

St Patrick's RC Primary School

Livesey Street, Collyhurst, Manchester M4 5HF

Inspection dates

1–2 March 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Some improvements in attainment since the last inspection have not been sustained and standards have fallen in Key Stage 2 and in phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' attainment and progress require improvement because they vary as a result of wide variation in the quality of teaching. Not all groups of pupils achieve as well as they should, including most-able pupils.
- Procedures to assess what pupils know and can do are not robust and this information is not always accurate.
- Children in the early years do not make enough progress and, on entry to Year 1, they lack the skills and knowledge to help them to achieve well.
- Occasionally, there is some low-level disruption in lessons which interrupts pupils' learning.
- Until recently, teachers were not held to account rigorously for the progress that pupils make.
- The governing body does not challenge leaders sufficiently about the school's performance. There is too little evaluation of the impact of the school's work on the achievement of different groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Leadership at all levels has not been effective in bringing about sufficient improvement in the quality of teaching and in pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher has accurately evaluated the school's performance and has made a number of changes which are starting to result in clear improvement in pupils' outcomes.
- The school makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of subjects and experiences.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are good. Pupils show self-confidence and understand what they have to do to be a successful learner.
- Pupils understand what is necessary to have a healthy lifestyle, show good attitudes to keeping fit and enjoy the physical games and activities available to them at break- and lunchtimes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in all key stages so that it is at least consistently good by:
 - raising teachers' expectations as to the quality and quantity of pupils' work that should be produced
 - using information about what pupils know and can do to set ambitious targets and to plan activities which ensure that they make rapid progress
 - checking that teachers' assessments of what pupils know and can do are rigorous and accurate, especially in the early years provision
 - implementing the school's marking policy consistently so that all pupils receive high-quality guidance and can use this to improve their work.

- Raise standards in all subjects and in reading and writing in particular by:
 - improving the quality of teaching in phonics in the early years provision and Key Stage 1 and increasing the percentage of pupils who achieve the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check
 - giving pupils good opportunities to develop and practise their writing skills. This applies especially to pupils in Key Stage 1 and children in early years provision, who are at an early stage of learning to write.

- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - consistently implementing the school's behaviour policy to ensure that learning is not disrupted
 - eliminating the use of derogatory language by a very small minority of pupils.

- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality and reduce persistence absence by embedding current strategies and by continuing to ensure that good attendance has a high profile with parents.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that the governing body carefully evaluates the attainment and progress of all pupils and groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, and challenges senior leaders if pupils do not make sufficient progress
 - holding all staff to account for the progress pupils make
 - training subject leaders and ensuring that their plans and actions are effective in raising standards and in improving the quality of teaching in their subject.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, there has been too much variation in the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers have not been rigorously held to account for the progress that pupils make and there has been some weak teaching which has not been tackled swiftly.
 - Expectations for pupils' progress and for speed of improvement are too low. Until recently, school leaders have not been ambitious enough in their expectations, and actions to tackle weakness have been slow.
 - Subject leadership is underdeveloped. Subject leaders play little part in raising standards and do not have the skills to evaluate pupils' achievement and plan effective actions to raise standards. Their action plans lack detail and clear, measurable outcomes for pupils. Training is in place to develop their leadership skills, but is at an early stage so the impact is not yet evident.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils study the full range of subjects. Subjects are studied through a good range of topics and pupils say that they enjoy their learning. Although the curriculum is broad, expectations for pupils' attainment are not high enough and pupils do not always make good progress.
 - During the school day, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills within physical education (PE) lessons and through organised games and activities at lunchtime in particular. Pupils speak highly of these activities and show enthusiasm for sport and keeping fit and healthy. In addition, there are extra-curricular clubs in dance, netball and football. The PE and sports premium funding is used effectively and senior leaders are working to extend the range of sports on offer for pupils.
 - The new executive headteacher has no illusions about the school's performance and has an accurate view of pupils' achievement and the actions needed to bring about swift and sustained improvement. She has managed staff turnover well and filled vacant posts. She has greatly improved the systems to hold teachers to account and there are some clear signs of an acceleration in pupils' progress as the result of a much improved quality of teaching.
 - The executive headteacher and senior leadership team are ambitious for pupils and communicate this ambition well through new policies and procedures, such as the drive to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.
 - Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning are starting to show improvement, such as training for staff in phonics. As a result, standards in Year 1 in particular are rising.
 - Parents and carers who spoke to an inspector said that communication has improved and they appreciate the regular newsletters. They also praised the new arrangements for collecting their children at the end of the school day, saying that they are orderly and safer for families.
 - The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and work in pupils' books shows that they have studied justice and the rule of law and know the difference between right and wrong. Tolerance is promoted through work on values, such as kindness, responsibility and courtesy. Pupils speak articulately about the values expected by the school and their responsibilities as members of this school's community.
 - The school makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities such as learning about the teaching and celebrations of different faiths. Pupils have enjoyed learning about the history of the school and about the convent situated next door.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governance requires improvement because, since the last inspection, there has not been enough challenge to senior leaders and the pace of improvement has been too slow. Governors have accepted information about the school's performance without questioning its accuracy. Detailed evaluation of outcomes for all pupils and groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils, has not been undertaken and some pupils have not made consistently good progress. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is lower than for other pupils and the pupil premium funding has not been used effectively. The governing body has been quick to recognise success, such as good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 in 2015, but slow to raise concerns, such as the slow progress and dip in attainment in Key Stage 1.

