

# St Francis Catholic Primary School

Friary Road, Peckham, London, SE15 1RQ

**Inspection dates** 5–6 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils are making good progress with considerable proportions meeting or exceeding national expectations.
- Since the last inspection, pupils have made faster progress in acquiring skills, particularly in reading and writing. Children in the Nursery and Reception make exceptionally good progress because they are taught particularly well.
- Teaching has improved greatly over recent years. Almost all teaching is at least good, with an increasing number of outstanding lessons. Teachers create a stimulating and purposeful learning environment where pupils are engaged and thrive well. The quality of marking is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved in lessons and around the school. Good relationships between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils, are strong features of the school and ensure that both adults and pupils flourish well in a motivating environment. Pupils enjoy school, they are happy and feel safe.
- The headteachers and governors demonstrate a clear commitment which is shared by all staff, particularly the newly recruited subject leaders, to secure further improvement. The headteachers evaluate the school's performance rigorously and accurately which helps to identify priority areas for improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The newly recruited subject leaders have not had time to develop their roles in monitoring lessons so that they can accurately support and challenge staff to drive forward school improvement further.
- Pupils, especially the less able, are not always supported well by other adults in lessons.
- Information on pupils is not always used well to set challenging targets, especially for the more able, so they make even better progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Occasionally there are not enough opportunities in lessons for active and independent learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 22 lessons taught by 18 teachers. They scrutinised the work in pupils' books and listened to pupils reading.
- Information on the school's evaluation of its work was examined, as well as the school's development plan and tracking data on pupils' achievement.
- Inspectors held several meetings with the two headteachers, subject leaders and other managers, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. In addition, they held discussions with a sample of staff and met two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's monitoring records on teachers' performance, safeguarding policies and the subject development plans.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes, was observed.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the Parent View, the Ofsted on-line questionnaire survey, and the views of parents and carers spoken to at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Samuel Ofori-Kyereh, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Elson	Additional Inspector
Lily Evans	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Francis is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages, with the largest proportion being from Nigerian and Ghanaian backgrounds. Three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language, with a high proportion at the early stage of learning English.
- A larger than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, additional funding provided by the government.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below the national average, but the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or autism.
- Since the previous inspection, the school had gone through a period of staff turbulence. A large number of teachers left the school and new ones have joined.
- The school is led by two part-time headteachers who job share the position.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics by:
  - setting precise and challenging targets closely matched to the learning needs of all pupils, especially the most able, and sharing these with pupils so they know what to do next to improve
  - ensuring that other adults effectively support less able pupils in lessons to enable them to achieve as well as possible.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding by:
  - including more creative ideas in different subjects to ensure that pupils are actively and independently engaged with their learning.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of the school by:
  - ensuring that subject leaders take a greater role in observing lessons regularly and providing support and challenge to teachers to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are making good progress, particularly in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 where attainment is above the national average. The progress made by a large proportion of pupils exceeds the national expectations, so that attainment in all subjects and across the school has risen since the previous inspection to be either in line or above the national averages.
- The school has successfully addressed the areas identified for development during the last inspection and has secured further improvement so that pupils' attainment is improving rapidly across the school. Due to focused planning of the different subjects and effective support for different groups of pupils, pupils' attainment in the 2012 national tests rose sharply. By the end of Year 6, standards are at least average in all subjects.
- Although pupils' achievement in mathematics is good, it is not as good as that in writing or reading. This is because improvements to the subject in order to develop pupils' basic skills in problem solving and calculations are recent and have not yet had time to make a marked impact on pupils' attainment. The new leader of mathematics has supported teachers through training and lesson observations and, as a result, mathematics is now taught as effectively as reading and writing and pupils are beginning to make better progress in lessons. However, precise and challenging targets that would help pupils to make even better progress are not set and shared with pupils.
- Children start the Nursery with skills and abilities that are often well below those expected for their age. They are supported very well through very good teaching and they get off an excellent start so that by the end of the Reception year they have made rapid progress across all the areas of learning. The children develop their social, communication and numeracy skills particularly well because of the wide range of learning opportunities that consolidate their learning.
- The school has revised its literacy programme which effectively enables pupils to develop good strategies to help them to learn letters and sounds (phonics) and develop writing skills at the same time. This approach has helped to raise standards in reading and writing rapidly across the school. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson, pupils had the opportunity to practise how to pronounce words on sentence cards, read texts from a reading book and engage in extensive writing.
- Pupils enjoy reading a range of books and texts and this has helped to broaden their vocabulary. Pupils like to talk about their favourite authors and why they choose to read specific books and texts. Pupils are able to use several strategies such as sounding out and building up words to help them pronounce and make sense of difficult words.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning English, including those from Nigerian and Ghanaian backgrounds, develop language skills quickly and make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported particularly well through tailored sessions with specialist teachers and carefully planned activities so that they make good progress in lessons. The school has acquired several resources and recruited staff to specifically support and meet the learning needs of pupils eligible for the pupil premium so that they make even better progress than seen nationally. However, some adults are unable to support less able pupils effectively to enable them to make even better progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved considerably across the school since the last inspection so that almost all lessons are either good or better. There is strong emphasis on improving the skills of the teachers and the subjects they teach. The impact of the school's effort is seen in the confidence and enthusiasm with which teachers deliver well-planned lessons that take account of pupils' learning needs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

