

St Teresa's Catholic Infant and Nursery School

Everton Road, Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 4BT

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- From broadly average starting points attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high by the end of Year 2. This has been consistently maintained over several years. Achievement is excellent for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils rapidly develop outstanding behaviour and concentration because activities are so interesting. Excellent behaviour contributes to pupils' excellent progress. The school is a place where everyone loves to learn.
- Teachers and support staff provide many inspirational and purposeful learning opportunities to interest and engage the pupils.
- When planning learning, teachers consider what children enjoy and base many learning activities on children's interests.
- The teaching of reading is a major strength of the school so that many pupils reach exceptionally high standards.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school. Parents agree that this is a nurturing environment in which all staff take excellent care of their children.
- Since the previous inspection the school has significantly improved the tracking of children's progress. However, more can be done to sharpen the system to provide an even clearer picture of progress from Nursery into Key Stage 1.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have a detailed and accurate picture of the school's performance. This has enabled them to sustain and build upon previously outstanding performance.
- The school enjoys excellent relationships with parents, who are kept fully informed about their children's learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by six teachers, listened to pupils read and discussed their work with them. In addition, short visits were made to individual and small-group sessions led by teaching assistants.
- Discussions were held with the school staff and senior leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses on Parent View (the online questionnaire) to register, but information from the school's recent parental questionnaire and written comments sent into the inspection were taken into account as well as informal discussions with parents bringing their children to school.
- Staff views were gathered from discussions and analysis of the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at information on pupils' progress, the work in pupils' books, teaching records, and planning and monitoring documentation. The school's documents on safeguarding were reviewed together with records of attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized infant and nursery school. There are more boys than girls currently on roll.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average but is steadily increasing each year.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The school holds several awards in recognition of its work, including national healthy school, ECO school and Activemark.
- Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher was appointed in 2009.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the tracking system further to provide an even clearer picture of individual pupils' progress from entry into the Nursery to the end of Year 2.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding broadly in line with what is expected for most three-year-olds. They learn rapidly and by the end of the Nursery year almost all achieve the age-related expectations in all areas of learning and a good proportion exceed this level.
- Children in the Nursery make excellent progress in developing important skills to make them very effective learners. They settle quickly and soon begin to direct their own learning, make decisions and explore for themselves.
- The excellent start made in the Nursery is consolidated in the Reception Year where children make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in reading are particularly high.
- Excellent progress is maintained in Key Stage 1. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are on target to maintain the school's strong record of well-above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment overall at the end of Key Stage 1 has been significantly above average or high for more than five years. Standards in subjects such as music, information and communication technology and religious studies are also high.
- Most pupils who speak English as an additional language have had little or no experience of English before they start in the Nursery. The emphasis on adults talking to children enables them to learn quickly so that they are soon able to take a full part in all lessons.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very quickly identified. All staff are aware of these children's needs and extra help is focused on them so that they make outstanding progress, becoming confident and happy in their learning.
- Pupils supported through pupil premium funding benefit from extra individual teaching and make excellent progress in all areas. The number of pupils entitled to this support in each cohort is very small and makes comparison between the attainment of different groups of pupils unreliable.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well. Every child is known as an individual and receives teaching and care adapted to their particular needs, including pupils with particular gifts and talents.
- Pupils are keen to learn and take pride in their work. Their written and displayed work shows that most pupils strive to do their best. All pupils are prepared very effectively for the move on to junior school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality. All adults, teachers and support staff are skilled at turning activities into learning opportunities. Adults enable children to explore, investigate and find things out for themselves.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes adults interact with children throughout the day, talking, listening, developing language and guiding children's learning.
- The school has created a rich and interesting learning environment inside and out, recently enhanced by the new 'winter garden'. In the Nursery and Reception classes children mostly learn through play. Adults are very effective observers and quickly respond to children's interests. The theme during the inspection was 'pirates' and children were excitedly dressing up, talking about, and looking for, treasure, making telescopes and weaving exciting stories about life at sea.
- In Years 1 and 2 classes are more formal but just as exciting and interesting to the pupils. They rise to the high expectations set for rapid learning in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Teachers' planning takes full account of different starting points and the needs of all pupils. As a result, all pupils are challenged to achieve their best and enabled to do so.

