

St Theresa's RC Primary School

Whetstone Hill Road, Derker, Oldham, OL1 4NA

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress through the school. They achieve well and their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Good relationships and the way teachers organise their classrooms help pupils to learn well.
- Pupils behave well and are polite and considerate to others. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The amalgamation has been managed well by leaders and the governing body. The headteacher inspires staff to do their best and morale is high. The school has good arrangements for checking how well it is doing and for identifying areas for further development. The governing body knows about the school's performance and is fully involved in helping it to move forward. The school's leadership has shown it is capable of continuing to make improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The proportion of outstanding practice is not big enough and this practice is not shared with other staff.
- Marking in subjects other than English and mathematics does not provide specific guidance to pupils on how to improve.
- Pupils do not use grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately in their writing.
- Pupils do not have well enough developed mental recall skills in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons or parts of lessons taught by six teachers. Four of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, parents, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. Work in pupils' books and displays around the school were examined. The inspector listened to groups of pupils read.
- Account was taken of the four responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and carrying out the inspection.

Inspection team

Melvyn Hemmings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Theresa's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It was formed by the amalgamation of two small schools in September 2011.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils whose parents are in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- It has gained a number of national awards, including the Rights Respecting Schools Award, and holds Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - improving pupils' ability to construct sentences using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - improving pupils' quick mental recall skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching further by:
 - extending the good marking in English and mathematics to other subjects
 - systematically sharing the outstanding practice evident in school with all teaching staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from their skill level on entering school, which is well below that typical for their age, especially in language and social development. They make good progress through the school and attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly settle into everyday routines and grow in confidence as they are encouraged to make choices for themselves. They show enjoyment in all their activities, happily working and playing in pairs and small groups. A good example of this was when children were lost in a world of their own when using the role-play area set up as a construction site.
- Through the rest of the school, pupils are able to concentrate for lengthy periods and persevere when faced with difficulty. They are eager to succeed and they get on well with their work. Pupils are appreciative of the efforts of others and collaborate well to complete tasks.
- Pupils enjoy reading at home and at school and are keen to talk about their favourite books and authors. Although attainment in reading is below average by the end of Key Stage 1 it is rising because of improvements in the way they are taught to link letters and sounds. By the time they leave school pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average.
- Pupils' writing across a range of styles, including poetry and narrative writing, is imaginative and holds the interest of the reader. Handwriting is neat and pupils take pride in their presentation. However, they are not always adept in constructing sentences with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In mathematics, pupils confidently use their calculation skills to solve number problems in real-life situations. At times, the rate at which they do this is hindered because their quick mental recall skills are not well enough developed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the carefully planned extra support they are given. This is tailored to meet their individual needs and is effective in helping them to do well.
- The school has used the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium effectively to raise their attainment. It has enabled the school to provide individual and small group tuition, led by teaching assistants, to raise levels of literacy and numeracy. Though the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is not as high as other pupils in the school, the gap is narrowing because of this extra support.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults provide interesting and practical activities that enthuse children so that they are eager to learn. There is a strong emphasis on children making their own decisions, which helps their development in being able to work and learn on their own. The outdoor area is used effectively to extend learning that has taken place indoors.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers make clear to pupils, at the start of lessons, what they are to learn. They ask searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood. Classroom management is good, so that lessons have a good pace and little time is lost.
- Teachers use information about how well pupils have learned to help them plan future lessons. As a result they provide pupils with work that brings the best out of them whatever their ability. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support all pupils, especially disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Marking in English and mathematics gives pupils specific guidance on how to improve their work. It is not used as effectively in other subjects to show pupils how to do better. Praise is used well by teachers to raise pupils' self-esteem and to encourage them to take pride in their work.

- Occasionally, teaching lacks sufficient pace, such as when developing pupils' quick mental recall skills in mathematics. When the introduction to a lesson goes on too long pupils begin to lose concentration and do not have enough time to work independently.
- Outstanding teaching is characterised by pupils being given highly motivating activities that capture and maintain their interest and very effectively meet their individual needs. Such teaching was observed in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, in which they made excellent progress in their ability to write a persuasive letter. Outstanding progress was also made in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, in which pupils were learning to find percentages involving three digit numbers.
- Spiritual and moral development is promoted effectively by pupils being encouraged to reflect on the wonder of the world around them and by high expectation of their behaviour. Social and cultural development is fostered by pupils being given opportunity to work collaboratively and to explore the traditions and beliefs of cultures different to their own.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good behaviour contributes positively to the progress they make and to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere that is evident throughout the school. They are proud of their school and say, 'It's like being a member of one big family.' Pupils are keen to learn and are supportive of each other in lessons.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, such as name calling, and say it seldom occurs. They are confident that staff will deal with any such instances. Staff, parents and pupils agree that behaviour has improved over time and the school's behaviour records confirm this.
- There is a thorough understanding among pupils about how to keep themselves and others safe. This is effectively promoted through the curriculum by pupils having opportunity to discuss the dangers associated with water, roads and railways and how to react if approached by a stranger.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, such as being a house captain, prefect or member of the school council. In so doing, they add to the life of the school by giving pupils a voice in how it develops. They talk with enthusiasm about the school's Rights Respecting Schools Award and are clear about their rights, such as the right to learn and to make choices for themselves.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is shown in their above average attendance and the way they arrive on time to start the school day.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and the governing body show determination in driving forward improvements. They have managed the amalgamation effectively and all involved with the school have a clear view of how successful it can be. Action taken to bring about improvement, such as the impact of the use of funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium, is assessed carefully to see if it is proving successful.
- The management of staff performance and training of teachers and other adults effectively meets whole-school and individual staff needs. There is a good link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression.
- There are good systems for checking the quality of teaching. These have identified outstanding practice but this has not been systematically shared with other staff to improve their expertise.
- The promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling of discrimination is good. Leaders have improved the procedures for checking the progress of different groups, so that any unevenness can be quickly identified and swiftly tackled.
- The local authority provides light touch support.
- The curriculum is exciting, makes pupils interested in learning and effectively promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enriched by extracurricular activities and

visits, such as to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester to enhance their experiences in music.

- Links with parents have been improved and they are kept fully informed about the progress and achievement of their children.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body ensures safeguarding requirements are met, so that staff and pupils are safe. Governors know about data regarding the school's performance and understand how the management of performance is used to improve staff expertise and reward good teaching. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and take part in regular training to maintain their effectiveness, such as in safeguarding procedures. They manage the budget well and hold the school to account for the way the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used to raise their achievement. The governing body shows initiative in challenging leaders about how well the school is doing and in planning for long-term improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136825
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	400291

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	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bridget Meehan
Headteacher	Maureen Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0161 7703173
Fax number	0161 7703174
Email address	info@sttheresas.oldham.sch.uk.

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