

St Francis Catholic Primary School

Myers Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD2 4ES

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 make good progress because they are taught well and take pride in what they are able to achieve.
- Outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make an excellent start to school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy learning and participate enthusiastically in the lively and interesting lessons teachers provide.
- The well-planned and carefully constructed curriculum broadens pupils' horizons and teaches them much about the diverse world in which they live.
- Pupils feel completely safe in the school's warm and friendly atmosphere and have confidence in staff to care for them well.
- Teaching is well-managed. Frequent monitoring of lessons, clear targets for teachers and regular staff training ensure that teaching develops and improves at a good pace.
- Under the able leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and with the support of the well-organised governing body, the school has made good improvement since it was inspected. Pupils are learning more and standards are continuing to rise.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is only occasionally outstanding and there are inconsistencies in the way teachers explain what is expected of pupils, how quickly pupils move on to more challenging work and how well their books are marked.
- In some lessons pupils are not given enough opportunities to work things out for themselves, express their ideas in full and learn from each other.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors heard pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Years 2 to 6, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and school staff with management responsibilities. A short telephone conversation was held with a consultant from the Bradford and Keighley Catholic Schools Partnership.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), letters received from parents, the views of parents they met informally and the 10 staff questionnaires in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents including the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records in relation to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Keith Bardon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Burrow

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which is mainly for the benefit of those eligible for free school meals) is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- Approximately one in eight pupils is of minority ethnic heritage. While the ethnic background of these pupils is wide ranging, very few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons in which teaching is regularly outstanding by:
 - providing pupils with clear examples of what they have to achieve and what high quality work will look like
 - making sure that pupils move on to more challenging work as soon as they can
 - indicating clearly when marking pupils' work (in all subjects) what they need to do to improve.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves, express their ideas in full and learn from each other.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they first joined the school most of the children who are currently in Key Stage 1 showed skills and abilities typical of their age. In the last two years children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage has fallen below what is typical, particularly in their social and communication skills. Stimulating provision and skilled teaching ensure that, irrespective of their starting points, children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and move into Year 1 well-prepared for the National Curriculum.
- This secure start is built upon successfully and pupils make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards in both key stages are rising in response to the improvements the school has made since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average. Most pupils attain or exceed the expected level for their age in English and mathematics, although fewer pupils attain a higher level in writing than in reading. The school has identified this discrepancy as an area for improvement and the gap is closing. Higher-ability pupils are writing with expression, using well constructed phrases such as '... at the cutting edge of renewable energy' when explaining the benefits of the school's recently fitted solar panels.
- Pupils are taught sounds and letters (phonics) well in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 1 most pupils have the understanding expected for their age and by Year 2 are identifying unfamiliar words with confidence, explaining clearly how the 'a' and 'i' in 'brain' blend together to make the middle sound. A small proportion of Year 2 pupils need to sound out a lot of the words, but they do this with determination and, having done so, show good understanding of what they have read.
- Year 6 pupils read regularly and with enjoyment. While a small proportion of lower-ability pupils lack a little fluency when they read, all pupils understand the meaning of what they are reading and are able to follow and understand detailed written instructions. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 6 is above average and will stand pupils in good stead when they move to high school.
- Pupils do particularly well in mathematics. With very few exceptions Year 6 pupils show a clear understanding of the properties of numbers and how they interrelate and higher-ability pupils tackle complex problems with confidence and gusto.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive carefully targeted support and appropriately modified work and they too make good progress in their learning. Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress and their attainment often matches that of other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress, similar to that of other pupils, and achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- The highly effective teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children learn quickly and make rapid progress. Teachers provide a wide range of carefully considered and very well-planned activities, both in and out of doors, which motivate the children and give them a strong desire to learn more. Adults support and question children skilfully, giving them every opportunity to put their own thoughts and ideas into words.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and lessons are managed well. Most lessons move along at a good pace and have several well-connected elements. In many lessons teachers maintain a regular flow of instructions, information and well-chosen questions. However, there are times when too much teacher talk discourages pupils from working things out for themselves, expressing their ideas in full and considering what others are saying so that they can learn from them.
- On a few occasions teaching is outstanding. These lessons are characterised by extremely high

but realistic expectations of the quality of work pupils will produce, combined with exciting and creative activities which challenge pupils to reason out answers for themselves. Higher-ability Year 6 pupils were set the task of solving a fictitious crime using a range of mathematical clues which involved applying knowledge, measuring, making calculations and research using the computer. The classroom was a hive of activity with pupils extending their skills and understanding at a rapid pace.

