

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100045
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	354791
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Harvey
Headteacher	Sean Cranitch
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at work in pupils' books, tracking data showing pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plans, and policies and records for safeguarding pupils. They considered the 38 responses to the questionnaire received from parents and carers, the 100 responses to the questionnaire for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and the three responses to the staff questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How consistently all groups of pupils are making good progress in all classes and whether attainment by the end of Year 6 is securely average.
- How successfully the school is improving outcomes for boys.
- How accurately the school monitors the quality of its work and ensures consistency of provision throughout the school so that all pupils learn and progress well. How accurately the school monitors the quality of its work and ensures consistency of provision throughout the school so that all pupils learn and progress well.

Information about the school

This is a slightly smaller-than-average primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage children taught in one Nursery and one Reception class. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. There is an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Sixty-five per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. A very small minority are at an early stage of learning English. The school has achieved the Healthy School's Award. The school operates and manages a breakfast club. There have been a number of recent staff changes.

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 Catholic Primary provides a good quality of education. It is an inclusive school that serves its community well. Accurate self-evaluation has enabled the school to identify key priorities and actions to successfully enhance the quality of its work. Leaders, staff and members of the governing body have worked effectively to secure improvements, for example to the consistency of teaching and the involvement of additional adults in supporting pupils' learning in lessons. The school has introduced good assessment systems. Improvements to the curriculum, such as the daily teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) in small group sessions, and a particular focus on developing speaking and listening throughout the school, are helping to raise pupils' attainment in literacy. Mathematics themed weeks, numeracy workshops for parents and carers, and information about what their children will be learning each term, are leading to improved outcomes in mathematics. Consequently, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Home-visits by staff and opportunities to attend a playgroup at the school before they join ensure children settle quickly and are happy. The outdoor spaces in the Nursery and Reception classes have been enhanced since the previous inspection and children enjoy regular opportunities to develop their learning outside. Pupils make good progress through the rest of the school. Tracking data is analysed carefully to check the progress pupils are making and identify pupils who need additional support. Teachers use assessment information well to match work in lessons to pupils' learning needs. Extra help, tailored to pupils' specific needs, ensures all groups of pupils, including those speaking English as an additional language, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and boys, make good progress. Occasionally, assessment information is not used as consistently to challenge more able learners. Marking and target setting are often used effectively to make clear to pupils what they should do to improve their work. In a few classes, opportunities are missed to ensure pupils respond to teachers' comments about their work and take responsibility for knowing their individualised targets in order to promote their own progress.

The curriculum promotes pupils' positive attitudes to school. Successful enhancements to engage boys' interests include re-enacting the fifteenth century Battle of Bosworth and role play as Roman soldiers. Pupils in Year 6 are proud of the film they have made based on a Shakespeare play they have been studying. Opportunities to play musical instruments including trombone and guitar, regular singing, a wide variety of popular extra-curricular clubs and specialist sports coaching are all strengths of the good curriculum. Participation in performances at school, in local cultural venues and at the parish church boost pupils' self-confidence. All pupils are known as individuals and enjoy themselves in the school's safe and caring environment. Relationships are welcoming and friendly. Successful strategies have been introduced to promote regular attendance and good punctuality.

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These include a weekly competition between classes for the best punctuality and support to get to school regularly and on time for vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils' attendance is now average overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure pupils in all classes systematically take account of teachers' guidance on how to improve their work and take responsibility for checking their progress against personalised targets.
- Sharpen the consistency with which more-able pupils are challenged in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally below the expected levels for their age. Communication, language and literacy and their personal, social and emotional development are often particularly weak. Rates of learning and progress, and pupils' overall achievement and enjoyment in their learning are good. The reasons for this were illustrated in a mathematics lesson. Pupils were working hard to solve word problems. They made good progress in identifying how to solve the problems because the teacher gave clear prompts, ensured they identified and understood key words in the questions, and they enjoyed exploring solutions in small groups. The pace of pupils' learning was brisk because pupils were challenged to find ways to solve the problems for themselves before sharing their ideas and explaining to one another how they had found the answers. Tasks were particularly well matched to all pupils' needs to ensure pupils of all abilities were suitably challenged.

Well-led and managed support in lessons, as well as targeted additional help, ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities keep up and learn well. This includes additional, personalised support from specialist therapists for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. Additional sessions outside the classroom in numeracy and in reading are particularly successful in boosting pupils' basic skills and ensuring all pupils make good progress. Pupils speaking English as an additional language are well supported. They receive extra guidance in lessons and individualised support with developing their literacy skills. In their learning across all subjects, these pupils make similar progress to other groups.

Pupils' behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will help them whenever any problems occur. Each year, every pupil chooses a member of staff that they could talk to should they need additional guidance or support. Together with visits from the local emergency services and advice on keeping safe when using computers, pupils have a good awareness of keeping themselves from harm. The school council has contributed to developing the quiet garden and organised whole-school charity fund raising including an annual sponsored walk and collecting harvest gifts for a local charity for the homeless. Pupils have contributed their ideas for the design of the new school library and music room. The school choir sings for local elderly residents. Older pupils enjoy helping the younger ones at break-time and take responsibility for ensuring materials are collected for re-cycling. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy, as the school's success in achieving the Healthy School's Award shows. The healthy lunches cooked at the school are popular

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and pupils enjoy using skipping ropes, balls and hoops available at break-time. Success in competitions including girls' football and awards for gardening foster pupils' self-esteem. Visitors from a wide variety of cultures and faiths, links with the parish church, activities during Black History Month and the school's annual international day support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Average attainment in basic skills and average attendance prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage classes successfully and make use of a variety of resources to ensure pupils take an active part in lessons. They use computers well to explain new concepts. Pupils enjoy their work; they often think and concentrate well. They make swift gains in their learning when work is well matched to their abilities. In a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning is not as consistently brisk, for example when activities are not always sharply matched to pupils' learning needs, particularly for more able pupils. There are a few inconsistencies in the time and emphasis teachers give to helping pupils use their personalised targets, teachers' marking and feedback on their work to improve progress further.

