

Inspection of a good school: St Francis Catholic Primary School, Morley

Highcliffe Road, Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 9LX

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

Outcome

St Francis Catholic Primary School, Morley continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's religious character is at the heart of the curriculum. The dedicated staff team unites behind the new headteacher's vision. They are committed to serving each pupil's individual learning needs.

Pupils are consistently kind and courteous, showing respect to one another, to staff and visitors. This helps everyone feel happy and safe in school.

The school recently introduced a new behaviour policy that sets out clearly the consequences of pupils' behaviour choices. Pupils demonstrate self-control and positive attitudes to their education. Each pupil has a bookmark reminding them of rewards and sanctions. This helps to motivate all pupils to behave well and take responsibility for their actions.

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. This is fully implemented in English and mathematics. Pupils achieve very well in both subjects. The school is continuing to develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils achieve as highly in every other curriculum subject.

Pupils feel safe. They have a sound understanding of risk. They can confidently talk about how they stay safe when using the internet and computer programmes.

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

There have been lots of changes to the school's leadership team since the last inspection. The experienced governing body managed this turbulence well. Now that things are settled, the school's improvement journey is accelerating rapidly.

Some curriculum subjects are further ahead in their development than others. Several of the school's subject leaders are recently appointed. The school has provided curriculum leadership training for all staff. The school is realistic about what can be done in the time available.

The school ensured that recently introduced assessment arrangements are appropriate, striking the right balance between supporting pupils and ensuring that systems do not overburden staff. The school provides the time needed for mentors to meet with several early career teachers (ECTs). The school manages teachers' workload well and staff sincerely appreciate this.

The early years learning environment is nurturing. Children in Nursery listen attentively in class. They take turns and play well together. Children are thriving in the early years. They learn to read swiftly. The effective curriculum in the early years prepares children very well for Year 1.

The phonics curriculum is implemented consistently well. Reading books in key stage 1 are matched well to pupils' phonics knowledge, helping pupils to develop confidence and reading fluency. Pupils in key stage 2 asked for a wider range of novels. The school provided these, alongside classic texts. The extensive range of books engages all pupils' interests and is helping to nurture pupils' growing love of reading.

The mathematics curriculum is implemented equally well. Staff have excellent subject knowledge. Pupils take great pride in their work and their presentation. Pupils behave well in lessons and enjoy learning. Their enthusiasm for interesting lessons is partly why pupils' rates of attendance are so high.

The school provides additional small-group language sessions for pupils who speak English as an additional language. This helps selected pupils learn the English and subject-specific vocabulary that staff use in different subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported skilfully. The school adapts the curriculum effectively, depending on each pupil's individual needs. The school presents information in alternative formats, including using sound buttons or software, to assist pupils with communication. Reasonable adjustments support pupils with SEND who are neurodiverse. Pupils with SEND are making good progress from their individual starting points.

Curriculum enrichment enhances learning. The school arranges immersive experiences or virtual school visits. Pupils have a secure recall of their learning about the past. For example, pupils in Year 6 studied the British Empire and learned about immigration, including the Irish and the Windrush generation. Pupils know that the lessons of history are relevant today.

The curriculum for pupils' broader development is a strength of the school. Pupils can recall vividly, their learning about a wide range of different faiths and cultures. Older pupils have a mature understanding of protected characteristics, including hidden disability. Pupils' social development goes above and beyond primary school community volunteering opportunities. For example, the 'silver readers' read to elderly parishioners

by telephone. This helps to ease loneliness and builds cross-generational respect. Pupils at St Francis are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have taken on additional responsibilities, becoming subject leaders in more than one subject area. As a result, some curriculum plans are at more of an advanced stage than others. The school should ensure that new subject leaders have the time and support to further develop and improve their new areas of responsibility.

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 school to be good in November 2014.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and](#)

[protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	108016
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10297239
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Maria Walker
Headteacher	Grace Gibbons
Website	www.stfrancismorley.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has changed since the last inspection, including substantive and interim headteachers. The current headteacher took up their post in September 2022.
- This is a Roman Catholic school with a Christian character. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2027. The Diocese of Leeds completed a section 48 inspection in March 2022. The diocese evaluated the catholic life of the school and the religious education curriculum as outstanding.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school's ECTs are attached to the Leeds Teaching School Hub through the early career framework.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 this into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The reading, mathematics and history subject leaders met the inspector separately.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector held discussions with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with senior staff who lead the wider curriculum. The inspector also discussed this with pupils, including in single-sex groups.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety was evaluated at breakfast club, in lessons and at lunchtime.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed Ofsted Parent View and spoke to several parents before the start of the school day. The inspector also considered responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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