

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mr P Rincon  
Headteacher  
Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School  
Treadgold Street  
Notting Hill  
London  
W11 4BJ

Dear Mr Rincon

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: English**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 21 June 2011 to look at work in English.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is outstanding.

### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is outstanding.

- Attainment in English has been average and above average at the end of Key Stage 2 in recent years. Test results dipped at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 last year. However, the school's monitoring data suggest that standards will improve in 2011 and 2012. Pupils eligible for free school meals perform especially well against the national average for that group.
- The contextual value-added data show that progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 has been very good in recent years. This is confirmed by the fact that nearly every pupil has achieved at least the expected rate of progress over the past two years. Most groups of pupils make similarly strong progress and some pupils who have a first language other than English achieve particularly well. There is some evidence that more able pupils have not always made as much progress as might be expected. Overall,

taking into account below-average starting points for many pupils on entry to the school, the progress of pupils is outstanding.

- Progress in lessons observed was good. Pupils behaved very well and were keen to learn. Many of the pupils expressed their ideas effectively in discussion and with considerable maturity.

### **Quality of teaching in English**

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- Pupils enjoy lessons. They form very good relationships with teachers and work well together in pairs and small groups. They particularly enjoy lessons that are active and enable them to contribute through discussion and drama.
- Teaching in lessons observed was consistently good. Lessons were well planned and prepared, with good use of a range of resources and approaches. Teaching assistants worked well to support identified groups of pupils. Learning objectives were usually clear and lessons proceeded at pace. Lessons featured some high-quality oral work as a result of good modelling by the teacher.
- At times, activities were rushed giving pupils insufficient time to complete work and consolidate learning. Pupils were always fully engaged but activities sometimes needed more effective differentiation to challenge all groups of pupils, including the most able.
- The very positive school ethos for learning and the outstanding quality of resources and display contribute strongly to pupils' high achievement in English.
- Assessment, marking and feedback are good overall. The most effective marking includes helpful targets and areas for improvement for pupils. The less effective marking tends to concentrate on more general, positive comments without the clear identification of next steps for pupils.

### **Quality of the curriculum in English**

The quality of the curriculum in English is outstanding.

- The whole-school curriculum is highly effective, distinctive and very well-planned around the needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy learning and recognise the links between subjects. For example, they speak thoughtfully about how they are able to use knowledge in history to strengthen their writing in English.
- The English curriculum is broad and balanced and contains innovative elements. There is a good emphasis on discussion work and practical drama. Information and communication technology, including media technology, is beginning to be used very well. For example, pupils act as journalists and record interviews; they also have opportunities to produce and film their own advertisements.

- The school provides a strong reading curriculum. It works closely with parents to support early reading and all teachers use good-quality texts to engage pupils' interest. The use of whole-class novels is very effective in promoting understanding of key writers for children and encouraging wider reading.
- A good range of well-targeted interventions supports pupils who have a first language other than English.
- The curriculum is enriched well by a good range of additional activities. This includes an annual Year 6 drama production, visits from theatre companies, work with writers and other external experts (including, most recently, a film director), school trips, and strategies such as book events to support reading.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in English**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in English is good.

- Very effective leadership has ensured that the school has an innovative curriculum that motivates pupils. Resources are outstanding and the school provides a stimulating environment that supports work in English.
- Very effective efforts have been made to work with parents, especially in supporting reading.
- Good leadership has helped to promote a lively and very effective curriculum in English. The emphasis on reading has worked well and ensures that most pupils enjoy reading.
- The school has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in English. The improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities in reading, writing and teaching phonics. However, subject leadership needs to be strengthened to provide more detailed analysis of performance data, clearer and more specific action points for improvement, and better monitoring and evaluation of English teaching across the school.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- reviewing the role and impact of subject leadership in areas including:
  - analysis of performance data
  - action-planning
  - monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in English across the school
- reviewing best practice in planning for mixed-age classes to challenge all groups of pupils, including the most able, in English.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection.

Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Philip Jarrett**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**