

Inspection of a good school: St Francis Church of England Primary School

Longfield, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4SU

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 January 2022

Outcome

St Francis CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered. They are happy at school and feel safe. Pupils understand the importance of the links between the school and church. They can talk confidently about their school values. For example, pupils select charities to support so that they can help others.

Leaders are ambitious for all learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable pupils. Leaders have high expectations of behaviour, which pupils meet. They understand the 'golden rules' and can talk about the consequences if these are not met. As a result, disruption to learning is rare.

Leaders ensure staff and pupil well-being is a priority. Pupils have a very good understanding of what bullying is, including physical and mental bullying. They say that bullying is rare. Pupils trust staff to help sort out any issues that arise.

Pupils are elected as well-being ambassadors to support their peers. They take on responsibility, such as leading clubs for younger pupils during lunchtimes. More recently, staff and pupils meet together to discuss how to improve well-being further. Staff run regular 'emotional check-ins' for pupils. Pupils say these help them to learn more in class.

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

Children get off to a good start in Reception. Leaders ensure that the children know the routines and expectations. Staff use vocabulary well to develop children's understanding. For example, children use words such as 'past' and 'now' when talking about how milk is delivered to homes. As a result, children learn well and are prepared for the next stage in their education.

Leaders ensure that reading has a high importance within the curriculum. Pupils learn to read as soon as they start school and read often. Staff also read to pupils regularly. Leaders identify important books and poems for pupils to read. Pupils say they enjoy their

class novels and can remember key information about them. The teaching of phonics supports pupils to learn to read effectively. This is supported by pupils reading books that contain the sounds they know. As a result, pupils love to read and progress well. Staff use what they know about pupils' reading to provide effective, targeted support, including for pupils with SEND.

Leaders talk to pupils about what they have learned. They use this information to develop an ambitious curriculum. For example, in mathematics the curriculum is sequenced well. Staff encourage pupils to use ambitious mathematical vocabulary and to work independently. Pupils regularly check what they know and remember. Teaching addresses any misconceptions successfully so that pupils learn quickly from their mistakes. Pupils with SEND know the targets they are working towards. However, in some subjects the curriculum does not yet meet the ambition leaders have. For example, important knowledge that pupils need to learn is not identified specifically enough in some subjects.

Leaders have put in place a well-sequenced curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils have a clear understanding of relationships, discrimination and disabilities. For example, pupils learn about the importance of treating people with respect.

Leaders ensure pupils attend a range of activities to help them learn and to promote their wider personal development. These include extra-curricular clubs, educational visits, residential visits and an annual school musical production. Pupils have opportunities to debate and discuss important issues, for example whether everyone should learn sign language.

Governors know the school well. They provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. Staff feel well supported by leaders, including governors. They say leaders listen to staff's suggestions to reduce workload. Staff value weekly 'thankful hearts'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are robust policies and procedures in place. Leaders ensure staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training and updates. As a result, staff know how to report any concerns and know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Governors understand their statutory responsibilities and fulfil these well. Leaders make appropriate checks for staff who are new to the school. All new staff are part of a thorough induction process.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through their lessons and wider opportunities. For example, the local police have talked to older pupils about how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not set out the important knowledge that pupils need to learn precisely enough. This means that pupils are not always able to build on what they have learned before to help them with what comes next. Leaders should identify specifically what it is that pupils should learn and remember in all curriculum areas.
- In some subjects, the implementation of the school's curriculum does not yet match leaders' expectations. This means that pupils do not know and remember as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is taught as intended in all year groups so that all pupils learn more.

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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Francis CofE Primary School, to be good in July 2013.

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

Unique reference number	144059
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10212135
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Parker
Headteacher	Hannah Stevens
Website	www.st-francis.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Francis Church of England Primary School is a voluntary-aided school. The last section 48 inspection took place on 26 March 2018.
- This school is part of Kernow Learning Multi Academy Trust.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school club provision.
- St Francis Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, St Francis Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, the well-being leader, curriculum leaders and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector met with the chair of trustees, the chief executive officer, the chair of the governing body and three other members of the governing body.
- The inspector met with designated safeguarding leaders to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. She considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concerns and their engagement with external agencies. The inspector also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The inspector considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also took into consideration the responses to the staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Donna Briggs, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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