

Inspection of a good school: St Francis de Sales RC Junior School

Church Road, Tottenham, London N17 8AZ

Inspection dates:

25–26 May 2021

Outcome

St Francis de Sales RC Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes embody the school values of aspiration, respect, resilience, teamwork and engagement. Pupils love their school and value the education it provides. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils' learning and behaviour. As a result, low-level disruption is rare. Pupils are engaged in their learning. They take part in discussion and enjoy good working relationships with staff.

Pupils are encouraged to believe that if they work hard, they can be successful. Leaders are committed to developing pupils' cultural awareness. They enrich the curriculum through experiences such as a Viking Day for Year 4. Normally, pupils go on many trips to museums and theatres. Some of these have continued during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. A range of after-school clubs is now back on offer.

Pupils value the support of their friends. They show respect for others and listen to their views before expressing their own. Pupils feel safe at school and report that bullying is a rarity. They would challenge bullying if they saw it. If they have a problem, they can speak to a member of staff who will help them. Alternatively, they can place a note in the 'worry box'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

All national curriculum subjects are covered. A teacher is responsible for leading each subject area. Leaders have provided training to support these subject leaders in planning a well-sequenced curriculum. This work is further ahead in some subjects than in others.

The curriculum is well planned in history and geography. This helps pupils remember important knowledge. They can make links between topics because they regularly revisit themes such as power and justice. Teachers identify the important words they want pupils to read, understand and remember. For example, in a Year 3 history lesson about ancient Egypt, pupils could understand the concept of mummification.

Pupils read well and access a range of appropriate books in their classrooms or online. As well as learning how to read accurately, pupils also develop their understanding of texts, for example by inferring or deducing information. Small-group phonics support is available to pupils who need it. Teachers choose books which link with the topic they are delivering in class. For example, a book by a Ghanaian author helped Year 5 pupils learn about Accra, the capital city. However, pupils are not as confident in their writing. This is because the English curriculum does not always build precisely on what pupils have already learned, for example about writing to argue or writing to persuade.

Leaders ensure that pupils in need of support get help to stop them falling behind. Teachers and teaching assistants prepare pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in advance of lessons. They adapt the curriculum and provide resources that are suited to pupils' individual needs.

Teachers actively encourage pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Recently, subject leaders tweaked the curriculum to make it more relevant to pupils' experiences. For instance, in Year 6, pupils have learned about how the Blitz affected Tottenham. Pupils are encouraged to take an interest in the world around them. They participated in a petition about climate change. The school council led a campaign to encourage waste-free lunches. Pupils work with the church to provide a food bank for local families.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders offered enriching experiences to pupils, including visits to theatres and museums in central London. Year 6 pupils usually go on a residential trip to Wales. In normal circumstances, the 'University of Tottenham' allows pupils to meet positive role models from the worlds of media, the arts and sport. This year it was possible for all pupils to attend a local pantomime.

Teachers expect pupils to behave well. There are few interruptions to learning and incidents of bullying are rare.

Staff feel well supported. They said that leaders take account of their well-being. For example, the school marking policy has been streamlined to reduce teacher workload. This allows more time for joint curriculum planning with colleagues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers are vigilant about logging any concerns about pupils' welfare. The safeguarding team pick these up quickly. Relevant training is provided for all staff twice a year. The safeguarding leader provides regular updates. All senior leaders have had training in safer recruitment. Staff are aware of the safeguarding risks to pupils in their local area. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe as part of the relationships, sex and health education curriculum. Teachers cover topics such as stranger danger and knife crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all curriculum subjects are as effective as, for example, history in building precisely on pupils' prior knowledge and skills. All leaders should strengthen subject planning to make clear the key components of knowledge required in their subjects and ensure that these are taught in an appropriate sequence. This includes in English, particularly with building pupils' confidence when writing for different audiences.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 21 and 22 June 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school [here](#).

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.

School details

Unique reference number	102143
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10192565
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Geraldine Normoyle
Headteacher	James Lane
Website	www.sfds.haringey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has formed a soft federation with a Catholic primary school in another London borough.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school and senior leaders. The inspector met with three members of the governing body remotely and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects during this inspection: English, including reading, history and geography. The inspector also looked at work in mathematics. The inspector visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.

- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils, staff and parents and carers, the inspector considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. The inspector also looked at records related to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils during lesson visits. The inspector spoke to staff about behaviour and about their workload in school. Three parents' responses to Ofsted's surveys were considered.

Inspection team

Lisa Strong, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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