

St Francis Catholic Primary School, Morley

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108016
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	337005
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Lockwood
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Burns
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. One of the inspectors focused mainly on safeguarding. Twelve lessons or part lessons were observed and six teachers were seen. The inspection team observed the school's work and examined its policies, assessments, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. There were informal conversations with parents. The inspectors analysed 42 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others by staff and pupils.

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

- improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well pupils perform in writing
- the effectiveness of strategies to improve mathematics
- how well senior staff monitor and develop teaching.

Information about the school

St Francis Catholic Primary is much smaller than most primary schools. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The nature of these difficulties includes specific learning and speech, language and communication difficulties. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in Reception. A before- and after-school club is managed by the school and governing body. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2008 after a period in which the school was led by temporary headteachers and underwent several changes of staff.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

After the last inspection, the school went through a difficult period where there was not a substantive headteacher and several staff changes. These factors contributed to a decline in the school's and pupils' performance.

Good leadership and direction by the current headteacher, effective teamwork and a more settled teaching force have resulted in considerable improvements during the past two years. This view is confirmed by parents, staff and pupils. A parent wrote, 'The school has really come on in the past few years'. St Francis Catholic Primary is now a good school.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. They achieve well because of good teaching and the exciting learning activities provided. Good care, guidance and support and the school's very positive ethos make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils are courteous, friendly and supportive of others. Behaviour is often exemplary, particularly in lessons. Pupils feel safe and show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Community cohesion is promoted well and pupils make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.

Most children enter Reception with knowledge and skills broadly as expected for their age. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved and children make good progress in most areas of learning. However, outdoor apparatus to develop children's physical skills of balancing and climbing is limited. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average. A range of strategies has been successfully implemented to improve pupils' performance in writing. Positive action has also been taken to improve provision in mathematics. However, not enough pupils are attaining the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. Individual learning targets for literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 are not always specific to pupils' needs, particularly those who are more able. There are examples of outstanding practice in the teaching. Teachers are enthusiastic and their good subject knowledge and the interesting tasks they provide motivate the pupils. They establish very good relationships with their class. In most cases, assessment information is used effectively to plan teaching and match tasks to pupils' different abilities. The curriculum is creative, exciting and enriched by a good range of additional activities.

The headteacher provides good leadership and direction. She has created a very positive climate in which pupils can learn and staff can work. Other key leaders provide effective support. Teamwork among the staff is a strength and there is a clear commitment to doing the best for all pupils. The school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve.

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Leaders and managers systematically and accurately review the school's performance and take positive steps to bring about improvements where needed. The Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching, assessment and pupils' progress have improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Parents and carers are pleased with the education provided and appreciate the improvements made.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment for more able pupils by the end of Year 2 so that a proportion close to the national average reach Level 3, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - – setting challenging individual targets that are specific to pupils' needs
 - – ensuring that tasks fully extend the more able.
- Improve the outdoor equipment and apparatus in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop children's physical skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. They have very positive attitudes and make good progress. After the last inspection, pupils' performance declined and attainment by the end of Year 6 dipped to below average in 2008. Effective action was taken and attainment rose to above average the following year. School assessments, pupils' work and the lessons seen indicate that attainment in the current Year 6 is above average in English and mathematics. Most pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

In a high-quality Year 6 English lesson, pupils in small groups made exceptionally good progress in planning and devising advertisements for a forthcoming Mini Olympics event in school. They tackled the task with enthusiasm and applied their language, information and communication technology (ICT) and writing skills extremely well. Using alliteration, humour, catchy slogans and songs, pupils created striking posters, a television advertisement and one for radio. Pupils were articulate and confident in their presentations. The class reviewed the performance of different group's work in a constructive and supportive way.

Pupils make good progress in mathematics because of good teaching and the emphasis placed on practical, problem-solving activities. This approach is appreciated by the pupils who remarked, 'Lessons are practical and fun'.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength. They appreciate and demonstrate important values such as generosity, kindness, patience and thoughtfulness. Pupils told the inspectors, 'Everyone is friendly here and no one is left out'. Collaborative working is very well developed as shown by the way pupils tackle and solve problems in pairs or groups. Pupils feel safe and well cared for at school and are confident that there is always a trusted adult they can turn to if they are worried or upset. Pupils take on additional responsibilities, such as serving on the school council. They support those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for national and

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overseas charities and participate in local community events. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their personal and social skills are very well developed. They successfully apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to new situations. Attendance is broadly average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching promotes good learning and progress. There are examples of outstanding practice in Years 3 to 6. A pupil commented, 'Lessons are fun and you learn a lot'. Teachers create attractive classrooms and a positive climate for pupils to learn in. Classroom displays include a good balance of learning prompts and pupils' work. Teachers effectively share the purpose of lessons with the class so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Clear indicators are provided to guide learning and pupils use these well to assess their own progress. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate key teaching points. Explanations, demonstrations and instruction promote learning well. Teachers provide pupils with imaginative tasks and good opportunities for pupils to solve problems in groups. Questioning is used well to check pupils' knowledge

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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and understanding. Activities and tasks are usually well suited to pupils' abilities and needs. Those who need additional support receive good guidance from teaching assistants. Pupils are set individual learning targets in writing and mathematics so they know what to do to improve. These are not sufficiently tailored to pupils' specific needs in Years 1 and 2, particularly for the more able.

