

# St Teresa's Catholic (A) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124320
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	380858
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Judith Straw

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

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<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>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neal Hopkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Rouse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12-13 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Stone Road Trent Vale Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6SP
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Judith Straw  
Derek Barnes  
Sheila Loughlin

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 12 teachers and teaching assistants. They also visited guided reading sessions to listen to pupils read. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at data the school has collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, school improvement planning, records of the school's monitoring and review processes and the work in pupils' books. They also considered the 127 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as analysing responses from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

St Teresa's is larger than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a below average proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is average.

The school meets the current government floor standards. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy School status, Activemark, extended school and Dyslexia-friendly status.

There have been several changes of staff since the previous inspection and a new headteacher took up her post in 2009.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- St Teresa's is a satisfactory school. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average overall. Reading and writing are above average with strengths in the numbers of pupils exceeding the expected level. Although progress is accelerating in mathematics, it is satisfactory overall and attainment is broadly average in Key Stage 2. This is why achievement overall is satisfactory and combined with some weaker aspects of teaching, particularly in mathematics, this accounts for the school being satisfactory rather than good.
- The school plays an important role in the local and wider community. It sets high expectations for good behaviour, to which pupils respond readily. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is above average. Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree. The ethos of the school makes a very positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with much that is good. In satisfactory lessons the pupils do not always have enough challenge to achieve well. The level of independent work in which pupils engage and the quality of in-class assessment of their work is often the difference between good and satisfactory lessons. Where teaching is good, lessons are lively, move at a good pace and fully engage pupils in their learning.
- The ambition and drive of the senior and middle leaders have been key factors in ensuring that attainment is rising and the gap to reaching above average in mathematics is narrowing considerably. Evidence is clear in the school's focus on improving mental mathematics which is ensuring that progress in mathematics is accelerating across the school. All staff and members of the governing body share the ambition to improve and maintain high standards overall and to fulfil the school's vision statement 'to be the best that we can be'. The curriculum is good because it is engaging, creative and relevant and responds to pupils' interests and enthusiasms.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Rapidly improve achievement in mathematics especially in Key Stage 2 so that attainment is above average by:
  - sustaining the focus on mental mathematics and application of skills
  - further extending opportunities to develop numeracy across the curriculum.
  
- Increase, as quickly as possible, the amount of good and better teaching by ensuring that:
  - pupils' work is consistently challenging, right from the start of lessons
  - pupils are engaged in more independent work on which they are asked to reflect and improve
  - in marking and assessing work, particularly in mathematics, teachers clearly explain to pupils how they can improve.

## **Main Report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children start school with a range of skills and an increasing number need help as they are new to speaking English. They settle quickly in the bright and stimulating environment and over time make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the great majority of children have reached, and many have exceeded, the learning goals set for them. Children enjoy their learning and eagerly participate in a wide range of activities. For example, during the inspection, children in the Nursery class were learning about farm animals, practising walking like different animals, enjoying singing, music and dance and pretending to be scarecrows exercising after a long sleep.

Achievement overall is satisfactory. It is stronger in Key Stage 1 and in reading and writing. Attainment is above average because of high standards in reading and writing and an improving picture in mathematics especially in Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading and writing and attainment in both subjects is above average by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Progress in mathematics is accelerating in Key Stage 1 so that pupils' attainment is also above average in Year 2. Pupils make good progress in lessons and enjoy reading and many read for pleasure. In a particularly successful lesson in Year 2, all pupils were analysing the quality of factual books about animals and identifying which were best for giving the reader information quickly and easily. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue their stronger progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics. They are responding well to the school's many strategies to accelerate progress in mathematics so that attainment, although average, is rising at a good pace. Learning in numeracy lessons is satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy the challenge of mental mathematics starters, but some lack confidence in risking answers and are

not as resilient in tackling more difficult problems. More-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to make as much progress as possible. Nevertheless, in most lessons pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, are keen to succeed and enjoy celebrating their own and others' successes. Learning is effective in reading and pupils enjoy discussing a wide range of texts. For example, Year 6 pupils were keen to argue the relative merits of factual books, science fiction, fantasy and history-based stories. Attainment in reading in Year 6 is above average.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language thrive in the supportive environment of the school and make the same good progress in English, and satisfactory progress in mathematics, as other pupils. Pupils are articulate and courteous and keen to talk about their work.

