

Saint Francis Catholic Primary School

Dalby Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0BP

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have ensured that the school has improved, at pace, since the last inspection. They are ambitious for further improvements.
- Subject and middle leaders are a strength of the school. They undertake their responsibilities with diligence and enthusiasm.
- Leaders sometimes lack the necessary attention to detail in their plans for school improvement and some administrative tasks. This can make it difficult to hold colleagues fully to account for their actions.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations for every pupil. Work in pupils' books is usually well presented, regardless of the subject.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are sharp at identifying pupils who need additional support in reading, writing and mathematics. They deal with pupils' misconceptions quickly and effectively.
- The assessment practice for subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet consistent. Teachers do not match work to pupils' abilities as well as they might in these subjects.
- The school's strong ethos is the bedrock for pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils are thoughtful and understanding to the needs and differences of others.
- Safeguarding is effective because staff know pupils and their families well. They care deeply for each pupil and are vigilant for pupils who may be in need.
- Pupils attend regularly because they enjoy school. Their conduct is usually of a high standard.
- Work in pupils' books show that most are making progress that is good or better. Pupils who are more vulnerable to underachievement, such as the disadvantaged, achieve well from their starting points.
- Historical performance information shows that the progress of some pupils could be accelerated further.
- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. Teachers plan activities that stimulate their interest and inquisitiveness.
- Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their child's development in the early years. These positive relationships continue as pupils progress through the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leaders' effectiveness in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's performance, in particular ensuring greater attention to detail in the development of plans for improvement and the completion of administrative tasks.
- Extend the good assessment practice seen in reading, writing and mathematics, to ensure that pupils' progress and attainment are equally strong in all subjects.
- Ensure that teachers set work that consistently challenges pupils and stretches their learning, regardless of their age, ability or background, and further accelerates their progress in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The senior leaders have acted quickly and decisively in response to the outcomes of the previous inspection. They have focused on ensuring that improvements in pupils' progress and attainment are at the forefront of their actions. Their success in this has shown that there is good capacity for the school to continue to improve.
- The school's religious character is ever-present and underpins the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Senior leaders have designed thoughtfully the curriculum links between religious values and those of modern Britain. As a result, democracy, tolerance and service to others have a high priority and are intertwined throughout the curriculum.
- Subject and middle leaders are a strength of the school. Senior leaders have succeeded in delegating responsibilities and empowering others to lead. Subject and middle leaders are increasingly effective in identifying and addressing the aspects in need of improvement within their areas of responsibility. This has been exemplified by leaders' actions to reverse the dip in Year 1 phonics outcomes, seen in 2016.
- Senior leaders use the school's performance management systems and procedures to promote good teaching practice and improve pupils' outcomes. Leaders have addressed staff underperformance and provided coaching and professional development opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants when necessary. As a result, the majority of teaching in the school is of a high standard.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the additional government funding from the pupil premium has been used to deliver positive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders track the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils diligently to ensure that they receive support according to their needs. Leaders also use this funding creatively to ensure that these pupils have equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life.
- The special educational needs coordinator is effective because she knows the needs and backgrounds of individual pupils well. Additional support is well planned and closely monitored for impact. As a result, the additional funds provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well used.
- Senior leaders review their actions regularly for impact. This is illustrated well in the improved use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding. Leaders, having identified that the use of PE specialists was not creating a legacy of improved teachers' skills, prioritised successfully the development and sharing of teaching practice to raise pupils' PE outcomes.
- Senior leaders have been proactive in seeking the additional support they need to improve the school. In addition to the involvement of the local authority, the school has also benefited from the assistance of the STEP Teaching Alliance and the Nottingham Catholic Teaching Schools Alliance. These actions have contributed significantly to the pace of school improvement since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not consistently show attention to detail in their planning for school improvement or their checking of documented evidence of actions taken. Leaders' action plans are not specific enough to ensure that time deadlines are met or specific

colleagues held to account for their actions. Key administrative tasks are sometimes overlooked and some records are incomplete as a result.

