

# St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Crawley

Southgate Drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6HD

## Inspection dates

18–19 April 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher has brought about rapid improvements since joining the school in January 2017. He has worked in close cooperation with staff and governors to create a vibrant learning community in which pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are warmly welcomed into a bright and attractive learning environment in which they receive outstanding care and attention. They behave exceptionally well and they feel safe in school.
- There has been a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, consequently, teaching has improved and is consistently good across the school.
- Phonics is taught well and this provides pupils with a secure foundation to read fluently and confidently. Pupils enjoy reading and speak enthusiastically about the range of books and authors they enjoy.
- Occasionally, books provided for younger pupils are not appropriate. There are times when pupils across the school do not use punctuation accurately enough to read with meaning and expression.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They enjoy a balance of activities that help them to make good progress in all aspects of their development. They are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive effective support and, consequently, they make good progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to use their English and mathematics skills when learning other subjects.
- Underpinning the work of the school are the strong values and ethos that permeate the learning community. Pupils have enriching experiences that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- There is not always a high enough level of challenge for the most able pupils and this prevents them from making even more rapid progress.

## Full report

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:
  - checks are made to ensure that pupils' reading books are appropriate and that pupils take note of punctuation to read expressively and with meaning
  - there is sufficient pace and challenge in lessons so that all pupils, including the most able, make more rapid progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since joining the school, the headteacher has established high expectations for both staff and pupils. He has built a strong staff team which shares his vision and ambition and together they strive to ensure that pupils receive the highest quality of education.
- Leaders have strengthened the skills of all staff by providing high-quality training, support and coaching so that they all play a key role in developing the school. There is a shared vision among all staff and governors and so they know exactly what they are working towards. Teamwork is a strength of the school and staff morale is high.
- There has been some staff turnover in recent years, primarily due to maternity leave, but this has been thoughtfully managed to avoid disruption to pupils' education. As new staff have been appointed, they join the school before the outgoing teacher leaves so that there is a seamless transition in leadership as well as teaching.
- Leaders at all levels are passionate about their work and demonstrate an enthusiasm for making the school even better. They have a thorough understanding of what is working well and where further improvements can be made. They regularly check on the work of colleagues to secure further improvements to the quality of teaching in their specific subject.
- Incorporated into the school's mission statement is: 'As pupils and staff we encourage in each other a love of learning. This is a place where we can all belong and where difference and diversity are celebrated.' This underpins all aspects of the school's work and is reflected in the high expectations and ambitions set out by school leaders.
- Every pupil is seen as a unique being with his or her own skills, talents and beliefs. The school's caring ethos ensures that fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are consistently promoted throughout the school. All pupils are treated equally and fairly and discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.
- The curriculum is very well planned to provide increasing links between subjects so that pupils gain a broader understanding of what they are learning. It often allows pupils to reflect on moral issues and so pupils gain a deeper understanding of the world. To add to pupils' interest and enjoyment, educational visits are very well planned to enhance pupils' learning.
- Leaders make careful use of all funding available, including that for disadvantaged pupils. They have analysed the individual learning needs of disadvantaged pupils and have put support in place to ensure that these pupils have the same opportunities to achieve equally as well as other pupils.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the leadership of the headteacher. Many parents who expressed their view commented on how much the school has improved over the past year. One parent wrote: 'Both my children love this school, the ethos, the staff and the pupils. I feel confident that my children get the best care academically and pastorally. I am proud that my family is part of the St Francis of Assisi family.'

## Governance of the school

- Governors provide a high level of professional support and challenge to the school's leadership team. They visit the school regularly and they receive high-quality reports and so they have a good insight into the work of the school. Since being re-established last year, they have built on the strengths of the previous executive working group and have a clear understanding of their role in providing strategic leadership to the school. There is a strong climate of trust and respect between the governing body and school leaders.
- Governors bring a good range of professional skills that they use to challenge school leaders. They ask pertinent questions and probe into various sources of information and data and so they understand how well the school is performing. They hold school leaders to account for the learning and progress that pupils make. They worked alongside school leaders to create the development plan and so know exactly what leaders are aiming to achieve.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school makes all the necessary checks when appointing new staff and records are detailed and meticulous. All staff and governors have received training and so are up to date on what to do should they have a concern that a pupil is at risk from harm. All policies and procedures are clear and provide helpful guidance to staff.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school because staff take their concerns seriously. They know about different forms of bullying but they are adamant that it rarely occurs. They say that on the odd occasion that pupils fall out there is always an adult on hand to help to sort it out. Such incidents are rare because of the caring and nurturing nature of the school.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through information in assemblies and across the curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on staying safe when using modern technology. Pupils understand that although there are benefits to online research and activities, there are also risks. They know that they should not share personal information with strangers and to tell a trusted adult if they have concerns.
- Parents and staff who responded to the surveys agree that pupils are safe and happy and that they are well looked after in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- There is a culture within classrooms of high expectations in which pupils are expected to do their best. Routines and procedures are well established and so pupils understand what is expected of them. Recently, initiatives to improve pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work are showing a demonstrable impact. Consequently, pupils are proud of the work in their books.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning because teachers provide interesting activities that inspire their interest. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson,

