

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Whitehouse Road, Bircotes, Doncaster DN11 8EF

Inspection dates

20–21 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors do not ensure that all statutory duties are fulfilled.
- There are too many inaccuracies and oversights in important record-keeping documentation by leaders and governors.
- Middle leaders have only recently been given the responsibility to lead their subject areas. They are still learning their role and have not had opportunities to promote good learning and ensure good outcomes across the school.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good across the school. Sometimes the work that pupils are asked to carry out is too difficult and they do not receive support to overcome this quickly enough.
- Across the school, the achievement gap between boys and girls is not closing quickly enough.
- Many initiatives introduced by the headteacher have not had time to promote good learning and bring about the positive outcomes that leaders desire. Further small developments to these initiatives are still needed.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, effectively supported by governors, has been instrumental in beginning to turn pupil outcomes round. After a legacy of underachievement, he has begun to put systems in place that are starting to have a positive impact on outcomes.
- The school's published 2015 performance information was the best for many years.
- Children get off to a good start to school in the early years. Good teaching, well-planned activities and increasingly strong links with parents enable children to make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching of phonics is a strength and has resulted in greater proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of Year 1.
- Pupils' books show that they are taking an increasing pride in their work. They respond well to the comments that teachers make in their marking.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are well-mannered and considerate towards each other and adults. They enjoy coming to school and work collaboratively in class.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should ensure that:
 - they understand all the statutory duties required of them and ensure that these are carried out
 - important documents, such as policies, receive the necessary attention to detail so that there are clear, precise and accurate records in school that provide strong evidence of the work being done by leaders and governors
 - middle leaders receive the training, support and opportunity to carry out their role effectively to help improve further the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes for pupils.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - Ensuring that all assessment information is accurate and that staff are trained to interpret and use it effectively so that they can plan the next steps in learning for their pupils, identify groups that are underachieving, and provide support to accelerate their learning
 - planning for opportunities to accelerate the progress of boys in the school in all subject areas
 - making sure that all teachers model concepts effectively and that work is not too difficult so that pupils are appropriately challenged and can make progress.

- To further improve outcomes by ensuring that the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is closed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not acted promptly enough in putting important documentation in place, which allows parents and other bodies to see that the correct procedures are established to ensure that pupils are safe. For example, before the inspection, some statutory policies were not on the school's website. This had been rectified by the end of the inspection.
- Leaders have not fully embedded the systems and processes which they have put in place to improve pupil outcomes. As a result, these systems are not helping to improve the school at a quick enough pace. For example, the data entered into systems to track pupil progress contained errors and there were inconsistencies with the data held by different leaders for the same pupils.
- Leaders have achieved recent success in improving overall outcomes for pupils effectively. They have also used the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that pupils eligible for this funding make good progress. However, they have not put enough resources or strategies into accelerating boys' progress so that they close the gap between them and the girls.
- Leaders have made changes to the way pupils are taught and the resources used and this has had a positive impact on pupil outcomes. For example, the introduction of a consistent and systematic phonics programme and the very focused way this is now taught to small groups of pupils, has significantly increased the proportion of pupils reaching the national expected standards in phonics by the end of Year 1. Some very recent changes being trialled in Key Stage 1 still need further development.
- The headteacher has an excellent knowledge of teaching and learning and is using this knowledge to constantly improve the ways that teachers teach and pupils learn. He very quickly identifies strengths and weaknesses when observing lessons and looking through pupils' books; he then feeds this back to teachers effectively so that they can further improve.
- Leaders and governors have worked hard to establish a culture of high expectations for each and every pupil, regardless of their ability or background. The headteacher brought an 'I can do' attitude to the school when he joined and there is now an ethos in school that does not accept excuses – any child can achieve! Parents have embraced this culture and speak extremely positively about the work of the school and particularly about the headteacher. 'Amazing, just amazing,' were the final comments one parent made after waxing lyrical about leadership.
- The headteacher, with the support of the governors, local authority and diocese has reversed the decline in standards. He holds staff to account effectively. The setting of targets for teachers, which are linked to pupils' progress, has become more robust and is used to ensure that the pupils in any teacher's care are challenged to succeed.
- The headteacher has empowered others to lead. These leaders, known as 'middle leaders', are keen and are working hard to make a difference in their subject area. However, they need to be given the opportunity and skills to effectively monitor and evaluate their subject so that they can hold teachers to account and impact on standards in their subject area.
- The school's strong Christian ethos provides effective support for pupils' understanding of British values and all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of mutual tolerance and respect.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Visitors come into school to share their beliefs and, as such, pupils have developed a good understanding of various world faiths.
- The curriculum is well organised and frequent checks are made to ensure that it promotes learning effectively. It is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visitors, which widen pupils' experiences and understanding. The primary sports grant is used to ensure that pupils receive quality sports provision. Highly qualified coaches are employed to both teach physical education during curriculum time and provide professional development to teaching staff. The money is also used to further enrich provision with after school coaching activities and holiday sports clubs.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed, care deeply about the pupils and the importance of the school within its community. They have made appointments to strengthen the school in different areas and are continuing to do so. Governors play an active role in the life of the school. For example, those with specific remits link up regularly with the relevant member of staff so that they can be kept up to date with developments. They ask questions of leaders to ensure that pupils are receiving their entitlement. For example, they question the spending of the pupil premium funding and sports grant, wanting to

know what it is being spent on and what impact it is having.

