

St Teresa of Lisieux Catholic Primary School

Utting Avenue East, Norris Green, L11 1DB.

Inspection dates 25–26 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement is not yet good. Too few pupils make more than expected progress from their starting points or reach the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. The needs of groups of differing ability are not always sufficiently taken into account in teachers' planning. As a consequence, there are occasions when pupils find tasks too easy or too difficult. Pupils are not always given the opportunity to work independently of the teacher to solve problems.
- Pupils are not always given precise enough guidance about how to improve their work, particularly in writing.
- Subject leaders are not yet sufficiently involved in checking and driving improvement in the quality of teaching in their subjects. Good practice in school is not yet, therefore, spread widely enough.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to practise their basic skills of writing, speaking and mathematics in subjects other than English and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of consistently good teaching.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and very good relationships with each other and adults in the school. They say they feel safe.
- Despite considerable recent change and significant building work, the school provides a calm and purposeful atmosphere where achievement is valued.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy, gives very clear direction. In the short time she has been at the school she has accurately evaluated the work of the school and acted decisively and successfully to improve the school's performance.
- Governors are very well-informed and are fully involved in the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance and improvement planning procedures. They provide a good level of support and challenge.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons and made short visits to other activities led by teachers and trained assistants. These included 16 lesson observations carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders. Meetings were conducted with the members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), letters from parents, and questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and read a range of documents. These included documents about the school's own evaluation of its work, school improvement plans, pupils' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Hilton

Additional Inspector

Susan Davis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Teresa of Lisieux is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school has recently undergone significant changes, with the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. The school is currently undergoing extensive building work.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is higher than average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average but varies from year to year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers always use assessment information well in their lesson-planning so that pupils are always given the right amount of support and challenge
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively to solve problems, independently of adults
 - making sure that the written feedback pupils receive always gives them precise guidance about how to improve their work, especially their writing.
- Raise attainment and improve progress further in English and mathematics by:
 - increasing the opportunities pupils have to practise their literacy and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - improving attendance further.
- Improve the quality and effect of leadership and management by further developing the role of middle managers and subject leaders to drive improvement in teaching and learning and to ensure that staff are accountable.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although the majority of pupils make expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, the progress pupils make as they move through the school is uneven, particularly in writing and mathematics and could be better.
- Many pupils enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are low in relation to expectations for their age. Children make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in reading, writing and their communication skills. As a result, although many still have not achieved the skills expected for their age on entry to Year 1, they are keen to learn and able to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- Overall pupils develop their reading skills effectively. The youngest are able to apply their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) successfully to read and write simple words and sentences. By the end of Year 6 most read a variety of texts with fluency and understanding. Most are able to talk about what they have read, empathise with characters in stories and make presumptions accurately.
- Standards in mathematics and English are below average but the progress pupils are making in these subjects is improving. Pupils are treated equally and most now make the progress expected of them from their starting points, but the proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in mathematics is lower than that found nationally.
- Pupils who join the school late also make the progress expected of them from their starting points when they join the school because of the extra help they are given.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making the same expected progress as that of their peers, again because of the extra help they are given.
- The progress of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is now close to that of others in this group nationally. Although standards in English and mathematics are below the national average, the extra support that the school is providing with this funding enables these pupils to reach their targets and to make the same expected progress as that of their peers. Gaps between the performance of different groups, including those receiving this funding, are closing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable across the school. Although outstanding practice was observed, the quality of teaching is not consistently good or better across the school, except in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and requires improvement, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Evidence from both the school's own observations and from joint observations, made by inspectors and school leaders, support these judgements.
- In some lessons pupils' progress is slowed because planning does not take their needs sufficiently into account. When this is the case, pupils lose time either waiting for the teacher to help them because the task is too difficult or waiting for others to catch up because it is too easy.
- In the best lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently or collaboratively. Pupils respond to these opportunities with enthusiasm, especially when tasks involve problem-solving. For instance, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils worked enthusiastically in small groups to work out coordinates on graphs and were eager to take on more and more challenge and to solve more complex problems. They made outstanding progress and their confidence increased as the lesson progressed. However, pupils do not always get the opportunity to work things out for themselves or take the initiative in this way.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress as a result of the very effective use of assessment in planning next steps. Teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to engage children in conversation and are skilful in enabling them to learn through

play.

