

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108039
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	377687
Inspection dates	9–10 January 2012
Lead inspector	Joan McKenna

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	511
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Cockshutt
Headteacher	John Hutchinson
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joan McKenna
Rosemary Batty
Edward Price

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 16 teachers, made shorter visits to classrooms, looked at pupils' work and observed other activities taking place. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised documents including policies, action plans, information about pupils' learning and progress, attendance data, information from the school's monitoring and arrangements for safeguarding. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and with those parents and carers who requested a discussion. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and the 298 returned by parents and carers were analysed. No responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were available when planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average sized primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with special educational needs and with disabilities is also below average. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the usual times is less than typical for primary schools. The school has gained a number of awards, including Healthy School Advanced Status, The Stephen Lawrence Education Standard at Level 2 and the Leeds Inclusion Chartermark. The school has been above government floor standards for the last three years. There is onsite childcare provision that is not managed by the governing body. This is subject to separate inspection arrangements and did not form part of this inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Almost all parents and carers who returned questionnaires were very positive about all aspects of it. Comments such as 'I would highly recommend St Theresa's' were typical of the majority received.
- Pupils' achievement is good. They reach attainment that is broadly in line with the national average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a particularly good start in their learning and personal development. Across Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils achieve well. Progress is strongest in English, in both reading and writing. The value added in mathematics is not as great. Pupils learn well across the school, but there is some inconsistency.
- Teaching is good overall. Some is outstanding. Reading and writing are taught particularly well, resulting in high levels of pupil enjoyment. The curriculum has been effectively redesigned and successfully engages and motivates pupils. Nevertheless, some opportunities to promote pupils' independence and initiative are missed, especially in mathematics, and work is not always matched closely to pupils' different needs. Some marking is detailed, but not all gives enough feedback on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils' targets are not used enough to promote higher standards.
- Pupils behave well and try hard to do what is expected of them. The very large majority are respectful of each other and of adults. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident to approach adults with any worries. Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher and the governing body are ambitious for the school and they work determinedly and effectively to improve it. Although the governing body, along with senior leaders, regularly monitor the school's effectiveness and take wide ranging effective action as a result, the impact of monitoring and evaluation is lessened because middle leaders are less involved in identifying and tackling areas for improvement. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly, but

systems for tracking do not provide information in a form that is easy to analyse.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further and ensure that pupils' progress and learning are consistently good or better, including in mathematics, by:
 - using information about pupils' prior attainment and progress to match tasks and strategies closely to their individual and different needs
 - providing opportunities to promote pupils' independence, initiative and active involvement in all lessons
 - ensuring that all marking provides clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work and giving them time to act upon the comments made
 - using pupils' targets more explicitly to help them understand their next steps in learning.

- Improve the impact of monitoring and evaluation by:
 - developing the systems for tracking pupils' progress so that they provide information in a form that is straightforward to analyse
 - ensuring that all leaders, including middle leaders, play a full part in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility and in taking action to improve outcomes.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils are keen and willing learners. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children quickly learn to adapt to routines and expectations. Pupils of all ages readily do as they are asked and try hard to do well. A wide range of interesting activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage engage children's curiosity and secure positive attitudes towards learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils particularly enjoy practical lessons when they become actively involved in activities, as is the case increasingly across the curriculum. They also enjoy literacy lessons because both reading and writing activities are made appealing and relevant. This leads to very positive learning. They do not learn as well in mathematics lessons, and many do not enjoy them as much as their English lessons, because they are often not as practical and pupils do not always fully understand the concepts being taught. Pupils' learning is best when work is matched to their different levels of prior attainment. This is not always done with enough precision.

Pupils' progress is good. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is generally below expectations. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with the national average. Improvements in recent years in the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that attainment there is rising, and by the time children enter Year 1 it is now usually above age-related expectations. Pupils reach expected standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Even young children talk animatedly about the stories they are reading and are developing early reading skills well.

There is some variation in achievement across the school, and progress in English is better than in mathematics. However, all sizeable groups achieve at least in line with expectations and most do better. Most pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities learn well overall. The school is taking action to reduce any gaps which exist, with some success. The progress of boys at Key Stage 1, which was a weakness at the last inspection, has improved and the gap with girls had been eradicated in 2011. Parents and carers are very happy overall with their children's progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good overall and makes a major contribution to pupils' good achievement. It is strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage where some is outstanding. There is also some teaching that is satisfactory. Teachers and other adults have good relationships with pupils and provide a supportive environment for learning. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They plan lessons conscientiously, and usually provide a range of tasks for pupils of different ability. However, planning is sometimes general in nature rather than being closely matched to individuals' specific prior attainment.

