

St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100173
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	335497
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kathy Elliffe
Headteacher	Mr Ossie Folkes
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors spent nine and a half hours looking at learning, visiting fourteen lessons and observing ten teachers and two teaching assistants. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including teachers' planning, pupils' books, the school improvement plan, assessment records, individual education plans, minutes of meetings and the report of the School Improvement Partner. The responses from 71 parents' questionnaires were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of pupils in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that it challenges all learners, including higher-attaining pupils
- the impact of the school's work in addressing approaches to behaviour
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement.

Information about the school

St Patrick's is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Over two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, predominantly linked to difficulties in communication or behavioural, emotional or social needs, is above the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.

The school has Investors in People, Inclusion Charter and Artsmark Silver awards. A breakfast and after-school club, managed by a private organisation, operate within the school premises.

At the last inspection in November 2008, the school was issued with a Notice to Improve because senior leaders were failing to ensure that all government requirements relating to safeguarding children were followed. It was monitored by HMI in July 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement. St Patrick's Catholic Primary is a satisfactory and improving school. It has a number of good features. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher promote a strong, caring ethos in which staff work closely for the benefit of all pupils. There is a very real sense of team working which provides a sound basis for future improvement. Staff know what is expected of them and feel confident that they are part of a successful future.

The curriculum is satisfactory and a range of out-of-lesson activities enhance pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a strong ethos of respect and consideration for others which permeates the school. These positive aspects of the school are greatly appreciated by parents. As one parent wrote: 'We feel this school meets all our child's needs. She is supported and enjoys attending school.'

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are well below the levels expected for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class their attainment remains below that expected. By the end of Year 2, pupils leave the school having attained well below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the majority of pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average, although national test results for 2009 were significantly above national averages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and they also make satisfactory progress.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The emphasis on monitoring teaching and encouraging good practice has raised the overall quality. There is, however, some inconsistency in practice across the school. This is particularly the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage and lower Key Stage 1. Staff are not always deployed to best effect to ensure maximum impact on pupils' learning and attainment. Pupils are managed well and so there is a calm atmosphere in lessons. However, introductions are sometimes too long, so pupils are not fully engaged and do not get down to their work as quickly as they should. Some teachers do not always make the best use of assessment information to plan for pupils' individual needs. Consequently, there is not always enough challenge in lessons and this slows the progress of pupils, particularly the more able.

Senior leaders know the school well. The school improvement plan correctly identifies the key areas for attention, including the need to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, with a focus on

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raising standards. However, monitoring lacks rigour and challenge, and not all aspects of the school's work is evaluated sufficiently. Subject leaders are growing into their roles. They are beginning to contribute well to raising achievement across the curriculum through the monitoring of pupils' progress and lesson planning. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities conscientiously and challenge the school to do its best for its pupils. Their programme of visits provides them with a good idea of how well the school is doing, but they are not yet confident enough to ask searching questions about the effectiveness of strategies for raising achievement. Overall, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, in reading, writing and mathematics, by improving the quality of teaching and learning through:
 - actively engaging learners so that they achieve as well as they can
 - ensuring assessment data are used to plan lessons that challenge all learners, particularly the higher-attaining pupils.
- Ensure leaders at all levels:
 - pursue improvement rigorously by systematically monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the work of the school and through greater accountability and challenge at all levels
 - review the deployment of staff to ensure maximum impact on pupils' learning and attainment at all levels across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time at the school. Overall, they now make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Pupils make increasingly good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. A whole-school focus to improve writing is helping standards to rise.

In the lessons observed, pupils' learning and progress were variable. Where learning was good, pupils worked with diligence, purpose and full engagement. Their behaviour was good and they were very supportive of each other. For example, in one lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked in pairs with clearly assigned roles to write play scripts. The teacher's carefully designed activity enabled pupils to demonstrate their good reasoning and thinking skills, while acquiring new knowledge.

The school's family atmosphere provides the foundation for good relationships throughout the school. Pupils who find it more difficult to settle down to learning and behave well because of social, emotional or behavioural difficulties are given the right sort of help so they develop positive attitudes to school.

Pupils are friendly, confident and enthusiastic about their school. They have a strong understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to stay safe.

