

Jersey Standards for Independent Schools Inspection of FCJ Primary School



Mission Statement

Teach the children with all the kindness and gentleness possible.

Date of Inspection
16-18 January 2024



Jersey Standards for Independent Schools Inspection of

FCJ Primary School

Deloraine Road
St Saviour
Jersey
JE2 7XB

Proprietor:	D'Houet Ltd
Headteacher:	Donna Lenzi
Inspection date:	16-18 January 2024

Alongside this inspection, the team also conducted a review of the school against the Jersey School's Review Framework (JSRF). The findings of this review have been published in a separate report.

Summary

FCJ Primary School's Christian ethos coupled with its promotion of children's rights underpin the exceptionally caring community feel here. The shared values of 'companionship, dignity, excellence, justice, gentleness and hope' are at the core of pupils' learning and all that the school achieves. Pupils thrive in this exceedingly kind, considerate and warm learning environment.

Leaders ensure all pupils benefit from a stimulating and engaging curriculum enhanced by interesting activities and experiences. Experienced and skilled senior leaders ensure that the quality of teaching is very effective over time with some notable areas of significant strength. Pupils relish their learning here and over time they achieve very well at FCJ.

Leaders, governors and staff work as a cohesive team to continually refine and improve standards and provision here. They are to be commended for the many impressive improvements made to the school buildings and facilities in recent years. The school's effective monitoring and self-evaluation systems equip senior leaders and governors with a suitably in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Leaders are now rightly arranging for further minor adjustments to the curriculum and targeted training to ensure all teachers and teaching assistants can respond to the needs of their pupils in line with the best examples in the school.

As a gold-level Rights Respecting School, pupils' views are sought and valued here. Pupils proudly explained how they jump at the many chances to experience leadership and make a difference to the school and the wider community. Positive relationships ensure that pupils are well supported and safe here. There are well-established and meticulously organised systems to promote safeguarding and ensure safety when onsite. Parents and pupils particularly appreciate how well the welfare and wellbeing of everyone is promoted by the school.

Recommendations for Improvement

The recommendations below in relation to the quality of education on offer at the school are the same as those identified during the Jersey School Review conducted at the same time as this inspection.

The school should take the following actions:

1. Enable further improvements to the effectiveness of teaching by fine tuning curriculum plans in the foundation subjects to improve the sequence of key knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary.
2. Ensure more consistent and sustained progress is made in lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring 'in-the-moment' formative assessment techniques are used more consistently, in line with best practice observed within the school
 - continuing to support teaching assistants with training to enhance how they can support their target pupils within early reading and the foundation subjects.

Standard 1: The Quality of Education Provided

The standards relating to the quality of education are met

Comment:

The school meets the requirements of the Jersey Curriculum. Typically, teachers' well-planned units of work ensure that pupils enjoy the challenge of learning and develop a thirst for knowledge. Pupils here are educated to become articulate, confident, and knowledgeable. The knowledge they can recall across the curriculum can be impressive, particularly so when explaining and applying their learning from humanities and religious education lessons. Similarly, their achievement in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a significant strength. The culture and ethos of the school underpins the high levels of empathy, respect, and the sense of justice that pupils develop. They can confidently discuss challenging subjects and relate them to their rights and responsibilities. They are being well prepared to be model citizens.

Mutual respect and trust are clearly evident across the school. Teachers have high expectations and familiar classroom routines resulting in well-structured lessons. Teachers are determined to support all of their pupils to achieve their best.

Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is most effective where staff plan and provide learning activities in small carefully organised segments. In these lessons, staff use a range of strategies successfully to engage and motivate pupils so that they rapidly build their knowledge and skills. Strong examples of this were seen in mathematics in upper Key Stage 2 lessons.

Information technology is used well to engage pupils, particularly the use of iPads in lessons. Inspectors witnessed how effectively they were used to consolidate learning and apply subject knowledge. For example, in a gymnastics lesson where they were used to help pupils reflect on their learning and then refine and develop their body positions and balance.

The most effective teaching occurs when teachers' planning equips them and their teaching assistants to be confident about both the pitch of the subject matter and the needs of their pupils. This supports staff to work together delivering both the subject knowledge and 'in the moment' assessments to adapt their interactions to meet the needs of their pupils very well. Where this happens, it significantly boosts pupils' confidence and their learning. Leaders are aware of areas where these aspects of teaching are less well developed and are working to address them.