The curriculum promotes good academic progress for pupils and contributes well to their personal development. Initiatives to further develop pupils' writing skills are having a positive impact on pupils' performance. There are good links between subjects which add meaning and relevance to learning. Provision for ICT has improved recently and this is used well to support pupils' learning, particularly in writing. The teaching of French contributes well to pupils' language and cultural development. Popular clubs such as those for art, athletics, climbing, football, netball and ICT are enjoyed by pupils. A residential visit to Malham for Year 6 provides interesting outdoor activities and helps to build team and social skills.

Care, guidance and support and the school's very positive school climate are at the heart of the school. The safe and secure environment provided is appreciated by pupils, parents and carers. Policies and procedures to promote good behaviour and positive relationships are highly effective. A parent wrote, 'Pastoral care is top class'. Pupils who have special educational needs are carefully assessed and their support programmes ensure that they make good progress. Another parent remarked, 'I am pleased with the support given to meet my child's educational needs.' The school works in partnership with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. A well organised before- and after-school club is appreciated by working parents.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher with her staff and governors has successfully steered the improvements needed. Under her leadership, there have been considerable improvements to provision and to the outcomes for pupils. A parent summed up the views of many, 'The headteacher has made a real difference in turning the school around after staffing difficulties.'

Teaching is successfully monitored and developed by the headteacher and other key staff. Improvements to teaching have had a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher has a very clear overview of the quality of teaching in the

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school.

Governors make a valuable contribution to the school's effectiveness. They are supportive and provide constructive challenge in order to hold the school to account. Members of the governing body possess considerable expertise in areas such as financial management and child protection. This expertise is used well to benefit the school. Good attention is given to safeguarding. Recommended practices have been adopted and policies and procedures to protect and safeguard children are working well. All staff are well trained in this area and safe practices are promoted through the school's curriculum.

Equality of opportunity is promoted successfully and the staff strive to ensure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can. Racial equality is promoted very well and the school's participation in the 'Stephen Lawrence Trust' project has had a positive impact on pupils. The school has a good understanding of the community it serves and promotes community cohesion well. The curriculum successfully promotes different cultures and faiths. The school is taking steps to further extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider global community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective leadership, good planning and additional accommodation have contributed to the improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children settle into the Reception class quickly because of the positive partnerships with parents and the school's welcoming atmosphere. There are clear plans to extend induction arrangements

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and the partnership with pre-school settings. Good relationships between adults and children and the strong attention given to care and welfare enable children to make good progress in their personal and social development. Children feel safe, secure and grow in confidence. They relate well to adults and to their peers as they learn and play together. Staff provide an interesting range of learning activities both in and out of the classroom. Children are enthusiastic, keen and enjoy their learning. Most teaching is good, there is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Good emphasis is placed on language development and the teaching of letter sounds. Children enjoy the attractive books provided and a range of stories read with them. They make good progress in developing writing skills because of the good guidance by staff and opportunities to practise writing. There are numerous opportunities for children to explore and to work independently. Outdoor apparatus and equipment to develop children's physical skills such as balancing and climbing are limited in quality and quantity.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over a third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Almost all parents and carers who returned them are happy with their children's experience at the school. They are particularly pleased with the sense of enjoyment and safety in school. The inspection team agrees with these positive views. A very small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire do not believe the school meets the needs of individual pupils or deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that the school strives successfully to meet pupils' different needs and most pupils make good progress. Most pupils are extremely well behaved. The school has effective policies and procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Francis Catholic Primary School, Morley 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 119 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	68	15	26	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	60	22	39	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	39	32	56	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	47	24	42	1	2	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	24	42	26	46	1	2	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	33	31	54	3	5	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	47	27	47	2	4	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)	20	35	33	58	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	46	24	42	4	7	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	35	30	53	6	11	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	35	28	49	4	7	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	42	28	49	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	56	20	35	1	2	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Francis Catholic Primary School, Morley, Leeds, LS27 9LX

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a good school. It has made good improvements recently.

These are the school's main strengths.

- You really enjoy school.
- The school is a pleasant place in which to learn.
- Children in Reception get off to a good start.
- You make good progress because of the good teaching.
- A good range of learning activities is provided.
- You get on very well with each other and behaviour is often outstanding.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You feel safe at school because the teachers and other adults take care of you. and provide good support and guidance.
- You make positive contributions to the school and to the wider community.
- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and she receives good support from other senior staff.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to improve some areas of the school.

- Some of you, in Years 1 and 2 could make even more progress in writing and mathematics, particularly those who find things easy. We have asked the teachers to make sure that your individual learning targets to help you improve are clearer and that tasks always challenge you.
- The outdoor learning equipment could be improved in Reception so that children can practise and improve their physical skills such as balancing and climbing.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Derek Watts

Lead inspector

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