

St Francis Catholic and Church of England (Aided) School

Newport Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, PO38 1BQ

Inspection dates

24–25 September 2013

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:

- Teaching is not consistently good. Outstanding practice observed in some lessons is not shared effectively.
- Over use of undemanding worksheets means not all teachers provide pupils with challenging activities that capture their interest and motivate them to do well. They do not always give pupils the practical resources they need to support new learning or help them to use their initiative.
- Questioning is not used consistently to promote pupils' ability to think critically and solve problems.
- Marking is inconsistent. Pupils do not always know what they do well, what they need to do to improve, or have time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics are improving but they are not high enough.
- There are not sufficient practical opportunities for pupils to develop a good range of vocabulary or practical mathematical skills.
- Policies for teaching handwriting, spelling and grammar are not implemented consistently.
- Pupils do not always apply their essential literacy and numeracy skills accurately in other subjects.
- A few adults do not demonstrate high-quality spoken English or model good handwriting.
- Some subject and key stage leaders are new to their roles, and are not yet trained sufficiently to play a full part in promoting a whole-school approach to raising achievement.

The school has the following strengths:

- Governors and senior leaders have shown exceptional determination in bringing together different communities. They are ambitious for pupils to do well in a high-quality learning environment and know what they must do to achieve this. Action taken to tackle weak teaching is proving successful.
- Pupils benefit considerably from growing up in a community that stresses respect, tolerance and moral values.
- Some teaching in Year 5, Reception, physical education and the performing arts is outstanding.
- In 2013 the most able pupils reached levels that are much higher than those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The family support worker and breakfast and after-school clubs play a key role in helping pupils to be safe and attend regularly.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed substantial parts of 22 lessons, and made shorter visits to 14 lessons. Often they were accompanied by the headteacher or a member of the senior management team.
- Samples of pupils' previous work in English and mathematics were reviewed.
- Inspectors saw pupils, some of whom receive additional support, working with an adult in small groups or individually away from the classroom.
- Some pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read to an inspector. Older pupils discussed their views of the school. Their behaviour was observed in lessons and at various times around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff with responsibility for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, the Early Years Foundation Stage, English and mathematics. Inspectors also met with teaching assistants, representatives of the governing body and of the local authority.
- The responses of 37 parents and carers who completed the online Parent View questionnaire, those spoken to by inspectors before school, and two emails written to the inspection team were taken into account.
- Documents reviewed included the school's improvement plan, the summary of the school's checks on how well it is doing, governing body minutes, safeguarding, and records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lindsay Gabriel	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most primary schools. At the time of the previous inspection pupils were taught in two separate buildings in different parts of the town. In January 2013, all staff and pupils moved to the new purpose-built premises on the same site as the Rew Valley Sports Centre.
- The number of pupils attending the school has risen. Following reorganisation within the local authority, the school has pupils in Years 5 and 6. National tests were taken by pupils in Year 6 for the first time in 2012. The percentage joining and leaving the school, especially in Year 6, at other than the usual times increased last year.
- Since September 2013 pupils have been organised into classes containing single-age, rather than mixed-age, groups. Some staff are new and some have recently taken on leadership and management roles for subjects and aspects of the school.
- The school serves a number of Catholic and Church of England parishes, and the immediate community. Over one third of pupils travel to school by bus.
- The government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, are met.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is above the national average. This is the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent or carer in the armed forces. Currently the school has a very small number of looked after children and parents or carers in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is low. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school has breakfast and after-school clubs that are open every day during term time.
- Hampshire local authority took over responsibility for challenging and supporting the school from the Isle of Wight local authority on 1 September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching in all year groups so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that teachers:
 - reduce the use of undemanding worksheets and provide pupils with challenging and engaging activities that capture their interest and motivate them to do as well as they can
 - provide the practical resources necessary to strengthen pupils' understanding of new learning and enable them to work independently, to use their own ideas and make decisions about their work
 - use questioning which promotes pupils' critical thinking and problem solving abilities
 - improve marking by pointing out what pupils do well and what they need to do to improve, and giving them time to respond to their teacher's comments
 - share the outstanding teaching seen in some classes to help teachers who are less effective do better
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - helping more pupils, through high-quality practical experiences, to develop a wide-ranging vocabulary
 - implementing the policies for teaching handwriting, spelling and grammar consistently across the school

- ensuring all adults demonstrate high-quality spoken English, and model good handwriting for pupils
- showing pupils how to apply their developing literacy and numeracy skills accurately in a range of contexts
- giving pupils more opportunities to develop literacy and mathematical skills that they can use in other subjects.

■ Strengthen leadership and management by:

