

St Teresa of Lisieux Catholic Primary School

Utting Avenue East, Norris Green, Liverpool, L11 1DB

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Early years provision | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not yet good enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are not yet high enough.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, are not always challenged well enough in their lessons with work that is hard enough. As a result, too few pupils reach the higher standards in reading and mathematics but this is especially so in writing.
- The school's use of resources to teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) is not used well enough to meet the needs of pupils. This has resulted in slower progress for younger pupils. Consequently, the proportion of six-year-olds who reach the expected standard is well below average.
- The teaching of grammar and punctuation is not sufficiently well structured throughout the school and so there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Pupils do not get enough practice to apply the skills they learn in grammar and punctuation lessons to writing activities in subjects other than English.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are at the heart of this caring school.
- Children get a good start to their education in the exciting early years.
- Children in the early years and Year 6 make good progress due to good teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils who receive support through the additional pupil premium funding make similar progress to that of their classmates.
- Due to excellent work by staff, attendance has improved dramatically and is currently above average.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils agree that staff keep them safe.
- The school provides a very caring environment in which pupils behave well and get on well with each other. Pupils and adults care for and respect each other. This reflects the school's Christian ethos which underpins every aspect of the school's work.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. All staff share her ambitions.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas to develop within the school. They are skilled in checking its work and hold leaders to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read from Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Discussions were held with parents who brought their children to school and 10 parents who agreed to meet with the inspectors because the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were too few to be meaningful.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed in the 48 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and scrutinised the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Colleen Taylor

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Teresa of Lisieux Catholic School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the time of the last inspection the school has experienced many changes in staffing.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and therefore eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are in the care of the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the usual time is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to increase the rate of pupils' progress by ensuring that work is set at the right level of challenge for all pupils, especially the most able.
- Raise attainment in phonics so that by the end of Year 1 standards are at least average by ensuring pupils are taught the skills of linking letters to the sounds they make at appropriate levels of difficulty to suit their different abilities.
- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that:
 - the skills of punctuation and grammar are taught in a step-by-step way throughout the school
 - pupils are provided with more well-planned opportunities to apply their skills to writing in other subjects as well as in English.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides clear direction. She is strong, enthusiastic and committed to the school's improvement. She and her leadership team work especially well together, having skills and expertise which complement each other. They know what the school does well and what the school needs to do to become good. This strong team has secured improvements since the previous inspection. Their ambitions and expectations are shared and unreservedly supported by all staff who returned the staff questionnaire.
- Teaching and learning are checked regularly and rigorously. This results in sharp and focused feedback on what teachers must do to improve their practice and accelerate the rate at which pupils make progress. This is supported by effective performance appraisal systems to review teachers' work and to inform training. Teachers feel supported by the headteacher and senior leaders and welcome feedback about their performance in lessons.
- The school is supported extremely well by the local authority. It has provided the school with helpful guidance and strong support on its journey of improvement.
- The curriculum has been reviewed to bring it in line with new requirements. Together senior leaders and staff have made significant headway in developing their understanding of expectations for assessment with the removal of National Curriculum levels. Consequently, they are moving rapidly towards the implementation of a refined assessment and recording system to monitor pupils' progress and attainment.
- The curriculum captures pupils' imaginations. However, although reading and mathematics are threaded throughout the curriculum, the opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their writing skills across other subjects other than English are not so evident or as well-structured as they should be.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are woven through all aspects of school life including, visits, visitors and an exciting range of after-school clubs. This good development is clearly visible in pupils' growing sense of responsibility, excitement in learning, understanding and tolerance of difference and knowing right from wrong.
- The primary sports funding effectively enhances the many opportunities pupils have to be involved in sporting activities including a greater range of after school clubs. Participation rates have risen and pupils are involved in a range of inter-school sports competitions with notable successes particularly in boys' and girls' football. These opportunities have improved pupils' well-being and are influencing their enjoyment of school as seen by their rapidly improving attendance.
- Very strong support is provided for pupils and their families. Relationships with parents and carers are good.
- Effective support is provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those entering the school throughout the year so that they can settle quickly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a wide range of skills to their roles and responsibilities, and undertake effective training to support them in all areas of their work. They are highly committed to excellence in all aspects of the school. They are involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and setting priorities for improvement. This enables them to set ambitious but realistic targets for staff performance, to have rigorous systems for checking progress, holding staff to account and making salary decisions. Governors use their extensive involvement and monitoring in school to identify appropriate priority areas for development, build action plans, and check progress against these. Governors ensure that the school makes good use of extra funding, such as the pupil premium and the additional school sports funding, and monitor their impact well. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Kindness, courtesy and respect are hallmarks of the school. They are reinforced through assemblies, lessons and playground activities. Many parents agreed with the comment, 'It's a calm school and children's manners are just brilliant.' As a result there are very few recorded instances of unacceptable behaviour.
- Praise and encouragement successfully motivate pupils so that the majority work hard and want to do well. Pupils are keen to participate in discussion, to answer questions and take on responsibilities such as acting as ambassadors who escort visitors around the school.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. This is because pupils demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning and display