- Although overall pupils make adequate progress in developing early reading and writing skills, their progress could be swifter. Phonics lessons often take place at the end of teaching sessions, immediately before break or lunch times when pupils are sometimes tired or restless and find it difficult to concentrate. The timing of these lessons also limits opportunities for follow-up activities which would consolidate pupils' learning further.
- Pupils' work is usually marked regularly and there are instances of best practice within the school. However, marking does not always give pupils the precise guidance they need to improve their writing or mathematics. In some classes marking does not always pick up errors in spelling so pupils continue to make the same mistakes. At times pupils have difficulty reading comments from the teacher because their skills in reading are not always taken sufficiently into account. Opportunities are also missed to reinforce pupils' targets for writing in subjects other than English.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good one-to-one support in lessons as well as extra help with English and mathematics which enable them to participate fully in activities and make adequate progress.
- The effect of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is variable. Where pupils are given the opportunity to work together to solve problems or explore their ideas, they do so sensibly, reflect on and respect one another's views but they are not always given the opportunity to do this.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is usually good. They are kind and courteous to each other. Their behaviour and patience in the midst of considerable disruption caused by the extensive building programme is impressive. On the rare occasions when pupils go off task, lose concentration or become restless it is as a consequence of their needs not being met adequately in lessons or when activities fail to capture their imagination.
- They feel safe and they value the good relationships they have with their teachers and with each other. Pupils who have recently joined the school say they have been able to settle in quickly because of the friendly and welcoming atmosphere.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards their learning and are keen to do well. When given the chance, they work together sensibly and organise themselves well.
- Pupils have a good understanding and awareness of different types of bullying. Both pupils and parents are confident that any poor behaviour, including discrimination of any sort, is dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Attendance is below average but is improving. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and speak enthusiastically about opportunities to take part in sports and other extra-curricular activities.
- They play an active role in decision-making through the school council and through organising fund-raising activities. They take other responsibilities they have, such as Playground Buddies, prefects and helping younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage equally seriously.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Subject leaders and middle leaders are at the early stages of developing their roles in driving improvement in teaching and learning and so the effects of their work are yet to be seen in improved standards and quality of teaching. Hence, the leadership and management of the school require improvement so that leaders and managers at all levels can work well together as a whole team and teachers are held to account.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy, has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure further improvement. The senior leadership team has an accurate view of the school's performance, through close tracking of pupils' progress against their targets.
- Despite a period of considerable change, the headteacher has been successful in maintaining

stability and in improving achievement in English and mathematics since she has been in post. The school has, therefore, the capacity to improve further.

- The quality of teaching is reviewed frequently and the quality of teaching of each member of staff is regularly reviewed. The results are used to secure appropriate training to benefit their professional development and are also used to consider any advancement in pay.
- Safeguarding procedures meet government guidelines.
- The curriculum adequately meets pupils' needs. However pupils have too little chance to apply their basic skills of mathematics and writing in subjects other than mathematics and English. The school is aware that arrangements for the teaching of phonics are in need of review in order to make sure pupils make good progress in their reading and writing.
- The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage meets children's needs well. It is very well-planned and frequently adapted as a result of on-going observations of children's progress and enables individuals to build effectively on previous learning through a variety of play-based activities.
- One-to-one support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have fallen behind, or have joined the school late, enables these pupils to participate successfully in whole-class activities and to catch up on gaps in their learning.
- The curriculum is enriched by a variety of activities, such as a range of clubs and sporting activities, visits and visitors. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching for physical education, music, and all pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 have the opportunity to learn an instrument. The local authority has provided effective support, particularly for the teaching of mathematics and English, which has had a good effect upon the progress made and standards reached in these subjects.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a very good understanding of how the school is doing and are clear about what it needs to do to improve further. They are very well-informed and participate in various forms of training, including safeguarding. They make sure that pupils and staff are safe by securing effective safeguarding arrangements. Governors understand how pupil premium funding is spent. They make sure that some of the grant is used to pay for extra staffing to improve the pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Governors are fully involved in monitoring the performance of the headteacher and setting her relevant targets, they are also aware of the performance of teaching staff. Finances are carefully managed and the budget closely controlled. The governing body plays an active role in the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance and improvement planning. It provides strong support, and has done so throughout a period of significant change. Governors regularly challenge the school to improve further.

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	136686
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	400282

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	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John McCormack
Headteacher	Helen Underwood
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Fax number	0151 270 1300
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