



St Francis De Sales RC Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102143
LEA Haringey LEA
Inspection number 276661
Inspection dates 25 January 2006 to 26 January 2006
Reporting inspector Scott Harrison

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Tottenham
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		London N17 8AZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088082923
Number on roll	350	Fax number	02088017438
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms C Davis
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr H McBride

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Francis de Sales is a Catholic junior school a stone's throw from Tottenham Hotspurs' football ground. The school serves the Catholic community of Tottenham and further afield in Haringey, with some pupils travelling from surrounding boroughs; most pupils join from the neighbouring infant school. Attainment on entry is above average. Over three quarters of pupils are from minority ethnic groups; 59% have a first language other than English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is slightly above average. Almost one third of pupils are eligible for free school meals, above the national average. Since its positive inspection report in 1999 the school has expanded from two to three form entry. The school's mission statement strongly emphasises its inclusiveness and principles of faith: 'as we strive for excellence, we value one another's gifts, recognise one another's needs, are ready to share and are ever ready to forgive'.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school is currently providing an acceptable standard of education but in two significant respects, standards and leadership, there is cause for concern. From a good starting point, pupils make insufficient progress through the school; by the end of Year 6 they are around the national average in English, and below the average in mathematics: they should be doing much better. This is especially so because their personal development is good. Most of the time pupils behave well and treat each other and staff with respect. They enjoy coming to school and the school has the overwhelming support of parents. The quality of teaching and the curriculum provided by the school are satisfactory. However, the teaching should demand more from pupils, and the curriculum should be better balanced with more attention to National Curriculum foundation subjects such as art and music. The school has come through a period of considerable difficulty, in part related to its rapid expansion and staffing problems; pupils and teachers also speak of challenging behaviour on the part of some pupils in the recent past. However, the school has tackled these issues and is now a settled community based on clear principles, fairly applied, within a strong Catholic ethos. Pupils are well known and cared for and feel safe. They are able to offer their own ideas through their school council and they contribute readily as opportunities arise. Although the school's self evaluation is broadly accurate, over time there has been insufficient recognition of pupils' underperformance; and although the school's procedures demonstrate that it is adequately managed, it has lacked the leadership necessary to maintain the high standards reported in its previous inspection. As such, it fails to give good value for money. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards and strategic leadership.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Raise pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science so that they make more rapid progress through the school
- * Move the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good
- * Provide better balance to the curriculum and develop greater coherence
- * Improve the strategic leadership of the school to bring about the above.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils enter the school with standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science. By the time they leave Year 6 standards in English are average and they are below average in mathematics and science. This shows that

pupils do not make enough progress through the school. It is particularly true of the more able pupils, with insufficient numbers making the progress they should to attain the higher Level 5. Pupils of Black African heritage (over half the school population) and white pupils do less well than they should. Results fell sharply in 2005, partly because of staffing issues, but school data reveals underachievement in every year group. Pupils with learning difficulties tend to make better progress than their classmates because of the good support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Mostly, pupils treat each other with respect and they show a strong commitment to racial equality; the school is a harmonious community. Pupils relate well to their teachers. Behaviour in lessons is generally good and pupils concentrate well; where pupils are off-task, this is usually associated with slow pace or dull work. In the playground the behaviour of some pupils is boisterous and not considerate of others; but pupils say that bullying is now rare and that they feel safe. Attendance is good because pupils like coming to school. Pupils are aware of the elements of a healthy lifestyle and make sensible choices, for example in the food they eat at lunchtime. Many pupils take responsibility in their classes or the school council. They value the extra-curricular activities provided by the school and take part in good numbers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in the majority of lessons is satisfactory, and several good lessons were seen, but so were instances of inadequate teaching. Teachers generally plan their lessons thoroughly and make the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils. Teachers have been quick to develop their own skills in the use of ICT, particularly interactive whiteboards, although the full potential of this tool for learning has not yet been realised in most classes. Relationships with pupils are usually very good. Lessons were frequently judged satisfactory rather than good because the pace of work was too slow. For example, teachers sometimes talk for too long, conduct over-lengthy question and answer sessions, or set tedious tasks such as writing out lengthy lesson objectives. In some lessons, including lessons with pupils in sets, there is insufficient attention to pupils' different learning needs, especially those of more able pupils. In weaker lessons expectations are too low and pupils are passive or lose concentration. Together, these features explain the insufficient progress made by pupils in circumstances that are otherwise favourable. In the case of pupils with SEN, progress is better because work is well matched to their needs and they receive good support. Pupils are

