

St Theresa's RC School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 101335 |
| Local Authority | Barnet |
| Inspection number | 363652 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Susan Thomas-Pounce |

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 | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 206 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David Grant |
| Headteacher | Michael Lyons |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 September 2010 |
| School address | East End Road, Finchley London N3 2TD |
| Telephone number | 020 83468826 |
| Fax number | 020 83460215 |
| Email address | head@sttheresas.barnetmail.net |

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons taught by seven different teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the written records for tracking pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, school improvement partner reports and a range of school documents. The inspection team analysed questionnaires completed by 99 parents and carers, 99 pupils and 11 staff. They also held discussions with several individual parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The progress of Key Stage 1 pupils, especially the higher attainers.
- Whether approaches to teaching and learning varied between key stages.
- The impact of leadership and management at all levels on the outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

St Theresa's is an average-sized primary school serving several parishes. Only a very small minority of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A large majority of pupils are from a wide variety of minority ethnic groups although only a small proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportions of pupils who need support for their behavioural, language or physical needs and those with a statement of special educational needs are below average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. The school holds a number of awards including recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Theresa's is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils' interests are at the heart of this school and they are cared for, guided and supported exceptionally well. The school benefits from the confidence of its parents and carers, and works effectively to build and maintain very constructive relationships with them. The partnerships with other schools, the church and a range of outside agencies have extremely positive benefits for pupils' personal development. Pupils' attitudes towards learning and behaviour are good. Their outstanding spiritual development and good moral, social and cultural development ensure positive relationships, collaboration and a friendly, happy environment.

Progress is good overall with strengths in the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 especially those with higher ability. The rate of progress, however, varies across the school and between key stages. It is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and for the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1. It improves at the end of Key Stage 1 and then accelerates at the very end of Key Stage 2 where pupils make good, and in some years, very good, progress.

Teaching is good overall, but variable across the school. Teachers know their pupils well and relate well to them. In the good lessons seen in the upper end of each key stage, the good dialogue between teachers and their pupils, based on the teachers' skills in questioning, made a significant difference to the quality of learning. For younger pupils, teachers' planning does not always take sufficient account of pupils' abilities to ensure that they make good progress. On a few occasions these teachers did not manage their time well enough; consequently, the lessons lost pace and direction and the learning slowed.

A wide range of special assemblies, celebrations and other activities play an important part in ensuring that pupils develop a good understanding of the diversity of the local community. The curriculum has strengths, for example in the range of sporting and musical opportunities, but some planning for younger pupils does not have a clear enough focus so that it is matched appropriately to pupils' needs, interests and experiences.

Senior leaders and governors have correctly identified the strengths and areas for improvement. The school has made some of the improvements to the outside provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. However, there is recognition of the need to further improve learning and progress for the younger pupils in the school. The most senior staff monitor the school's effectiveness satisfactorily but the contribution of other staff in monitoring the school's performance is underdeveloped. In addition, systems to assure the quality of provision through the involvement of middle leaders are not rigorous enough. The effective leadership of the school, the maintenance of good attainment in recent years and the commitment to continuous improvement by all staff demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve learning and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for younger pupils in both key stages by:
 - refining the curriculum and strengthening teaching and assessment so that children in all phases make consistently good progress.
- Consolidate and extend the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders in order that they can take a full part in accelerating pupils' progress from good to outstanding.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Overall, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been above average over the last three years. Achievement is good and pupils enjoy most lessons and their time in school. This contributes to high attendance. Pupils' current work shows the majority are working at levels above those expected for their age at the end of both key stages. However, this is not the case for the younger pupils whose learning and progress are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, often by teaching assistants. In some of the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated a good understanding of the needs of the pupils who found the learning difficult. Their focused planning, coupled with the extra support, resulted in good learning and progress.

Pupils have a good knowledge and respect for different cultures and beliefs. They are reflective and show great respect for each other and say they feel safe. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the life of the school which they value highly. They relish the chances to take on responsibility such as prefects, school council members or playground friends. In these roles they play a highly active part in decision making within the school. Inspectors were very impressed with the orderly way the prefects lead the pupils into school every morning. Lunchtime table leaders work particularly hard as they effectively supervise their 'family grouping' tables. This, and the work of play leaders, has enhanced the quality of lunchtime and complemented the school's work of raising pupils' excellent awareness about the importance of living a healthy life. This, coupled with good academic skills, prepares them well for their future lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 2 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 1 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching ranges from good to outstanding. Good relationships and pupils' attentiveness were the hallmark of lessons observed during the inspection. The vast majority of teachers helped pupils to make sense of their learning by ensuring they knew exactly what they were expected to do in the lessons. In the good or better lessons observed, teachers used questioning well to ascertain what pupils already knew, and check what they had learnt as the lesson progressed. Generally, assessment information is used to plan appropriate tasks for all abilities. In less successful lessons, assessment information was not used carefully enough to plan tasks appropriate for all ability groups. The most effective lessons provide lots of opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or groups on interesting activities that make them think and work things out for themselves. This good practice is not yet fully consistent across the school.