- Governors know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a commitment to further improve standards in the school and know what information, resources and external personnel to access to gain an independent view of the school in order to ensure that standards do not slip again.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors seek training that keeps them up to date. At least one governor has received training on the procedures to safely recruit new staff. There is a commitment to keep pupils safe through the procedures that have been put in place, but the administrative side needs more attention to detail.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Although improved teaching is having a greater impact on pupils' achievement, its quality remains too variable. Because teachers are not fully aware of the issues that the school's tracking system highlights, such as the gap between boys' and girls' attainment, not enough opportunities or strategies are planned into lessons to address this. There is currently not enough focus on closing this gap.
- In some lessons, pupils take too long to settle and this slows progress. For example, pupils were not always equipped to make a rapid start because some did not have pencils and others needed them sharpening.
- Some very effective strategies have been put in place. Some strategies, such as the way phonics is now taught, are bringing about great improvements. Others have had to be changed or revised to make them more effective. The school has worked hard to equip teachers with strategies and initiatives in order to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Many adjustments, changes and revisions have been made along the way to determine the most effective practice, but these practices are not yet fully effective through school.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils automatically default to decoding when they come across unusual or difficult words and do so with success.
- Pupils' books show that they take a great deal of pride in their work and try hard with their presentation.
- Teachers give clear next steps in learning to pupils through their marking. In line with the school's assessment procedures, they insist on errors being corrected, give pupils their next challenge and allow them the opportunity to respond to advice.
- Pupils have increasing ownership over their targets and assessments. In one lesson, pupils had helped devise the 'success criteria' which they used throughout the lesson to measure whether they had been successful or not in achieving what they had set out to do.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use rich and technical vocabulary. By immersing pupils in such language, they use this technical language among themselves when discussing their work. Two pupils in one class were discussing 'adverbial phrases' and 'adverbial clauses' within their writing.
- Some lessons are taught at pace, with a 'no-nonsense let's get the job done' attitude and, as a result, pupils fully engage and make good progress in these lessons.
- Pupils know where they are in their learning journey. They speak with great enthusiasm about their personal assessment files which tell them exactly what stage they are at and what they need to do to get better. They meet each term with their teachers for a one-to-one assessment meeting where they have a 'voice' about their next targets. Consequently, they have a greater desire to achieve a target that they have helped set.
- The school is increasingly encouraging and involving parents in their children's education. Workshops, homework, home/school packs and diaries all help parents to understand what is required to help their child.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 feel that they are sufficiently challenged, especially the most able. One child said, 'It is never too hard so that you want to give up, but you have work at it.'
- Teachers create stimulating and purposeful working environments in their classrooms, which inspire pupils, giving them the tools to work more independently. As a result, they make quicker progress. Personal organisers and 'up levelling cards', which each pupil has, give them increasing ownership over what they are doing and help them to improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. They say that it is a special place where they are treated as a unique and special person.
- The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school. They comment on the inclusiveness, the positive ethos and the pastoral care that their children receive. Many put this down to the leadership of the headteacher and the warmth he brings to the school.
- Pupils say that their teachers care about them and resolve any problems should they occur.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They acknowledge and appreciate that the leaders of their school keep them safe by having security doors and gates, by carrying out fire practices and by ensuring that they have up-to-date knowledge of e-safety. They talk knowledgeably about the potential dangers that the internet can bring.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they learn. During a collective worship session, pupils sat in a circle and passed a mirror round by candlelight. They spoke about what they saw in the mirror and the fact that they were happy with what they saw because they knew it was unique. This led to a conversation about how and what each individual pupil contributes to the school community.
- Pupils enjoy and see the benefit of the sport and exercise they do in school. For example, pupils were observed exercising to music. Highly qualified sports coaches lead some physical education lessons, after-school clubs and holiday clubs. Coaches ensured that pupils were technically correct in their movements so that they would not cause damage to their bodies and they discussed the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils report that incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively, and bullying is rare. They speak positively about the 'ladder' behaviour system and see it as a 'consequence' that works.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They are well-mannered, helpful towards each other and, from a very young age, work collaboratively together.
- From the moment that pupils walk through the school gates in the morning they move round school in a calm and orderly manner. They are respectful to adults and each other and speak with confidence to visitors.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work hard and take a pride in what they do. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils spoke with great pride about their personal assessment files and how they get to meet with teachers one-to-one to discuss their progress and set their targets. This came about as a result of pupils requesting it through the pupil questionnaire.
- The work of the 'buddies' is an excellent example of how pupils support the welfare of each other at playtime. Pupils speak with pride about such systems, but also are pleased to report that the system is not used too much because 'we are all friendly and kind to each other anyway'.
- Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. Their attendance is above the national average. For the last two years and so far this year, no pupils have been persistently absent. This is well below the national figure.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- The school has not paid enough attention to accelerating the progress of boys so that their attainment becomes closer to that of girls by the end of each Key Stage in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, boys' attainment lags behind that of girls within school and other pupils nationally.
- Outcomes for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are often below those achieved by other pupils. However, many of these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes were well below those achieved by other pupils nationally. However, from their low starting points, all of these pupils made at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics and some made more. This narrowed the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally.
- The most-able pupils are challenged in lessons. Last year (2015), the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics was, for the first time, above