English is effectively taught. The teaching of early reading skills is carefully planned; some very effective sessions where adults were systematically developing children's knowledge and understanding of the sounds that letters make and of letter formation were observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example. While the teaching in some mathematics lessons is good, this is not the case in all. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly throughout lessons. Nevertheless, some pupils do not fully understand teachers' explanations of mathematic concepts or how to arrive at the right answers. Occasionally, teachers respond mainly to pupils who volunteer answers rather than involving quieter pupils. Basic skills are often taught through topics and activities designed to interest and engage pupils, and which promote their social and cooperative skills well. As a result, pupils report high levels of enjoyment. Learning in English, for example, was observed being enhanced by the use of practical approaches such as pupils using information and communication technology to animate stories they had written. In another lesson, pupils were recording interviews and analysing the questions that had been asked to develop their interviewing techniques. There has been a focus on promoting numeracy in a similar practical way, such as when pupils have to use measurement to produce costumes or models. These approaches are not always carried over to discrete mathematics lessons. Teaching assistants provide some high quality support for pupils, although they are not always deployed to maximum effectiveness.

There is some good marking, especially of writing assessments, where comments are detailed and tell pupils what they need to do to improve. Some marking lacks this detail, although pupils' effort is acknowledged. Pupils do not always act upon teachers' comments because there isn't enough emphasis given to the fact they should, or time given for them to do so. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, which some know and understand. However, they are not referred to enough in teaching or in marking to ensure that pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching in the school. Extremely positive comments were made about the teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Behaviour and safety of children

The pockets of misbehaviour outside of lessons noted at the last inspection have largely been eradicated and behaviour is typically good over time both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are sensible and show self-discipline as they move around the large building. They are polite, friendly and considerate and get on well together. Although a very small number of pupils have difficulty meeting the school's expectations of their conduct, the very large majority do so willingly and well and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils are very positive about the school and appreciate the efforts made by adults on their behalf. They have good attitudes to learning. When given the opportunity to be active involved in lessons, they do so with great enthusiasm and commitment, although passivity is also evident on occasions. Pupils feel safe, secure and that they are cared for well. They understand the part they can play in ensuring a safe environment and in keeping themselves safe. A little bullying takes place, such as some name-calling, but almost all parents, carers and pupils agree that it is dealt with effectively. A few parents and carers feel some specific issues have taken too long to be dealt with. Nevertheless, comments such as 'My child can't wait to get to school in the mornings' and 'The family ethos in all elements of school life contributes to my child being a considerate, kind, respectful and thoughtful individual' support the findings of the inspection.

Leadership and management

St Theresa's is well led, managed and governed. The headteacher is passionate about the school and provides very strong leadership in all areas. There is a clear vision for the school, and its values are made very explicit and are regularly reinforced. It is inclusive, and all pupils are valued as individuals. Areas identified as needing attention at the previous inspection have been energetically and effectively tackled and there has been good improvement since then, such as the development of the curriculum. Ensuring that it is well taught and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been the focus of much attention and professional development, to good effect. The improved outcomes demonstrate the school's clear capacity to improve further.

Senior leaders undertake an appropriate range of monitoring activities, both formal and informal, and take appropriate action in relation to the findings. However, not all evidence is cross-referenced fully, and middle leaders are less involved in the process. There is a lot of assessing and monitoring of pupils' progress, and the information is acted upon to promote improvement, including reducing differences in achievement between individuals and groups of pupils. In doing so, equality of opportunity and outcomes are promoted well. However, the systems for recording, accessing and analysing the information are unwieldy and make the process of analysis complex and time-consuming. This has been recognised and the school is improving its systems but the process is still in transition. The governing body is knowledgeable about the school, holds it to account well and is proactive about

improving it. Members of the governing body take pupils' safety very seriously. They ensure that arrangements meet requirements and they go beyond this to provide extra safeguards. The governing body plays a central role in managing the considerable demands posed by the state of the spacious, but old, building and the large site. The school values its links with, and the contribution made by, parents and carers, and communicates well with them through weekly newsletters. A much higher proportion of parents and carers than typical returned questionnaires outlining their views of the school. These indicate that the school enjoys the full support of the very large majority of them.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the children's attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



11 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, Leeds, LS15 8RQ

Thank you for being so very friendly and welcoming when my colleagues and I inspected your school, and for showing us your work. We enjoyed talking with you and hearing your views. You are very pleasant, polite children. You respect your teachers and each other, work hard and behave well. You are a credit to yourselves, your parents and those who look after you and to the school. Well done!

You told us that you think your school is good. I am delighted to tell you that we agree. Staff provide interesting activities for you and make sure you are well taught. Therefore, you achieve well, especially in English. You enjoy lessons, especially those that are practical. Staff also look after you well and keep you safe, and so you feel safe and secure. Almost all of you are kind to each other and play well together all of the time. On the few occasions when someone is unkind, it is sorted out quickly.

Your leaders, staff and the governing body want to continue to improve the school for you. There are some things we have asked them to concentrate on to help them do this. We would like them to make sure that you all make equally good progress in every lesson, including in mathematics, by providing tasks that are at the right level for each of you and that you can get actively involved with. We would like them to mark all of your work thoroughly and use your targets more to help you know how to improve. We also want them to have even more effective systems for checking on your progress. Finally, we have asked them to make sure that all leaders and staff check how well the school is doing so they know how to improve it further for you.

You can help by continuing to work hard and being such positive pupils. I send you and your teachers my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan McKenna
Lead Inspector

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