

# St Francis Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116402
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 October
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Rushforth

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fiona Grove
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Shepherd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Pilgrims Close Valley Park Chandler's Ford Eastleigh SO53 4ST
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<b>Age group</b>	<b>4–11</b>
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	<b>13–14 October 2011</b>
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The team observed 27 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Discussions were held with senior staff, members of the governing body, pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, policies and records of pupils' progress and attainment. The inspection team considered 143 responses to questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as questionnaires from staff and pupils.

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

- Whether the quality of teaching is consistent enough across the school to ensure that all pupils make accelerated progress.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in evaluating provision and driving improvement.
- The quality of pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of measures to enhance pupils' awareness of, and respect for, different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs locally, nationally and globally.
- The effectiveness of using assessment to raise attainment and engage all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in two Reception classes. The breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body, was included in this inspection.

The school holds national awards, including Artsmark Gold and the Enhanced Healthy Schools award.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

St Francis Primary is an outstanding school. It provides an exceptionally caring, enjoyable and well-rounded education for its pupils so that they develop into high achieving, thoughtful and responsible youngsters by the end of Year 6. The headteacher, very ably supported by the senior leaders and governing body, has been very successful in creating an ethos, which permeates the whole school community, of high expectations, outstanding care and a consistent drive to raise standards. As one parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'They bring out the best in every child.'

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skills and understanding expected for their age. Effective organisation and careful assessment enable children to settle very quickly and become confident learners. Their needs are met well throughout the whole school and their progress is excellent. As a result, pupils' attainment when they leave at the end of Year 6 is consistently high. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those assessed as gifted and talented also make excellent progress.

Typically outstanding teaching is characterised by consistently high expectations of all pupils, strong relationships and careful assessment of each pupil's capabilities. Teachers' detailed knowledge of their pupils is used effectively to ensure that they make rapid progress. Excellent care, guidance and support mean that pupils throughout the school are interested and active learners and behaviour is outstanding. As one parent put it, 'The teachers really go the extra mile.'

The school's detailed self-analysis of its strengths and areas for development, combined with rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, leads to self-evaluation that is both accurate and very well focused. There is a strong team spirit and a sense of pride in what has been achieved to date. This ethos, together with a track record of achieving high standards, shows that the school has an excellent capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding procedures are good and pupils feel very safe at all times. All staff work hard to create attractive classrooms with interesting and stimulating displays and attractive artwork. An extensive range of additional activities, visits and visitors enhances the outstanding curriculum. Pupils enjoy coming to school because of the exceptionally strong relationships and interesting activities. This is reflected in their high attendance. The school promotes community cohesion well at local and global

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levels through its work in the local community and multicultural activities. However, opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity in the United Kingdom are less well developed.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the strategies to promote community cohesion by improving the pupils' awareness of the backgrounds, beliefs and lifestyles of others who live in contrasting areas of the United Kingdom.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

On entering Reception, children's reading, writing and calculating skills are at levels typical for their age but by the time they leave in Year 6 their attainment in English, mathematics and science is high. This represents excellent achievement. Above average standards in writing and mathematics were verified in lessons observed and in pupils' work. Pupils demonstrate increasing confidence and flexibility in their use of different strategies to support learning as they progress through the school. For example, in an excellent Year 5 English lesson pupils enthusiastically used information from a wide range of sources to enhance both the content and structure of their recollections about a recent residential trip. The pupils' enjoyment and thoughtful consideration of each other's opinions and the outstanding quality of the finished work were impressive and typical of how they learn.

Pupils say they feel very safe and have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe. The school's strengths are reflected in its awards; pupils are very conscious of staying healthy and many participate in the wide range of sports clubs on offer. Pupils' social and moral development is excellent. They really enjoy responsibilities as play leaders, sports monitors, house captains and writers on the 'Francis Flash' and on the school's website. Pupils' cultural development is greatly enhanced through music, art and drama with about six out of ten pupils learning a musical instrument. In a typical example of outstandingly thoughtful and caring behaviour, older pupils were observed helping one of their peers out of a stressful situation in the playground and playing a game with him in the library in preparation for a calm afternoon's learning.

Pupils' understanding of cultural diversity, while good, is not exemplary because of their limited understanding of the differing beliefs and backgrounds represented in the United Kingdom. Pupils throughout the school said that they enjoyed their learning and as a result attendance is high.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Observations of teaching and reviews of written work confirmed that throughout the school pupils make excellent progress regardless of their background or ability because of the very effective approach adopted by teachers. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and are able to ensure that the learning in each lesson is pitched at just the right level to ensure that pupils make the maximum progress. In all lessons, pupils were well motivated by the ideas and resources presented through an extremely well-thought-out curriculum. This was evident in a Year 5 mathematics lesson in which pupils used resource packs suited to their individual abilities to help them practise subtraction involving decimal place. As in most lessons the pupils could hardly wait to complete the task and share their ideas. The use of wireless laptops to enable the pupils to search for and request library books was just one example of the way new technologies are routinely used to enhance pupils' learning. The curriculum is enriched by a large range of music tuition and after-school sports clubs. The school has developed excellent external links to support its work and is a centre for training through its partnership with Southampton and Winchester Universities.

