

St Francis de Sales RC Junior School

Church Road, Tottenham, London, N17 8AZ

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There has not been systematic development of good practice in teaching, so teachers do not always plan lessons that deeply challenge pupils of different abilities.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough scope to develop as independent learners and the quality of marking of work is too variable.
- Not all pupils make good progress in writing. Some higher ability pupils have not progressed as far ahead of others as they could. Boys generally write less well than girls.
- Pupils do not take enough independent responsibility for their learning and personal development.
- Instability in senior leadership of the school and a lack of a rigorous monitoring and accountability system have impaired the development of pupils' step-by-step learning as pupils go through the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' progress in reading and numeracy is good.
- Although the minimum floor standards set by government were not met in 2011, unvalidated results for 2012 indicate that attainment and rates of progress are beginning to rise.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other because all adults continuously model respectful behaviour.
- Attendance has been consistently above average for several years.
- The governing body has secured stable leadership that is strongly supported by staff and parents.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 20 lessons, three being jointly observed with the school's senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised written work and marking in class and in books completed throughout last year and listened to some children read.
- They talked with pupils and considered the views of parents and carers submitted on-line to Parent View and talked to parents and carers in the playground as they delivered or collected their child.
- They took account of staff views in returns of a confidential questionnaire and in evaluations of a recent training day developing a vision for the school.
- They reviewed the school's self-evaluation, planning and policy documents and the governing body's action plan.
- Telephone discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a senior officer of the local authority's School Improvement Service.

Inspection team

Anthony Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Val Ives

Additional inspector

Clifford Walker

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than average.
- A very high proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium.
- The proportion from ethnic minority backgrounds is high and a high proportion has English as an additional language. The largest ethnic group is African.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those pupils identified as having special educational needs, including school action, those supported at school action plus and statemented pupils, is much higher than average.
- In 2011 the school did not meet the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has entered into federation with the infant school that shares the site. An interim headteacher was appointed to lead both schools from the 1 September this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- With immediate effect, challenge pupils to learn independently by:
 - not spending too long introducing the lesson
 - ensuring that pupils understand and respond to marking
 - planning different challenges in English lessons just as effectively as in mathematics, especially for pupils of higher ability.
- With immediate effect, improve pupils' accuracy in spelling and punctuating their writing, especially boys, by emphasising getting it right first time and more closely supervising those who have difficulty.
- By the end of this school year, and in the future, encourage pupils to take more responsibility for their own behaviour and learning and to be less reliant on adults.
- By January 2013, fully involve those staff with management responsibilities in mapping out clear learning and progression for pupils and in monitoring and being accountable for achieving improvement targets.
- Ensure effective monitoring and evaluation by leaders and the governing body lead to teaching being typically good across the school.
- Fulfil the goals in the governing body's action plan by ensuring that governors continuously monitor and challenge the school to improve its overall effectiveness to at least good.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The main weakness is in writing. Some younger pupils, for example in Year 4, do not transfer the knowledge of letters and sounds that they use in reading to their writing. So, when a class wrote words that a picture conjured up in their minds, some used the right sounds, but put the letters in the wrong order. This was particularly the case for the boys.
- In written work done last year by the new Year 6, boys' handwriting was considerably less legible than girls'. Boys often rushed through and wrote too little. In the case of both boys and girls who could potentially attain highly, imaginative ideas and expression were undermined by weakness in using correct punctuation.
- Reading is better than writing. Older pupils read out loud in class confidently and clearly. Some Year 4 pupils with low scores in reading when they left Key Stage 1 met with an inspector in the library and read fluently from the quite demanding books they had chosen.
- Regular reading is well supported by the full-time staffed library and the books that pupils take home. Useful prompts in well maintained reading journals assist parents and carers to support their child's progress.
- Numeracy was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection report. The school took appropriate action and the proportion of pupils making expected progress now matches national figures. Unconfirmed results for 2012 indicate that pupils did reach the minimum standards in both mathematics and English that they failed to meet in 2011.
- Pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium are closing the achievement gap between them and all pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make at least expected progress from their starting points.
- Gaps between different ethnic groups' achievement, including African pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, are not significant as a result of the school's attention to equality of opportunity.
- Pupils of high ability have not been challenged sufficiently, over time, as they move up through the school and so some have not progressed as rapidly and securely as they should.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers introduce lessons clearly, but they often do so at unnecessary length, for instance explaining different tasks each table has got to do whilst everybody listens. Some pupils are quite capable of getting started, especially since teachers show clear planning and aims on their boards, and thus their independence is constrained.
- Teachers usually tell pupils how long they have got for an open-ended task, but they do not make clear what would constitute good progress within that time for groups at different levels of ability.
- There is no common, systematic approach to marking. Consequently, it varies in quality and there is no consistency from year to year when pupils change teachers. In a few cases teachers require pupils to respond to marking. This is helpful in involving pupils in their work, but in general pupils have limited understanding of what they need to do to improve their writing.
- Planning appropriate challenges for pupils at different levels of ability is better in mathematics lessons than in English lessons. Probing, well-directed questions in a science lesson showed that good practice is there to be drawn on in other subjects as well. However, mostly teachers accept answers from pupils with hands up who obviously have done the thinking, while some others remain passive.
- No inadequate teaching was seen during inspection, but outstanding teaching was rare and there was little evidence of teaching over time of the very highest quality. However, pupils showed spellbound excitement when two teachers received calls to their mobiles to report

