

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106460
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	336675
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Allan Torr 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	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Ron McGivern
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Bruen
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2007
School address	Hardybutts Wigan Lancashire WN1 3RZ
Telephone number	01942 244361
Fax number	01942 244363
Email address	enquiries@admin.saintpatricks.wigan.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Inspection number	336675

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed all of the teachers, sometimes more than once. Inspectors held meetings with three groups of pupils, a group of governors, parents and carers who were visiting the school and with teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the questionnaires completed by 27 staff, 77 parents and carers and 100 pupils. In addition to a wide range of documents, inspectors scrutinised a sample of pupils' work, assessment information, some of the school's policies, monitoring records and the school's improvement plans.

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

- the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in mathematics to determine how much progress the school has made on this key issue since the last inspection
- the quality of the school's policies and action plans for community cohesion and their impact on pupils' cultural development and understanding
- the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in writing and other work-life skills.

Information about the school

St Patrick's is a larger than average Catholic primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in mixed Reception and Year 1 classes. There is a higher than average proportion of boys in the school and around one quarter of all pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen since the last inspection to be above average. A few pupils have speech and language needs, a few have behavioural, emotional and social needs and some pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There are a few pupils who are looked after by the local authority. There have been four changes in teachers since the last inspection and a new headteacher who started 22 months ago. The governing body manages before- and-after school clubs. This provision was inspected at the same time. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools, the Artsmark Silver and ICT Mark.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Patrick's is a good school. Staff and governors have created an inviting, vibrant and inclusive environment in which all pupils regardless of their backgrounds can succeed and in which all parents and carers regardless of difference are respected and welcomed into the community. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures, religions and of people from different backgrounds. This is in part because of well crafted opportunities, through the curriculum and action plans and policies for community cohesion, to meet and mix with disabled pupils and adults, of different ages and from different backgrounds. There is scope to extend this further by having greater experiences of pupils and adults from minority ethnic heritage.

Pupils achieve well at St Patrick's because teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. They enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are below those typical of three- and four-year-olds. By the end of Year 6 they attain standards in English and mathematics that are around the national average. There is some fluctuation in pupils' attainment in mathematics but since the last inspection standards have risen, particularly at the higher Level 5. They have also risen in English in each of the last four years. Standards in writing, however, are below average and lag behind reading. There is scope to raise attainment further by ensuring that teachers set activities in all subjects that will take pupils onto the next level in their work. In some classes, pupils do not always have the guidance they need in lessons and through marking know precisely what they need to do to improve. Pupils' attendance is around the national average and given that pupils' attainment overall is also average they are satisfactorily prepared with the skills they need for the future.

Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development, although on occasions their self-evaluation is slightly over-generous and focused more on the provision than on learning and progress. This is the case, for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although leadership of this key stage is good the quality of monitoring and evaluation could be sharper to eliminate errors in subject knowledge made by staff and to focus on the quality of children's learning. Some staff missed opportunities to extend children's thinking by asking questions which required children to think, explore and to explain their reasoning.

The school's capacity for further improvements is good. All staff and governors are involved in self-evaluation, setting ambitious targets and reviewing their own performance. In addition to increased attainment, the security of the school site has improved significantly since the last inspection and there has been a decrease in the proportion of pupils persistently absent. Governors are highly skilled and dedicated, have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have the right

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

information they need to be able to support and challenge the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - – providing more guidance for pupils in lessons so they know what they need to do to improve
 - – ensuring that activities enable pupils to attain the next level in their work.
- Strengthening leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - – sharpening the impact and quality of monitoring and evaluation on the quality of children's learning
 - – ensuring that all staff use a good range of questions and activities to enable all children to think, explain and extend their skills, and that staff have improved subject knowledge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils overwhelmingly enjoy school. They are motivated to learn new skills and knowledge and have good attitudes to learning. They are curious and are eager to succeed. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are respectful, polite and friendly and show concern for others. These attributes are part of the reason why all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. They thrive on the small-group and individual teaching which is targeted at the next steps they need in their learning. In 2009 pupils with moderate learning needs, speech and language difficulties and those with behavioural needs made outstanding progress in Key Stage 2. The small number of looked after pupils make good progress, particularly in developing their self-esteem, confidence and attitudes to learning. There is a high proportion of boys in most classes. Although their attainment has been slightly below the national average by the end of Year 6, boys have made better progress in Key Stage 2 than the girls. All groups of pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards, however, in subjects such as French, art and design, and performing arts are strong. This is because staff have high expectations, pupils are fully involved during lessons and have plenty of skilled guidance about how to develop and improve their work.

Pupils have outstanding spiritual development. They reflect about different religions and beliefs as well as the intangible such as beauty, truth and forgiveness. They visit other places of worship each year and have learnt how to respect the beliefs of others. In lessons they use their time to reflect on the awe and wonder of the world. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and around a half take a nutritious healthy school dinner. Pupils feel safe, although a few pupils commented they have heard inappropriate words used by other pupils. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. They are taking advantage of increased links with the church and of community events, fundraising for good causes and contributing to work to improve their environment.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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?

One pupil's comment reflects the view of the overwhelming majority, 'Teachers are kind, caring and praise us.' There are strong procedures in place to care for and support pupils who are looked after by the local authority and for those pupils who could be deemed as vulnerable because of particular circumstances in their lives. Staff create good-quality personal and individual education plans and risk assessments to galvanise the appropriate support.