In this welcoming and inclusive school, excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, support and guidance. Inspectors agreed with parents that, 'St Francis is an exceptional school, primarily in its care for pupils and development of personal awareness.' Throughout their review of the school, inspectors observed adults and older pupils thoughtfully ensuring that all pupils were cared for. As one Year 3 pupil commented at lunchtime, 'Everyone looks after each other here.' Their work with

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

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local secondary schools has extended pupils’ learning opportunities in sport, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and English. All pupils, including those deemed as able, gifted and talented and those deemed vulnerable enjoy visits to local secondary schools to enrich their learning and prepare them for an effective transfer to their next stage of education. The breakfast club provides a safe, friendly and inviting start to the day. The children are gently encouraged to eat a healthy and appealing breakfast and then they themselves initiated their next activity which included reading, playing with toy cars, throwing toy darts, colouring and writing.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. His ‘gentle but assertive’ approach, in partnership with highly effective senior leaders, ensures that all staff are clearly focused on pupils’ learning and continuous school improvement. Ambition and drive are well established throughout the school, as seen in the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Data and information are systematically collected and evaluated to provide meaningful analyses that pinpoint areas for development. For instance, the gap between the boys’ and girls’ ability to read was recognised early in one year group and this resulted in the purchase of books and other material that would be more attractive to boys; the result of this effective intervention was an acceleration of boys’ progress.

Members of the governing body understand clearly where the school’s strong features lie. They challenge, probe and are highly supportive and strive for excellence, seeking the views of all stakeholders to this end. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school’s work and supports pupils’ academic and personal achievements whether it is playing football or achieving a high grade in a musical examination. Discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils’ individual needs are very carefully identified. Safeguarding practice is thorough, with very detailed risk assessments. Vetting of staff and child protection procedures are robust. Collaborative working with other agencies is strong. Parents and carers are very well informed through newsletters and very well presented, highly personalised and informative reports. The school makes a strong contribution to community cohesion in almost all respects and is developing its evaluations of its planned actions well.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The combination of a rich and stimulating curriculum and outstanding teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage makes a significant contribution to children's learning and development so that children make excellent progress. Activities are very well structured to secure high levels of engagement and to deliver excellent learning. For example, in an outstanding lesson, children worked together to create a café in the 'snack shack'. They took orders, used a calculator to add the amount and passed the message with a toy mobile phone to the suitably dressed chef who busily cooked the pizza. This approach, coupled with strong adult interaction, ensured the strong interest and engagement of all the children and contributed to excellent progress in the development of the children's fine motor and communication skills. One parent commented, 'Children enjoy their time in school enormously', while another wrote, 'My child was very shy but within a year was confident and happy to come to school and really misses it in the holidays.'

Children work with one another with enthusiasm and sustain excellent levels of concentration. Children relish their learning. The outdoor area acts as an extension of the classroom and all areas of learning are developed well. Both indoors and outdoors, children learn to be independent and to exercise choice exceptionally well. Children make rapid progress in the development of self-esteem because they feel valued and the quality of inclusion is exceptional. One parent noted, 'My child has made so much progress both academically and socially.' As a result, children are very able to work independently as well as with others, supported by a range of learning strategies. For example, one child concentrated for an extended period of time in the writing area to construct her story, regularly referring to displayed vocabulary to help



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her complete the task successfully.

Excellent leadership is evident in the creation of a stimulating, safe and welcoming environment which is very successful in supporting children’s learning and well-being. The school is wholly committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers and its success is reflected in the confidence expressed during the inspection. One parent said, ‘My children are doing brilliantly as a result of good teaching and communication.’ The staff work very effectively to ensure that transition from pre-school settings and to Year 1 classes encourages continued rapid learning. Children’s progress is monitored most carefully. Parents and carers are seen as valued partners in their children’s learning and contribute to the individual learning journals.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

The level of return of questionnaires from parents and carers was average. The overwhelming majority of these parents and carers, and those who spoke to the inspection team were very happy with the school. They considered that the school was very well led and managed and has a dedicated team of staff. They agree that the school has a warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and the vast majority feel their children make good progress. Inspectors endorse the positive views and found that the school was outstanding. There were many positive comments on questionnaires, and most of the few points raised for improvement related to individual cases. These were followed up in general terms as part of the inspection.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Francis Church of England 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 143 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	78	30	21	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	118	83	24	17	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	69	48	68	48	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	57	53	37	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	97	68	45	31	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	82	57	55	38	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	94	66	47	33	1	1	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)	88	62	38	27	6	4	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	91	64	46	32	3	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	80	56	53	37	6	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	78	55	53	37	6	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	112	78	30	21	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	115	80	27	19	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



14 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Francis Church of England Primary School, Eastleigh  
S053 4ST**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and your good attitude to learning in lessons. We noticed how kind and thoughtful you were to each other.

We found that your school was outstanding. It has several outstanding features which lead to excellent outcomes for you. The leadership of your headteacher is brilliant; he is kind, fair and strict when he needs to be. The leaders of the school are very ambitious for you all and have very high standards. The teachers know how well you are learning and help you to make great progress. You have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy life and you really enjoy school because there are so many exciting things to do.

We have agreed with your school that there is one thing that will help it to become even better.

- Make sure you learn about people who are from different cultures and also live in the United Kingdom.

You can help too by offering other ideas about this and by continuing to work hard and trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Paul Rushforth  
Lead inspector

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