

# Inspection of a good school: St Francis Catholic Academy

Rye Piece Ringway, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 8JN

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Inspection dates:

20 and 21 June 2023

## Outcome

St Francis Catholic Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Francis Catholic Academy is a small school with a caring ethos. Parents and pupils value its small size and family atmosphere. Pupils feel safe at the school because staff look after them well. Staff also encourage pupils to look after each other, and pupils endeavour to do so. Pupils like the school and are proud of it. They enjoy the stimulating and friendly environment that leaders and staff have created for them.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports pupils' academic and personal development well. Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. They foster pupils' interest in learning. Pupils achieve well and leave the school well prepared for secondary education.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. They get on with one another and respect staff. They are polite, helpful and eager to do their best. They know that bullying is not acceptable, and that staff will deal with it effectively when it happens.

Leaders and governors take pride in sustaining strong links between the school and the community. They organise fundraising events and support worthy causes in the local area. Parents appreciate that leaders and staff are approachable.

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

From Reception to Year 6, pupils follow a well-structured curriculum that prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Leaders have thought carefully about what they expect pupils to learn and remember. Teachers use many strategies to ensure that pupils achieve this. For example, in music, pupils study a wide range of genres, which they revisit in more depth as they progress through the years. In mathematics, lessons start with a quiz or a problem to solve, testing pupils' previous learning.

Pupils enjoy learning and do not disrupt lessons. They work well in groups and are keen to take part in class discussions.

Children in Reception get their first experiences of learning about science, art, music or geography through play and practical activities. They also learn essential early literacy and numeracy skills. They enjoy playing and learning in the bright and stimulating environment of the early years areas. Children are settled. They relate well to staff and interact nicely with one another.

Teachers check how well pupils learn in lessons, and they correct any mistakes. Systems to check and track pupils' progress are effective in most subjects. However, leaders know that the use of assessment in a few subjects lacks sufficient precision. They are in the process of refining their approaches to ensure greater consistency in the use of assessment across all subjects.

Leaders ensure that learning to read well and with enjoyment is a key priority. Pupils follow a well-structured phonics programme from the start of Reception. Staff make sure that pupils who find reading difficult receive the right support at the right time. This allows them to catch up quickly. Most pupils are fluent readers by the end of Year 2. Staff ensure that pupils read every day and across the curriculum. Pupils make good use of the school library, and they enjoy the school's book club.

Leaders make sure that all pupils are guided to fulfil their potential. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get effective support. Leaders have reliable systems to identify the needs of pupils in great detail. Staff use this detailed information effectively. They ensure that pupils with SEND enjoy school, access the full curriculum, and make progress.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that support their personal development well. They can develop their talents and skills in sporting or artistic activities. They gain awareness of democracy, diversity, and the rule of law through the curriculum and in assemblies. They learn about life skills and healthy relationships. Pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, are keen to take on leadership roles in the school council, as playground leaders, or as members of a fundraising committee.

Leaders and staff work closely together. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and are attentive to staff well-being. Trustees provide strong support to leaders and local governors. They contribute effectively to the success of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide regular training and updates to staff. Staff are alert to what is required of them in keeping pupils safe. They are confident to identify and report issues and concerns. Leaders follow these up and act promptly to address them. They work effectively with external agencies and families to protect pupils. Leaders make the right checks to ensure that staff recruited to school are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They learn about adopting safe behaviours in and out of school, including when using the internet.

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

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

- In a few subjects, assessment systems are not effective enough in helping staff to identify and address pupils' misconceptions. As a result, pupils may not make as much progress as they could in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that the effective use of assessment to inform teaching is more consistent across all subjects.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Francis Catholic Primary School, to be good in December 2012.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141817
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269131
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Philip Richardson
<b>Principal</b>	Charlotte Culleton
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stfranciscatholicprimary.co.uk">www.stfranciscatholicprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a member of the Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy trust.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider.
- The school is within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character was carried out in June 2022.

## 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive principal, who is also designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and the assistant principal, who is also the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector spoke with the chair and vice chair of the local governing body and with representatives of the multi-academy trust.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, music and mathematics. 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 listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector checked safeguarding arrangements and school records. The inspector discussed safeguarding policies and case studies with the DSL. He talked to teachers and other staff about the safeguarding training they had received and how they put this training into practice.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime. He talked informally to groups of pupils and talked to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including written responses. He also considered responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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