pupils had to discuss whether or not animals should be kept in zoos. This followed a previous visit to a zoo and inspired some interesting ideas as pupils confidently offered different points of view.

- One of the features of classrooms is the quality of dialogue and conversation. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and share their ideas and this helps them to learn. Teachers ask challenging questions that make pupils think and so they make good progress. It is part of classroom routines that pupils ask questions or raise comments and this encourages them to be active partners in their own learning.
- Lessons are very well planned to take into account pupils' needs and interests. Teachers use interesting resources such as video clips to stimulate pupils' imaginations and inspire them to learn. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils produced some highly creative writing using sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure to create images of a run-down, disused building.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive good support from well-trained teaching assistants. Class teachers, in liaison with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), identify pupils' specific difficulties and plan programmes of work that help them to catch up with their classmates. Sometimes help is provided in class but, where more specific help is needed, it may be provided in small groups.
- Teachers know their pupils well and they provide work that is mostly at the right level. In most lessons, teachers check on how well pupils are learning and they intervene to help pupils to move on when they are ready. Teachers have good subject knowledge and so their level of questioning is good.
- Work in pupils' books shows that teachers provide them with effective feedback, in line with the school's feedback and assessment policy. Pupils respond to this feedback by improving their work and this increases their rates of progress. Just occasionally, work provided for the most able pupils does not present a high enough challenge and this slows progress for these pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This is reflected in the views of pupils, who say they love school and they feel very safe in school. They get on very well together, showing respect towards each other and adults. As a result, the school is a very well-ordered learning community.
- Pupils' highly positive attitudes towards learning contribute well to the harmonious atmosphere that exists within the school. There is a high level of care and pupils know that they are valued. Their attendance is above average and very few are late for school. School records show that reported incidents of poor behaviour are rare.
- Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities to take on responsibilities such as acting as school councillors and play leaders. They are proud of their school and so take care of

resources and equipment. They show respect towards each other and adults and enjoy listening to each other while confidently asserting their own point of view.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Throughout the inspection, pupils demonstrated excellent attitudes and behaviour in classrooms and around the school. They are active, curious and motivated learners. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions so that little learning time is lost. They move around the school safely and quietly.
- In the playground, there is plenty of equipment, including an outdoor gym. Pupils use this sensibly, knowing that it helps to keep them active and healthy. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions when pupils sit together eating their lunch while chatting quietly.
- Pupils are very polite, friendly and helpful. They are courteous and show respect towards adults and each other. They all get on very well together regardless of background and take delight in playing and working alongside those from different parts of the world.
- In classrooms, pupils are absorbed in learning. They listen carefully to teachers and to each other. There are clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and all staff consistently implement the school's behaviour policy. Consequently, all pupils understand and respond to the high expectations placed upon them.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education because they work hard to reach standards that are at least in line with, and sometimes above, national expectations. Work in their books shows that they take pride in their work, usually presenting their work to a high standard.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2017, pupils' progress was broadly average in reading and mathematics and it was below average in writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and writing was broadly average, with fewer pupils reaching the higher standard in these subjects. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard was above average.
- Pupils currently in school are making more rapid progress, owing to improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers have a clearer idea of pupils' starting points and plan work that builds on and extends what they can already do.
- Although relatively few in number, disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils. Teachers have identified the specific barriers that some of these pupils have and they have put into place actions to help them to overcome their difficulties. Similarly, disabled pupils and those who have SEN make good progress. This is because staff are skilled at understanding their needs and they take action to ensure that these pupils receive the help that they need.
- Pupils get off to a good start in learning to read. In 2017, their attainment in phonics was well above the national average, having increased from the previous year. This

gives pupils the skills that they need to confidently read and decode unfamiliar words. However, just occasionally, they do not make enough use of punctuation to read for meaning and this slows their understanding of what they have read. There are also times when the reading material selected is not well enough matched to their learning or interest level.

