

St Francis Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125706
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	359924
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Kavanagh (Vice Chair)
Headteacher	Debbie Huxtable
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by eight different teachers, and held meetings with representative members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, planning documentation, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 117 parents and carers, 17 members of staff and 115 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effective is the teaching of mathematics in securing good progress for all groups of pupils at Key Stage 2, particularly the more able pupils?
- How well does the curriculum support the development of core skills, enabling pupils to make good progress?
- How effectively do leaders and managers at all levels identify, monitor and evaluate specific areas of the school's development to ensure better progress?

Information about the school

St Francis is smaller than the average primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average; their needs are mostly moderate learning difficulties, but a few pupils have autistic or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. Privately run before- and after-school care is available on site, along with a nursery known as Bambini Childcare, but these facilities are subject to separate inspection. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, the Active mark and the Eco-school silver award. The school has experienced a high level of staff turnover in the last two years, particularly in Key Stage 2.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Francis is a satisfactory school. Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. However, it slows at Key Stage 2 and although all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, it is better in English than in mathematics. This is because teaching does not consistently meet the individual needs of all pupils, particularly those who are the more able. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive enough finely tuned support to help with their mathematical development. Marking in mathematics is completed regularly, but does not tell pupils what they need to do in order to improve, or challenge them further.

Teaching is currently satisfactory, but it is improving in Key Stage 2 and there are now pockets of good progress. Throughout the school, teachers have good relationships with pupils, who feel safe and secure in their care. This means that the vast majority behave well and have good attitudes to their learning. Monitoring systems check the quality of teaching and learning regularly, but do not consistently give clear guidance on how to improve practice in order for pupils to make better progress. The governing body are very supportive of the school and know its overall strengths and areas for development, although they do not always have enough detailed information to effectively challenge the school's performance. They also recognise that communication with parents and carers is not yet fully effective.

Leaders and managers have identified a relative weakness in reading, and have addressed this through the purchase of more exciting books and better support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result progress in reading is rising and this had a positive impact on attainment in English, which is now above average. There has also been an appropriate focus on raising attendance through closer monitoring of absence, and taking action when necessary. Pupils understand the importance of being at school and are rewarded for good attendance. As a result attendance is now above the national average. Such initiatives, arising from accurate self-evaluation, demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Positive improvements have recently been made to the curriculum, which is based on topics aimed at engaging and inspiring pupils. Many of the subject leaders are new to their role and so do not yet have a clear understanding of how effectively each subject is meeting the needs of all pupils. However, they are enthusiastically working as a team to create a curriculum that develops pupils' skills well in every subject.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by Year 6, particularly in mathematics by:

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- consistently planning work to meet the needs of all pupils, especially to challenge the most able
- developing more strategies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in mathematics
- improving marking so that pupils know the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - ensuring that monitoring systems are tightly focused on specific priorities within subjects, and identify clear areas for improvement that will have an impact on the learning of pupils
 - developing the role of subject leaders so that they have a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development in order to effectively meet the needs of all learners
 - developing the role of the governing body in effectively challenging the school in specific areas and forging closer links with parents and carers.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' learning and progress in the lessons observed mirrored school data: good in the younger age groups and satisfactory but improving in Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year but is broadly average overall. Current attainment is now broadly average, with developing strengths in English but a relative weakness in mathematics. The school monitors pupils' progress carefully to ensure that there are no marked differences in achievement between different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are rarely at the early stages of learning English and make similar progress to their peers, as do pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Pupils with autism and those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties make at least satisfactory progress. However, in lessons the more able pupils are not always fully challenged. For example, pupils working on mental addition were all given a simple strategy to use rather than encouraging the more able pupils to think of more effective ways to work out the answer.

Pupils say that they like school and enjoy their lessons. For example, children were very excited about going to the allotment for a bear hunt and were keen to talk about their experiences. The school has earned its national awards relating to health. Pupils have a clear understanding of healthy living, including eating fruit, which is supplied by the school during morning break. They know what makes a balanced meal and understand the importance of taking regular exercise. They know how to keep safe both in and out of school, for example by using the lollipop man to cross the road and being careful when using the internet by not giving out personal information. The vast majority of pupils behave well both in lessons and on the playground. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community. Pupils in Year 6 act as play leaders, looking after younger pupils, and in turn Year 2 pupils each have a child in the Reception class to care for, including

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praying for them even before they start school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because pupils work well together and have a wide range of opportunities to reflect on how they care for and respect others, regardless of their background or abilities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	2
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?

Lessons vary in quality across the school, although an increasing number are good. Learning intentions are made clear at the beginning of lessons and activities are appropriately planned to meet them. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and satisfactory use is made of interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching. Teaching assistants are well deployed and give meaningful support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties. Work is matched well to their needs so that they make progress in line with their peers. Good assessment procedures give pupils a clear awareness of the level they are working at. They have group targets in English and mathematics to help them move onto the next level. However, they are not consistently reminded of these targets in lessons, and this limits their impact. Also, the quality of marking varies between subjects.

