

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Whitehouse Road, Bircotes, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN11 8EF

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is much improved since its previous inspection. The headteacher has ensured that all staff and pupils now aim to achieve high standards.
- Almost all parents and carers hold the school in high regard.
- Leadership roles are now more effectively shared among staff so that the deputy headteacher and middle leaders make an important contribution to improving the school.
- Because teaching and the use of assessment are good, all groups of pupils progress well throughout the school and standards are rising.
- Children in early years make a good start to their learning at school. They are well prepared for Year 1 and school life beyond.
- Pupils behave well around school and are polite and well mannered. They work hard and concentrate well in class and this helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for helping others in school.
- Governance is much improved. The governing body now plays its full part in helping the school to improve.
- The curriculum for reading and writing does not sufficiently capitalise on pupils' personal interests to encourage them to read more widely or to write at length.
- Sometimes pupils' writing and mathematical skills are not sufficiently developed in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Although the school has improved its management of pupils' attendance, rates of attendance are still a little below the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils develop their writing and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Fully capitalise on pupils' personal interests to motivate them further to read more widely and to write at length.
- Improve rates of attendance to at least national average levels.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has worked tirelessly and effectively to raise staff expectations of what pupils can achieve. All governors and staff share the same high aspirations and the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Leaders and staff know the school inside out and select wisely where to focus their efforts to improve the school.
- Leaders monitor each pupil's progress carefully. Each class teacher prepares an action plan every half term which focuses on their pupils, including the most able, who are not doing as well as they might. The progress of these pupils is then discussed at meetings between each teacher and the headteacher. Additional support for pupils is arranged and the teacher and headteacher later check that these pupils have benefited from this support.
- Middle leaders now play a full part in bringing about improvements in their areas of responsibility and there are effective systems to enable staff to learn from one another.
- The curriculum is modified effectively to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils, including the most able, those who struggle with their learning, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those who join the school with limited spoken English. All these groups of pupils make good progress. The curriculum is also modified well to meet the learning needs of disadvantaged pupils.
- The curriculum is much improved and is mostly effective, but leaders are aware that a few weaknesses remain. For example, sometimes the reading curriculum does not fully motivate pupils to read regularly and there are too few hobby readers in the school. Also, pupils' personal interests are not sufficiently used to encourage them to read more widely or to write at length.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their knowledge of British values and other ways of life, is well supported by the school's ethos and its curriculum. Pupils' welfare and personal development are well led and managed and pupils are taught consistently and effectively how to behave and to show positive attitudes to learning.
- The diocese and the local authority have played an important part in helping the school to improve. A particularly useful contribution made by the local authority was to arrange for the school to work with another primary school in Worksop. This partnership has done much to improve the skills and confidence of staff.
- Almost all parents regard the school highly and recognise that the school has worked more closely with parents over the last few years.
- The school spends its funds wisely. Leaders use the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to improve staff's teaching skills and to extend pupils' skills and participation in a wider range of sporting activities. Pupil premium funding is well used and there is no difference in the rates of learning of disadvantaged and other pupils. Additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also used well.

Governance

- Governors have worked closely with the headteacher to undertake a thorough review of how governance could be made more effective. They have commissioned an effective audit of the work of the governing body and have brought about many improvements over the last two years.
- Governors now have a clear view of exactly where the school needs to improve further and regularly check that all is as it should be.
- Governor training is comprehensive, and governors carry out meticulous checks to ensure that key activities, such as the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, are thorough and effective.
- Governors work as partners with leaders, such as subject leaders, to check that the pupils are doing well. They also have responsibilities for checking that a particular part of the school improvement plan is being implemented to good effect. The governing body now fully plays its part in helping the school to improve and in identifying and challenging any emerging weaknesses.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher works closely with staff to ensure that all are fully committed to keeping pupils safe. The ethos of the school is positive and caring and the well-being of each individual pupil is at the heart of the school's approach. Parents recognise this.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' safety. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and some older pupils are proud to be safety ambassadors.
- Training is up to date, and all staff know their responsibilities. Administrative arrangements such as records of staff checks are strong, and thorough checks are frequently made to ensure that procedures fully meet requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Throughout the school, pupils are now taught well, and assessment is used effectively to help them learn.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils know they have to behave well in lessons, and to concentrate and work hard.
- Adults look carefully at pupils' work and ask them well-judged questions that help them overcome difficulties in their learning and correct mistakes they have made.
- Reading is taught well and standards of reading are rising throughout the school. The teaching of phonics is much better than previously, and daily guided reading helps pupils read confidently. Many pupils are also doing better because of a well-organised home-reading programme. Some parents have a very positive influence on their children's progress in reading. Volunteer reading helpers, including school governors, also help some pupils with their reading.