- Pupils in Year 6 have very positive attitudes to reading. They read fluently and confidently and talk about the various books and authors that they enjoy. They respond appropriately to questions about books by referring to the text. In most classrooms, there are good links between reading and writing and these strengthen their progress in both subjects.
- Pupils frequently write when learning other subjects and this provides them with further opportunities to practise their skills across a range of different subjects. This can be seen in their topic books, science books and religious education (RE), where their work is of a particularly high quality. Pupils enjoy learning in other subjects and show skills in physical education (PE) and art. The quality of music is strong across the school.
- Pupils write fluently and confidently. They are rapidly improving their handwriting and presentation skills so that their work is neat and tidy. They use an increasingly complex vocabulary to present their thoughts and ideas and they use grammar choices well to improve their work.
- Pupils' learning and enjoyment of mathematics have improved owing to new initiatives to allow pupils to apply their skills and knowledge to solve problems and deepen their understanding. The work in their books is of high quality, but there is evidence that they could be challenged further and reach higher standards

## Early years provision

**Good**

- There have been significant improvements to the quality and provision in the early years and, consequently, children are very well prepared for Year 1. Children make good progress across all aspects of their development to become independent and confident learners.
- Children are warmly welcomed into a bright and attractive learning environment that is very well resourced both indoors and outside. There is an appropriate balance of activities that children select for themselves and those that are more structured and are led by adults.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Both teachers and teaching assistants know the children very well and they plan a range of activities that meet the needs of individual children. Consequently, all children, including those who are disadvantaged or who have SEN and/or disabilities, progress well.
- One of the typical strengths of teaching is the way in which all adults speak to children. They ask questions that probe their understanding and help them to make sense of the world around them. They take every opportunity to develop learning through whatever the children are doing. For example, children practise their counting skills when lining

up for lunch. They practise phonics skills when listening to stories and this reinforces and consolidates their learning.

- Children in the early years behave well at all times. They understand the classroom routines and they know what teachers expect from them. Consequently, whether learning or playing, there is a calm, orderly and purposeful atmosphere throughout the early years.
- Children have very positive attitudes towards learning. They show curiosity about the world around them. They listen carefully to stories such as 'The Bad Tempered Ladybird' and respond to teachers' questions, helping them to reflect on values such as friendship, sharing and helping each other.
- Systems to assess and record children's learning and progress are thorough. Written records are supplemented by an electronic system that is shared with parents and one in which parents make their own observations and comments. Consequently, parents have a good overview of what their children are learning and so are able to support and contribute to their child's development
- Children feel safe in the early years. They are confident that adults will help them. All adults understand their moral as well as legal obligation to keep children safe and they fully understand the steps to be taken should they have a concern that a child may be at risk from harm.
- The new early years leader has quickly settled into her new role. She has gained a good overview of the strengths of provision and is building on the strengths of previous leadership to further improve outcomes and provision for children. She has quickly established good relationships with the early years team and is well placed to bring about further improvement.



## School details

Unique reference number	126046
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10046544

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Piggott
Headteacher	Tim Hallett
Telephone number	01293 521 009
Website	<a href="http://www.stfranciscrawley.org">www.stfranciscrawley.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@st-francisassisi.w-sussex.sch.uk">head@st-francisassisi.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17 March 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools, with provision in the early years in two reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than in most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than the proportion seen nationally.
- About half of the pupils are White British, with a similar proportion from various minority ethnic groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in all classrooms, most of which were observed jointly with school leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books and they listened to pupils reading in Year 2 and Year 6. They observed pupils in the playground and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors met with staff, governors and school leaders. They also met with representatives from the diocese and with the school improvement partner.
- Among the documents that were scrutinised were governors' minutes, school improvement plans, information regarding pupils' behaviour and attendance as well as information showing how the school keeps pupils safe.
- The views of parents were taken into account. There were 86 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as many written responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents informally at the start of the inspection. Eighteen responses to the staff survey were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Joy Considine, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Jenner	Ofsted Inspector
Barney Green	Ofsted Inspector

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