The curriculum is good and meets most pupils' needs well. There are a wide range of enrichment activities which the school provides. These include links with other neighbouring schools, and some as far afield as China, as well as with other organisations. These broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding very well. Pupils particularly enjoy the trips, outdoor activities and the opportunity to travel to France, Spain and Italy which the school provides. The school is rightly planning to enhance pupils' cultural development further by extending the opportunities.

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The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. There is a very caring, supportive family atmosphere. Consequently, pupils feel safe and happy in school. Parents have a high level of trust in the school. Pupils needing additional help are supported very well and benefit from effective strategies to meet their specific needs. Strong links with outside agencies mean that the school is able to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils extremely well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a strong leadership team. Their vision for the school can be clearly seen in the work that they do. Members of the school's leadership team, including the governing body, are motivated to bring about further improvement. The ethos established in the school, of promoting equality of opportunity for all, is evident in the many aspects of support for different groups of pupils even though more challenge could be provided for the younger pupils in Reception and Year 1. There is no evidence of any discrimination. Governors are fully supportive of the school. They work alongside senior leaders helping to analyse what is working well, decide on priorities for improvement, and then monitor that these take place. The arrangements made by the school for safeguarding and protecting children meet government requirements. Sound procedures ensure that pupils feel safe and understand how to stay safe and secure in their surroundings. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good especially at school and local level. Pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of the diverse, multicultural society found within the United Kingdom and an awareness of life in other countries of the world.

The management of teaching and learning are dependent on the senior leaders with more limited contribution from key staff. Middle managers have not had the opportunity to regularly monitor and evaluate school improvement priorities closely enough to identify strengths and areas for development. Senior leaders rightly see the extension and development of the roles and responsibilities of middle managers as an important next step in the school's development.

The school has established excellent relationships with parents and carers who are seen as key partners in their children's learning. Excellent partnerships have also been fostered within the community, with local schools and with a range of agencies that support pupils' health, welfare, social and learning needs. These successfully contribute to the good and sometimes outstanding progress that individual pupils make. Given pupils' good overall

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progress combined with good and some outstanding aspects of personal development, the school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills that are at a level generally expected for their age. Progress is satisfactory and pupils start Year 1 with average attainment. Before children start in Reception, good links are made with parents and carers, most of whom are very appreciative of how well the school helps their children settle into school life. Children are happy, well behaved and cooperative. They are eager to engage and involve adults in conversation and include them in their learning experiences. During the inspection in the role-play area much discussion was held with the inspector as to how long patients would have to wait to see the doctor and who would have the first appointment.

The range of activities both inside and outside are not yet sufficiently challenging for all children to make good progress. Opportunities for adults to extend children's understanding through conversation are not fully utilised. Although limited, the outside area has improved since the previous inspection. Children have opportunities to use the larger playground area and the climbing frames. Between Reception and Year 1, the impact of planning for all children is not monitored carefully enough and the quality of provision is not evaluated systematically. This means that the assessment of the learning and development needs of children moving to Year 1 is not rigorous enough. Leaders plan to refine these curriculum areas and strengthen the quality of teaching, which will improve transition arrangements for the younger children in the school.

The leader of the provision is new in post and recent staff changes mean that it is too early to see the full impact of any new practice. Nevertheless, a good start has been made to create a welcoming learning environment for children. An action plan has been drawn

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up to address areas of weakness. There are good arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire? have a very positive view of the school. A few expressed concerns, for example about the progress their children make and the help the school gives parents and carers to support their child's learning. The inspection evidence indicates that pupils generally make good progress and the partnership with parents and carers is an outstanding feature of its work. Almost all parents and carers feel their children enjoy school and are kept safe there, and say the school is well led and managed. This is in line with the inspection team's judgements on the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Theresa's Roman Catholic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 99 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 61 | 54 | 46 | 46 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 23 | 62 | 38 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 24 | 23 | 59 | 60 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 28 | 24 | 54 | 55 | 13 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 20 | 28 | 57 | 58 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 25 | 20 | 64 | 65 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 19 | 25 | 64 | 65 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 24 | 19 | 55 | 56 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 32 | 24 | 57 | 58 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 24 | 32 | 51 | 52 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 32 | 24 | 51 | 52 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 43 | 32 | 52 | 53 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 61 | 43 | 49 | 49 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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 | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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. |

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.



27 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Theresa's Roman Catholic School, Finchley, N3 2TD

You may remember that three inspectors visited your school recently. I am writing on behalf of the other inspectors to say thank you for your help and tell you some of the best things we found about your school.

- You make good progress during your time in school.
- You are taught well and your teachers help and support you well in your learning.
- Your understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and your contribution to your community are excellent.
- Your headteacher leads the school well, with the support of the staff and governors.

Your teachers are always looking for ways in which they can help you to learn and achieve more. We have asked the school to do two things to help make it even better.

- First of all, we have asked the teachers to work together to make sure that those who are in Reception and in the younger classes in each key stage are asked to do work that is challenging enough.
- Second, we have asked the school's leaders to work together more effectively to help them decide what they need to change to help you improve even more.

You can help by continuing to work hard, behaving extremely well, and doing your best to help the school improve even further.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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