

# St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

Southgate Drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6HD

## Inspection dates

17–18 March 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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders' vision for the school is not understood and shared by all members of the school community, including the governing body.
- Differences in the quality of teaching and assessment lead to variations in pupils' learning and progress as they move up through the year groups.
- Pupils make slower progress in mathematics than in other subjects.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 does not build strongly enough on pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 2, particularly in mathematics.
- Children do not make sufficiently rapid progress during early years. While some make good progress, others do not learn well enough.
- The most-able pupils do not make the progress they should to achieve their full potential at the end of Year 6.
- Some teachers do not use information about pupils' progress well enough to plan learning for pupils of all abilities.
- Plans to improve the school's work are not specific enough to secure the rapid developments needed in teaching and learning.
- Some subject leaders are having a greater effect on improving teaching and learning than others.
- Members of staff are not always sufficiently clear about their accountability for pupils' behaviour and achievement.
- Governors do not hold senior leaders sufficiently to account for pupils' achievement.
- At times, some pupils become distracted during lessons. When this is the case, adults do not always re-engage them in learning quickly enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Standards have steadily improved at the end of both key stages since the previous inspection.
- Some aspects of teaching are better than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1 and achieve well at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say that behaviour has improved this year. Most pupils want to do their best and work hard.
- The headteacher has lifted staff morale since her appointment. Teachers are keen to improve their practice.

## Full report

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

- Deepen pupils' learning and quicken their progress during Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that teachers:
  - use information about pupils' progress to plan work which demands pupils of all abilities to think hard and do their best, especially the most able
  - deepen and extend pupils' mathematical understanding effectively
  - have the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and quickly rectify any off-task behaviour.
- Improve outcomes in early years by ensuring that adults:
  - focus on moving children's learning forward in all activities
  - make better use of children's interests to engage them in learning
  - have consistently high expectations of children's behaviour and learning.
- Improve leadership and management, including in early years, by ensuring that:
  - everyone in the school community understands and shares senior leaders' vision and ambition for the school's future
  - governors work effectively with senior leaders
  - assessment procedures are fully established and consistently used by leaders and teachers
  - teachers strengthen their subject knowledge in the teaching of mathematics
  - school development plans more precisely identify which aspects of the school's work need improving, which staff members are responsible and how success will be measured
  - there are clear lines of staff accountability for pupils' behaviour and well-being.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Senior leaders have not communicated their vision and ambition for the school's future clearly enough to all members of the school community. Teachers' and leaders' expectations of pupils' learning and of their behaviour in lessons are not yet high enough.
- Leaders and governors have an overgenerous view of the school's performance. Some are unclear about their part in the school's development and about their responsibilities for securing the necessary improvements. This is hindering the pace of development in the school. The key issues for development identified at the time of the previous inspection have not been fully addressed.
- Plans for improvement are not specific enough about what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to check that the school is on track to secure the necessary developments.
- The appointment of a permanent headteacher at the start of this academic year signalled the start of a more settled phase for the school. The school has a positive, welcoming, learning atmosphere. Staff morale has improved over the past year and is now good. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together and are keen to develop their practice.
- Leaders and governors have secured steady improvements in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection, so that standards are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher has made a start in developing staff understanding of their responsibilities. She has put a secure framework in place to support and manage staff performance. It is too early, however, for this to have increased staff accountability fully for pupils' achievement, personal development and well-being.
- The recently appointed subject leaders are knowledgeable and determined to play their part in improving pupils' achievement. However, it is too early for them to have made a significant difference to teaching and learning. Some subject leaders have a less secure understanding of pupils' progress across the school in their area of subject responsibility than others because systems for assessing pupils' progress are not yet fully established.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils' learning and personal development. For example, leaders provide mathematics and reading interventions for individuals and small groups of pupils, which are helping them to catch up with their peers.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sports premium appropriately to ensure that pupils can take part in a wide range of clubs and activities. Training has improved the quality of physical education teaching. This has increased pupils' enjoyment of sport as well as their physical well-being.
- Leaders have reviewed and updated the way the curriculum is planned to reflect recent changes in the National Curriculum. Trips, visits and after-school clubs enhance pupils' enjoyment of school well. However, while pupils learn a broad, balanced curriculum, teachers do not always set them work which is sufficiently demanding and this restricts pupils' progress.
- Leaders have recently introduced more consistent procedures for recording and checking pupils' progress. However, these are not fully established in all subjects or year groups and so, as yet, are not used by teachers to plan learning effectively.
- Leaders develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. They have introduced more opportunities in the curriculum to promote and celebrate British values, and have increased staff and pupils' awareness of the school's religious ethos. Pupils get on well together. Most respect the views of their classmates and listen carefully to their teachers. Rising achievement means that pupils are increasingly well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The large majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that the school is well led and managed. They are pleased the school now has a permanent headteacher and are keen to learn her plans for the school's future. Most would recommend the school.