generally well motivated. However, they are given too few opportunities for independent learning, for example by engaging more in enquiry and extended writing across the curriculum, and through more imaginative homework. Most teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and some very good examples of helpful marking were seen; but this is not entirely consistent. Pupils are given targets which are helpful in some respects, but sometimes these are either too general or too technical. The school has plentiful assessment data but makes insufficient use of it to improve planning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad but not fully balanced. The taught time is just below the recommended amount. Within the time available teachers in most classes go beyond the 10% for religious education required by the Diocese and additionally the time set aside for literacy is at or above that recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. As a consequence, foundation subjects such as art, music and history receive less than the recommended time. The exception is physical education, which gets around two hours per week and which includes swimming in Year 6. As yet, insufficient consideration has been given to planning the use of English, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum. The school offers good extra-curricular provision including a range of clubs, activities and visitors so that, for example, all pupils are able to take up the opportunity to play a musical instrument. The school makes use of London for visits, such as one to Hampton Court to study the Tudors. There is a school journey for outdoor and adventurous activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care and support for pupils is good. The overwhelming majority of parents say that their children are safe and well cared for. Health and safety routines are good and there is a strong concern for pupils' well being. Child protection procedures are in place and there is regular risk assessment. The school's efforts on anti-bullying have been effective. Pupils say that they have an adult to talk with where the need arises. Teachers are keen to reward pupils for good work, behaviour and attitudes; but also there is a firm code of discipline which pupils understand and which is generally well applied. Pupils like the systems for rewarding their success. Pupils with SEN are well supported. So too are the small number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, who have a good induction programme and well organised support thereafter.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The school is satisfactorily managed but has not had the direction and drive necessary to raise standards and achievement. It has been through a difficult period of transition, both in terms of its rapid expansion in pupil numbers and in staff turnover; for a long period of time it was without a deputy headteacher. The headteacher has focused successfully on his pastoral leadership of a close-knit Catholic community, and this explains why the overwhelming majority of parents agree that the school is well led and managed. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the quality of work in classrooms. The effect of this has been falling standards with pupils not making the progress they should. The governing body has not been rigorous enough in holding the school to account in these matters. Some governors have not shown the necessary commitment and there have been difficulties in recruiting new governors. As a consequence, the small core of active and supportive governors, have been unable to discharge their responsibilities effectively. A new deputy headteacher has now had sufficient time to make an impact and there is a greater sense of purpose in the leadership team and a clearer focus on areas for improvement. The school's self evaluation shows awareness of the issues that need to be addressed. The development plan carries some of these forward but needs to highlight priorities. Recent improvements include the implementation of workforce reform, major investment in ICT and the introduction of targets for subject leaders for which they are accountable through performance review. Work has also been undertaken with subject leaders to draw up high quality planning documents. Plans for the restructuring of the roles of an expanded senior management team are complete. A monitoring programme has focused on the use of teaching assistants. These factors suggest that the school has the capacity to improve. As yet, however, too many responsibilities are retained by the headteacher, and other members of the senior leadership team have classroom commitments that make it difficult for them to extend their role into areas such as improving teaching. The role of subject leader, too, is underdeveloped. In particular, insufficient time is made available for the leaders of English, mathematics and science to monitor the effectiveness of provision.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. It was a great pleasure to visit the school and talk to you about it. Most of you really enjoy coming to school and value what it has to offer you. The great strength of the school is in the way you grow up as positive and happy young people who respect each other and co-operate with your teachers. We were told that there has been some bullying in the past but now you say you feel safe. We saw some rough behaviour in the playground. You should remember always to be considerate of others, especially when there are many of you in a limited space. We think there should be more playground equipment, but that if this is provided you should look after it better.

When you come to the school in Year 3 you are doing well, but you are not making as much progress or reaching the standards you should by the end of Year 6. We have said to your teachers that in some lessons you spend too much time listening and do not begin your own work quickly enough. Some of the things you are asked to do should be more demanding. In turn, you need to take every opportunity to show how you can improve. This is the most important thing that the school needs to attend to, and inspectors will be visiting you next year to see how you are getting on.

We think that you take part well in the life of the school. The school council is a good idea and you should think about ways in which it can be stronger. Perhaps you should decide on some rules for voting and the duties of representatives and talk to Mr McBride about taking on more responsibilities. We think your school can be better than it is, and you have an important part to play in making improvements.

With all good wishes for the future,

Scott Harrison HMI

Lead Inspector