Standard 2: Pupil Behaviour and Personal Development

The standards relating to behaviour and personal development are met

Comment:

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically exemplary. Leaders have high expectations and there are well-established systems for praise, rewards and the use of a restorative justice approach when required. The promotion of children's rights, pupil voice and participation underpin daily life at FCJ. Pupils learn to confidently discuss their rights and responsibilities and to respect and value those of others too.

Pupils are attentive and keen to learn in class and conduct themselves well. They are polite, respectful and courteous. At break and lunch times they socialise and play together well, with older pupils looking out for their younger peers. Established warm and trusting relationships underpin a real sense of belonging to the FCJ family.

Leaders ensure clear progression pathways are outlined in planning and provision for PSHE. Age-appropriate activities link well with school values and content of religious education. A strength of the school's provision is a close and supportive PSHE team, whose clearly defined and separate areas of responsibility merge to form a cohesive approach to the promotion of pupils' personal development.

Informative newsletters provide parents with valuable information on the objectives and sequencing of PSHE curriculum from starting points in early years through to Year 6. Leaders are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views while they are attending school and during after school activities.

Standard 3: Pupil Safeguarding and Welfare

The standards relating to safeguarding and welfare are met

Comment:

The arrangements meet the requirements of guidance for schools in Jersey. The safeguarding policy and other linked policies, together with arrangements for risk assessment all meet regulatory requirements and are implemented effectively. Leaders' well-organised systems for promoting safeguarding ensure that comprehensive child protection records are maintained and managed. The safeguarding team are ready to deal with any issues that arise and work proactively with outside agencies to secure support for vulnerable pupils and their families when necessary.

There are clear lines of accountability and oversight of school systems involving governors, leaders and office staff who together ensure that all pupils are kept safe. Regular training for all staff is provided on safeguarding matters. Consequently, staff understand and carry out the school's policy and procedures well, ensuring a culture of vigilance.

Policies and systems are in place to ensure the school meets Jersey requirements. Leaders and governors have a rigorous approach to ensuring health and safety and carry out detailed risk assessments and regular checks on all required aspects. This includes reviewing trips and visits and working with governors to conduct regular reviews of fire safety systems and onsite safety. The site manager contributes strongly towards keeping the building and people within it safe and enjoys involving the children in the 'Safety Squad'. Staff are appropriately qualified in first aid; Year 6 pupils receive some training on this too.

PSHE lessons help pupils to learn about different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying. The behaviour and counter-bullying policies are implemented effectively, with systems being well known by staff, parents and pupils. Individual records are kept when any sanctions or additional intervention are required to support pupils with their behaviour. In addressing the rare incidents that do arise care is taken to manage the needs of both the victim and perpetrator.

Pupils and their parents say that pupils feel safe here and know that there are trusted adults who will listen and take action when they raise any concerns.

Standard 4: Suitability of Staff and Proprietors

The standards relating to the suitability of staff and proprietors are met

Comment:

Leaders ensure all required pre-recruitment checks are made on teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, FCJ staff and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Records are held centrally detailing which checks were made, the dates they were done and who did them. The full range of checks are made in line with statutory requirements. These include; enhanced DBS and update checks, the right to work in Jersey, health/fitness to work checks, identity checks, references and qualifications checks

The school ensures that safeguarding leads, all members of the senior leadership team and other key staff are suitably trained and regularly updated in safeguarding and safer recruitment. Meticulous record keeping enables leaders to be proactive so they can spot when training needs refreshing and to arrange updates as required.

Standard 5: Suitability of School Premises

The standards relating to suitability of the school premises are met

Comment:

All school facilities are appropriate and suitable for purpose. The governing body and senior leaders have worked over many years to raise funds and coordinate several improvements to the school premises. Significant thought went in to creating best use of the premises in the recent capital build project and FCJ now boasts 14 well-equipped classrooms with suitable technology and furniture to support age-appropriate learning. In addition, it is rightly proud of its extended and improved hall, library area, Chapel and its specialist rooms for computing, science, art and its music and drama studio. All the teaching rooms, outdoor areas, toilets and medical needs accommodation are of a high quality. The PE curriculum and pupils' physical development are well supported by the available facilities.

The premises meet acoustic, drinking water, hot water, fire safety, heating and lighting requirements. The site manager has high expectations and monitors the school daily to ensure compliance and to identify, monitor and respond to any health and safety risks.

