

Inspection of a good school: St Francis de Sales RC Infant School

Church Road, Tottenham, London N17 8AZ

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 May 2024

Outcome

St Francis de Sales RC Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this friendly and inclusive school. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe here. Pupils can name a range of trusted adults who will listen and help them if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils say they are happy because the adults make their learning interesting and fun. Attendance is high.

Behaviour is a strength in lessons, around the school and in the playground. The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

There are a range of opportunities for pupils to take on roles of responsibility. For example, reading and faith ambassadors help out in the library and lead prayer and worship during assembly time. School councillors are proud of their roles because they feel listened to and understand the value of helping others.

Pupils of all ages, including those with SEND, engage in a wide range of additional opportunities and visits designed to develop their talents and interests. The school makes full use of the local Tottenham area, organising visits to shops, as well as the local park and library.

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

School leaders encourage pupils to follow the guidance given by St Francis of 'Be who you are and be that well'. They have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Learning in key stage 1 builds on children's strong experiences in early years. Curriculum and assessment plans set out clearly what pupils need to know at each stage of their education. Some subject leadership roles are new. While this leadership has developed new ambitious curriculum thinking, the school is still at the early stages of embedding how this is implemented. This school is rightly focused on preparing pupils for the next

stage of learning. This can be seen with the proportion of pupils' reading and writing outcomes which are broadly in line with national averages. Leaders are also focusing on raising achievement further, especially in mathematics.

The school adopted a new phonics scheme three years ago and all staff have been regularly trained to implement it. Phonics teaching begins as soon as children start in Reception. In early years, staff focus effectively on communication and language. They use stories and rhymes well to help children develop their early reading, speaking and listening skills. However, there is occasional variability in how well this is implemented in a few classes. In some instances, the school's expectations are not followed consistently. As a result, some pupils are behind where the school intends for them to be in their reading.

School leaders are determined that all pupils should participate fully in school life. They ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly and appropriately. Staff work together to adapt learning and ensure activities are well matched to the needs of their pupils. Pupils with SEND make good progress across a broad range of subjects.

Pupils behave well during lessons and at playtimes. From early years, children are well supported in developing their social skills and independence. There is a warm and respectful culture in the school. Low-level disruption rarely interrupts lessons or pupils' learning. Pupils know school routines well and follow instructions with thought and care.

The personal development of all pupils is strong. When children start school, they quickly learn to build friendships and to treat each other with fairness and kindness. Teachers provide clear guidance to promote pupils' spiritual and moral values in an age-appropriate way. During the inspection, pupils celebrated the feast of Pentecost and really enjoyed a cultural awareness 'own-clothes' day that featured a vibrant and diverse range of dress from all over the world.

Leaders closely monitor pupils' attendance. Pupils and parents receive guidance about the importance of regular attendance. Pastoral support is also provided if persistent absence is a concern. As a result, attendance is high and continues to rise.

Staff feel well supported by school leaders. They report that leaders at all levels are considerate of their workload and well-being. Governors are committed to the school and its community. They are well informed and understand the strengths of their school as well as the areas that need further development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in how phonics is taught, as a few staff do not deliver phonics in line with the school's expectations. In these instances, this affects how well

some pupils learn to read. The school should ensure that all staff receive the support and training they need to teach phonics consistently well.

- Some foundation subjects are at an early stage of implementation. This means what pupils know and remember does not fully match leaders' ambitions. The school should continue their work to embed and strengthen the curriculum so that pupils develop secure and deep knowledge across 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2019.

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	102149
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10323312
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Cassandra DaCosta Patel
Headteacher	James Lane (Executive Headteacher) Natasha Bracken (Head of School)
Website	www.sfds.haringey.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher is also the headteacher of St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School in Barnet.
- St Frances de Sales RC Infant School is federated with the junior school. The same governing body is responsible for both schools. The executive headteacher and leadership team work across the infant and junior schools. Each of the schools are inspected separately.
- The school has a Catholic religious character and the last section 48 inspection took place in January 2018, when it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use any 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 his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the school business manager, other leaders and teachers. He spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, considered the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of school 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 met with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Sean Flood, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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