- The governing body recognises that it has not been challenging enough nor ambitious enough with regard to bringing about improvements. New arrangements are in place, through the federation with St Edmund's RC Primary School, to utilise an executive core group to drive improvement. This group is in the early stages of formation, so no impact is evident yet. Governors wholeheartedly support the executive headteacher and are undertaking training to improve their skills to hold the school to account.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are well trained and policies have been recently updated to take account of new information. Appropriate checks are made when recruiting new staff to the school and the school site is secure, with visitors carefully vetted on arrival.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- There is a wide variation in the quality of teaching and in the progress that pupils make as a result. Until very recently, teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils should produce have been too low. Activities lacked challenge and there has been too little support to enable pupils in Key Stage 1 and the early years provision in particular to develop their writing skills.
- Assessment information about pupils' skills and knowledge is not always accurate and is not used well to pinpoint their next steps in learning. Targets for pupils are not precise and are not being used to help them to make rapid progress.
- The school has recently revised its marking policy and there has been an improvement in the quality of teachers' marking in most year groups. Consistency in the application of the policy has not been achieved and so not all pupils receive the same good-quality guidance to help them to improve their work.
- The teaching of reading and phonics is improving. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were observed responding to the teacher's challenging questions and looking for information in their books to help them to answer questions. The teacher's effective questioning and prompting helped the pupils to use their comprehension skills to make inferences from the text.
- In upper Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is particularly effective. For example, pupils in Year 6 began this academic year with below-average levels of attainment, and school data and work in their books show that they are making rapid progress. Pupils particularly relish the opportunities they have to write and they enjoy writing. Adults' very high expectations, combined with creative lessons conducted with good humour and a sense of fun, result in a very high-quality learning experience for pupils. Pupils write with flair and imagination, as seen in a quotation from one pupil's writing read out by the teacher as an excellent example to others. The pupil wrote, 'Escaping slowly from the school, the boy cautiously passed the police as carefully as a teacher marking a test paper'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils fully understand how to be a successful learner and the pride that they take in their work is very clear; they try very hard to present their work well and complete tasks. Year 6 pupils all have special responsibilities in school, such as helping out in the dining hall, and they take pride in their roles.
- The vast majority of pupils show very good attitudes to their learning and wear their school uniform with pride.
- The relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are good and pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils say that this is a happy school and they have lots of friends.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They understand the different forms of bullying and say that they have confidence in adults to resolve any concerns.
- After-school care provides good opportunities for pupils to socialise and take part in games and activities. Some pupils say that they like to do their homework in the after-school club. The school's breakfast club helps to improve pupils' punctuality.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. A very small minority of pupils cause some low-level disruption in lessons from time to time. Pupils told inspectors that they do not like having their learning interrupted, and one boy in Year 6 said that this is because his learning is 'important'.
- Occasionally, a very small minority of pupils use derogatory language. Pupils told inspectors that they do not like this and it is wrong. They acknowledge that when they report such language to staff, pupils are dealt with appropriately.
- The school places a very high priority on pupils' good attendance and punctuality. However, the range of strategies to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence has been in place for a short time and the impact is not fully evident. Although the percentage of persistent absence has reduced, overall attendance remains below average. When asked, pupils are very clear about the importance of attending school every day and being on time. Pupils spoke very positively about the rewards for 100% attendance and were keen to earn them.
- A large majority of pupils behave well and instances of misbehaviour are infrequent. However, the school's records show that there are still too many instances of misbehaviour, which is why this aspect has been judged as requiring improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils vary. Current attainment in Year 6 is lower than it was last year when pupils reached broadly average standards in the national reading and mathematics tests and in teachers' assessment of writing. From below-average starting points, that cohort of pupils made good progress and were well prepared for their next stage of education. The current Year 6 pupils started this year with lower standards of attainment due to slow progress being made previously. School assessment information and work in pupils' books show that progress is being accelerated rapidly.
- Pupils' attainment dipped to significantly below average in Key Stage 1 last year in reading, writing and mathematics. However, work in pupils' books and school data indicate that pupils in Year 2 are working currently at broadly average standards.
- The percentage of pupils in Year 1 that achieved the required standard in the phonics screening test in June 2015 was below average and dipped below that of the previous year. At the start of this academic year, senior leaders were very concerned about standards in phonics and changes were made to teaching and assessment. These changes have been very successful and currently about half of Year 1 pupils have already reached the required standard and this figure is rising rapidly.
- The progress of the most-able pupils varies and their learning needs are not always met. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, the percentage of pupils working at an above-average level (Level 5 or above) was similar to the national figure. However in Key Stage 1, a smaller percentage of pupils achieved above-average standards (Level 3) in reading and mathematics and no pupils achieved this level in writing. Work in pupils' books this year shows that the most-able pupils are achieving well, particularly in upper Key Stage 2.
- In 2015, at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was lower than for other pupils both nationally and in school. Current school information shows that there have been some improvements, but that the attainment and progress of this group vary across subjects and year groups.
- Some pupils with special educational needs or disability and those who need to catch up do not always make good progress. In writing in particular, not enough is done to support young pupils with special educational needs in developing and practising the skills to become effective writers.
- Pupils with English as an additional language have extra support to help them learn to speak, read and write in English but this is not effective in helping them to make rapid progress. In 2015, at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, this group of pupils had much lower attainment than pupils who speak English as their first language.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the school with levels of skills and knowledge which are well below those typical for children of their age, particularly in communication and language. Although published data suggest that, by the end of the early years, an above-average percentage of children are well prepared for Key Stage 1, assessments of children's skills and knowledge are not robust. This means that in reality, not enough of them have the skills they need to cope well with the national curriculum in Year 1.
- Teachers, as a result of weak leadership, have not been held to account for the progress that children make. The quality of teaching, particularly in reading and writing, requires improvement. Children do not make enough progress in phonics and children who find writing difficult are not given sufficient support and time to develop their writing skills. This is in contrast to the most-able children, who are given opportunities to write at some length and this helps them to make good progress.
- By the end of the early years, there is a large gap between the attainment of disadvantaged children and that of others. Leaders have not evaluated the impact of the strategies to support this group and used the evaluation to help to raise standards. Additional funding to support these children has not been used effectively.
- Recent work to improve the early years provision has ensured that children benefit from a range of learning activities both indoors and outdoors. Examples of children's work show that some have benefited from good opportunities to develop their number skills. Staff expectations have been raised, and work to introduce children in Nursery to phonics has been established. Nursery children were seen listening to, and identifying, the initial sound in a word and making the connection between words beginning with the same sound, such as 'yellow' and 'yawn'.
- Children in the early years provision are happy and settled and generally behave well. The youngest group of Nursery children were observed returning very quietly to the main room so as not to disturb other children who were practising their phonics. However, when the pace of teaching slows, children lose attention and they do not make rapid progress.
- Procedures to safeguard children are effective and good links are made with parents to involve them in their children's learning through 'stay and play' sessions.
- Adults talk kindly to children and ensure that learning is fun. During the inspection, children were seen enjoying songs and nursery rhymes with actions and it was evident that they enjoyed these very much.

