

# Inspection of a good school: St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

Roberts Road, Balby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 0JN

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Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

## **Outcome**

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

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

Pupils enjoy attending this kind and caring school. They give visitors and pupils new to the school a warm welcome. Pupils are polite and respectful. Adults create a happy and supportive environment. Pupils use the 'friendship stop' in the playground to meet new friends. Pupils are keen to see who is there and support them if they are feeling lonely or want to make a new friend.

Staff set high expectations for pupils. Pupils respond to these by demonstrating highly positive attitudes to their learning. The curriculum helps pupils to build increasingly complex knowledge as they progress through school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and remember what they have learned.

The wide range of clubs available are well attended by pupils. Pupils speak excitedly about these clubs, including Scotty's Heroes (team work club), choir and sports club. Leaders take pupils to the beach as part of their personal development. This ensures that pupils access valuable life experiences outside of the classroom.

Pupils' behave very well. They are quick to settle in their learning. At breaktime, they play and socialise well with one another and manage their own behaviour. Pupils are safe in school. They know they can speak to a trusted adult if they have any worries.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that prepares pupils well for their next stages of learning. Pupils gradually build their knowledge over time. The school carefully designs the curriculum from early years to Year 6. For example, in early years, children learn about the features of a plant and how it grows, to develop their understanding of the world. This is intentionally linked to the science curriculum in later years to ready them for further scientific learning.

Pupils remember what they have been taught. They make links between what they have learned before and what they are learning now. For example, in mathematics pupils use their knowledge of multiplying fractions when learning how to divide them. Pupils apply their knowledge of mathematical functions well. The school is in the process of introducing a relatively new mathematics curriculum. Although this is being implemented well, there remain areas where it is not securely embedded and more needs to be done to improve pupils' progression through the curriculum.

The school celebrates reading and helps pupils to develop into inquisitive readers. Leaders ensure that adults receive training to teach the phonics programme well. As a result, pupils use the knowledge they learn to become confident and fluent readers. The school regularly checks to identify those pupils who need phonics support. This enables pupils to keep up with the phonics programme. Pupils enjoy reading and talking about books. Adults read to pupils every day, promoting a love of reading. Leaders prioritise the development of language in the school. In every lesson, the focus on precise use of language is present. Pupils develop an impressive understanding of varied vocabulary.

The school has high aspirations for pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support that they need. As a result, pupils who have SEND achieve well.

The outcomes achieved by Year 6 pupils in 2023 do not reflect the good quality of education that pupils receive. Pupils in this year group were adversely affected by the disruption caused by the pandemic, including increased rates of absence for some pupils.

In the early years, children benefit from a curriculum that enables them to build the knowledge, skills and learning attributes that they need. Their routines are very well established. Children settle and focus well on their learning and play.

Leaders ensure a relentless focus on securing good levels of attendance. The school works very closely with families to encourage this. As a result of this work, pupils' attendance is extremely high.

The school has a strategic approach to supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils have different leadership opportunities. These include the school council, chaplaincy council and eco club. The eco club members are proud of their work to improve the local environment through their litter pick in the local community.

School leaders, governors and the diocese are united in their vision for the school. They are aspirational for pupils' achievement. They are committed to preparing pupils for the next stage of their learning and life in modern Britain.

Staff know that leaders consider their workload and well-being. They feel valued by leaders. As a result, staff are happy. They are proud to work at the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school is introducing a relatively new mathematics curriculum and this is not fully embedded at this stage. There is some variance in pupils' understanding. The school should work with teachers to securely implement the curriculum to further improve pupils' progression through the mathematics curriculum.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106762
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297192
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Elizabeth Cotterill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Nesbit (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.xavier.doncaster.sch.uk">www.xavier.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character. It is also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in March 2023.
- Since the last inspection there has been a new head of school. The executive headteacher is the same.
- Since the last inspection there has been a new chair of governors.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## 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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, 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 members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector met with a learning standards and effectiveness officer from the local authority.
- The inspector met with the acting director of schools for the Diocese of Hallam.
- A range of school documents was reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered the views of pupils through their responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and through meetings held with pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through meetings and through their responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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