## ■ The governance of the school

- Governors lack clarity about the school’s work, the difference initiatives have made to the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement, and about improvements since the previous inspection. They have an overoptimistic view of the school’s performance and are unclear about the headteacher’s vision for the school’s future.
- The effectiveness of governors’ roles in supporting and challenging the school are variable within the governing body. Some governors are well informed about aspects of the school’s work, such as science. They meet regularly with subject leaders, visit the school to see teaching and learning in action and ask pertinent questions during governors’ meetings. However, some governors have a less secure view of the school’s work.
- Governors have strengthened checks on the use of funding, including the pupil premium. They speak knowledgeably about the way funds are used to support disadvantaged pupils’ learning and about the difference this is making to pupils’ progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school completes appropriate suitability checks when appointing new members of staff. Leaders ensure that all members of staff are well qualified and give parents helpful information about safety issues, including e-safety. Teachers and learning support assistants are alert to any potential risks, making sure that pupils are safe in the classrooms and around the school. Leaders make sure that playtimes are well supervised and that equipment is well maintained, so that pupils can play securely. Leaders have tightened procedures for checking attendance, including prompt action in the case of any unexplained pupil absence.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**requires improvement**

- Teaching in early years and Key Stage 2 does not deepen and extend pupils’ learning well enough, particularly in mathematics. Teachers do not yet use assessment information effectively to plan learning for pupils’ differing needs.
- Some teachers underestimate pupils’ potential to make faster progress, including the most able. They do not set work which builds on pupils’ knowledge and understanding sufficiently. As a result, pupils do not achieve their full potential at the end of Year 6.
- The teaching of mathematics is variable across the school. Some teachers are more knowledgeable about teaching mathematics than others. For example, while teachers in all year groups regularly set mathematics work for pupils, some teachers are more proficient at exploring and building on pupils’ mathematical understanding, both during lessons and over time. As a result, pupils in some year groups make faster progress than in others.
- At times, teachers do not respond quickly enough when pupils lose concentration during lessons. When this is the case, pupils make slower progress.
- There is some effective teaching in the school, particularly in Key Stage 1. Where this is the case, teachers employ their confident subject knowledge well to engage and develop pupils’ learning in reading, writing and mathematics. They work positively with learning support assistants to get the best out of their pupils. They take note of how well pupils are learning, giving support and reassurance where needed as well as setting work which is challenging, stimulating and rewarding.
- Teachers and learning support assistants in Key Stage 1 teach fundamental reading and writing skills well, so that pupils develop secure literacy skills by the end of Year 2. The teaching of phonics has improved since the previous inspection, with a consistent, systematic programme securely established.
- Improvements in the teaching of reading, including increased use of high-quality texts to appeal to pupils’ interests, have increased their enjoyment of books. Pupils have more opportunities to read in school than at the time of the previous inspection and so regularly practise their reading skills. Teachers and learning support assistants have a better understanding about how to develop pupils’ reading skills than at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, pupils read with increasing confidence.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare requires improvement. Some pupils do not listen carefully enough to their teachers or to each other during lessons.