high levels of perseverance when working in groups or as individuals. They respond well to the guidance and direction given by staff and as a result, time for learning is rarely lost. However, occasionally when the activities set are too easy pupils sometimes become a little restless.

- Current attendance is above average. This is a dramatic improvement since the previous inspection and is the consequence of the resolute and imaginative leadership of the headteacher, the school's Attendance Leader and good parent cooperation.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. They are cared for extremely well and given appropriate guidance about avoiding risk and danger. However, a few pupils were not sure of what action to take in the case of cyber bullying such as hurtful text messages. All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection confirmed that pupils feel safe and are well looked after. This was exemplified by one parent and agreed with by many others that, 'staff are just like parents and make a big difference to our children's lives.'
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are overwhelmingly confident in the staff to deal with any concerns they may have. They act responsibly on the playground, where they are well supervised.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and its different types. They and their parents say such behaviour is extremely rare. However, pupils are clear what to do should any incidents occur. They know that any member of staff will listen to them if they are concerned about anything.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because in the past expectations have not been high enough to ensure that pupils consistently make or exceed the progress expected of them. However, more effective monitoring by senior leaders and the focused and unambiguous feedback they provide are resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching. This is especially so in the early years and Year 6 where teaching is good. This is reflected in the much higher proportions of pupils who at both these stages now achieve expectations and standards in line with the national average.
- Staff build warm and caring relationships with pupils and use the rewards system well so that pupils commit themselves to learning. This means that pupils are confident learners prepared to try hard and unafraid of making mistakes because they know their teachers will always help them. This has resulted in developing in all classrooms a climate in which pupils can learn and feel safe.
- There is a strong focus on extending pupils' speaking skills. In lessons pupils are frequently asked to share ideas and work in pairs which promotes the development of their social skills and their ability to listen to and respect the views of others. Classrooms and areas around school are attractive and tidy with vibrant displays of pupils' work.
- Throughout the school pupils are given an interesting range of purposeful opportunities to apply and develop their mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems. This is a significant contributory factor to pupils' better attainment in mathematics than in writing at both key stages. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to engage in extended pieces of writing in English or other subjects. This limits the opportunities of some pupils to practise their skills at the levels of which they are capable, especially the most able.
- What the school does to help pupils who are identified as in need of additional support due to falling behind, or with gaps in their learning, is a strength of teaching. A well structured system of additional support is in place. Well organised learning support areas outside classrooms are bright and attractive and inspire pupils to learn. The quality of this support is checked carefully by leaders. One of the main reasons pupils with disabilities and special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils make progress at least in line with their classmates is because of the good quality of support they receive.
- Pupils' work is marked well. Written comments carefully explain what pupils are doing well and what they need to do to improve. However, pupils are not always given opportunities to use or apply the good advice given to make the best possible progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because the rate of progress pupils make as they move through the school is not consistently good.
- At Key Stage 1, standards in reading, mathematics and especially writing have been consistently well below the national average for a number of years. However, in 2014 the rate at which pupils made progress was above average despite a fall in standards. This fall was largely due to the high proportion of

