

St Francis' Catholic Primary School

Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5ED

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils do not make the good progress they need to do as well as they can.
- Teaching overall is not strong enough to help pupils learn well and make fast progress.
- Not enough is expected of the pupils, particularly the most able. They do not receive challenging enough tasks.
- Time is sometimes wasted on going over work that pupils already understand.
- Marking does not always give pupils enough guidance on how to improve.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that teaching and achievement have improved enough recently to be good.
- They do not sufficiently ensure that their advice to teachers is followed up so that the overall quality of teaching improves.
- Leaders and managers focus too much on teaching styles and not enough on how pupils are learning.
- Governors do not get enough value for money by making sure that there is a secure link between teachers' pay and the progress pupils make.

The school has the following strengths:

- The school is a caring one and has a warm, welcoming atmosphere.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted.
- Pupils are taught strong values. Behaviour is good. They respect others and get on well with one another.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility and help others.
- Pupils are safe at school. They are taught successfully how to keep themselves safe when away from school.
- Pupils who have various additional needs are given good support. This enables them to make better progress than others.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding receive good support and do as well as others.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 23 lessons across a range of subjects. Four were observed jointly with the interim headteachers.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at samples of their work.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers with responsibilities for specific subjects, a representative of the local authority, and groups of pupils. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 22 questionnaires.
- There were 63 responses to Parent View, the online survey of the views of parents and carers. Inspectors considered these, and also spoke to a number of parents and carers during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own views of how well it is doing, its plans for the future, information on pupils' attainment and progress, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors also examined safeguarding information, and records relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allan Barfoot

Additional Inspector

Gill Walley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Francis' Catholic Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- An average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages, with no one group predominating. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra help in class through school action is smaller than average, as is the proportion who receive more help through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in governance and in senior leadership. The headship is currently shared between two interim headteachers.
- The breakfast club is managed by an outside provider and is subject to separate inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is good or outstanding, so pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics rises, by teachers:
 - expecting more of the pupils
 - giving them tasks that are hard enough, particularly the more able
 - making sure that time is not wasted in lessons so pupils learn more
 - making sure that marking helps pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - explaining clearly what teachers need to do to get the best out of the pupils, and making sure in subsequent classroom visits that their guidance is producing results
 - focusing more sharply on how well pupils are learning rather than on the teaching styles.
- Make sure that governors secure the best value for money by ensuring that there is a close link between teachers' movement along the pay scales and the progress pupils make.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not good because they do not make the good progress they need to do as well as possible.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to shine, and do not do as well as they could.
- Published figures show that in 2012 and 2013 results in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average. School figures show that this pattern is likely to continue in 2014.
- Leaders and middle leaders are, however, successful in raising the achievement of the small numbers of pupils who need additional support. This shows that this caring school successfully promotes equality of opportunity for pupils' learning.
- As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given effective support and make better progress than others.
- Those who speak English as an additional language are also given effective support and do well at the school.
- The small numbers of pupils eligible for additional government funding are supported effectively through a range of additional groups and individual help. There is no appreciable difference between their attainment and that of others in reading, writing and mathematics, and all make similar progress which is improving.
- Children in the Reception classes make a good start to their school career. They learn well because tasks are stimulating and appeal to their imagination. For example, a group of pupils making space rockets out of scrap materials were able to speak confidently about what they were learning. One said, 'I am going to fly my rocket to the coldest planet.'
- Reading is a growing strength. The new leaders have made a promising start in raising standards. For example they have brought back guided reading lessons, so that pupils can explore a wide range of books. Pupils who read aloud to inspectors appreciate the way the school encourages them to use the library. As a result, school records show that pupils are likely to do better in reading than in writing and mathematics in the 2014 Year 2 and Year 6 national tests.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not good because it is not helping pupils to make strong enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Too little is expected of pupils. As a result, they do not do as well as they could. Tasks set are not always difficult enough, particularly for the most able. Sometimes time is wasted when pupils go over work they already know and can do well.
- Marking does not always give pupils enough advice on how they can improve. This, too, slows their progress.
- The extra support, both in class and in small groups for pupils with a range of additional needs, helps them to make faster progress than others.
- Children in the Reception classes have plenty of chances to explore a range of interesting topics. In one activity, for example, they learned basic number and science skills by weighing ingredients for cakes they were planning.
- Pupils learn most rapidly when the tasks fire their imagination and enable them to work at a fast pace. For example, pupils in the mixed Years 5 and 6 English lessons were stimulated by the Greek myth of Perseus and Medusa to write their own descriptions. A typically lively example was, 'A huge warty head appeared, as ugly as a troll.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are keen to learn. Inspectors observed that pupils were so absorbed in their learning that they were disappointed when the lesson came to an end.
- They are polite and considerate towards others. Pupils play peaceably together in the playground. The youngest children in the Reception classes are ready to share the play equipment and take turns in using the play activities.
- Pupils are respectful towards others. For example, they hold open doors for others and are quiet and attentive during assemblies. This reflects the warmth and care they receive from all the adults.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for others. Inspectors saw the head boy, head girl and other prefects keeping a watchful eye on playground behaviour. Pupils in Year 3 actively promoted the sale of orange juice intended to help overseas farmers get a fair price for their goods.
- Such respect for others reflects the school's strong Christian values, which ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities are developed effectively.
- The school fosters good relations among its pupils, and there is no discrimination towards minorities.
- Pupils told inspectors that the good behaviour seen during the inspection was typical.
- Discussion with pupils and records of behaviour incidents show that occasionally pupils call one another unkind names. This is why behaviour is judged to be good rather than outstanding.
- Pupils show their enjoyment of school through their above average attendance.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe. All parents and carers who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors agreed that the school is safe.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying. If they have any worries they know whom to turn to.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, and understand the risks involved in using computers or when out and about.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management are not good because there has been a decline in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection, and because teaching is now no longer judged to be good overall. Governors have not until recently held them to account for this.
- Leaders' advice on how pupils' learning can be improved has not been rigorously followed up. This has meant that weaknesses in teaching have not been put right over time.
- In their programme of classroom visits, leaders sometimes focus too much on teaching styles and not enough on how well pupils are learning. As a result the progress of some pupils, particularly the most able, is sometimes overlooked.
- The interim headteachers, working closely with governors and the local authority, quickly identified the areas for improvement. Their view of how well the school is doing is clear, honest and realistic. They judge the school to require improvement, and this is also the view of the local authority.
- As a result of this clear-sightedness, they have been swift to make plans for improvement. These plans cover the right priorities.
- The interim headteachers have made a promising start in little over one term. They are training all teachers to use figures on pupils' progress, so that teachers can quickly spot where progress