School details

Unique reference number	105535
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10002222

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	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Gerard Murphy
Headteacher	Anne Clinton
Telephone number	0161 8349004
Website	www.st-patricks.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-patricks.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 December 2013

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for looked after children) is more than double the national average.
- Almost two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and just over a third of all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is in a federation with St Edmund's RC Primary School, Miles Platting, Manchester. There is an executive headteacher in charge of both schools, but each school retains its own governing body. The executive headteacher took up her post at St Patrick's RC Primary School in September 2015 along with an acting deputy headteacher.
- Since September 2015, five teachers have resigned and one has started her maternity leave. Two temporary teachers took up their posts after February half term 2016, and a teacher was seconded from St Edmund's RC into Year 6 in November 2015. Two new teachers have been recruited to join the school in June 2016, one of whom will be the leader of the early years provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club every morning and after-school care nightly in the 'Night Owls' scheme.
- The school is receiving support in the teaching of reading from Jayne Kennedy, a local leader of education from Barlow Hall Primary School, Chorlton, Manchester.
- The school is receiving support to bring about improvements in the early years provision from Liz Hardy, a national leader of education from Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre, Hulme, Manchester.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors gathered a range of evidence from the school's documentation, assessment information relating to pupils' progress and attainment, work in pupils' books and from observing lessons. Documents examined included safeguarding records, improvement plans, school policies and external reports from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of lessons and subjects, and two of these were made jointly with the executive headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors observed the executive headteacher and acting deputy headteacher giving feedback to staff.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors, who also talked to pupils informally at break- and lunchtime whilst observing their activities.
- The teaching of phonics and reading was observed and one inspector heard some Key Stage 1 pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a representative from the local authority, a representative from the Diocese of Salford and with the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Meetings were also held with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and subject leaders.
- Inspectors could not take account of responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as there were too few to view, but one inspector talked to a group of 10 parents at the start of the school day. In addition, one letter from a parent was received by the lead inspector.
- Inspectors took account of pupil questionnaires from all Key Stage 2 pupils provided by the school, along with 25 responses to the school's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Andrée Coleman, lead inspector

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