A good range of enrichment activities enhance the curriculum. These include a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs for pupils, which are much enjoyed. Pupils take part in a number of visits, including residential trips, as well as having visitors to the school. Pupils

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have the opportunity to learn French, and provision for music is particularly good. A strong emphasis on personal, social and health education results in many good non-academic outcomes. The curriculum is planned through topics, and these include satisfactory links between subjects to consolidate literacy and numeracy skills. However, the school has rightly identified that opportunities are sometimes missed to promote and extend these basic skills, particularly for the more able pupils.

The good quality of care, guidance and support ensures that pupils feel safe and secure in the school environment. The learning mentor gives good support to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This has a positive impact on their personal skills, helping them to gain more confidence, develop social skills and learn to behave appropriately. As a result, these pupils are now making satisfactory progress in their learning and some have made significant steps in overcoming their difficulties. Strong transition arrangements ensure that pupils are ready to move on, whether starting school for the first time or facing the challenge of secondary education. In particular, strong links with Bambini Childcare, who share the site with the school, provide continuity and ensure that pupils settle well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and managers, including the governing body, embed ambition and drive improvement satisfactorily. They have brought the school through a difficult period with many staffing changes, particularly in Key Stage 2, while maintaining pupils' satisfactory progress. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. A learning improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities and how they are to be tackled. Whole-school targets for attainment are appropriately challenging, and care is taken at pupil progress meetings to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. Equal opportunities are promoted well in some respects, but the more able pupils in particular are not always sufficiently challenged to reach their full potential.

The school has good links with outside agencies to support its pupils, such as the educational psychologist, the school nurse and other schools in the local area. Good use is made of the parent support worker, who helps families in need, giving a range of support such as parenting skills and improving attendance at school.

Safeguarding arrangements are robust, including procedures for child protection. In particular, detailed risk assessments ensure the safety of pupils whether in school or out on trips. These include specific risk assessments for handling tools and procedures to follow on open days.

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The school's motto - to love, learn and grow together as God's family - is seen as an important part of school life, resulting in the good care that both staff and pupils give and receive. Senior leaders have worked with staff, pupils and their parents and carers to identify shared values, enriching the school community. While pupils are gaining a good understanding of the local and wider communities in the UK, the school recognises that international links are not yet so well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children invariably make good progress from their various starting points in all areas of learning because of the good quality of teaching and learning. The school places a strong emphasis on learning essential skills. Children are looked after well and their behaviour is outstanding. This reflects the high level of care, support and guidance and how much they enjoy their learning. Healthy snacks and water are readily available for children whenever they wish. The indoor environment is spacious and attractive, encouraging children to explore. There is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning. The outdoor space is very small, limiting the range of learning opportunities such as using large apparatus and adventure play equipment. The planning for outdoor activities lacks detail and links with indoor learning are not always made. However, particularly good planning for use of the indoor environment compensates for these restrictions and ensures that children's development does not suffer. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, ensuring that pupils are safe, enjoy learning and are prepared well for entry into Year 1.

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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

The proportion of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was above average. Most are supportive and positive about their children's experiences in school. A small minority raised concerns, particularly about behaviour management, how well the school takes account of their concerns, and school leadership. Inspectors found that the vast majority of pupils behave well, and any challenging behaviour is managed well. The views of parents and carers are sought and acted on, although the governing body is working to improve this area. The effectiveness of leadership is improving as staff and governors, many of whom are new to their role, are becoming more experienced and effective.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Francis 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 117 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	51	51	44	4	3	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	61	52	48	41	7	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	30	71	61	9	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	31	65	56	14	12	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	35	30	61	52	15	13	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	30	66	56	11	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	32	76	65	3	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)	41	35	59	50	8	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	30	62	53	13	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	25	52	44	24	21	8	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	25	58	50	21	18	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	36	31	53	45	20	17	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	37	55	47	17	15	1	1

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



25 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Francis Catholic Primary School, Bedworth, CV12 8JN

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for the welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet you all and find out about your school.

You told us that you enjoyed coming to school because you have so many friends. You obviously enjoy all the different activities in school, especially the variety of clubs that you can go to. We were pleased with the way you behave and your understanding of how to keep healthy and safe.

We found that you go to a satisfactory school, which means that some things are good but others can be improved. For example, those of you in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 make good progress while the older pupils make satisfactory progress, and it is better in English than in mathematics. We have asked your teachers to make sure that those of you who find mathematics easy are always given work that challenges you to think hard, and to give extra support for those who find mathematics difficult. All of you can help by letting your teachers know if you are finding the work too easy or too hard. We have also asked teachers to let you know the next steps in your learning when they mark your work.

We have asked your senior leaders to concentrate on particular areas that will help you to learn more effectively and for subject leaders to find out how well you are doing in all your learning. We have also suggested some ways for the governing body to become more involved in the school's work.

Thank you again for a lovely two days. We wish you all the very best in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Shears

Lead inspector

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