

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

Treadgold Street, Notting Hill, London W11 4BJ

Inspection dates

12–13 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards have declined since the last inspection and require improvement, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Some pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of because the quality of teaching is not consistently good across all subjects and age ranges.
- Until very recently, leaders have not done enough to check on the impact of teachers' work or put in place effective systems to manage their performance.
- Leaders and governors have not evaluated the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils thoroughly enough until the current school year began.
- The curriculum is not implemented consistently enough to ensure pupils are well prepared for all the potential opportunities of their future lives.
- The behaviour of some pupils requires improvement in lessons because it deteriorates when the quality of teaching is not good.
- Rates of attendance and punctuality require further improvement.
- Governors do not make effective use of the wider range of school information which has become available to them since the new senior leadership team took over, to ask sufficiently probing questions.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed executive headteacher and senior leadership team have begun to improve the school after an extended period of turbulence in leadership and governance.
- Pupils make good progress in learning to write.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well promoted.
- Governors have been well led out of a period of significant change and now have a wider range of information to help them hold school leaders to account.
- Nearly all pupils behave well and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils get on well with one another.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all leaders, including middle leaders, continue to develop the skills necessary to hold all teachers, including those with less experience or who are new to the school, fully to account for implementing agreed teaching policies.
- Ensure that leaders check to ensure that the agreed curriculum is clearly communicated and consistently implemented by all teachers in all subjects.
- Continue to monitor and improve rates of attendance and punctuality so that these become at least good.
- Develop the skills of governors further so that they can use the full range of information available to them to hold leaders to account.
- Develop the outdoor area in the early years so that it offers effective opportunities for children to develop key skills across all areas of learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils' progress improves by:
 - ensuring all teachers have the necessary skills to implement agreed teaching policies effectively
 - improving the quality of the teaching of phonics so that pupils catch up more rapidly
 - providing the necessary support and challenge to enable teachers to use assessment information more effectively to plan learning which meet the needs of all pupils, including the least and most able
 - monitoring the effectiveness with which teachers use the resources provided to support disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of governance is recommended.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium is also recommended.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The recently appointed executive headteacher has restored the drive for improvement after an extended period of turbulence in school leadership. She has worked successfully with governors to appoint a capable senior leadership team. She has ensured that systems to plan for improvement and monitor the impact of leaders' actions are in place, with challenging but realistic timescales for improvement set out. However, this has not yet secured a consistently good quality of teaching or good outcomes for pupils in all subjects.
- Senior and middle leaders are using the expertise provided by colleagues in the executive headteacher's substantive school well to develop their own skills. They monitor the quality of teaching systematically and thoroughly. Teachers are given clear, precise advice about how to improve. Training to help teachers acquire or extend their skills is well selected. However, senior leaders have not ensured that all teaching is improving quickly enough to secure the rates of pupils' progress required to make up for previous underachievement. Leaders are faced with the additional challenge of developing the quality of teaching of staff who are very new to the school or less experienced. The skills they need to tackle this challenge are developing but still require improvement.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that a comprehensible system for managing the performance of teachers is now in place. Senior leaders have introduced a rigorous system to track and monitor the achievement of pupils and use it to evaluate the impact of teachers' work. This is helping senior leaders hold teachers more fully to account. It is also helping leaders to support teachers in planning lessons which are more closely matched to the needs of pupils.
- Senior leaders have evaluated the school's effectiveness accurately and have established a culture where the need to improve can be discussed openly. Some parents have noticed the changes and appreciate them. Others continue to express concerns that communications about improvements and learning are not clear or frequent enough.
- The new leadership team has focused sharply on improving the methods used to monitor the impact of the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. This is allowing them to make decisions about whether or not to continue with specific interventions, based on their effectiveness. Consequently, leaders can demonstrate that gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils are closing for most disadvantaged pupils.
- The curriculum covers the required range of learning. It is suitably broad and balanced, offering effective opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, leaders' effectiveness in ensuring that the curriculum is implemented consistently requires improvement. Pupils demonstrate good skills in explaining how lessons, and the range of extra-curricular activities, help them consider challenging ideas. Pupils are expected to consider the views of others and contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. This is preparing them well for their future lives in Britain. Leaders have sought the views of pupils about how to improve the curriculum further, though not all of the plans resulting from this consultation have been fully implemented.
- The additional sport premium funding is being spent effectively to improve pupils' abilities in school sport and help them enjoy a wider range of activities.
- The local authority express confidence in the new leadership team. They have taken the decision to provide the governing body with the opportunity to act independently to resolve the challenges which have faced the school since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The current Chair of the Governing Body has led governors effectively through a challenging period of change. He has ensured that the skills of governors in holding school leaders to account have developed. Governors now benefit from much more substantial information about outcomes for pupils and have the necessary skills to interpret this. However, governors do not always ask sufficiently searching questions to probe deeply enough into the impact of plans for improvement.
 - Governors have played an important part in the recruitment of a new senior leadership team and in nurturing the relationship with a successful local school. They now have sufficient skills and information to check on the effectiveness of leaders' decisions about spending additional funding. They are now better placed to improve the accuracy of the decisions they make about rewarding teachers and monitoring safeguarding arrangements.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The new leadership team wasted no time in reviewing and improving arrangements to safeguard pupils when they took over. A governor checks on the arrangements regularly and staff are provided with appropriate training to ensure they can implement the

