

# Saint Francis Catholic Primary School, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

Dalby Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 0BP

## Inspection dates

24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Attainment has declined since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in their work.
- Some pupils' writing lacks imagination and few write at length or in depth. They make errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils make slightly better progress in reading and mathematics than they do in writing but not enough make more than the progress expected of them in any subject.
- Not all teachers give pupils' clear explanations or expect enough of them. On these occasions, teaching is not consistently strong enough to close the gaps in pupils' previous learning.
- Some staff do not ensure that work is challenging enough for pupils of different abilities, particularly the most able.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and some teachers do not regularly identify or follow up areas for improvement.
- Some teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Consequently, their learning slows.
- Pupils do not always persevere and try to answer questions they find difficult. Their work is not always neatly presented.
- A small number of pupils do not always think about how their boisterous behaviour at playtime can impact on the safety of others.
- Leaders do not always follow up the checks they make of the work in pupils' books and in classrooms rigorously enough to bring about rapid improvement.
- Staff with additional responsibilities are not sufficiently involved in checking the progress that pupils make and in identifying and pursuing improvement.
- Until recently, governors have not challenged leaders sufficiently, or checked with sufficient rigour the areas for which they hold responsibility.

### The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders are monitoring provision and pupils' achievement more effectively than in the recent past and have a secure understanding of what works well and where further improvement is necessary.
- Teaching in the early years is consistently good in all areas of learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in parts of 19 lessons and in a range of other activities. Several of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher. The inspectors also looked in detail at the work in pupils' books and heard several pupils read.
- Inspectors held planned and informal discussions with pupils throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors had discussions with the headteacher and several staff members. A discussion was held with representatives of the governing body. A discussion with a representative of the local authority took place on the telephone.
- There were 42 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. The inspectors also spoke to a number of parents at the start of both days of the inspection. They also took account of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' progress. They also took account of records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clive Worrall

Additional Inspector

Ian Hart

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Reception class full time.
- Some classes are made up of a single year group and others have pupils of mixed-age.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. Around 20% of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is close to the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) is well below the national average. This includes pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are currently no pupils looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is less than half the national average.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a considerable change in staff. The school was without a substantive headteacher for a while and had several staff in temporary leadership roles. The current headteacher took up her role in August 2013. There has been an acting deputy headteacher in school since August 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of the quality and quantity of work that pupils are expected to complete
  - give pupils clear explanations so that they make the best possible progress
  - consistently plan activities that contain an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils, and particularly for the most able
  - make clear to pupils, through their marking, what they need to improve, and check that pupils have acted on this advice, revisiting areas of weakness as necessary in future lessons
  - check that the behaviour and attitudes of a very small minority of pupils does not adversely affect others.
- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, and ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well by:
  - carefully monitoring the rate of progress made by different groups of pupils from year to year to ensure they make equally good progress
  - improving pupils' writing, including their spelling, punctuation and grammar, and encouraging pupils to take greater care over the presentation of their work
  - helping more pupils to reach the higher levels in their reading and mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of senior staff, including those with additional responsibilities, in rigorously monitoring activities in order to identify and tackle the areas identified for further improvement
  - helping pupils to understand how their boisterous behaviour at playtime can affect the safety of others.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because standards at the school have slipped since the last inspection and leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good. Pupils do not make enough progress as they move through the school and the school does not ensure that all groups of pupils enjoy equal opportunities to succeed.
- The school has had many changes since the previous inspection, with temporary or part-time leadership. This has meant that action to identify and address weaknesses has not been taken quickly enough. Governors rightly note: 'We became complacent but we are on the case now.'
- Senior leaders have started to address identified issues, particularly in the last year or so, but have not succeeded in driving improvement forward fast enough. This is in part because many changes have not yet had time to make a full impact across the school. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher now have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, leaders are more able to ensure pupils' equality of opportunity and to tackle any discrimination.
- At times staff, including those leading key subject areas, have failed to identify weaknesses in teaching and believed dips in progress were predominantly caused by pupils' lack of ability. Leaders have not always evaluated the impact of initiatives well enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The school's own view of its effectiveness has been overgenerous and has not taken sufficient account of data on the progress of all pupils.
- Staff with additional responsibilities have had limited opportunity to monitor and evaluate the work in areas for which they hold responsibility. Recent checks of pupils' books have been introduced but these are not extensive and do not yet involve all those with additional responsibilities. Therefore, some staff are not in a strong enough position to identify specifically what needs to improve or how to do this.
- Senior leaders carry out observations of the progress made in lessons and, during the inspection, these evaluations matched those of the inspectors. However, records show that some recent observations appear generous and were not reflective of the work in pupils' books.
- Targets for the management of teachers' performance are securely linked to school priorities and based on the progress of pupils and the standards achieved. There are opportunities for professional development, including in-school training.
- Senior leaders are now working well together to identify what is effective and where further improvement is needed. They have succeeded in drawing the staff team together and in raising morale. This is reflected in the positive responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Leadership of the early years is good and all aspects of work with the youngest pupils are effective. Work by the early years leader with newly qualified staff to model effective teaching is leading to improvements in other year groups.
- In the last eighteen months the school has started to work more closely with the local authority, which recognised the dip in the progress pupils were making. This has included effective work with the leadership team which has led to a tighter focus on the monitoring of the work of the school. This ensures the school now has the capacity to improve.
- Additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used appropriately to support pupils, including through the work of learning support assistants. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also receive extra help. This is particularly effective in boosting their levels of confidence.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used to employ a range of sports coaches who work with staff and pupils. This is helping to increase staff confidence and extend the range of sports that