- In English lessons, writing is taught well, and standards of writing have risen well since the last inspection. Mathematics is also taught well. Pupils are taught to understand quite difficult mathematical ideas, and to reason and to solve problems. The school is aware that a weaker aspect of mathematics is pupils' knowledge of number facts such as multiplication tables. Some useful work is under way to remedy this.
- Sometimes, pupils' skills in writing and mathematics are not developed as well when they are learning subjects such as geography, history and science.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well. Support and guidance provided by teachers and teaching assistants are often varied to meet the learning needs of all learners, including the most able, in reading, writing and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- During lessons, pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their work. Throughout the school, they are taught to concentrate well and not to give up easily. Pupils take a pride in their books and standards of presentation are good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that there is no bullying. They are confident that adults would quickly sort out any incidents that did arise. Standards of care and guidance provided by the school are high. The school knows individual pupils' needs well and caters for these.
- Pupils are taught British values such as respecting the views of others and being tolerant and understanding. They are polite to adults and one another, and older pupils enjoy the many opportunities they are given to take responsibility for helping others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around school. Pupils told the inspector that the positive behaviour evident during the inspection was typical for their school.
- Pupils show a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. They behave safely in school and act with respect for the safety of others. Pupils' safety is continually given high priority by staff. For example, during the inspection, at playtime, pupils were directed to play on the field rather than the playground to reduce the danger of slipping on ice.
- Although the school has improved its procedures for promoting regular attendance, overall rates of attendance remain a little below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- National assessment results show that pupils attain well and make good progress in early years and in Years 1 and 2.
- Although results in national assessments, especially in reading, were not as strong in

Year 6 as in key stage 1, pupils' work and school records show that pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining in line with national expectations and standards of reading are considerably higher than last year.

- At the time of the previous inspection, boys were underachieving compared with boys nationally. The school has concentrated on motivating boys to do better. Now the difference between the standards attained by boys and girls is less than previously and boys are achieving better throughout the school.
- Because phonics is taught well, an above-average proportion of pupils is successful in national phonics screening checks.
- The most able pupils are often challenged well and make good progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress in their learning and personal development.
- Throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils achieve well and make progress well.
- The school is aware that in mathematics, pupils' knowledge of number facts is not as strong as their problem solving and reasoning. In all classes, this aspect of the mathematics curriculum is being given greater attention.

Early years provision

Good

- The school's good links with parents and effective procedures to introduce children to school ensure that children get off to a flying start and progress well in the two years they are in early years.
- Many children join early years with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. They make good progress and by the end of Reception, the majority of children attain a good level of development and some exceed expected standards.
- Children are well prepared for Year 1. As well as developing academically, they learn how to behave well, sit and listen for extended periods, to answer politely and to take turns and cooperate with others.
- Their personal development is given high priority by staff. Standards of safety, welfare and care are high and children thoroughly enjoy their time at school.
- The early years curriculum is of good quality. Children enjoy many interesting learning opportunities and benefit from visits, such as a recent visit to the local shop. This visit was used to stimulate them to write and develop their number skills.
- Adults assess children's progress carefully and use the results of assessments to help their teaching fully meet the needs of each individual. Adults are very skilful at maximising opportunities to help children learn. For example, when undertaking routine tasks such as taking the register, the teacher taught children how to answer politely and to count and add and subtract using the numbers of children present that day.
- The headteacher and the early years leader provide effective leadership and management of early years. Leaders are aware of where improvements are needed and take the action necessary to bring about improvement. For example, much has been done to improve the outdoor area as a high-quality learning resource.

- Parents are given clear and detailed information about their child’s learning. There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in their children’s life at school and parents hold the early years provision in high regard.
- Basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well to groups of children and during individual activities. Staff constantly talk to children and ask them skilful questions that extend their learning and deepen their understanding.

School details

Unique reference number	122816
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10041566

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Hennis
Headteacher	Neil Harris
Telephone number	01302 743145
Website	www.stpatrickscatholicps.co.uk
Email address	admin@st-patricks.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The great majority of pupils speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average for primary schools. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes, including a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, he carried out shorter visits to classrooms to see aspects of the school's work, such as the teaching of reading.
- A range of other school activities, including at playtimes and lunchtimes, was observed.
- The inspector scrutinised past and current work of pupils of different abilities in all year groups. He also discussed reading with pupils and heard some pupils read.
- The inspector held a meeting with three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector analysed documents, including the school's plans for improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance. The school's website was evaluated. Safeguarding documents were reviewed. Policies and records relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance were inspected.
- Information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was analysed. The school's own records of pupils' attainment and progress were also considered.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the detailed written accounts provided by some parents. The 69 responses to the school's most recent survey of parents were considered and the inspector spoke briefly to 29 parents of 42 pupils at the start of the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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