Standard 6: Provision of Information

The standards relating to the provision of information are met

Comment:

The ethos and values of the school are well communicated to parents and the wider community. The school's high-quality website offers a professional, easy to navigate portal to all the statutory required information for parents. This includes details about the proprietor, governing body, admissions arrangements, provision for pupils with SEND. All required policies, for example those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and exclusions are up to date and published on the here too. The website also contains a range of additional useful information for parents and celebrates the many achievements of the school through regular newsletters.

FCJ Primary meets the requirement to offer parents an annual report on the progress and attainment of their child which they receive in the summer term. In addition, parents receive information during consultation evenings in the autumn and spring terms.

Standard 7: Parental Complaints

The standards relating to parental complaints are met

Comment:

The school meets the requirements in relation to responding to any parental complaints. It has a compliant complaints policy. Leaders maintain a suitable log of concerns and complaints, but these are rare occurrences. Appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained as files are accessible only to key members of the senior leadership team.

Leaders and governors promote an open approach to any expressions of parental concern. The overwhelming majority of questions and concerns are resolved informally through daily contact and dialogue with parents. However, should the need arise, there are appropriate complaints procedures in place. Communication is encouraged with clear lines of responsibility shared with pupils and parents so they know who to contact.

Standard 8: The Quality of Leadership and Management

The standards relating to leadership and management are met.

Comment:

The dedicated and skilled governing body and leadership team at FCJ Primary School can easily and convincingly demonstrate that they have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities under these standards. The standards are met convincingly and consistently and safeguarding is effective.

The headteacher and her senior team are inspirational. Their dedication, infectious enthusiasm and shared vision drive the high-quality curriculum and the standards achieved across the school. Passionately committed to providing the very best they can for all of their pupils, leaders are tenacious in their pursuit of additional resources and approaches to continually improve provision. They particularly value and benefit from the support and guidance of the FCJ Educational Trust.

Leaders ensure that provision for pupils' personal development and support for their wellbeing are a particular strength. The school curriculum ensures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted particularly well. The FCJ Values are the school's values and are threaded through all aspects of the life of the school to promote teamwork, reflection and celebrate success.

The governing body are a committed team who are knowledgeable about the school. Together governors possess a wealth of relevant skills honed from their experiences in the educational, legal, financial, and safeguarding sectors. This enables them to offer valuable support and challenge to leaders. Governors share the headteacher's ambitious aims for the school and offer support and challenge to the school well.

Senior leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for further development well. They apply their expertise and knowledge of the school to create pertinent plans for improvement, involving training and seeking outside support where necessary.

Information about the school

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll: 266

School telephone number: 01534 723063

School website: www.fcj.sch.je

FCJ Primary School is an independent non selective fee-paying Catholic school drawing pupils from across the Island. It was initially founded by the Society of Faithful Companions of Jesus as FCJ Convent School in 1911. The school completed a major rebuilding programme in recent years and is now housed in modern facilities in St Saviour. FCJ Primary School is part of the FCJ Educational Trust which consists of four schools in England together with this one in Jersey.

- At the time of this inspection there were two classes in each of Years R, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and one class in the pre-School and Years 1 and 3.
- There are a very small number of pupils eligible for Jersey Premium.
- A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is 6% which is well below the Jersey average.
- The school is run by the governing body which works with the headteacher and senior leadership team.

Information about the inspection

This report reflects the inspections team's judgements against the Jersey Standards for Independent Schools. These standards are based on the statutory requirements of Education (Jersey) Law, 1999 and are the minimum standards required to be met in all independent schools in Jersey.

- Meetings were held with representatives of the FCJ Educational Trust, the Governing Body, the Headteacher, senior and middle leaders.
- Meetings were held with teaching staff, support staff and the caretaker.
- A wide range of documents, policies and curriculum plans were reviewed.
- A tour was made of the school's site to check its security and safety. Documents including a range of risk assessments, were scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and the way the school ensures their safety and wellbeing.
- Safeguarding records and staff recruitment files were sampled and reviewed.
- Visits to lessons were made to all classes from Reception to Year 6 and samples of pupils' work were considered.

The inspection team

The team consisted of four inspectors. The inspection was led by a senior adviser from the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills who is also experienced off-Island inspector.

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to Head School Improvement & Advisory Service, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Highlands Campus, PO Box 142, St Saviour, Jersey JE4 8QJ.