- raising the skills of new subject and key stage leaders so that they play a full part in promoting a whole-school approach to raising achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress requires improvement. In writing in all year groups there are not enough opportunities for pupils to talk through their ideas, extend their vocabulary and write confidently.
- Pupils are often taught how to use grammar and punctuation in separate grammar lessons but do not apply these skills when writing in other situations. Not all pupils develop a good style of handwriting or speak well because adults do not always set a good example. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 spell well because they use their knowledge of sounds that letters make to write simple words. This is not the case in all classes.
- In mathematics pupils learn to practise techniques to calculate correctly. They do not carry out sufficient practical activities to understand how to apply different mathematical ideas to solve a problem. Their books show that there are few opportunities for them to use mathematics in other subjects.
- Pupils are confident readers. They make good use of the library reading different kinds of stories and finding out about subjects that interest them. Older pupils extend their reading abilities by carrying out research on the internet.
- Some pupils, including those joining the school in Year 6 in 2013, made rapid progress by attending booster classes in the holidays and joining after-school clubs. Some more-able 11-year-old pupils reached levels that are much higher than expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Two thirds of children in Reception reached a good level of development in 2013. They make faster progress in their physical, mathematical, personal, social and emotional development, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design than in literacy. This is because there are not enough opportunities to develop and extend spoken language or begin to express their ideas in writing by the age of five.
- Pupils who benefited from the pupil premium in 2012 were a year behind their classmates in reading, 18 months in writing, and 16 months in mathematics. Current records show that progress was faster in reading and mathematics than in writing last year and the gap has narrowed.
- The school provides good levels of support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. To help them to overcome barriers to learning, especially in reading, pupils work on a variety of activities designed to meet their particular needs. Some make good progress. Others with highly complex needs make progress, but justifiably only in very small steps. This reflects the school's commitment to developing equality of opportunity.
- Pupils who excel in sports, music, dance and drama extend their talents in specialist clubs outside of school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not all teachers are fully challenging or engaging pupils, or helping them to do their very best. Some provide pupils with dull exercises that are too easy. They complete undemanding worksheets, or practise a skill without understanding the context in which it should be used correctly.
- In English and mathematics teachers do not always use questioning well to help pupils think critically, or to develop problem solving skills. Activities are not always supported by the practical resources to add to pupils' understanding, to encourage independence, explore their own ideas or make decisions.
- Teachers mark pupils' work in different ways. While some offer comprehensive feedback, others only confirm what pupils have done well with no suggestions for improvement or time for amendment. This makes it difficult for some pupils to improve at a faster rate.
- Each class has a teaching assistant, some of whom are exceptionally skilled. They offer good

levels of support to pupils throughout lessons that deepen understanding, especially for those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.

- Teachers use information from the new tracking system well to check pupils' progress and identify those that may be at risk of falling behind. Programmes of work are sometimes adapted to help them fill any gaps in their learning.
- Where teaching is at its best teachers:
 - are highly qualified and extremely knowledgeable about the subjects and age groups they teach
 - provide activities that are matched very well to pupils' age and interests so that they are fully engaged in their learning and make rapid progress
 - offer short, sharp, tightly focused activities throughout lessons that ensure pupils gain a clear understanding of what they are learning about and can see how well they are doing
 - offer open-ended tasks that challenge pupils' thinking and call on them to argue their point of view
 - bring learning alive for their pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Pupils are not always motivated to do as well as they can because the tasks they are set do not inspire them. Consequently they lose concentration, take more time than is necessary to complete their work and do not take sufficient pride in its presentation. These factors hinder pupils' progress.
- Attendance is below average but improving steadily. The family support worker and the provision of a breakfast club are helping more pupils to get to school on time and attend regularly.
- The atmosphere in school is a happy one because pupils are respectful to one another and to adults. Those with challenging behaviour are taught to take responsibility for their actions. No pupil has been stopped from coming to school because of poor behaviour and no lessons observed during the inspection were interrupted by low-level disruption.
- Pupils are proud of their new school and look after it. They feel safe and well looked after by adults. They are aware of different kinds of bullying, including cyber-bullying, but say that they are not aware of any in school. They know how to keep safe on the internet.
- When teaching is good or outstanding, pupils become engrossed in their learning. They thoroughly enjoy practical work. One pupil who was excited about writing a story said, 'This is fun because I can use all my own ideas.'

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching is not high enough to ensure pupils make consistently good progress. This is because:
 - some subject and key stage leaders are new to their roles and have not been trained to play a full part in developing the skills to support senior leaders in their drive to bring about a consistent approach to raising achievement for all pupils
 - ways of teaching handwriting, spelling and grammar are not consistent between classes
 - outstanding practice is not shared with staff who are less effective to develop their practice.
- The local authority prior to September 2013 did not support or challenge the school through its transitional period.
- Senior leaders and governors are determined to improve the school's effectiveness. They are ambitious for the school to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they can. A recent full review of how well the school has become established, the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the subjects taught has identified key areas for improvement similar to those found during the

inspection.

- The schemes for teaching programmes of work in English and mathematics are not yet promoting consistently high levels of attainment or capturing pupils' enthusiasm for learning. There are many excellent opportunities for pupils to take part in sports activities in the on-site sports centre which promote their health and well-being strongly. Assemblies, visits out, art, science, dance and drama activities make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The partnership with parents and carers is strong. Those responding to Parent View, or who spoke or wrote to inspectors during the inspection, were very supportive, especially with regard to the manner in which pupils are cared for.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Highly skilled, knowledgeable and experienced governors have worked closely with senior leaders to merge the school on to one site, retaining the full confidence of parents and carers and the communities it serves. They ensure that pupils learn in an atmosphere where discrimination is not tolerated, and moral values and respect are highly regarded. Governors' expertise challenges senior leaders and supports them in raising achievement. They are fully aware of the quality of teaching and what needs to be done to improve it. They use analysis of statistical information to compare the performance of the school with others and review the progress of pupils regularly. Governors update their skills frequently through training. They contribute fully to the decisions on the allocation of funds, including the pupil premium. Their decision to employ new sport and performing arts specialists and a sports coach supports opportunities to develop talents, skills and confidence in school, after-school clubs, and in the wider community. Finances are managed prudently and targeted to support learning. Governors are fully involved in the school's appraisal and pay review procedures, where staff pay is linked to pupils' progress. They ensure that safeguarding has high priority, particularly for those who are travelling on the buses. They also ensure that the school works in partnership with other professionals to keep pupils safe from harm.

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	136011
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	426532

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	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter-James Smith
Headteacher	Angela Hewkin
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 January 2013
Telephone number	01983 857449
Fax number	n/a
Email address	office@stfrancisventnor.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