- Teachers give pupils clear and detailed instructions of what they have to do and discuss carefully where the work is leading and how it builds on what they have learned previously. On occasion they fail to provide appropriate examples of what the work should look like upon completion and some pupils struggle to get started.
- Using the outcomes of regular and thorough assessments, teachers match work carefully to the different abilities of the pupils. This generally ensures that they all have work that gets the best out of them and are able to make good progress. At times, pupils grasp an idea quickly but are required to repeat work they can already do and opportunities for further learning are missed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, indicating clearly where targets have been met and success achieved. In the best marking teachers make clear how the work could be improved, but on occasion this important information is missing.
- Teaching assistants have clear roles and responsibilities and support pupils' learning well. They provide class teachers with valuable information about how well pupils are doing and what they need help with. This enables teachers to plan further accurately targeted work for them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly because 'lessons are fun, there are special days, teachers are kind and there is always someone to talk to'. They are eager to learn and work hard in lessons, follow instructions carefully and readily help each other when working in pairs or small groups.
- Parents, pupils, staff and governors share the same positive views of pupils' behaviour. Very occasionally an individual pupil may need a reminder to pay full attention or to concentrate fully on work, but behaviour is managed well by staff and lessons progress without interruption.
- Pupils know what constitutes bullying but regard it as a rare occurrence and have complete confidence in staff to deal quickly and effectively with any which may arise. They feel fully secure in school and show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in the outside world. They say that staff regularly discuss important details of safety precautions to keep them fresh in their minds.
- Pupils regularly show concern for others and act accordingly. When four older pupils were asked why they were standing on a patch of ice at playtime they explained it was to ensure that none of the younger pupils slipped on it and hurt themselves. They are prepared to think carefully about important issues and explain carefully how Black History Week had increased their understanding of racial matters and of the importance of providing equal opportunities for all.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have high ambitions for the school and drive it purposefully forward. They keep a careful watch over the school's work and pupils' progress and share the information widely so that everyone understands what needs to be done to make the school even better.
- Staff work closely as a team and welcome the regular opportunities the school provides for their training and development. This ensures that teaching is continually improving and that new ideas and ways of working are constantly being introduced into classrooms.
- Management responsibilities are delegated carefully and the well-written school improvement plan provides a clear framework for development. Some members of the senior leadership team

have quite recently returned from a time away from the school and are re-familiarising themselves effectively with their roles and responsibilities.

- Excellent leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured that the high quality provision children enjoyed at the time of the last inspection has continued. New developments have been introduced very successfully to promote further improvement.
 - Regular, carefully selected visits to places of educational interest and visitors with particular expertise extend the wide and varied curriculum and add much to pupils' enjoyment of school. Close attention is paid to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with schools in other parts of the world, such as the School on Wheels in California, enhance pupils' appreciation of how others live their lives. The school's Catholic heritage provides a strong base for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Extensive displays of pupils' work boost their self-esteem and sense of achievement.
 - The very careful watch the school keeps over each pupil's learning and development ensures they all have equal opportunities to learn and none is discriminated against.
 - The local authority has provided good support for school improvement. It has gradually reduced its involvement as the school became more effective and consultants from the Bradford and Keighley Catholic Schools Partnership began their work. It currently provides light touch support for this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The work and effectiveness of the governing body has improved substantially since the last inspection. Governors undergo regular training and have a detailed understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They check the school's work thoroughly using a comprehensive range of information including that gathered first hand during their regular visits. Close attention is paid to the quality of teaching pupils have received and staff are required to meet specific targets before a salary increase is considered. Governors are fully aware of how pupil premium funding is spent and the reasons for spending it in this way. They have yet to establish procedures for checking for themselves the effect this spending is having on pupils' progress. The health and safety governor makes regular checks of the school site and current safeguarding requirements are comprehensively met.
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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

Unique reference number	107332
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	400063

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr. Patrick Wall
Headteacher	Daniel Copley
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2010
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