pupils who entered Key Stage 1 with standards below those expected and the relatively high proportion of pupils who entered Year 2 with English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils in Key Stage 1 who reach the higher Level 3 is well below average, especially in writing.
- In 2014 the proportion of pupils who by the end of Key Stage 2 made or exceeded the progress expected of them was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, by the end of Year 6 standards improved from being well below average in 2013 to average in 2014. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5, especially in writing, was below the national average. This is because the teaching of punctuation and grammar is not sufficiently well planned, nor are there enough opportunities to apply and practise the skills they learn across a range of subjects in addition to English.
- Reading is given a high profile. However, the progress pupils make in their understanding of phonics is limited because the resources available to teachers are not used well enough. Consequently, the proportion of six-year-olds who in 2014 reached the expected level in the phonics check was well below average. This too was influenced by the relatively high proportion of pupils who entered Year 1 with English as an additional language. The teaching of phonics is better in Year 2 and as a result, the proportion of pupils who retook the check in 2014 and met national expectations was average.
- As pupils move through the school they develop a love of reading. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'You get engaged with the characters and they pull you into the book.'
- The school checks that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed. The needs of all groups of pupils are identified promptly and effective support, particularly through carefully chosen learning programmes, is added where most needed. As a result, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress.
- The number of most able pupils who on entry to Key Stage 2 had reached the higher Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1 was very few. However, throughout Key Stage 2 pupils made more rapid progress and by the end of Year 6 the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in 2014 was much closer to but still below average, especially in writing.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional teaching assistants for group work, one-to-one tuition and nurturing activities. Because of the well-targeted support the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is similar to and sometimes above that of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014 the standard reached for those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding was in line with pupils nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is good.
- Children start in the early years with skills which for the overwhelming majority are below and some significantly below those typical for their age.
- Children make good progress because of skilful teaching and carefully planned activities which are matched to individual children's interests and needs. As a result, by the time children leave early years the proportion reaching a good level of development is close to the national average.
- Critical to children's good progress is the focus on developing their personal skills. Adults carefully explain how to behave in the early years, what the routines are and encourage children to work and play together and to support each other. In a large, busy unit, children mix well and are very polite and caring. Consequently, those children who have just started in early years are happy, have settled down well to routines and are eager to learn and enjoy school life.
- Much thought has gone into developing children's language skills. Daily opportunities to work in groups listening to each other and discussing ideas have made a significant improvement in children's language development. Those children who enter the early years with English as an additional language are supported extremely well.
- The quality of teaching is good in the early years and now provides a secure base for future learning. A well planned balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to explore for themselves means that children can practise the skills they learn as they play. Adults rigorously track the progress children make and use this information to plan future activities which will build on their skills and knowledge.
- Indoor and outdoor learning environments are vibrant, inviting and capture children's imaginations. Resources are easily accessible to the children and are well chosen to excite interest. They contribute particularly well to children's speaking and listening skills and personal and social development, such as in

encouraging imagination in the role play areas.

- Behaviour and attitudes in early years are good and help children to focus on their work and make good progress. Staff work effectively to engage parents with their children's learning so that children come happily into school and are ready to join in the exciting activities planned for the day.
- Children's learning journals reflect their time in early years and the progress they have made. Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader and her team have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the unit. They work well together to identify priorities and evaluate how well everything is working to improve on what they already do.

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

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| Unique reference number | 136686 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 432125 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| 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 | 462 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | John McCormack |
| Headteacher | Helen Benwell |
| Date of previous school inspection | 25 April 2013 |
| Telephone number | 0151 226 5018 |
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