

# Inspection of St Francis Catholic and Church of England Primary Academy

Newport Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 1BQ

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

All the adults at St Francis share the same determination for all pupils to achieve well, including those who need extra support. Central to this ambition is their successful work to build pupils' confidence and resilience. As a result, pupils are proud of their learning and achieve well in all subjects.

Pupils are happy and feel safe at this school. They know that staff expect them to behave well. Staff help them to follow the school rules to be ready, respectful and safe. Pupils say unkind behaviour rarely happens but, if needed, there are plenty of adults who help to sort out any concerns.

Staff help pupils learn about their emotions using the 'zones of regulation'. This gives all pupils, including Reception children, the vocabulary and strategies to consider and change how they feel. As one pupil explained, 'This helps us to manage our emotions when we face any daily stresses.'

Pupils are proud of St. Francis Academy and like contributing to the school community. Older pupils take their different responsibilities, such as play leader or librarian, very seriously. Pupils think the school is very welcoming for new pupils. They told inspectors that 'everyone is equal, no matter how different you are'.

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

The teaching of reading is effective, especially in Reception. Leaders have recently strengthened the teaching of reading with high-quality training for all staff. Staff closely follow the school's chosen phonics scheme. They make sure that pupils practise their skills by reading books that match the sounds they have learned. This helps most pupils get off to a good start in learning to read. Leaders have made sure that pupils who need extra help receive the practice they need. This support has recently been increased. Older pupils read a broad range of books with fluency and confidence. Skilled teachers choose books to read aloud to deliberately extend pupils' learning.

Reception children learn the vocabulary to confidently talk about key number facts, which gives them a secure foundation to build future learning on. Staff receive quality training to help older pupils build their mathematical understanding, using a well-ordered curriculum.

Staff have developed ambitious and well-sequenced plans in other subjects that start in Reception. Pupils are helped to link new learning to what they have learned before. For example, Year 3 pupils learn the vocabulary to compare artists' work. In Year 4, pupils expand this language and apply it to give their own opinion on different artwork. In these plans, leaders have considered the broad content they want pupils to know. They have not yet precisely identified the most important knowledge and skills they want all pupils to learn. Leaders have planned training for

these subject leaders to help them more accurately check what pupils have learned and remembered.

This is an inclusive school. Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' additional learning needs are swiftly identified. Appropriate and effective support helps these pupils to achieve very well across the curriculum. Leaders have also prioritised extra support for vulnerable pupils which helps them manage their emotions and develop in confidence.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have ensured that staff have high expectations and a consistent and positive approach to managing behaviour. From Reception, children learn how their behaviour can affect others. This means that learning is rarely disrupted. Leaders work closely with families and make robust checks to ensure that pupils attend school. As a result, attendance is good.

Leaders are determined to give pupils a broad range of experiences to help prepare them for their next stage of education. As one pupil commented, 'They get us prepped up for high school.' Pupils thoughtfully consider what spirituality means, starting with their own experiences, and then considering what it means to others and to the wider world. Pupils' reflections are captured in the class 'special moment' displays. Leaders appropriately emphasize water safety given the school's location. They also support pupils to learn about, and be proud of, the Isle of Wight.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They value the range of professional development that leaders provide. Staff feel valued by leaders and are given extra time to complete additional work.

Leaders at the school feel very well supported in the multi-academy trust. Sharply focused support has helped leaders prioritise and secure improvements in the curriculum. The transition board has strongly challenged and effectively supported leaders about the quality of education, especially for pupils with SEND.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture that is firmly focused on pupils' and families' welfare. They prioritise continual safeguarding training for staff. Consequently, they are assured that all staff understand what to do in different situations. Staff report concerns promptly, and safeguarding records are comprehensive.

Staff have a strong knowledge of local safeguarding issues which affect their pupils. This helps them to swiftly identify pupils who may be at risk, and to provide prompt help when needed.

Leaders work with external agencies to help safeguard pupils, including insisting that action is taken when they think it necessary.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have broadly identified the knowledge and skills for each subject. However, this is not accurate enough to ensure that staff can precisely build on pupils' prior learning. Subject leaders should identify the most important knowledge and skills they want all pupils to learn and remember in all subjects. Leaders have already taken action to address this weakness over the coming year. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Leaders of subjects other than mathematics and English have checked that plans have been followed, but they have not monitored how well pupils have learned the intended curriculum. Leaders should equip subject leaders with the skills to check that all pupils have learned and remembered the most important knowledge and skills.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143541
<b>Local authority</b>	Isle of Wight
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200913
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Luke Irvine-Capel
<b>Principal</b>	Alex Augustus
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stfrancisventnoracademy.org">www.stfrancisventnoracademy.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- In June 2017, the academy joined the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Academies Trust.
- When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, in January 2016, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The principal started in his role in September 2018. Since he started in his role, there has been a substantial change in teaching staff and support staff.
- In May 2021, the academy joined the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust. Members of the transition board, including the chair of the transition board, started in their role at the same time.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The transition board manages before- and after-school childcare provision on site.
- This school is a Roman Catholic and Church of England school in the Diocese of Portsmouth. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2017.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the principal, the deputy principal, subject leaders and teachers.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, design technology and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects. They also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and on the playground.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the transition board, including the chair of the transition board. She met with two representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and written comments from parents. Inspectors considered the views of staff during meetings with them and took into account their responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Inspectors reviewed school documents relating to safeguarding, including reviewing safeguarding records and training logs, as well as talking to pupils and staff and meeting with the school's designated safeguarding lead and family liaison officer.

## Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Flemington

Her Majesty's Inspector

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