are taught in the school. The school also provides additional opportunities for pupils to go swimming.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides a suitable range of activities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Topic activities and work in religious education help pupils to understand about the lives, beliefs and experiences of others. A recent focus on 'Crime and Punishment' has helped pupils understand more about their rights and responsibilities as members of society. This helps them develop an awareness of British values and key concepts, such as the rule of law, and prepares them for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils have numerous opportunities to work with others in class and social occasions. The school provides a range of activities where pupils learn more about other faiths including Judaism. These activities along with work to support charities and local arts events enable pupils to extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Parents are pleased with the care and education provided for their children, particularly in the early years. Several note they are aware that the behaviour of a very small number of pupils at breaktimes can be boisterous but they have confidence that school leaders take action when necessary.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance requires improvement but is improving rapidly and a review of governance is not required. Governors are keenly aware that they have not held the school to account for the quality of education provided. They have recently undertaken training in understanding what the data tell them about the progress of different groups of pupils and now accurately recognise strengths and weaknesses. They are suitably informed about the quality of teaching and ensure information about pupils' progress is used to inform decisions about teachers' pay awards.
- Governors are keen and enthusiastic in their support of the school. They are well led and rightly value the work of senior leaders in undertaking work to move the school forward. Governors have developed a committee structure that now focuses more strongly on strategic development. They ensure that checks are carried out to safeguard the pupils. These arrangements now meet statutory requirements although, until very recently, these checks had not been rigorous enough to ensure the recording of information was up to date.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils**

**requires improvement**

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because, throughout the school, too many pupils do not push themselves to do their best or try consistently hard with their work. This is shown in lessons where several pupils offer little to discussions and simply wait for others to offer their ideas. This does little to help develop their speaking skills or the ability to critically evaluate the ideas of others. The work in pupils' books often shows untidy presentation and sometimes only a limited amount of work is produced.
- On the whole, pupils generally behave correctly in lessons and are polite to the adults that they work with. Most pupils get on well with each other. On some occasions, pupils lose concentration and as a result, their learning is not as good as it might be.
- Observations at lunchtime show that the behaviour of a very small number of boys is too boisterous. Occasionally, staff supervision is not effective enough to address any concerns. Pupils are confident, however, that senior leaders deal with any misbehaviour appropriately.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. The school has worked successfully to cut the number of persistent absences and the taking of holidays in term time.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. It works successfully to help pupils understand how to keep safe. Visitors are invited to talk to pupils about the dangers around them.

A very small number of pupils do not, however, have a strong understanding of how their behaviour impacts on the safety of others at playtimes.