agreed policy. Leaders carry out thorough checks on the safety and security of the premises regularly. Pupils and parents who spoke to inspectors expressed confidence in the ability of leaders to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving because senior leaders have established robust systems to check on the work of teachers. They are providing effective training to address weaker teaching and to help inexperienced teachers improve.
- Teachers are using assessment information to plan lessons which meet the needs of pupils more closely. Most teachers are using the school's policies to teach pupils skills in an agreed sequence and provide more helpful guidance to pupils. For example, the recently introduced calculations policy is accelerating the progress of pupils in mathematics, where it is being implemented effectively. However, work in pupils' books shows that these agreed policies are not used consistently well in all classes and across all subjects. Some teachers do not always provide the necessary resources to enable less-able pupils to understand how to tackle calculations in mathematics, for example.
- Some teachers, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, ensure time is devoted to reminding pupils how to apply basic skills to tackling new concepts. They expect more-able pupils to think deeply and apply reasoning skills when solving problems. This ensures that work matches the needs of all pupils well and is quickening their progress. However, in some other classes, pupils are set work which is less closely aligned with their needs and sometimes is unnecessarily linked to their age rather than their ability.
- Teachers are successful in promoting a deeply embedded enjoyment of reading, despite some remaining limitations to the range of books available. Pupils are able to talk about their reading choices eloquently. However, the teaching of early reading skills and the recognition of the sounds that letters make requires further improvement.
- Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to write at length in a wide range of genres. They provide guidance which helps pupils make good progress in improving the content and structure of their writing. Teachers are also effective in enabling pupils to understand the link between reading and writing.
- Some teachers provide very effective direction and information to enable additional adults to support less-able pupils well. However, some support staff are not effectively deployed and do not always provide sufficiently clear guidance to help pupils make progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The curriculum is not implemented consistently well enough to ensure that all pupils recognise the full range of opportunities their future lives may provide. The recent survey of pupils' views conducted by leaders is being used to plan improvements to this aspect of pupils' learning.
- Pupils have learned how to keep themselves safe and leaders have ensured that this learning is relevant to the place where they live. Pupils also understand the risks associated with the internet and can explain how to manage such risks.
- Pupils say that changes introduced by the new leadership team make them more confident about seeking help. They see senior leaders as approachable and accessible. They understand how bullying might occur and speak enthusiastically about how adults keep them safe from bullying.
- Pupils know why fire drills are necessary and understand the importance of the school rules and routines. Leaders check the safety of the premises regularly and thoroughly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Most pupils behave well in lessons and during play. However, the attitudes of a small minority of pupils are less positive when the quality of teaching diminishes.
- A very small number of pupils require regular support to manage their behaviour. This work is well supported by teachers and effectively ensures all pupils are included in lessons without disrupting the learning of others. Records kept by school leaders indicate that poor behaviour linked to bullying or discriminatory behaviour is rare. The majority of parents are supportive of the school's work to promote good behaviour.
- Pupils are polite, enjoy wearing the school uniform and look after property well. They communicate enthusiasm for learning.