The very great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were pleased with the progress their children are making. A minority expressed the view that progress is not as strong in mathematics. The inspection finds overall achievement is satisfactory and that pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics which is accelerating.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers are enthusiastic and create a positive climate for learning. All adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage play a significant role in asking open-ended questions and supporting children's learning. Children make good progress over time. However, occasionally, the higher-attaining children could be challenged to go further in their learning.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, good teaching was seen in both mathematics and English lessons. In the best lessons teachers make sure pupils have the opportunity to explain their answers to confirm their learning, for example, Year 6 were working out the areas of complex shapes and relishing the challenge of ever more difficult problems. In cross curricular topic work pupils' above average writing skills enable them to write imaginative and vibrant accounts. In satisfactory lessons, especially in mathematics, this additional challenge is sometimes lacking, so that all pupils listen to the same explanation when it is clear that some could immediately move on to more difficult work. Lessons sometimes move at a slower pace when all pupils are doing the same work, when more-able pupils could be working independently on different problems and peer marking. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported by well trained teaching assistants so that they are able to make similar progress to the other pupils. Teachers mark pupils work regularly and offer plenty of praise but teachers do not consistently give advice on how pupils can improve their work and reach the next target. Pupils are rarely asked to repeat work which they have misunderstood and there is little evidence of a dialogue between teachers and pupils in marking.

The creative curriculum has accelerated learning in all classes because lessons are more interesting. Teachers plan their work around agreed themes which inspire the pupils to want to learn and find out for themselves. Links across subjects work very

effectively in extending skills in literacy but are less successful in promoting numeracy skills. Teachers promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by encouraging them to be curious and interested in the world around them. Pupils appreciate books, poetry, music and the arts. Most parents and carers feel that their children are well taught. A minority expressed concern about the teaching of mathematics and felt that progress was not as good as it could be. The inspection findings judge teaching to be always satisfactory with much that is good.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The vast majority of pupils are confident in the school and feel safe and well cared for. They spoke about their trust in the adults to sort out any problems they might have. Pupils know about different kinds of bullying but say that instances of it are very rare and quickly dealt with by school. Pupils responding to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good and always has been in their school. In conversation with younger pupils, some thought that the playground can become rather boisterous at times. This was discussed with school leaders who are looking at ways to improve this. Pupils said that it is extremely rare for lessons to be disrupted by bad behaviour. Enjoyment of school is reflected in the pupils' well above average attendance over several years. Pupils have good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and their respect for adults, visitors and each other is evident in their good manners and good behaviour. An outstanding aspect of pupils' behaviour is their keen attitude to learning and concentration in lessons.

Parents and carers are similarly positive. They are unanimous that their children are safe and well looked after. This is summed up by one parent who wrote, 'The school is an extended family and everyone takes the time to care.' The vast majority felt that behaviour is well managed by the school. A few individual concerns were raised which were discussed with school leaders. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views expressed.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior and middle leaders and the governing body know their school well and are determined to improve further. Leaders are well aware of what needs to be done to become securely good because of accurate self-evaluation. Good strategies are in place to tackle identified weaknesses. The most recent steps taken to improve mathematics are already leading to better progress in several year groups especially in Key Stage 1. Rigorous monitoring and subsequent professional development are helping to improve further the quality of teaching, although some relative weaknesses remain. Regular pupil progress meetings provide opportunities for teachers to discuss where improvements have been made and put in place strategies when pupils are seen not to be making enough progress. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because of careful, appropriate planning and effective teamwork which leads to positive outcomes for all children.

The governing body is committed to its role of safeguarding pupils and arrangements to keep pupils safe are met. Governors are very involved in the life of the school and regularly challenge the school's performance. All leaders, including the governing body are committed to tackling discrimination and ensuring equality of opportunity.

Gaps in the performance of girls and boys have been eliminated. The school is starting to close the gap in mathematics by providing support for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics through one of its many partnerships with a local high school. The curriculum is interesting and stimulating and is well planned to develop pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop a good understanding of cultures other than their own through the rich diversity of cultures represented in school. They are generous in the fundraising they do which includes supporting children in Africa.

Although achievement overall is satisfactory because it is not as strong in mathematics as in English, there is clear evidence of effective action narrowing the gap to above average. Success has been achieved in Key Stage 1. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve further is good. The school has a good relationship with parents and carers, the great majority of whom have confidence in the teaching staff and are pleased with the education their children receive.



## 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](http://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.
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 pupils' 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.**



7 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Teresa's Catholic (A) Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent , ST4 6SP**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We would especially like to thank the pupils who met with inspectors and read to us. You were all very courteous and thoughtful and were excellent ambassadors for your school. You told us that you feel very safe in school and your attendance is above average because you enjoy yourselves and want to do well.

Yours is a satisfactory school which is rapidly improving. You achieve better in English than in mathematics and so we have asked your school to make sure you catch up in mathematics so that you attain as highly as you do in English. We think the school could give you more opportunities to use your numeracy skills in other subject areas. Teaching is always satisfactory and we have asked the school to make sure that even more of it is good. We want each one of you to be given challenging work and the pace in lessons to be rapid so that 'you can be the best you can be', as your school vision statement says. We have asked teachers to give you more advice on how you can improve your work.

You can play a part in improving your school by attending as well as you do and continuing to have your outstanding attitudes to learning.

We wish all of you the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw  
Lead inspector

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