

# St Francis Catholic Primary School

Maryland Park, Stratford, London E15 1HB

**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school's leaders and managers do not check on the progress made by pupils rigorously. They do not have effective systems for managing the performance of teachers to ensure good quality teaching for all pupils and are not effective in promoting and securing improvements quickly enough. They do not have the capacity to improve without external support.
- The governing body has not met its responsibility to ensure that school leaders provide an acceptable standard of education for all groups of pupils.
- Teaching across the school is not yet good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers' expectations are not always sufficiently high.
- The school has not dealt with some of the areas for improvement from the last inspection, for example, the lack of consistency in the quality of marking and feedback to pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour in some lessons requires improvement because when teaching fails to maintain their interest they become distracted. Moreover, the policy for managing behaviour is not followed consistently by all teachers.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Attendance is above average.
- From this term, the two newly appointed acting headteachers are beginning to make improvements. However, it is too soon to see the impact of their actions.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. They are polite and welcoming.
- The school has excellent links with the church community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 16 lessons, including six jointly with the two acting headteachers and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors evaluated pupils' work and talked to a range of pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents and carers, staff, members of the middle and senior leadership teams, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, documents relating to safeguarding, policies, information about pupils' progress, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, records of behaviour and incidents; they also looked at the school's website. The school's records of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and anonymised documents about the management of staff performance were not available.
- Inspectors took account of 18 responses to the online Parent View survey and the views of expressed by parents during the inspection. They reviewed the responses to staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Kewal Goel, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Gill Walley

Additional inspector

Sharona Semlali

Additional inspector

Mary Usher-Clark

Additional inspector

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group from Year 1 to Year 6.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two part-time Nursery classes and two full-time Reception classes.
- Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, with the largest groups from African and Caribbean heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is much lower than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The previous substantive headteacher left at the end of the autumn term 2012. There are plans to appoint a new headteacher from September 2013. In January 2013 the governing body, with support from the local authority and diocese, appointed two acting headteachers from Catholic schools in Newham until the end of August 2013. These two acting headteachers also lead their own schools.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' attainment by:
  - ensuring teachers have higher expectations and set work which matches pupils' different learning needs
  - making sure teachers talk less in lessons and provide more opportunities for pupils to work by themselves so that they remain involved in their work and behaviour improves
  - ensuring lessons move at a brisk pace and that more-able pupils are suitably challenged to reach higher levels of attainment
  - encouraging more-able pupils in Years 5 and 6 to read more challenging texts
  - ensuring that reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively across the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - making sure all leaders, especially subject leaders, have the necessary skills to check on

- pupils' progress and know what needs to be improved and how to hold teachers to account
- making sure that the school's policies for marking and managing behaviour are implemented consistently
- ensuring there are systems to accurately measure pupils' progress, and that these are used to highlight how different groups and individuals are achieving, and to promote rapid improvements
- developing plans for improvement with suitable timescales and clear criteria against which success can be measured
- fully implementing procedures for managing the performance of staff so that teaching becomes securely good for all pupils
- strengthening systems for engaging with parents and carers so they express greater confidence in the school
- ensuring the governing body is able to perform its duties effectively and, in particular, to hold leaders to account more rigorously.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils make uneven progress as they move through the school and do not always reach the levels they are capable of achieving. The school is not successful in ensuring equal opportunities for all its pupils.
- Children enter the school with skills that are below the levels expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, they make good progress in developing their social skills, but progress in developing language and mathematical skills requires improvement.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is below average, with very few pupils reaching the higher Level 3.
- Last year, rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics were slower in Years 3, 4 and 5 than in Year 6, where pupils made good progress. Progress is broadly in line with what is expected overall, but too variable from class to class and from year to year.
- In 2012, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attained the expected levels in both English and mathematics was in line with the national average. Attainment at the higher levels, however, was below average in both subjects.
- In the most recent Year 1 phonics (letters and sounds) screening check, pupils' scores were similar to those found nationally. Pupils are given opportunities to read books written by a wide range of authors. However, more-able pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not encouraged enough to read increasingly challenging texts.
- There are no significant gaps in the average point scores at the end of Year 6 between different groups of pupils. The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of their peers because they receive appropriate support.
- Those pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, including those eligible for free school meals, achieve well in English and are closing the gap on what other pupils are achieving nationally. Pupils whose first language is not English generally communicate well and make progress similar to other pupils. Pupils from different ethnic groups, including Black African and Caribbean pupils, make similar progress to their peers.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement, as there is not enough good or better teaching to ensure that all pupils learn well and make consistently good progress.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough to ensure they set suitably challenging targets for all their pupils. Work set does not always match pupils' different learning needs. In a number of lessons seen during the inspection, the pace of learning was not rapid enough, particularly for the more-able pupils who are at times held back from getting on with their own work while they sit through the teacher's lengthy explanations to the whole class.
- Teachers work well with teaching assistants to ensure good quality additional support for some pupils during lessons. For example, in a mathematics lesson on coordinates, the teaching assistant was deployed effectively to support pupils' learning, including through the use of information and communication technology.
- In lessons where teaching is good, teachers use questioning effectively, maintain a brisk pace and plan activities that interest and motivate pupils. They create a positive learning environment within which pupils can talk and challenge each other.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, providing positive feedback. They do not, however, offer guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work. Teachers do not always expect pupils to do follow-up activities so that they can learn from their mistakes. Overall, there is a lack of consistency in the quality of marking and feedback across the school, partly because the policy is