- Senior leaders have been effective in ensuring that staff and parents understand their responsibilities in making sure pupils come to school on time and regularly. However, attendance and punctuality still require improvement because rates of attendance remain below the national average and persistent absence is too common.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because standards in some subjects, such as mathematics and reading, are low.
- The most recent information collected by the school about outcomes for disadvantaged pupils shows that they are making better progress in nearly all year groups and gaps are closing. However, the gaps between the attainment of these pupils and others both in the school and nationally were wide in 2015.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 was well below the national average in 2015. Pupils in the current school year are making better progress, but the teaching of phonics requires further improvement to enable pupils to catch up quickly.
- Standards in mathematics were too low in 2015. The proportion of pupils making the expected progress to reach the expected level of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average by some margin. Work seen in the current Year 6 classes demonstrates that progress is accelerating and standards are rising. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is less rapid in other parts of the school where teaching is less effective and requires further improvement.
- Pupils make good progress in learning to write. The pace of their progress quickens as they move through the school. All pupils who left the school in 2015 made the progress expected of them in Key Stage 2 and over half of them exceeded this.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making better progress in the current school year as a result of more timely and thorough monitoring of the impact of additional support.
- A large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Most make similar progress to other pupils in acquiring skills in reading and writing. Teachers who are less new to the school have received specialist training in helping pupils learn English as an additional language and put this to good use.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- A new leader for the early years took over in April 2015. She acted swiftly and effectively to introduce more accurate checks on the attainment of children on entry. These indicate that children often arrive at the school with skills and levels of development which are lower than those typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year the proportion of children reaching a good level of development and well prepared for Year 1 is broadly in line with the national average. This represents an improvement in outcomes. However, current children's work seen during the inspection indicates that children's progress from their individual starting points requires improvement, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The early years leader monitors the quality of teaching across the setting regularly, and provides opportunities for professional development. This includes using support provided at the partner school. However, outcomes for children currently in the setting show that they do not always receive clear and effective guidance to develop some of their emerging skills. Additional adults do not always explain how to use resources to the greatest effect or promote effective dialogue with children.
- The outdoor area offers a secure and intriguing space for children to continue their learning. However, it has not been developed to its full potential. The range of resources to promote early skills in reading, writing and mathematics outdoors is more limited than that seen indoors, which limits opportunities to extend children's learning, particularly for those who prefer to learn outdoors.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection expressed confidence in the school's arrangements to keep children safe in the setting. Children get along with each other well, look after equipment properly and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

School details

Unique reference number	100494
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10006392

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.

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	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Asgian
Executive headteacher	Kathleen Williams
Telephone number	020 7727 8523
Website	www.franassisi@rbkc.sch.uk
Email address	info@franassisi.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 May 2010

Information about this school

- St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The early years has a single Nursery class offering part-time places and two Reception classes which children attend full-time. There are three mixed year group classes in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4, and two classes in both Year 5 and Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional funding, the pupil premium, is above the national average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for primary schools, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Governors are responsible for a breakfast club and after-school provision at the school.
- In September 2015 governors appointed an executive headteacher to lead and manage the school. She remains the substantive headteacher of a neighbouring successful primary school, but has a long term commitment to her role at this school. An informal support partnership exists between the two schools. Governors are working towards a more permanent collaboration. An associate headteacher, who has been appointed on an interim basis, leads and manages the school in the absence of the executive headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations in 14 lessons. The lead inspector conducted a tour of the school with the associate headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils at play and during the lunch break.
- The lead inspector held discussions with a group of pupils and heard them read.
- The lead inspector spoke to a number of parents at the end of the first day of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the leader responsible for monitoring the expenditure of the pupil premium and the leader responsible for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documents including the school improvement plan, documents related to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body and information about the outcomes for pupils.
- There were insufficient responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. However, inspectors considered outcomes of consultations and surveys of the views of parents and pupils provided by the school. They also spoke to parents who expressed a wish to speak with them during the inspection.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Bryant	Ofsted Inspector
Nicholas Cornell	Ofsted Inspector
Edison David	Ofsted Inspector

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