The curriculum underpins pupils' good rates of progress in basic skills. Literacy and numeracy are rightly prioritised. Topic themes bring the curriculum to life and have been carefully planned to motivate all groups of pupils to do well. Cross-curricular links are

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developing, although opportunities for pupils to use computers widely in their learning are occasionally missed. Well-established partnerships with the local community and local businesses benefit the school and support pupils' learning. For example, volunteers regularly hear pupils read. Pupils appreciate regular visits to local places of interest, including a residential visit to an activity centre in Kent involving all pupils in Year 6. Visitors from a wide variety of professional backgrounds talk to pupils about the jobs they do in order to raise pupils' aspirations for their future lives.

All staff play a strong role in supporting pupils' social and emotional development. Good links with a range of outside agencies promote pupils' learning and well-being and are used effectively to provide additional help for pupils experiencing difficult circumstances. The school ensures that important information is passed on when pupils move on to the next stage of their education. All pupils receive additional help and guidance when they transfer to secondary school, particularly those who may find the transition difficult. The breakfast club ensures a positive and healthy start to the school day for the small number of pupils who attend. They benefit from the opportunity to socialise and make friends with pupils in other classes, play games and share enjoyable activities together.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 is a strong leader and works successfully with the deputy headteacher, staff and members of the governing body to put pupils at the centre of all the school's work. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality well so that rates of progress are good for all groups of pupils. Leaders and managers embed ambition well and bring about sustained improvement: they have ensured teaching is consistently good, enhanced the provision and children's outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and secured improvements in assessing and tracking pupils' progress. There remain a few inconsistencies because some subject leaders and members of the governing body are recently appointed and are developing their roles in subject monitoring. The governing body knows the school well and fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff are well trained and have a detailed awareness of safeguarding issues. Record keeping is of very good quality and risk assessments are thorough. The school site is well maintained and secure. Community cohesion is promoted well. There are harmonious relationships between different groups of pupils and differences are respected. This ensures the school is a cohesive community. Through recent opportunities to meet pupils from other Catholic schools in this country and raising funds to sponsor a pupil in Thailand, pupils are developing a good understanding of those who live in contrasting communities in the United Kingdom and abroad.

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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

Staff work successfully to establish positive relationships and create an environment where children can grow in confidence and develop good personal and social skills. Parents and carers are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning. For example, in the Nursery, parents and carers were working with their children planting fruit bushes and runner beans in the vegetable beds. There is a good balance of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to select activities independently in the inside and outside areas. In the Reception class, children working with an adult were learning about healthy food and making cheese sandwiches for themselves. In the role-play area, children were selecting toy foods to heat up in the toy oven. Children's knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is supported effectively because it is prioritised daily. Children in Reception confidently practised reading difficult words by saying them out loud in a variety of different voices and enjoyed putting letter cards in the right order to spell the words correctly. The teacher emphasised useful strategies to help them when reading sentences in books. Children make good progress and outcomes are closer to average by the time children move up into Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed which ensures that records of ongoing observations are kept and used to plan interesting activities tailored to children's specific needs. Adults often extend children's learning effectively, although occasionally, opportunities are missed to ensure children make even faster gains in their skills through discussion and questioning.

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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

A smaller-than-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. In the survey, the overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with their child's experience of school and are confident that the school keeps their children safe. All confirm that their children enjoy school and most evaluate the quality of the school's work to develop pupils' personal skills positively. Almost all agree that their children's needs are met and that they are well taught at the school. A few parents and carers feel the leadership and management of the school could be improved. Inspection findings generally endorse the views of parents and carers regarding pupils' personal development. The school was judged to be well led and managed. Inspectors found rates of learning and progress, pupils' academic outcomes and the quality of teaching and other aspects of the school's provision to be 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 227 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	58	16	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	53	18	47	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	45	20	53	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	29	26	68	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	45	21	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	39	23	61	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	39	21	55	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)	11	29	24	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	32	25	66	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	24	26	68	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	21	26	68	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	21	23	61	7	18	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	42	21	55	1	3	0	0

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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



19 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, London, NW5 3AH

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much and were pleased to see all the trophies you have won in inter-school sports competitions and the awards you have received for the garden. This letter is to tell you about the judgements that we reached.

St Patrick's is a good school. The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. You make good progress in your learning to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Those of you who need extra help are well supported so that you make good progress. The adults look after you well and make sure that you feel safe. Your behaviour is good and you get along well with one another. You are enthusiastic to take on responsibility. You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe. You like the clubs, outings and themed events that the school organises. The staff make regular checks on how well you are making progress.

We have asked that the teachers make sure that all of you are set work that is the right level of difficulty, particularly for those of you who find work easy. When teachers give you written advice and guidance to help you to improve your work, we would like the school to ensure that you always read and follow it carefully. All of you can help by remembering your individual learning targets and checking regularly that you are meeting them.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard

Lead inspector

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