

Inspection of St Francis Church of England Primary School

Pilgrims Close, Valley Park, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 4ST

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since February 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils embody the school's values in this kind and nurturing school. Pupils behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school. Staff make sure that all pupils, beginning with children in the Reception Year, receive a warm welcome each day. Staff are keen to hear pupils' views and take prompt action to resolve any concerns. This ensures that pupils feel happy and safe.

Staff are determined to empower all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to be well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school uses their values of care, trust and respect to promote positive attitudes to learning. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the school's high expectations. They are keen to try hard and learn well.

The school plans purposeful experiences beyond the academic. These include visits from expert speakers, clubs, trips and music concerts. Pupils learn to support themselves and others. For example, pupil leaders take pride in helping other pupils to develop an understanding and love of the subject they represent. These and other roles teach pupils to be responsible and resilient.

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

The ambitious curriculum is well designed. The school has identified and sequenced the precise content it intends pupils to learn from early years onwards. Staff make appropriate changes to the curriculum when they think it could better meet the needs of pupils. They provide strong support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff use expert knowledge to identify additional needs and adapt their teaching to promote pupils' independence from the start of Reception.

Staff benefit from high-quality training. This equips them with secure subject knowledge to help pupils learn the most important content. Staff prioritise building pupils' communication and language skills over time. This begins in Reception, where children receive an exceptional start to their time in the school. Pupils develop their spoken vocabulary using accurate language about many aspects of their learning, such as numbers.

Across the school, staff usually create thoughtfully designed activities for pupils to learn and practise their skills. Teachers often recap important content, which helps pupils to connect and build learning over time. However, in a small number of subjects, staff do not always check pupils' understanding of previously taught knowledge carefully enough. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well in these subjects as in others.

The teaching of reading is a high priority. This starts in Reception, where children receive expert support to develop their language skills. Staff closely follow the school's chosen phonics scheme and provide effective support for pupils who need

more practice. Pupils read books that contain the sounds they have learned to develop their fluency. The school provides useful guidance for parents and carers to support their child to read at home. Staff foster a love of stories by talking about the books they love and reading books aloud skilfully. They expose pupils to books that promote discussion about the meaning behind the words the author has chosen. Consequently, pupils develop into confident readers. This was seen in the positive end of key stage 2 outcomes in 2023.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional and they have very positive attitudes to learning. Staff use a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour. This creates a happy environment for pupils to learn. Additional support for some pupils helps them maintain focus in lessons. Pupils arrive at school on time as they understand the importance of it. Leaders are relentless in their quest for high attendance of pupils and work closely with families to ensure this. As a result, attendance of pupils is high.

The personal development of pupils is exceptional. The school has designed an impressive curriculum that develops pupils' character and a deep appreciation for the diversity in the world around them. Opportunities to raise money for local, national and global charities enhance this. For example, pupils raised money for a charity to ensure that disadvantaged people in other countries received hygiene facilities. The school carefully tracks which pupils take part in these events and ensures that disadvantaged pupils benefit from every possible opportunity.

Leaders at all levels are aspirational for pupils. They share the same inclusive vision and keep pupils at the heart of decision-making. Staff are positive about the support they receive that helps them to refine their teaching. They are proud to work at the school. The dedicated governing body supports pupils and staff to be their best. It provides effective challenge to help the school to further improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, staff do not check what pupils have learned and understood systematically. This means that some pupils' misconceptions are not always being identified and addressed. Leaders must ensure that staff check pupils' understanding and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge effectively in all subjects.

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	116402
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296235
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Brian King and Nick Grew
Headteacher	Dawn Harrison
Website	www.stfrancisceprimarysch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Winchester.
- This school has before- and after-school provision provided by school staff.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with the representatives of the governing board.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education, science and art. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and looked at writing across the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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 reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of governing board meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Neil Pilsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Flemington

Ofsted Inspector

Judith O'Hare

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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