- Leaders have not yet ensured that the quality and accuracy of the assessment of pupils' progress and attainment are equally strong across the curriculum. In subjects other than English and mathematics, the assessment systems are not yet supporting teachers in setting work that is consistently well matched to pupils' abilities.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school and the future of every pupil. They have responded commendably to the outcomes of the previous inspection, and are determined that the school will continue to improve. The governing body is led very ably by the chair of governors, who has a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of governors in securing school improvement.
- Governors undertake their responsibilities conscientiously, prioritising the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The majority of governors have an accurate picture of the school's performance. They use the school's performance information well to challenge school leaders and hold them to account.
- Governors monitor the use of additional funds, such as the pupil premium, and receive regular updates on the outcomes for different groups of pupils. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is particularly knowledgeable about the interventions, outcomes and impact of the additional income for this group of pupils. As a result, vulnerable pupils achieve well at the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and school staff know pupils and their family circumstances well and this contributes to the strong culture of care and commitment to others. Child protection records are thorough and illustrate the steps taken to secure pupils' safety and welfare.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and other school staff undertake regular training and are able to describe the signs and symptoms of abuse. Some very good procedures exist to ensure that training is translated into practice. Where leaders identify areas for improvement, they act quickly and decisively to address these.
- Staff are vigilant to the risks of extreme views and know what to do if they have a concern about a child, or member of staff, and to whom they should take their concerns. The vast majority of parents are sure that their children are safe and that school staff would act quickly and appropriately if there were any concerns about a pupil's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' and teaching assistants' expectations of pupils' work have risen significantly since the previous inspection. In the vast majority of classes, teachers insist that pupils' work is well presented in all subjects. Pupils are eager to reach their teachers' high expectations and this fuels their love of learning.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to assess pupils' learning. They pinpoint any additional support required, quickly and accurately. Teachers address pupils' misconceptions in reading, writing and mathematics immediately. Any additional learning needs are supported promptly by regular, effective intervention activities. These actions enable pupils of different abilities and backgrounds to make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons that allow pupils to practise their English and mathematical skills across a range of subjects. Pupils' topic work in subjects such as religious education (RE) and science often reinforces pupils' learning in writing and data handling, for example. This ensures that pupils' learning is deepened over time.
- Teachers and teaching assistants often extend pupils' learning through the use of well-considered questions. Teachers' feedback encourages pupils to reflect on how they could improve their work further, with opportunities usually provided for pupils to respond to teachers' developmental comments. Work in pupils' books shows that, over time, this is helping to reinforce learning and eliminate pupils' inaccuracies.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use and apply their improving mathematical skills. Increasingly, pupils are also expected to explain what they have done, and why, to improve their reasoning skills. In Year 5, pupils enthusiastically solved problems about the placement of sheep in a farmer's fields, while explaining their thinking to each other.
- Teachers pay particular attention to the development of key skills, such as handwriting, spelling and grammar, in pupils' writing. Pupils write for a range of audiences, over extended periods, and this helps to build their resilience as writers. Over time, pupils' writing shows improvements in the quality and maturity of content and becomes increasingly engaging for readers.
- Leaders and teachers place a high priority on the development of reading skills. Parents and pupils know that there is an expectation that pupils will read regularly at home. Early reading skills are taught effectively. Pupils use their developing phonics knowledge to read new or unfamiliar words, developing their confidence and enhancing their ability to read for pleasure.
- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, teachers do not yet use their assessments of pupils' progress consistently well to inform the next steps in pupils' learning. Where this is the case, all pupils undertake the same work, regardless of their background or ability. Consequently, some pupils are not challenged as much as they could be, beyond English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. From their entry into the early years, pupils are taught to respect each other and their school environment. The vast majority of pupils show great pride in the presentation of their work and the condition of the school building.
- Pupils are taught to accept and show tolerance for each other as well as people of other faiths, cultures and lifestyles. The school's religious character supports and

enhances the curriculum, while also encouraging service to others through actions such as charitable giving. Pupils are well prepared to become citizens of modern Britain.

- Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. They understand democracy and the rule of law, at an age-appropriate level. Year 5 pupils illustrated this when discussing their trip to the galleries of justice in Nottingham. Not only were they able to tell an inspector how the judicial system works, but they could also discuss topics such as why a judge wears a wig in court.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in a variety of situations and can explain the steps taken to protect them at school. Pupils can talk about the ways they keep themselves safe when using the internet, for example. They and their parents trust school staff to deal with any fall-outs quickly and effectively, with incidents of bullying being very rare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and well-mannered and their conduct is consistently good at most times of the school day. The vast majority of pupils respond quickly and appropriately to adults' instructions.
- Older pupils enjoy the increasing roles of responsibility they can undertake. They are responsive and respectful towards the views and opinions of their classmates, often expressing mature points of view. Teachers and pupils have high aspirations, with one Year 5 pupil explaining how she values her RE lessons as they cover issues such as personal ambition.
- Leaders have taken all reasonable steps to increase attendance, which has been below the national average for particular groups of pupils for a number of years. These figures have been distorted by a very small number of pupils and leaders have worked hard to re-engage their families, with some success. Overall levels of attendance and persistent absence are broadly in-line with the national averages for primary schools.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Work in books shows that the vast majority of pupils are making progress that is at least good in relation to their starting points, regardless of ability or background. Over time, pupils' skills and knowledge are improving and their understanding is deepening. This is true of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils' assessment and progress tracking information suggests that outcomes have improved this year in both key stages 1 and 2, and Year 1 phonics. Work in pupils' books and lesson observations suggest that this information is likely to be accurate.
- The improvements in current outcomes are the result of the effective action taken by leaders and teachers to address a dip in 2016, particularly in Year 1 phonics and key stage 1 reading and writing. Leaders track the progress of pupils assiduously and use this information to hold teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. Teachers use this information to plan and deliver effective interventions to raise pupils' outcomes.
- In 2016, key stage 1 pupils' attainment was broadly in line with national figures in mathematics. Reading and writing attainment was slightly below the national average. Year 1 phonics outcomes showed a significant drop that was not in keeping with the

school's past performance.

- In key stage 2, pupils' progress was broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. A slightly higher proportion of pupils attained at the expected levels in each subject than was seen nationally. A broadly similar proportion of pupils achieved at the higher standards.
- The most able and least able pupils usually attain well from their starting points. The same is true for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because teachers are adept at planning and monitoring additional support and intervention activities for impact.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress over time and in relation to their starting points. Their progress is tracked carefully and teachers and teaching assistants tailor additional support specifically to meet individual's academic, social and emotional needs. Over time, the difference between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils diminishes.
- Occasionally, the progress of some pupils does not accelerate as quickly as it could, over time. For example, in 2016, a smaller proportion of pupils who were of middle ability when they left key stage 1 reached the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to school in the early years. Members of the early years team have high expectations of what children can do and plan activities that build on children's existing knowledge while developing new skills. Consequently, children achieve well.
- The early years leader is effective in securing good practice. She uses children's assessment information to identify and plan for the areas in need of further improvement. She has ensured that parents are an integral part of their child's development from the point of transition into the early years. The impact of this is evident in children's learning journey development records and the classroom achievement board.
- Children enter the early years at levels of development that are broadly typical for their age. They settle quickly into new routines and benefit from a caring, nurturing environment. By the time they leave the early years, the proportion attaining a good level of development is usually above that seen nationally. Current assessment information suggests that leaders have been successful in addressing the dip in outcomes seen in 2016.
- From their starting points, children make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. Early reading and writing skills are taught well and this is reflected in the work in children's books. Children are increasingly confident mathematicians as they are taught and encouraged to apply a variety of calculation methods.
- Teachers ensure that there is a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children are clear about what they are expected to do and learn at each area of provision. Over time, the vast majority of children spend increasingly long periods immersed in tasks that interest them, and this helps to develop their resilience as

learners.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team to assess the progress and next steps in children's learning. Teachers plan activities that make good use of both the indoor and outdoor provision. They constantly adapt these learning environments to meet the interests and needs of the children. The vast majority of children progress well as a result.
- Teachers and teaching assistants form positive relationships with families and this ensures that children's welfare is well catered for. There is strong parental involvement with the school when children start in the Reception Year through visits to homes by early years practitioners, and through welcome and 'catch-up' events in school. As a result, children are happy and confident learners.
- Leaders ensure that the safeguarding of children takes the highest priority and that all statutory duties are met.
- On occasion, learning tasks are not well enough matched to ensure sufficient challenge for the most able children. Where this happens, they can lose interest and their progress is not as good as it could be.

School details

Unique reference number	120216
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10031150

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Justin Morgan
Headteacher	Jo Anderson
Telephone number	01664 562891
Website	www.st-francis.leics.sch.uk
Email address	adminteam@st-francis.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 March 2015

Information about this school

- St Francis Catholic Primary School is an average-size primary school.
- The majority of pupils are taught in single-age classes, including children in the early years, who attend full time.
- Two thirds of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language have risen to above the national averages since the last inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average but has doubled since the time of the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- In 2016, the school met the national floor standards for pupil achievement.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, including joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject and middle leaders, the special needs coordinator, representatives of the governing body and the school's adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and one email from a parent.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's own self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils; and minutes from a number of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Stephen McMullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Dale

Ofsted Inspector

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2017