- A bilingual teaching assistant spends dedicated time with each child for whom English is an additional language and a dedicated pupil premium teaching assistant works individually with every pupil entitled to receive this support four times each week. As a result, these pupils feel nurtured, supported and confident.
- The special needs coordinator ensures that any child who needs extra help is identified early. Plans are shared at frequent meetings. In this way, all staff are aware and able to meet the individual needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, ensuring their excellent progress.
- From the beginning of Nursery children are given enjoyable tasks to do at home with the support of their parents and optional homework continues to the end of Year 2, enabling parents to be fully involved in their child's learning and to see the progress children make for themselves.
- Pupils' work is marked and assessed frequently with plenty of praise and advice on how to do even better next time.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because they are fully occupied and engaged in their learning and are curious about the world around them.
- Pupils show excellent levels of concentration and sometimes seem quite disappointed that a lesson has ended.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and each other. Pupils across the school enjoy spending time with each other.
- Pupils support their local and wider communities through fundraising and events to celebrate the year.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and parents agree that their children are extremely well looked after and safe. Pupils are confident that staff care for them exceptionally well and know that if they have any concerns there will be an adult to help them sort them out.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a clear understanding of different kinds of bullying. They know about the dangers of using the internet and enjoy road safety training.
- Attendance is average. Many pupils have excellent records of attendance. The figure is reduced to average because of the number of childhood illnesses that occur in young children and the impact of holidays in term time.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This is a very forward-looking school which has maintained high standards over several years. The dedication and expertise of the headteacher, effectively supported by her enthusiastic staff and knowledgeable governors, have resulted in improvements across the school even though the school was judged to be outstanding at the previous inspection.
- The school's new system for checking on pupils' progress has ensured more rapid intervention if pupils are falling behind. Adults have a clear picture of where each child is achieving success and where they need help. There is more to do, however, in refining the tracking of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 1.
- The governors and headteacher use pupil premium funding to provide dedicated sessions, usually focused on improving reading skills, for those pupils entitled to this support. Thorough checking on their progress shows the funding is being used very effectively to raise the attainment of these pupils.
- The setting of targets for teachers to help them improve and maintain high performance is rigorous and exceptionally well planned to reward good practice and tackle any underperformance. The headteacher is involved in all classes and knows every child well. All teachers in this small school have some leadership roles and all carry out their responsibilities

with efficiency and enthusiasm.

- The local authority is well aware of the high quality of the school's performance and uses visits to confirm the school's own judgements.
- Safeguarding requirements are fully met and security measures have been strengthened since the previous inspection.
- The different themes and subjects covered in the school year provide an exciting range of opportunities and contribute to pupils' outstanding progress. Regular visits from theatre companies, science road shows and puppet theatres, as well as visits to places of interest, all enhance pupils' enjoyment in learning. The school caters for all needs including those with learning difficulties and those new to English.
- The excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is fostered through close links with the church, awareness of other faiths, lifestyles and cultures, and through the outstanding personal example set by the adults in school. The small school museum containing many items donated by members of the local community is a source of much enjoyment in history lessons.
- Parents hold the school in high regard. Some wrote to the lead inspector and others came in to personally give their very positive views.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school exceptionally well. They talk knowledgeably about its work and understand how to use school data to check its performance against schools nationally. They hold the school to account while supporting it in every way. The Chair of the Governing Body visits almost on a daily basis. Governors are well aware of the rate of pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and the impact of managers through frequent visits, both formal and informal. They are fully involved in decisions about the use of pupil premium funding, the development of the curriculum, the investment in improved resources and the performance management of teachers. They have an excellent grasp on the school's budget and fully understand the implications of the financial decisions they implement.

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	104917
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	412323

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Gaine
Headteacher	Anna Gavin
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
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