- Checks to ensure the suitability of adults to work with children have improved recently to take account of current guidance. Procedures to ensure site security are appropriate.
- Pupils know that bullying is a deliberate and repeated action. They recognise different types of bullying that might occur, such as cyber-bullying. They know that calling each other names is hurtful. Pupils report that although this does happen sometimes, especially in the older year groups, they know how to seek help. Pupils say staff help them to deal with it and are confident that their concerns are taken seriously.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement. There is too much variability in the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics, which leads to very mixed progress for the pupils. There are examples of good teaching in the early years and for some of the older pupils, but teaching is less effective for others.
- Not all teachers expect enough of the pupils. Sometimes too little is demanded of them, both in their work and, very occasionally, in their behaviour. Tasks are often the same or very similar for pupils of all abilities; this does not provide the best level of challenge especially for the most-able pupils. The work in pupils' books shows that not all staff insist that care is taken with handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- The marking of some work is ineffective and does not identify for pupils what they need to do to improve. The school has recognised that this was a weakness and has introduced guidance for marking. However, marking quality is still inconsistent; mistakes and misconceptions are not addressed or revisited in subsequent work.
- Where learning is least effective, teachers' explanations to pupils are not good enough for them to understand what they are doing and as a result, several are left unsure about particular ideas. Similarly, pupils' behaviour is not always managed well and this disrupts their learning and that of others.
- Support staff are deployed to work with groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also have help where appropriate. The support provided for the different groups of pupils is again of variable quality and there are occasions when staff are quite uninvolved with pupils for parts of the lesson.
- Where learning is most effective, staff have a good awareness of what pupils are doing and challenge them well. For example, in Year 6, staff explained carefully to pupils how they could rotate shapes around a vertex and challenged pupils by extending the angles of turn. The highest attaining pupils were challenged further and made good progress when using more complex shapes.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Children start in the early years with skills that are generally typical for their age. Most settle well into the school's routines. They develop positive attitudes to their learning and make good progress in the Reception Year. However, as pupils move through Key Stages 1 and 2, their progress is inconsistent and requires improvement.
- In Key Stage 1, standards have dipped from being above the national average to being below average in 2014. Boys did not do as well as the girls, and to a greater degree than seen nationally, especially in mathematics and writing.
- In 2014, standards in Key Stage 2 improved slightly from 2013, where achievement had been the lowest for several years. While girls achieved quite well, the boys were weaker. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils'

current work and observations of teaching and learning show that the reverse is true this year with, for example, several more boys than girls in line to achieve Level 6 in mathematics.

- The progress pupils make has varied considerably in the last three years. It currently requires improvement, as it is still inconsistent. While most pupils make the progress expected of them, many do not make better than expected progress.
- Pupils' reading skills generally require improvement. While several are confident and skilled readers, some do not have the confidence to work out new words and do not consistently improve their reading skills to a higher level. In Year 1, results in the national screening check on pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) were slightly above the national average in 2014.
- Pupils' writing skills are generally weaker than those in reading and mathematics. Their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar is not strong enough. Few pupils across the school write imaginatively, at length and in depth.
- Pupils' mathematics skills require improvement. This has been a key priority for the school and work has been done to engage girls in mathematics, albeit with mixed success. While a greater proportion of older pupils are working at the higher levels in their mathematical work, this is not consistent throughout the school.
- In 2014, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment on their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics without risk of identifying individuals. Currently, some disadvantaged pupils receive help from support staff. School data indicate that the progress that these pupils make is similar to that of their classmates and so also requires improvement.
- The most-able pupils make progress that requires improvement because, at times, work does not fully challenge them. The proportion of the most-able pupils working at the highest levels, particularly in mathematics, is improving because of some well-targeted teaching, especially in Year 6.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement, as does that of pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils' progress is variable because they do not all receive the help they need to achieve well. The school recognises the need to closely monitor the effectiveness of additional support to ensure it is more effective.
- Pupils develop healthy lifestyles through a range of physical education activities supported by the additional funding for primary school physical education and sport.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Children's skills when they start school are generally typical for their age in all areas of their learning and development. The school provides a good range of well-planned activities that take account of their interests and their stage of development. Children settle happily because there are lots of interesting things to do. They make good overall progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children develop good attitudes to their learning, as seen when happily sharing resources to colour in an Easter basket or a picture of an Easter egg or chick. They readily take turns when using the tricycles outside, and understand that the use of the timer ensures they each have the opportunity to use the equipment. For their age, most have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe when using such equipment. Children are keen to please the adults around them, as seen when one child produced 19 short lines of unaided writing about the Easter story.
- Teaching is consistently good. Staff make clear to children the expectation that they will try hard, as seen when all children took part in a discussion about a visit to a local farm. Staff have good subject knowledge of how to teach letters and the sounds they make (phonics). This means that most children have a secure understanding of sounds and how to blend them together to make, for example, 'lip', 'shop' and 'ship',

with some able to find words with 'ou' in them.

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Staff work well together to ensure consistency of approach when different adults are present. Leaders have enhanced the outdoor learning area with new safe landing surfaces, and they ensure that pupils are able to work and play safely in both areas. They are, however, aware of the challenge to make the indoor and outdoor environment more stimulating to make learning even more vibrant and imaginative. Parents are pleased with the quality of care for their children and speak with pleasure about how well they have settled at 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120216
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	453189

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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>	258
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Justin Morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Anderson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01664 562891
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
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