is slowing.

- The local authority has provided considerable additional support. This has helped the school to plan improvements.
- Middle leaders have been given new responsibilities by senior leaders. They have made a promising start, for example in observing the quality of teaching and learning both in lessons and in pupils' workbooks. As yet there has not been time for there to be an impact on pupils' learning.
- The subjects pupils learn have an appropriate focus on improving their language and number skills. Pupils reported that they enjoy the range of clubs, trips and visits to places of interest.
- Plans for using the additional sports funding are still evolving, because of changes in middle as well as senior leadership. However, funding has already been used to enable shared use of the swimming pool in a neighbouring primary school. Support has also been given for football coaching at the school, and for multi-skills sports at a nearby secondary school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The largely new governing body has made a promising start in working closely with leaders and managers to bring about rapid changes. There is now shared planning and shared understanding of how to improve.
 - Governors now have a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing in comparison to others nationally. The headteachers' reports are now clear and informative. Governors are increasingly using this information to hold leaders to account.
 - Governors ensure that pupils known to be eligible for additional funding do as well as others.
 - They understand the benefit of the additional sports funding in helping pupils to join in more sporting activities, and are increasingly planning for its effective use.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching and that a high proportion of the teaching staff are on promoted pay scales and that pupils' progress is not strong. As new governors, however, they have not made sufficient impact on holding the school to account for weaknesses in this link between teachers' pay and pupils' progress. They welcome an external review on this aspect of their performance.
 - Governors have taken every opportunity for training, for example on understanding published data on pupils' achievement. They are trained in safeguarding and safer recruitment. They successfully carry out their statutory obligation to keep pupils safe.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125203
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	443904

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	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Mee
Interim headteachers	Dorothy Rollason, Jill Keany
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2011
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