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Pupils show a willingness to take on responsibility by raising money for several charities and by being elected to the school council. Their personal development is supported well, for example, through their eager participation in the choir and end-of-year productions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils now make steady progress in their learning because overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are some clear strengths in teaching. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2, where pupils feel involved in their learning because they are given a clear idea of what they are expected to learn and achieve by the end of each lesson. Pupils are generally keen to learn, although some find it hard to concentrate in lessons which are not active or practical.

In the less effective lessons observed, there is insufficient support for pupils at the various stages of learning English as an additional language; teachers make few concessions to the needs of these pupils. There is insufficient focus on key vocabulary, on explaining terminology or on providing visual props and prompts. Helpful displays

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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and aids for learning, such as word walls, are not referred to consistently during lessons. Tracking systems help teachers to take account of the range of ability within classes. However, not all teachers are using this information effectively to provide challenging enough opportunities for more able pupils. Generally, pupils know their targets and say these are helping them to improve their work. Good teaching makes clear what pupils need to do to achieve them.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The strengths in curriculum provision include art and music. The school is beginning to develop the curriculum to make it more interesting and relevant, with stronger links between the subjects. This approach is intended to capture pupils' interests and encourage them to use their literacy and numeracy skills in a range of different contexts and for a variety of purposes.

Good use of specialist teachers and instructors, for example in music, makes a significant contribution to the good standards achieved in this subject.

Care, guidance and support are good and enhanced by the well-established links with a range of external agencies and with parents. Staff know individual pupils well. A range of different intervention strategies are used to support pupils' different needs, including their social and emotional development. The work of the inclusion manager and the learning mentor are particularly effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, they hold a realistic view of teaching. However, monitoring lacks rigour and does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of all the school's work on teaching, learning and the progress the pupils are making.

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils meet government guidelines. At the time of the inspection, there were, for example, effective procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school. A particular noteworthy feature is the fortnightly safeguarding audit conducted by the headteacher and chair of governors.

The school is strongly committed to inclusion and removing barriers to success, although assessment information is not always used to best effect to ensure that higher attaining pupils make as much progress as the rest. Pupils' knowledge of different cultures in the diverse community that they live in is strong because action to promote community

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cohesion is a particularly good feature of the school.

Links with parents and outside organisations are good and used well to support pupils' learning and personal development.

The current level of pupils' attainment and progress achieved confirms that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children come into the Nursery with levels of skill and knowledge much lower than those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and social development. Children have access to an attractive learning environment and a good range of indoor and outdoor learning resources. That teaching and progress are satisfactory rather than good is partly due to children having to work independently for too long without sufficient support from adults. Activities are carefully planned, but opportunities to develop children's language through dialogue are sometimes missed, and this further limits their progress. Children's knowledge of sounds and letters and their writing skills develop satisfactorily. By the end of the Reception class most children are attaining below the expected levels for their age. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led satisfactorily.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires are positive about the work of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Patrick's Roman Catholic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 340 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	77	16	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	72	20	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	58	29	41	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	46	38	54	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	52	34	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	54	34	44	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	54	31	44	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	48	31	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	39	35	49	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	44	35	49	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	39	37	52	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	56	28	39	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	62	24	34	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 January 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School, Plumstead, SE18 7QG

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We really enjoyed our visit, particularly the chance to have lunch with you and talk to so many of you during the two days. Thank you for your invitations to listen to the lunchtime choir and music sessions. It was such a privilege to listen to your beautiful singing. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found out about your school.

These are the things we liked about your school.

- Lots of you told us that you enjoy school and you showed this by your good attitudes and hard work. It is a happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other.
- You make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are in line with those of pupils in other schools.
- You make healthy choices, behave well and make visitors to your school feel very welcome.
- The headteacher, governors and other staff work effectively together to make your school a safe place to learn well in. They are working hard to make it even better.

We have asked your school to improve a number of things to make it even better.

- Make sure that teachers have the right kind of information to help them plan even more challenging lessons.
- Make sure that the senior staff know how well the school is doing and that they plan carefully to make things even better.

Remember, you can help to make your school even better by continuing to work hard, coming to school regularly and by always behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector

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