

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106762
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	336735
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Haczynskyj
Headteacher	Mr Nicholas Collins
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
School address	Roberts Road Balby Doncaster DN4 0JN
Telephone number	01302 344678
Fax number	01302 341231
Email address	head@xavier.doncaster.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed six teachers. The inspectors held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and pupils' work books and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the improvement plan and an analysis of the school's records of pupils' progress and attainment. The inspection team analysed 36 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as a number of questionnaires completed by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- children's starting points and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- progress in writing and mathematics, especially for the more able
- how the leadership improves the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. The majority of pupils are White British with an average percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Fewer than average pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The number with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has received the Activemark, Sportsmark, Basic Skills Aware and a second Healthy Schools Award. It has achieved the Financial Management in Schools Standard.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school where pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Parents and carers, and pupils, welcome the friendly ethos and approachability of the headteacher and other staff. 'St Francis has encouraged my child to be her own person and all staff and volunteers are very helpful, regardless of time,' is typical of parents' and carers' views. Children enter the Nursery with skills which are at levels a little below those typically expected for the age. Pupils leave Year 6 with average standards in English, mathematics and science. They work steadily and neatly. Progress is not always fast enough, however, because some activities do not provide the right level of challenge and pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

Their good behaviour and social skills enable pupils to be sensitive to the needs of others and make a good commitment to the school and wider community. They happily take on a range of responsibilities, such as acting as school councillors and playground buddies, which has a positive impact on their daily life. Strengths in the teaching include good relationships and good support from teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, some tasks are not matched closely to their needs and teachers do not always use marking to help pupils improve rapidly. The school increasingly makes use of links between subjects to make learning relevant to pupils. The residential visits for pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make a good contribution to their social skills. The school works well with parents and carers and provides good care and support for all pupils, and in particular for the most vulnerable.

The headteacher and staff monitor the quality of provision and are focused on improving areas of weakness. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate. However, leaders at all levels are not clear enough about their roles and responsibilities in systematically improving teaching and learning at all stages, nor are they fully accountable for their effectiveness. The capacity for future improvement is, therefore, satisfactory.

Procedures for keeping pupils safe are good and a priority for the school. The school works well with parents and carers and plays an important role in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and use of assessment in order to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that work is accurately matched to the needs of pupils of all ages in every lesson

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- providing clear and consistent strategies to involve pupils in organising and improving their work
- using marking consistently to guide pupils towards the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the leadership of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels have clear roles and responsibilities and are accountable for their effectiveness
 - more effectively and consistently sharing the best practice through school.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are thoughtful and largely conscientious workers. They set their work out carefully and persevere in completing tasks. However, they are insufficiently independent in organising their work because tasks are not always closely matched to their needs and sometimes limit individual expression. As a result, pupils do not always make the best progress they could. The school's results in the latest National Curriculum tests for Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average and there are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Standards are similar for the present year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make at least expected progress because of skilled intervention from teaching assistants and programmes specifically planned for their needs. Pupils make increasing use of a range of strategies to improve their basic skills in English and mathematics, such as displays to aid learning and regular homework. However, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

Pupils are well behaved, thoughtful and considerate towards each other. Very occasionally, their behaviour suffers because they are not sufficiently engaged by lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of issues facing different faiths and cultures because of well-planned work in religious, and personal and social, education. They are proud of their school and enjoy learning. Pupils play a role in interviewing new staff and providing information to the governing body. They have good understanding of how to keep safe in a variety of circumstances and how they can contribute to their own well-being. Pupils' future workplace skills are less well developed than other aspects because they do not have enough opportunities to show enterprise and take the initiative in their work. Pupils with emotional and social difficulties make good progress in managing their behaviour because of the caring ethos and specialised support they receive. Pupils make good use of the suggestion books managed by the school council to express their concerns and know they will be addressed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The overall satisfactory quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to outstanding with a small element of inadequate teaching. Teachers set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well. Classrooms are bright and attractive places in which to learn. In the best lessons teachers generate excitement and interest through practical tasks where pupils solve problems and apply their skills and knowledge imaginatively. In these lessons, teachers share clear and precise objectives for pupils to attain and set out clear criteria for success. In such lessons a wide range of strategies are used to support and challenge all abilities. This shows the school has some exemplary teaching from which others can learn. However, in the less effective lessons, teachers do not always make it clear enough to pupils what they are expected to achieve during the lesson and how to get there. As a result, pupils do not contribute to organising and managing their work sufficiently and the work set does not always meet their needs.

