

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Ashford

Quantock Drive, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8QN

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- From their different starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching is typically good.
- By the time they leave school, pupils attain levels which are above those expected for their age, especially in mathematics and reading.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium achieve well.
- Teachers provide work that is fun and exciting for pupils and regularly check the progress that they are making during lessons.
- The work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress in their learning.
- School leaders focus well on numeracy and literacy and encourage pupils to work together. They carefully review pupils' achievement and this enables the school to target support carefully so that the results remain high.
- The ambitious headteacher and governing body know how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that staff would deal with any problems quickly and effectively. They say they feel safe and are well cared for.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few of the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could in writing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Over time, not enough teaching is outstanding; teachers do not provide enough challenge for all pupils in lessons.
- The quality of teachers' marking does not consistently give clear next steps to move learning on and pupils are not routinely given opportunities to respond to this advice.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 14 lessons or part lessons, seven of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, and a number of staff. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a representative group of pupils and heard pupils read in Year 6 and Year 2.
- The inspection team observed other work of the school including the plans for further development, the school's own self-evaluation, attendance and safeguarding information, assessment records and the school's own monitoring of the progress that pupils are currently making.
- The inspectors also took account of the 29 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire, (Parent View) and also considered the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gianni Bianchi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- It has provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children in one Reception class. There is one class per year group.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is above that found nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers plan lessons so that all pupils are consistently challenged, particularly the most able, in developing their writing skills
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length, thereby extending their writing skills
 - making sure that teachers' marking always gives clear next steps for improvement, and giving pupils time to respond to this advice
 - building on existing strengths in teaching in the school as a model to share best practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills slightly lower than those typically expected for their age, especially in communication and literacy. Good teaching, exciting learning experiences and careful observations to plan the next steps of learning ensure that they make good progress and they enter Year 1 with skills much closer to those expected for their age.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well and they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time they leave school, pupils attain levels in English and mathematics which are above those expected for their age. This good picture of the standards that pupils reach has been consistent since the previous inspection.
- Occasionally, teachers miss chances to challenge pupils, especially the more able, and, as a result, a few do not reach the levels of which they are capable in writing. The writing skills of a few of the older pupils are sometimes held back because teaching does not always extend them to write independently and at length.
- The school develops pupils' reading skills well. In the most recent national screening check for Year 1 pupils in phonics (letters and the sounds they make), four fifths of pupils met nationally expected levels. In a good phonics lesson observed, the high degree of challenge provided by the teacher and teaching assistant ensured all pupils made good progress. Pupils enjoy reading; they read widely and are very confident at reading aloud to an audience, as observed in a good Year 6 history lesson.
- Through closely monitoring the progress and well-being of pupils, the school ensures that all pupils are well prepared for secondary school. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from different ethnic backgrounds, all of whom achieve well.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding reach similar levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 to other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics. The funds are used most effectively to employ additional support for smaller groups of pupils and individuals. They are also used to fund pupils to attend school trips and the breakfast club.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve at least as well as other pupils. They make good progress because of early identification of specific needs and good quality planned support to meet these needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good, with some that is outstanding. The work in pupils' books is well presented and shows good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers use a good range of methods to focus learning and maintain pupils' attention. Good relationships between pupils and adults ensure that they are motivated to learn and develop as confident learners. In a good grammar lesson observed, the pace was brisk and the teacher effectively chose videos to engage and interest pupils. This supported learning and, consequently, the pupils made the progress expected of them and succeeded in their learning.
- Teachers usually plan activities that match the needs of different groups of pupils. They target questions carefully to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to contribute to class discussions and extend their thinking and understanding. Occasionally, the more able do not have the chance to work at the higher levels, especially in writing, and pupils do not get enough opportunities to fully extend their independent writing skills.
- Work is marked regularly. However, a few teachers do not always give clear guidance on how to improve and pupils are not given enough planned opportunities to respond to the teachers' advice.
- Where teaching is best, lessons are fun and exciting. In an outstanding art lesson the pupils were given the choice of which medium to use and the teacher regularly checked the progress that the pupils were making during the lesson. As a result, the pupils made rapid progress and

one child was extremely proud to show his work to the inspector, saying, 'I did this all by myself.'