archaeological treasures discovered in the playground. A pupil with severe special educational needs, sometimes reluctant to participate, was first in line to make the expedition to find out more. This showed what can be done to electrify pupils' interest in learning.

- There are strengths in how firmly some teachers implement simple behaviour drills that pupils readily understand and follow. All adults in school have very caring and considerate relationships with pupils to which pupils respond well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour is safe because pupils respect each other and follow well established routines, for example as when the bell is rung twice, first to end play, second to line up silently. They are obedient, but not self-motivated. This restricts their engagement in learning, readiness for the next stage in learning and long-term ambition.
- Instances of poor behaviour in records over time are rare, but staff indicate that general behaviour is better following the introduction of clear rules understood by all. Some parents and carers who responded on line expressed some concerns about bullying and behaviour. Parents and carers spoken to in the playground were confident that the new headteacher had already brought about significant improvements.
- The caring conduct of all adults has a very positive influence on pupils' good relationships with each other, regardless of backgrounds. This is evident throughout the day and culminates in a very polite exchange of farewells and handshakes as pupils leave their lines to be collected by parents and carers.
- Pupils said they could resolve problems by seeking out adults or talking them over in class in circle time. However, while they do not fear bullying, some have a limited understanding of some types of bullying, for instance cyber bullying, and therefore of how to avoid risk.
- Pupils respond spontaneously and joyfully to events like hymn practice, music and dance, but the curriculum is not thoughtfully enough planned to enhance their spiritual, moral social and cultural development well.
- Attendance is a significant strength of the school and has been consistently above the national average for several years.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Senior leadership over time has been subject to disruption due to a range of factors and the junior school has not yet fully benefited from the federation arrangement in terms of tracking pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 3. On the other hand pupils do settle in easily, having already gained familiarity with the junior school facilities and staff.
- Stable, assured and visionary leadership by a headteacher, who has led another local school and spent some time working with the local authority on school improvement, has been established. It is inspiring confidence in staff and parents. New routines are in place and shared expectations are high.
- Systems to manage the transformative vision are not yet fully in place. The new headteacher, with the support of governors, has taken a strategic decision to re-structure middle management and what it is accountable for. This rightly includes mapping clear progression routes for pupils and ensuring that outcomes are carefully monitored by middle leaders. The process of negotiating federation-wide responsibilities, rather than just filling gaps in the junior school, is now well underway.
- The school is rapidly developing systematic approaches to the improvement of teaching, learning and assessment but this is at an early stage. Unclear expectations of subject coordinators have led to a somewhat fragmented, and sometimes repetitive, curriculum experience for pupils.
- However, prior to the appointment of the headteacher, capacity to improve since the previous inspection has been demonstrated in the significant improvement of progress in numeracy.

Standards in reading have been maintained. The recruitment last year of an expert consultant in teaching and learning as a member of staff has already started to increase the amount of good teaching and inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium have benefited from effective one-to-one and small group tuition. This provision has improved their progress

- Throughout any difficulties the school has remained a very caring and secure place for pupils and safeguarding requirements are thoroughly met.
- Local authority support for the school has been effective in resolving difficulties about leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- governance has improved since the previous inspection
- the work done in partnership with the diocese and the local authority has been crucial in setting the school on a path of improvement
- governors demonstrated their commitment by attending a staff training day to share in hammering out a vision for the future. An outcome of that was the production of a clear strategic plan for how the governors will in the future be accountable for supporting and challenging the school
- the governors fully accept that only the best will be good enough for children who attend this school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102143
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	400532

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Urban Jacobs
Headteacher	James Lane
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 January 2010
Telephone number	02088082923
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