

# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103439
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	343748
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Adrian Pembleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary O'Friel
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Dudley Road Birmingham B18 7QW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 14 lessons or parts of lessons while visiting eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They also examined the school's arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised pupils' work. Staff and pupils' questionnaires were also scrutinised, along with 32 completed by parents and carers.

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

- the boys' attainment in reading at Key Stage 1 and their progress in other subjects throughout Key Stage 2
- the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly in English
- how teachers use assessment information to ensure pupils make better progress.

## Information about the school

St Patrick's is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. A breakfast club, managed by the governing body, operates each morning at the school. The school has entered into a 'permanent collaboration' with a sister Catholic primary school, with an executive headteacher overseeing both schools. The school was given a notice to improve following an inspection in June 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

St Patrick's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and leadership team have been effective in arresting and reversing a decline in pupils' attainment through the implementation of effective strategies for monitoring and tracking their progress.

Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are significantly below those expected for their age. As a result of effective provision the children make good progress so that on entry to Year 1 their attainment is close to the national average. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Underachievement in the past results in pupils' progress being below average by the end of Year 6. Attainment is, however, rising, the result of teachers beginning to focus more effectively on the progress of individual pupils and of different groups. The school has identified that a small proportion of boys are not progressing as well as they should in their writing and it has introduced strategies which are beginning to accelerate their progress. A programme to improve boys' reading skills through continuing a programme of learning letter sounds is having some good effect. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been variable but, through streamlining its assessment procedures, the school is now ensuring they progress satisfactorily and in line with their peers, particularly in English.

Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved their use of assessment information to plan lessons and to enable pupils to make better progress. However, there is still a little way to go to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they should. Activities are not consistently pitched at the correct level for all pupils and there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills. Pupils are not always clear about the steps they must take to progress to the next National Curriculum level. Teachers question pupils effectively and encourage them to take a full part in lessons but they occasionally talk for too long, providing insufficient time for the pupils to undertake their work.

The school provides good pastoral support and guidance for the pupils. Pupils' behaviour is improving and this is seen in the dramatically reduced number of exclusions, improved attendance and reduction in the number of persistent absentees. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They make a good contribution to their school through acting as school councillors and peer mediators. They contribute well to the wider community; the choir performs locally and the gardening club has worked effectively with park rangers to create an inner city meadow. Pupils enjoy and enthusiastically engage in a range of sporting and physical activities that help them to sustain their healthy lifestyle.

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The headteacher has provided a very effective steer for the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvements since the previous inspection show it has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvements. Regular meetings between senior leaders and class teachers to review pupils' progress are identifying more quickly where there is any underachievement. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous. The governing body knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is beginning to hold the school to account. Partnerships with external agencies and its sister school are helping the staff to improve the provision for its pupils.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching further by:
  - ensuring assessment information is used effectively to pitch work at the correct level for all pupils
  - ensuring learning objectives are written in language that is easily understood by pupils
  - providing sufficient time in lessons for pupils to be actively engaged in their learning rather than listening for too long to explanations and instructions.
  - providing pupils with opportunities to find things out for themselves.
- Accelerate pupils' learning in writing by:
  - providing more opportunities for writing for a purpose and for cross-curricular writing
  - ensuring pupils have a clear understanding of what it is they have to do to reach the next National Curriculum level
  - providing boys with more visual stimuli to encourage their writing.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

In 2008 attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly below average in English, mathematics and science. There was an improvement in 2009 and these improvements have been maintained for the current Year 6 pupils. Observations during the inspection showed that pupils are making satisfactory progress overall although progress is better in Years 5 and 6. For example, good progress in pupils' mathematical and computer skills were observed in a lesson where pupils were planning a theme park. However, pupils are not all making the progress of which they are capable in writing throughout the school. Opportunities to write at length and to write for a specific purpose have been implemented but as yet have not had a sufficient impact on the pupils' progress. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities has been reduced and the school has been able to better target its resources to enable

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them to make improved progress, particularly in English. A strong focus on accelerating progress in mathematics has been effective and pupils are now achieving satisfactorily in this subject.

Pupils enjoy all aspects of school and this is reflected in their improved attendance, which is now average. Pupils behave sensibly, which helps them all to feel safe, and they look after one another well. A small number of pupils occasionally demonstrate challenging behaviour but staff manage the instances well so that they do not affect the quality of learning. Children in the Reception class quickly learn the school rules and this understanding stands them in good stead as they move through the school. Through school routines and curriculum activities, pupils show that they have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and most eat healthily. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and religions within their community and these are celebrated throughout the school. Through fundraising internationally and locally, pupils develop a good understanding of service to the community and to each other. Pupils' improving literacy and numeracy skills, more regular attendance and good social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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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## How effective is the provision?

Pupils are keen to learn because teaching is usually satisfactory, ensuring they make sound progress. Teachers question pupils effectively to test their understanding and extend their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good it is because the teachers do not take sufficient notice of the regular assessments when planning work and learning objectives are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of specific pupils. Teachers occasionally miss opportunities to allow pupils to find things out for themselves and to initiate learning activities. Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support groups of pupils. They make a good contribution to supporting those pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties, enabling them to take a full part in lessons.