- There are not enough opportunities for staff to share and extend the best practice that exists in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The pupils, without exception, say that they feel safe and well cared for at school. Staff model good behaviour and apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Attitudes to learning are positive across the school.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They feel safe in expressing their ideas and responding to questions, even if their responses are not correct, and are very prepared to talk and listen to their classmates in an atmosphere free from discrimination.
- Pupils' typically good behaviour in lessons, at playtimes and around school is a strong factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress. The older pupils told the inspectors how much they love looking after the younger pupils at school and when they walk to the church.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because whilst attitudes to learning are generally good they are not exemplary across the school, especially in some lessons where there is a lack of challenge.
- Attendance is well above national average and is indicative of pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Exclusions are rare and disruptions in lessons are uncommon.
- Of the small percentage of parents who responded to Parent View, a small minority raised bullying as an area of concern. The inspectors found little evidence of this during the inspection or over time.
- Pupils show a high regard for one another respecting differences and readily playing together in different situations. They confirmed that behaviour was good and that instances of bullying are rare. They also knew where to go and who to seek if they felt unsafe.
- The strong Christian ethos of the school, its links with the local church and cultural enrichment days help pupils extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They know right from wrong, have good social skills and this helps create a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The leadership and management are good

- Following a review of staffing, the headteacher and governors have improved leadership at all levels and have established a leadership structure that is sustainable.
- The headteacher gives clear direction to the work of the school. She has high expectations of staff and effective teamwork is driving improvement strongly. She is well supported by middle leaders and the governing body.
- Staff are committed to giving pupils the best education and national test results over the past three years show that the school is maintaining high standards in English and mathematics.
- Teaching and learning are managed well, leading to ongoing improvement, and there are well-established systems for managing staff performance. Although teaching is consistently good, it is not yet of outstanding quality overall. There are not enough opportunities for staff to share the very best practice that exists in the school.
- Leaders at all levels are sharply focused on further improving pupils' learning and have correctly prioritised writing as a whole-school focus. They have acted swiftly and pupils now have more chance in lessons to participate in 'talk for writing'. This allows for more visualisation of what they are writing about and gives it more purpose.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress by class teachers enable them to be well prepared for termly meetings, where they discuss pupils' achievement with senior leaders. From these meetings, carefully planned support intervention programmes are implemented.

- The curriculum includes subjects and activities that meet the needs of pupils well. There is a good balance between the development of essential skills and creativity. The curriculum is enriched with music and drama, trips that make learning interesting and the rich variety of after-school activities that deepen pupils' enjoyment of learning. The school's own breakfast club offers high quality care and provision.
- Equality of opportunity is at the centre of the school's work, although leaders know that there is more to be done to ensure that the most able pupils are fully challenged and attain the higher levels in writing.
- The government sport funding is used creatively to employ sports coaches who come into school and broaden the pupils' understanding of physical education, health and well-being. This is having a positive impact as a greater number of pupils are participating in after-school clubs. The governing body is very committed to continuing this aspect of pupils' education.
- The school's capacity to improve is good and the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection. The local authority supports the school with an appropriate light touch approach.
- All statutory safeguarding and vetting procedures are fully met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths of the school and know where it must improve. They use information on the school's performance to make sure senior leaders are not complacent about how the school can improve further. They bring a range of expertise and have undertaken training to ensure that they can challenge the school further. This has recently enabled them to have a much greater understanding of information on pupils' progress, including that of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding. They know in detail how the funds are spent and the impact of this on pupils' learning. Governors have an understanding of how the performance of teachers is managed and the link to promotions or salary progression for staff.

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	118760
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	426605

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Crosby
Headteacher	Mrs Bernadette Brown
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2008
Telephone number	01233 622797
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Email address	headteacher@st-teresas.kent.sch.uk

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