- Pupils behave well at the breakfast and after-school clubs. Staff give pupils a warm welcome. Pupils enjoy taking part in activities such as table football and board games, and talk confidently and politely to adults.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils learn what they can do to help to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They know where to find help in school if they are worried and say that their teachers are quick to help.
- Pupils are clear about what bullying is and know that it is wrong. They say there are no problems with bullying in the school because everyone gets on well together. They say events such as 'anti-bullying week' give them helpful reminders about what they can do if they ever feel unsafe.
- Pupils enjoy receiving awards for regularly attending school. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is above the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent.
- Pupils say that they are working harder this year and making better progress. Many concentrate very well during lessons and do their best.
- Most parents who completed Parent View feel pupils are safe.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. There are variations in pupils' behaviour between classes and within lessons. Some pupils do not get on well enough with their work. At times, off-task behaviour hampers pupils' learning in some classes. This is particularly the case in those classes where teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and in lessons where the work set for pupils is too easy.
- Leaders' plans to support individual pupils with specific emotional and behavioural needs are appropriate. However, plans are not sufficiently clear about who is responsible for checking whether the extra help provided is making a difference to pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils say that the headteacher has improved behaviour in the school. Pupils behave well during playtimes, assemblies and when moving around the school. They are polite, friendly and welcoming.
- Most parents who completed Parent View feel that pupils are well behaved.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Pupils make uneven progress as they move up through the year groups. Children in early years do not make sufficiently rapid progress to ensure that they are as well prepared as they can be for learning in Year 1. Teaching in Key Stage 2 does not build strongly enough on the good progress pupils make during Key Stage 1. As a result, pupils do not achieve their full potential by the end of Year 6. In 2015, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics during Key Stage 2 is slower than in reading and writing. The work in their books indicates that, while they develop a secure knowledge of fundamental mathematical knowledge appropriate for their age, they are less confident about using this to tackle problems.
- The progress made by the most-able pupils varies between key stages. While they make good progress during Key Stage 1, they make slower progress in early years and during Key Stage 2, especially in reading and mathematics. While the most able achieved well in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, they did less well at the end of Year 6, where the proportions achieving the higher levels were below the national average in both subjects.
- The most-able pupils make better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. In 2015, the proportions achieving the higher levels (Level 3 and Level 5) in writing were above average at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make the same, uneven progress as their classmates. While they make good progress in some classes, particularly in Key Stage 1, they make slower progress elsewhere.
- Standards have steadily improved over the past three years. In 2015, pupils' outcomes were higher at the end of both key stages than they were at the time of the previous inspection and were in line with the national average.
- Effective teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures that pupils' progress accelerates during this key stage. By the end of Year 2, standards are consistently in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and pupils are well placed for the next stage in their learning at Key Stage 2.

- Pupils make good progress in developing key reading and writing skills, including phonics (the sounds letters make) during Key Stage 1. The results of the Year 1 phonics check have increased since the previous inspection and were above the national average in 2015. However, this good progress in reading and writing is not sustained during Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. They acquire secure English language skills which help them to participate fully and with increasing confidence in lessons and in school life as they move up through the year groups.
- While the gaps between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and others nationally increased in all subjects and at both key stages in 2015, the work in their books indicates that the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group make better progress than before, so that the gaps are now narrowing.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- Leadership of early years is not sufficiently strong to ensure good teaching, assessment and outcomes. Leaders have not ensured that adults have the highest expectations of children's learning and behaviour.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has declined substantially since the previous inspection and has been much lower than the national average for the past two years. As a result, some children are not sufficiently prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Adults' expectations of children's learning and behaviour are not sufficiently high. While children behave sensibly, and some concentrate well, others are not as well engaged. Adults do not always respond quickly enough to ensure that all children get the most out of the activities. This means that, while some children concentrate and learn well, those who are inattentive make slower progress.
- There are some strengths in teaching. For example, teachers give the development of language and number skills an appropriately strong focus when planning activities. There are lots of interesting and appealing opportunities for children to write. Some of those participating in these activities make good progress. For example, during the inspection, several children concentrated hard, carefully drawing pictures and writing captions to represent the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. However, others who are less interested make more limited progress because adults do not make the best use of their interests to further their learning. Adults do not always focus well enough on deepening learning when children are engaged with activities.
- Caring teachers and learning support assistants ensure that classrooms are safe, welcoming and attractive, so that children are happy and secure. Teachers widely display key words and numbers around the classroom so that children know where to look if they get stuck. Relationships are good.
- Parents are supportive of the school's work. They say their children like school and have settled in well. Parents recognise improvements in the way teachers record children's progress and feel this gives them a clearer picture of how well children are getting on in school. They appreciate opportunities for them to share their view of children's experiences and learning outside school with teachers.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126046
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002294

This inspection 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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	422
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mary Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debra Turner
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 521009
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stfrancis-school.com">www.stfrancis-school.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@st-francisassisi.w-sussex.sch.uk">office@st-francisassisi.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21–22 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are managed by the school and were included in this inspection.
- The school provides full-time early years in two Reception classes.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2015.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in 17 lessons or part lessons.
- The inspection team held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. A meeting also took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- The inspection team took account of 91 responses to Parent View. In addition, they considered the views expressed by parents who spoke with them informally at the start of the school day, as well as written comments from parents.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and attendance, and safeguarding policies.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. They also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Good	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Redman	Ofsted Inspector



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