not adhered to closely.

- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught well in some classes but not in others.
- Using the pupil premium, the school has employed additional adults to provide targeted support to groups of pupils. As a result, these pupils make up lost ground in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Older pupils explained to inspectors how they believed that teaching has improved. They told inspectors that in the past, they had too many supply teachers who gave everybody easy work to do. Nevertheless, teaching still requires improvement.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because teachers' expectations are too low.
- When pupils spend too much time listening to teachers talking rather than being allowed to get on with their work some lose concentration and become distracted. This in turn interrupts learning for all pupils in the class. Teachers do not use the school's clear procedures for managing pupils' behaviour well enough.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. The school is a welcoming and inclusive community. The school values the different heritages of all pupils and so pupils learn to respect and appreciate diversity. From the time pupils start in the Early Years Foundation Stage they develop skills in working successfully with each other and with adults.
- Parents and carers said their children are safe and well cared for. This view is also reflected in the confidence expressed by pupils that they are safe at school and that bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying; they recognise, for example, concerns regarding cyber bullying. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together and there have been no reported incidents of racism during the last year.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire and those who spoke to inspectors said that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are supported well. The school works effectively with external agencies in this regard.
- Attendance is above average.

### **The leadership and management**

### **are inadequate**

- Leaders and managers have not dealt with some of the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Improvements which have been made are fragile and heavily dependent on support from the local authority. The capacity to bring about and sustain improvements without external support has not been demonstrated.
- The acting headteachers have made sound early steps in beginning to raise aspirations and in creating a common sense of purpose to move the school forward. In the last few weeks they have created a clear focus on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching. However, it is much too soon to see the impact of their actions. Other leaders and managers rely heavily on the two acting headteachers and the impact of their own work is limited. This is because they do not all check well enough on the progress that pupils are making or contribute sufficiently to helping the school to improve.
- Until recently, the school's evaluation of its performance lacked rigour and was inaccurate. The views of the acting headteachers about the school's provision and outcomes are accurate. However, plans for improvement are underdeveloped and lack suitable timescales and clear criteria against which success can be measured.
- In their responses to the questionnaire, a number of staff indicated that they do not feel they

have received sufficient training, including in helping them to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Until very recently, systems for managing the performance of staff had not been implemented. Records were not available during the inspection to show that leaders had made any checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress prior to January 2013.

- The information about the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils has been unreliable because leaders did not take steps to check its accuracy. Meetings to discuss pupils' progress and to hold staff more accountable for pupils' performance are planned but have yet to take place.
  - The curriculum makes a strong contribution to promoting pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development through, for example, assemblies, musical events, international week and Black History month. However, the curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils well, especially the more-able pupils.
  - The local authority has provided intensive support to help the school to improve its leadership and management, including with the appointment of the two acting headteachers.
  - The school's strategies for engaging with parents and carers are weak and a few who spoke to the inspection team expressed a lack of confidence, until recently, in the leadership of the school.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governance is inadequate. The governing body is not sufficiently robust in holding the school to account for the quality of teaching and the school's performance. Governors do not have a clear understanding of how pupils' performance compares to that in other schools. Governors are supportive, but they are not sure how to challenge the school to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' performance. Governors do not have a secure overview of how the performance of staff is managed or of how good teaching is rewarded. They do not know how the pupil premium funding has been used or the impact of this spending on pupils' achievement. Some governors attend professional development training regularly. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including ensuring the suitability of staff to work with children, are secure.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102770
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	400570

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	457
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Terry Sweeney
<b>Acting Headteachers</b>	Christopher Mabey, Gael Hicks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8534 0476
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