the proportions seen nationally. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 2 was also above that seen nationally. However, this was not the case in mathematics.

- Although assessment data and the system the school uses is new and contains some inaccuracies, progress in books supports the view that many pupils are making expected or greater progress.
- The increased emphasis on developing pupils' use of phonics and changes to the way that phonics is being taught are having a positive impact on pupils' reading abilities. Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 has risen from 36% to 73%. Pupils successfully use the skills learnt in their phonics sessions to decode words when reading.
- Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has been well below that seen nationally for many years. However, pupils' performance in 2015 was much closer to national figures at the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with national figures at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Performance information from 2015 shows that standards in writing and mathematics are now much more in line with those seen nationally at the end of both key stages. English grammar, punctuation and spelling are also now in line with national figures at the end of Key Stage 2. Once again, this comes after many years of being well below national figures.
- Pupils enjoy reading and speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to read in school. Displays around school show the many varied and 'strange' places it is possible to sit and read a book!

Early years provision

is good

- From low starting points, children in the early years make good progress. In 2015, the proportion of children that reached a good level of development was above average. This meant that a large proportion of children were ready to access the Year 1 curriculum.
- Leaders track children's progress from early in Nursery and put the relevant support in place to make sure that as many children as possible will reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- Leadership and management in the early years are good. The early years leader has put successful systems in place to assess and record children's development. As a result, staff can talk confidently about the achievements of children and provide evidence to back this up. Detailed learning journeys are shared with parents and provide ample information to plan accurate next steps in learning.
- Other adults are deployed effectively so that learning activities are set up and managed well throughout the day that keep the children stimulated, enthused and engaged. The learning environment is well thought-out so that it both inspires children and informs parents.
- Adults support children in their learning, taking every opportunity to develop children's thinking by regularly visiting and checking on their progress as they work and play. Staff keep a constant dialogue going with children - promoting and modelling language and getting the children to further develop their thinking or further extend their initial answers and comments.
- Sometimes, there is an insufficient focus on the boys in order to accelerate their progress. For example, a group of boys working together at the sand tray were left with no adult support for a long period.
- The early years leader has built effective relationships with parents and strongly encourages them to be involved in their children's learning. Initiatives have been set up such as parents reading with their child on a Monday and an opportunity to share the detailed learning journeys with the parents on a Thursday. Workshops and transition meetings are all starting to help parents know what they can do to help their child and also help children settle into school more effectively. As a result, these initiatives are starting to impact positively on children's outcomes.
- Staff create an emotionally and physically safe environment in which children can learn. They model a caring and positive approach to learning where collaborative working is the order of the day. As a result, children work and play well together in a safe environment that has children's welfare as its priority.
- Children thrive both indoors and outdoors in a busy and purposeful learning environment. The structures and organisations that staff have put in place help children to develop resilience and determination. Children see activities through to the end. This could be seen in one session where a child enthusiastically designed a robot by sketching it on paper and carefully labelled it before embarking on making it. She saw the whole process through with enthusiasm.

School details

Unique reference number	122816
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10001797

This inspection 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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Clements
Headteacher	Neil Harris
Telephone number	01302 743145
Website	www.stpatrickscatholicprimary.org.uk
Email address	admin@st-patricks.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2013

Information about this school

- St Patrick's Primary School is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils that have an Education Health Plan is below average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of 11 lessons and visited other sessions briefly. Most of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with both a representative from the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- A meeting was held with four governors.
- Numerous meetings were held with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with four middle leaders.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils.
- The inspector spoke with pupils informally around school and listened to some pupils read.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in their books whilst visiting classrooms and also selected a sample of books for more detailed scrutiny.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the inspection and analysed the 22 responses on the Ofsted 'Parent View' website.
- A variety of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Mark Mallender, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