- Teachers usually adopt a variety of teaching styles which add fun and imagination to lessons so that pupils are fully engaged, show deep interest and make good progress. Teachers frequently check pupils' level of understanding and how well pupils have achieved in lessons by asking challenging questions that enable them to think and improve on their learning. In a few lessons, however, the learning activities do not provide enough challenge for the more-able pupils to make even better progress.
- The whole-school approach to improve achievement in reading and writing has been effective in supporting pupils, especially those at the early stages of learning English, to acquire skills and strategies to read fluently and write extensively. Teachers use a wide range of resources, including the interactive whiteboards, extremely well to support the learning needs of pupils so that they are fully engaged in lessons and achieve well. However, in a small minority of lessons, creative ideas to ensure that pupils are actively and independently engaged with their learning are not evident.
- In lessons, pupils often have time to discuss and reflect on activities and other pupils' opinions and ideas and are empowered to give their own views. Many lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a Year 2 outstanding lesson, pupils had the opportunity to reflect on the work of Jesus and why it is important to be selfless to others rather than taking undue advantage of them.
- Teachers and other adults create a very positive learning atmosphere and establish excellent rapport between teachers and pupils so that all pupils are enthusiastic about learning and want to achieve well. Good teaching inspires pupils and they really enjoy learning. One pupil declared, 'I love reading and writing because the teachers make lessons fun and I now like to learn maths because of the games.'
- The quality of marking seen across the school is outstanding. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide detailed comments on how pupils can improve on their work so they move to the next level in their learning. Pupils have opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and where they still require further help to improve on their learning this is made known to teachers, who provide further help.
- Pupils are set weekly homework and are expected to read at least one book a week. The homework helps to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Parents are positive about homework, a typical view being that 'pupils receive good quality homework which has helped them to develop a love for learning instead of playing all the time at home'.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and so they enjoy coming to school regularly. Behaviour is good and they demonstrate positive attitudes that support their learning.
- A particularly strong feature of the school is the community spirit and the excellent relationships that exist between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils. The whole school atmosphere is typified by respect, harmony and order. Pupils from different backgrounds, including the different minority ethnic groups, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are sensitive to each other's needs and they relate well to each other.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. Pupils' punctuality has improved and almost all pupils attend school on time because the school has worked well with parents on this issue.
- Pupils indicate that bullying of any form, including racist or cyber bullying, is effectively dealt with and is now almost non-existent. Staff and parents and carers indicate that pupils feel safe at schools.
- Discussions with pupils affirmed that they feel safe because teachers and other adults look after them well. They know how to keep themselves safe because they have been taught about different types of dangers. Pupils have opportunities to take up responsibilities, such as peer mediators to resolve difficulties amongst pupils and to look after those who are known to be vulnerable.

- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their spiritual and moral awareness through daily acts of worship and lessons which enable them to understand what is right and wrong. Pupils are exposed to other cultures through partnership exchanges and fundraising activities to support a school in Ghana. The displays on the walls show that pupils' cultural awareness is developed particularly well through what they learn in the different subjects and planned cultural events such as Black History Month and Young Voices Choir.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The two headteachers have worked extremely well together and, with support from governors, have managed the high staff turnover by recruiting high calibre staff to improve on teaching and to raise pupils' achievement. All staff indicated, through the staff questionnaire, that they have full confidence in the leadership of the school to improve standards.
- The headteachers ensure that senior and subject leaders support teachers through training and through induction programmes for newly qualified teachers, so that the quality of teaching is now good. However, subject leaders are not yet involved in the monitoring of lessons in order to challenge staff promptly to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The headteachers have accurately assessed the school's performance and have put together improvement plans with clear actions to improve further the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Measures of success are frequently reviewed to ensure that all weaknesses are addressed appropriately.
- Teachers' performance is rigorously monitored and linked to clear targets that must be achieved before an increase in pay is considered. These targets are focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Teachers are motivated and they willingly take on responsibilities, such as providing additional support sessions, to help improve on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Lessons have been revised and they are now based on themes that allow different topics to be taught across different subjects. Pupils are supported to develop their reading, writing, mathematics and communication skills across the different subjects.
- The school's emphasis on eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equal opportunity ensures that lessons take account of the needs of pupils, especially the disabled and those who have special educational needs, so that they make at least the expected progress. Additionally, pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are supported by other adults effectively. The progress of these groups of pupils is rigorously tracked and appropriate support is provided to ensure they achieve as well as their peers.
- The school works extremely well with vulnerable pupils and/or their parents and carers. The school's learning mentor/specialist counsellor and other therapists assess and monitor the needs of these pupils and/or their families to enable them cope, often with extremely difficult circumstances. The school organises sessions for parents to help them support the learning needs of their children.
- The development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of pupils is a strength of the school. This is promoted through the daily acts of worship, engagement in fundraising activities and through personal, social and health education lessons. The many after-school activities, including sports, arts, music, drama and dance, provide many opportunities for pupils' social and cultural development.
- The local authority effectively supported the school in the times of staff turbulence by helping to develop the skills of teachers to take up interim leadership roles. The local authority representatives participated in lesson observations and helped to revise the school's approach to the subjects that pupils learn. Currently, local authority visits are limited to the monitoring of the improvements at the school and they offer support when required.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors of the school come from different professional and social backgrounds. Several

members of the governing body have experience of bringing about school improvement and this enables them to provide professional challenge and support. All governors have undertaken training to enable them understand how schools function. The Chair of the Governing Body visits the school daily and this helps him to collect information so that actions are taken promptly to address any weaknesses that emerge. Other members visit the school at scheduled times to monitor lessons, and interpret information about the school's work and its performance. The governors analyse the school's data to understand how well teaching is helping to raise pupils' achievement. They challenge each other to perform their duties as well as they should. They support and challenge the headteachers to bring about improvements in the school, especially in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and recruitment of high calibre of staff. All forms of staff underperformance are challenged through rigorous procedures. Governors scrutinise the school's self-evaluation and the improvement plans and ask for evidence before the plans are endorsed. They ensure that the school's finances are used appropriately to secure further improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors ensure that the pupil premium is used to acquire learning resources and recruit staff to provide support to pupils who require additional help. All governors are trained in safer recruitment and child protection and they ensure that the headteachers and other staff have received this training to keep all pupils safe. They fulfil their statutory duties for safeguarding.

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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100826
<b>Local authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	400429

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Father Peter Ryman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ros Atkinson and Carol Molloy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0207 639 0187
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