Teachers make largely accurate assessments of pupils' progress, although they do not consistently use marking to help pupils attain challenging targets. Staff are increasingly making links between subjects to make learning relevant and exciting. However, the provision for mixed-ability classes is not always planned effectively to build on their existing skills. The curriculum effectively helps pupils make healthy lifestyle choices and a good understanding of how to stay safe. Learning is enriched by opportunities for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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whole classes to play musical instruments and perform for others. 'It makes me proud to play the instruments – I feel good about myself,' reflects the views of many pupils. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. This aspect has continued to improve since the last inspection through the development of support for vulnerable pupils and the drive to providing an increasingly safe and positive learning environment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Following the last inspection the headteacher and other senior staff robustly addressed weaknesses in writing and the monitoring and support for teaching. This had a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, leaders at all levels have insufficiently clear and precise lines of responsibilities and accountability for improving the school. The school is making some use of its known strengths to model the best practice, but this is not fully embedded. The school provides good support for vulnerable pupils; however, not all Reception children have full access to appropriate provision and equality of opportunity is satisfactory as a result.

The school effectively analyses its provision for community cohesion. It has a positive impact on the life of the local older people through work with a dementia group. The school has strong links with different faith leaders in the community and is involved in projects in the Sudan, for example, improving children's lives. There are robust procedures to keep pupils safe and encourage them to be aware of dangerous situations on the internet, for instance. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are developing increasingly strong procedures to gather first-hand knowledge of progress in the school and pupils' attitudes.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with a range of skills which are mostly a little below the levels expected for their age, particularly their communication skills. They make satisfactory and increasingly better progress. Nursery and Reception children in the unit make a good start because of the good balance between activities they choose for themselves and those led by adults. However, the small number of Reception children in the Key Stage 1 classes do not get enough opportunities for directing their learning and accessing the outdoor provision.

Staff have good systems to gather information from parents and carers, and other providers. Arrangements to promote children's welfare are good. Positive relationships ensure that children feel safe and secure. There are largely good procedures to develop children's early literacy and numeracy through sharply focused teaching well matched to their individual needs. The unit is a bright vibrant and stimulating learning environment. Children enjoy exploring a wide range of stimulating learning activities indoors and out. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. This is because although there have been good recent improvements to the provision in the unit, there is an insufficient overview of the provision for all children and lines of responsibility lack clarity.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About one fifth of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Parents and carers are positive in their views of the school. They particularly comment on the approachability of the headteacher and other staff and that they go out of their way to help pupils. The

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inspection team largely agrees with parents' and carers' positive views but judges that pupils could make better progress academically.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 181 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	67	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	62	15	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	36	20	51	3	8	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	38	19	49	3	8	2	5
The teaching is good at this school	19	49	17	44	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	49	19	49	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	38	22	56	2	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	41	19	49	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	41	19	49	2	5	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	44	19	49	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	36	23	59	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	44	19	49	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	54	15	38	2	5	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School, Doncaster, DN4 0JN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking to you about your school and could see you are proud of your school. You say you feel very safe and appreciate the care that all adults show to you. You have a good knowledge of how to live healthily and enjoy the many opportunities to be active at school. You learn a lot from visits, especially the residential ones, and the clubs and societies you belong to. The school council and buddies help to make the school a safer and more interesting place to be.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Your headteacher and other staff work together to help you to learn and to make things better for you. They take good care of you. You make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science and the standard of your work is average. Your lessons are satisfactory, although occasionally the work set for you is not at quite the right level. We have asked your headteacher and other teachers to help you make even more progress in lessons and to use assessment and marking to help you to organise and improve your work. We have also asked them to make sure all staff have a clear role in helping the school get even better. You can help by enjoying your work and continuing to try hard.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark

Lead Inspector

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