The majority of lessons during the inspection were of good quality. In these lessons there was a fast pace to the learning; relationships with adults were strong; pupils were active and teachers used high-quality questions and activities to make pupils think, explain, create and to use their skills and knowledge. Highly skilled specialist teachers teach very good-quality lessons, for example in music. The quality of lessons was particularly strong in Years 4, 5 and 6. In these year groups, pupils were challenged and fully engaged. Their work shows they make accelerated progress. These lessons particularly engaged the boys, more-able pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is, however, some inconsistency in the quality of

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

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

teaching. In some lessons adults' subject knowledge is not as good as it could be which hinders their ability to ask questions and provide good guidance in lessons to move pupils onto the next level in their learning. As a result, pupils sometimes complete work which they have already shown they can do and adults do not enable pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve. Some pupils knew their targets but were unsure about what level they were working at or what they should do to improve. Most pupils' work scrutinised by inspectors was marked but some was not.

Good links are made between National Curriculum subjects. This enables most pupils to make connections between different parts of their work. Year 1 pupils are mixed with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although teachers plan for the Year 1 pupils, using the National Curriculum there is scope to tighten the quality of planning to ensure that all pupils over the age of five are following the National Curriculum at an appropriately challenging level. There are well designed trips, visits and special weeks which enhance the curriculum. Pupils in the enterprise week, for example, learnt how to bid, design, market, make and present their finished product. This was particularly effective in enhancing and developing their skills for the future. There is a good range of extra-curricular activity such as wrestling, clay club and cheerleading, however, less than half of pupils are involved.

The before- and after-school clubs are good. There are effective systems in place to ensure the necessary information is shared between the clubs and the school. There are good-quality resources available for pupils of different ages. Adults get on well with pupils in the clubs and promote good behaviour, positive relationships and enjoyable learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She and the team of senior leaders are open to internal and external scrutiny and respond with speed and efficiency to any identified areas for improvement. Staff morale is high and they are proud to be at St Patrick's. Every member of staff answering the questionnaire agrees they know what the school is trying to achieve, that the school runs smoothly, they contribute to self-evaluation and the school is well led. There are clear priorities for improvement in the whole-school and subject-action plans. These could be sharpened to ensure that there is greater focus on pupils' learning and progress and success criteria. This limits

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

how well improvements can be measured, monitored and evaluated by senior leaders and governors.

There are good systems in place to ensure equality and diversity. There are no major differences between groups of pupils. All pupils, and parents and carers, can succeed and are welcomed at St Patrick's. There are strong links with parents and carers. One parent summed up the opinions of those interviewed during the inspection; 'Staff really care about the children, they welcome parents and my son is always happy to come.' The partnerships with outside agencies are also good and effective. The school benefits, for example, from the close working relationship with St Patrick's church, from close links with the high school and from links with Edge Hill University which trains future teachers.

The school meets current government guidelines about the vetting of staff and has rigorous and robust systems for risk assessments, child protection, first aid and health and safety.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The outcomes for children are good in the Nursery and Reception classes because the teaching, curriculum and the environment enable the majority of children to make good progress. The classrooms and outdoor spaces are spacious, vibrant and exciting environments. They are used well by adults to provide interesting and absorbing activities for children, often linked to a main theme. Children produced, for example, some very good work about fish and life in the sea after a visit to a local marine

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

environment. Children enjoy their learning and are active learners. One group looked in detail at mini-beasts and their environments through magnifiers. Another group made good progress learning about snails.

The adults skilfully used questions to make pupils think and to explain their reasoning. Some adults, however, during the inspection made errors in the information they were telling children and did not have enough subject knowledge to develop children's learning fully. Opportunities were lost to extend children's thinking and to get them to apply their speaking, writing and calculation skills in the different areas. The management of the classes is good but procedures to monitor and evaluate children's learning and adults' teaching were not always sharply focused on children's learning. Adults assess children and have a good understanding of what each individual is capable of.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers spoken to or who returned the questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They agreed that it is well led and managed, meets their children's needs and helps them to support their children's learning. The overwhelming majority agreed their children enjoy school and are making enough progress. Every parent and carer returning a questionnaire agreed that teaching is good at the school. The overwhelming majority agreed the school keeps their children safe, helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle and informs them about how well their children are progressing. A few parents and carers disagreed that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors considered this in addition to the questionnaires returned by pupils who overwhelmingly agreed the school dealt well with poor behaviour, and concluded that, overall, pupils' behaviour is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Patrick's Catholic Primary 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	65	24	31	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	73	20	26	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	55	32	42	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	55	32	42	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	69	24	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	48	37	48	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	53	33	43	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)	46	60	28	36	0	0	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	53	32	42	1	1	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	47	33	43	4	5	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	42	36	47	3	4	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	46	60	25	32	0	0	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	69	22	29	0	0	2	3

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



12 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Wigan, WN1 3RZ

You may remember I came with a team of inspectors to judge how well your school is doing. I would like to thank you for talking to us when we met you in groups, in class, in the playground and around school and for sharing your views and opinions. This letter is to explain briefly what we found.

St Patrick's is a good school. This is because you are taught well, make good progress and reach standards that are around the national average in English and mathematics. I think your work in art and design is good and we were impressed with much of your work that we saw on display. The Reception and Year 1 children, for example, created some impressive paintings of butterflies while we were in school. You could attain even higher standards, particularly in writing and mathematics. So we have asked teachers to explain precisely what you need to do to improve your work and make sure the activities you are given help you to reach the next level. We are also asking school leaders to improve teaching and learning by checking that adults use a good range of questions to help you think, explain and extend your skills.

It was good to see you all excited and motivated ready for sports day and the summer fayre. Inspectors felt you were involved in school activities but thought there is scope for you to be even more involved by, for example, running the tuck shop yourself and by getting even more involved in community events and links with other schools, areas of the United Kingdom and other countries. You behave well and have a good understanding of how to be safe and how to live healthily. Inspectors judged that you are satisfactorily prepared for the future. To improve this to good you can help your school further by making sure you keep your attendance high and work on improving your writing and mathematics skills.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allan Torr

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.