

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Todholes Road, Cleator Moor, Cumbria CA25 5DG

Inspection dates: 8–9 October 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils follow the school's 'living and learning' values to the full. Pupils are respectful of each other. Relationships between the staff and pupils are strong.

A calm learning atmosphere is exemplified through pupils' wonderful behaviour and attitudes. They play well together and leave no one out. Pupils said that bullying and name-calling are rare. They told me that staff help them to resolve problems. Pupils know whom to go to if they have worries.

Pupils' excellent behaviour means that everyone can concentrate and learn. Pupils support one another in lessons. They cooperate and listen carefully to what teachers say. Older pupils help younger pupils at playtimes in their playleader roles.

Pupils feel safe in school. They have a mature understanding of the dangers of the internet and social media. Pupils know not to talk to strangers or share personal information. Pupils enjoy the many after-school clubs and activities. Many pupils take part in a wide range of sports and compete with other schools in football and netball. They enjoy the many trips and visits that enrich the curriculum. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have planned a curriculum that is broad and rich. Teachers plan interesting lessons that build well upon what pupils know. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills in a logical manner. They take great pride in their learning. They present their work neatly. Teachers use assessment effectively to ensure that pupils are ready to move to the next stage of their learning. At the end of Year 6, pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally in English and mathematics. Teachers make sure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support.

Many subject leaders are relatively new to their posts. Senior leaders give them time to develop their curriculum areas. Subject leaders check on the quality of work in pupils' books. They share ideas with subject leaders from other schools. These activities are more developed in some subjects than others. Subject leaders do not receive regular training in their areas of expertise.

Children in early years and pupils in key stage 1 enjoy reading. Teachers choose books to read to children that are exciting. They are linked to the themes they are teaching. Across the school, pupils enjoy reading books that are challenging. In school, pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality reading materials. Leaders place a high priority on the teaching of phonics. Well-trained staff deliver effective phonics sessions. The teaching of phonics helps to develop pupils' ability to read. Pupils typically read fluently. Pupils who fall behind are supported well. The ambition for good reading habits is well established in key stages 1 and 2. It is not as well

developed in early years.

The early years curriculum is designed around the interests of the children. Staff have created a learning environment that develops children's curiosity. Children enjoy counting activities. They like finding out things for themselves. Leaders plan activities to develop different aspects of children's development. Children behave well. They take turns and share resources. For example, children enjoy working together to construct a car using wooden blocks. They have fun exploring with water and pipes. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is improving. More children do better in mathematics than in reading and writing.

Leaders support pupils' personal development. Staff know how to spot signs of anxiety in pupils. Pupils have a secure understanding of life in modern Britain. They understand key concepts such as democracy and tolerance. They relate these to their school values. Pupils enjoy raising money for local and national charities. They learn how some religions are similar and how they are different. Pupils do not have a developed understanding of other cultures.

Leaders have taken effective steps to reduce teachers' workload. Staff are positive about the school leaders. They feel supported and valued. Staff appreciate that they are included when leaders make decisions.

Governors know the school well. Governors have a strong understanding of the structure of the curriculum. They hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Governors are developing their approach to checking the impact of teaching across other subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils feel safe. Staff understand their roles. They know how to record concerns. School leaders work with a wide range of partner agencies to ensure that families receive appropriate support.

School leaders utilise the skills of staff to provide support to pupils in school. They have identified the needs of vulnerable children and are proactive in their duties. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about online and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- School leaders have developed subject leadership in several curriculum areas. This is not developed effectively across all curriculum areas. Leaders should ensure that staff have appropriate access to high-quality professional

development so that they can support teachers to teach their subjects better.

- A systematic approach to phonics teaching is followed in the early years. The ambition for all children to achieve from their first days in Reception is not given as high a priority as it could. Children in the early years do not have the resources to reinforce the sounds that they learn in their phonics lessons. Leaders should ensure that children have the resources to enable them to practice their early phonics skills at home.
- Leaders have provided pupils with many opportunities to develop personally. They are providing them with opportunities to develop their understanding of Britain through many trips and visits. Leaders should ensure that pupils' awareness and knowledge of other cultures is developed in line with the high priority given to other aspects of the curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	132835
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10057980
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michelle Rooney
Headteacher	Gayle Wilkinson
Website	www.st-pats.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 April 2018

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic school.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Lancaster, in November 2015.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, senior leaders and three members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors.
- We visited lessons in each key stage.
- We held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Lancaster.
- We spoke to parents before school. We considered 20 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 14 free-text responses. We also considered the 12 responses to the staff survey.

- We spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.
- We examined the single central safeguarding record and documentation in relation to safeguarding. We talked to staff about their understanding of safeguarding.
- We listened to pupils read from each key stage.
- We spoke to pupils throughout the inspection. We observed their behaviour in lessons and around school.
- We evaluated the school's approach to the curriculum. We examined the school's approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading, and to the teaching of mathematics, science and history. We spoke to subject leaders and examined the quality of pupils' work in these subjects. We visited lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Brookes

Ofsted Inspector

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