

Inspection of St Francis Church of England Aided Primary School and Nursery

Teazel Avenue, Bournville, Birmingham, West Midlands B30 1LZ

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at St Francis Church of England Primary School. The school's values of 'love, honesty, family, forgiveness and friendship' are at the heart of this school's work. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are polite and are respectful of each other. At social times, pupils play well together. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils trust that staff will address any concerns they have.

The school has experienced changes in leadership in recent years. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. However, expectations for how well pupils behave in their lessons and the quality of work are not consistently high enough. At times, pupils become disengaged from their learning and disrupt the learning of their peers. Leaders are now helping teachers to deal with this more successfully.

Leaders organise trips and visits to broaden pupils' interests. Pupils visit the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to develop their musical knowledge. Year 6 pupils enjoy the annual residential to Snowdonia National Park. Pupils enjoy attending the range of clubs on offer, including art, choir, French and photography.

Parents have mixed views about the school. Parents are positive about recent improvements in the leadership of behaviour, but express concerns that, over time, expectations of what their children can achieve have been too low.

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

Leaders have designed a well-ordered curriculum. This supports teachers to know what to teach and when to teach it. However, teachers do not have secure subject knowledge in some subjects. This affects how well they deliver the curriculum. This means that expectations of the quality of work pupils produce in lessons are not high enough and misconceptions are not always addressed. Pupils do not make the progress they should through the curriculum. Most leaders are not confident in how to check and assess what pupils know and remember.

Reading is now a whole-school priority. Staff have been trained how to teach phonics, which supports pupils at the early stages of reading. Staff know what to teach and how to teach it. Pupils' reading books match the sounds they are learning.

Recent improvements to leadership mean that most children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now identified accurately. Leaders make sure that pupils can access the resources they need to help them with their learning. Parents are positive about the support their children are now receiving. However, there are still some younger children whose needs have not been identified quickly enough, for example pupils in need of speech and language support. As a result, these pupils have fallen behind in their learning, particularly in reading and phonics.

Effective communication between home and school helps children settle quickly in the Nursery or Reception classes. Staff have high expectations of what children can

achieve. They establish clear routines. Children are supported well to develop positive attitudes to learning. Children learn about number and develop language skills through practical activities, stories and rhymes, for example they enjoy the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' and role play in the hairdressing salon. There is a strong focus on early language and communication skills. Teachers make the most of every opportunity and model vocabulary extremely well. For example, they sing with children while splashing in puddles and point out the rainbow that appears in the sky while naming the colours.

Leaders provide a rich set of varied experiences to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of positive and respectful healthy relationships. Opportunities such as the eco-council and the school council allow pupils to take on leadership responsibilities in school. In doing so, they develop an understanding of democracy and children's rights. Pupils know about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This helps them to empathise with the experiences of other children around the world, for instance children who do not have access to clean water, health care or an education.

The school rules help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong, and how to keep themselves and others safe. Workshops run by the police and the fire service inform pupils about safety in the home, the community and making safe choices. Opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions help pupils to recognise and respect others' differences. For example, pupils enjoy learning about festivals, such as Diwali, Sukkot and Eid. They enjoy fundraising for chosen charities. In all, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Fioretti Trust Leaders know the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. However, leaders do not know how well the curriculum supports pupils' learning. This is because they have not established ways of checking how well the curriculum is being delivered. A new headteacher has been appointed to aid school stability after the turbulence of recent years. Staff say that workload is manageable and leaders are considerate of their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders and staff are aware of specific areas of concern, such as protecting pupils from child criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Leaders seek the right support for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Leaders ensure that appropriate checks on staff are undertaken before they are appointed. Pupils learn about how to keep safe when working online and when out and about in the community. Pupils know how to raise concerns with trusted adults in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, when expectations of pupils are not high enough, they become disengaged in their learning and disrupt the learning of their peers. Leaders should raise teachers' expectations of the quality of work given to pupils, so that all children can be successful in school and work with staff to promote better attitudes to learning in classrooms.
- Teachers do not have the necessary subject knowledge to teach all subjects well enough. This means that the work given to pupils is sometimes not challenging enough and misconceptions are not always addressed. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should support subject leaders to ensure that staff have the required subject knowledge they need to teach all subjects effectively.
- Subject leaders are not making effective checks on how well the curriculum is being delivered. This means that leaders do not know how well the curriculum is supporting pupils to know and remember the intended curriculum. Senior leaders should support subject leaders, particularly those new to their role, to fully understand what is expected of them.
- Some younger pupils have fallen behind in their learning, particularly pupils at the early stages of reading. This is because their additional needs were not identified quickly enough. Leaders need to identify additional needs quickly enough, so that pupils can be given support to access the curriculum.

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.

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	143434
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10241069
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	Local governing body
Chair of trust	Giles Allen
Acting headteacher	Emma Jones
Website	http://stfrancisprimaryandnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character took place in October 2022.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in computing, history, mathematics and reading. These included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, examining curriculum guidance and talking with pupils and staff. Inspectors looked at pupils' work from a sample of other subjects. They also discussed the curriculum with subject leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. They reviewed reading resources.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation on the school's website.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the record of employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the special needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leader, the early years leader, representatives of the Fioretti Trust and the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Devinder Riat

Ofsted Inspector

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