The curriculum is suitably broad and the school is in the early stages of developing a more creative and skills-based approach to learning. Opportunities to improve literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects are increasing but are not yet planned sufficiently well to ensure such opportunities are maximised. The school makes good use of partnerships to enhance learning. For example, strong links with two local football clubs provide pupils with an awareness of citizenship and the importance of healthy lifestyles. Pupils thoroughly enjoy musical and dance activities and demonstrate good skills in these subjects. The opportunities to use computers and an effective link with a city learning centre help to improve pupils' skills significantly.

All pupils are looked after and cared for well. The safety of pupils is a high priority and health and safety procedures are carried out regularly and systematically. At the time of the inspection, all safeguarding procedures were fully in place. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to speak to if they have a problem. They are aware of bullying in the past but believe it is dealt with effectively when it occurs. Pupils who experience emotional or learning difficulties are supported sensitively and effectively, enabling them to take a full part in all activities. This support is enhanced by the school's good links with outside agencies. The breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day, and has helped to improve attendance and encouraged friendships between pupils. The credit union that operates on the school site provides pupils with a good economic awareness.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has acted decisively and effectively to address the school's weaknesses. There has been a reorganisation of the school's middle leaders' roles and responsibilities. Consequently, middle leaders now have a clear picture of how pupils are progressing in all subjects across the phase for which they have responsibility. The senior leadership team has been rigorous and systematic in the monitoring of teaching and learning and improvements made to teachers' planning and their use of assessment data. The headteacher is embedding ambition amongst the staff and they are improving their skills in evaluating and moderating pupils' learning. The school's links with its sister school are providing wider training opportunities and are helping to develop teachers' skills. Good tracking procedures introduced by the headteacher provide a clear picture of the attainment of individuals and this shows clearly the differences in progress between boys and girls and of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Strategies have been implemented to close these gaps, for example interventions to improve boys' reading and additional support to help pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds to engage more in their writing. As a result, pupils have equality of opportunity and there is no discrimination.

At the time of the inspection, all required safeguarding procedures were rigorous and fully in place. Governance has improved significantly and governors have clear roles and responsibilities. They are beginning to hold the school to account and challenge it more effectively. Relationships between staff and parents are satisfactory and the school works hard to encourage them to take a full and active part in their children's learning. The school has a clear and effective community cohesion policy that is implemented effectively. Pupils are involved in the regeneration project taking place in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham and the school is a satellite site for Birmingham's entry into 'Britain in Bloom'. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of different religions, cultures and backgrounds, locally and further afield.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>



<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are enthusiastic and willing learners. They settle quickly to activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage because activities are varied and interesting. They know how to care for their health, play alongside each other well and adapt quickly to classroom routines. Consistently good teaching, coupled with good relationships and secure welfare arrangements, ensure that all groups of children achieve well. There is a very effective programme in place that helps the children to learn their letters and sounds and this has helped to develop their early reading skills well. It is also helping to improve their early writing skills although this is the relatively weaker area of learning. By the time children enter Year 1, their attainment is just a little below average. Adults make good assessments of children's progress and use the information well to plan the next learning activity. Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning. There is a good range of practical activities which are well balanced between those led by staff and those led by children. The recently completed outside learning environment provides children with a good space to practise and develop their physical and creative skills. Children are well looked after and the pastoral support is strong. Good organisation, a stimulating environment and effective teamwork lead to good outcomes for the children.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

A very small proportion of parents returned the questionnaires. Those who did and parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection commented positively about the school. A small minority expressed concerns regarding pupils' behaviour and how the school deals with it. Inspectors found that pupils' behaviour was satisfactory and that the school had effective strategies in place to deal with any disruptions.

## 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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 201 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	53	15	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	47	14	44	3	9	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	41	18	56	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	38	16	50	3	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	44	13	41	2	6	2	6
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	22	18	56	4	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	28	22	69	1	3	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)	7	22	20	63	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	25	19	59	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	31	10	31	7	22	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	19	19	59	0	0	2	6
The school is led and managed effectively	7	22	19	59	0	0	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	31	19	59	0	0	2	6

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



19 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B18 7QW

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. We were impressed with the new outside learning area for the young children and with the 'rapping' of Year 4 pupils. This letter tells you what we found and what we are asking the school to do to improve.

You behave satisfactorily and enjoy learning. Your attendance is improving although there is still a small number who do not attend sufficiently regularly.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your attainment is a little below that seen in most schools but is getting better because you are now making satisfactory progress.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a good start to their schooling.

You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. You enjoy taking part in the good range of sporting activities and eat foods that are good for you.

The teaching is satisfactory and all of the staff look after you well.

Your school works well with other organisations and your parents and carers to help improve your education.

Those in charge of the school are providing satisfactory leadership.

This is what we have asked the school to do to make things better:

- help you to make better progress in writing.
- improve how teachers make use of information about how well you learn so that you can make better progress.

You can help by trying hard with your writing.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector

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