

# Inspection of a good school: St Teresa Catholic Primary School

Brook Road, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 5HL

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Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

## Outcome

St Teresa Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like attending St Teresa's. Pupils feel happy and safe in school. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff have created a culture where pupils confidently try again when they have made mistakes.

The school's strong values, such as having respect for others, are evident throughout the school. Pupils enjoy good relationships with staff. There is a strong sense of community within the school and working together is important to all. Pupils' behaviour is positive in lessons and around school. Pupils know the difference between what is right and wrong. Pupils show respect to each other and their teachers. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, teachers act quickly and effectively.

Pupils, parents, carers and staff are positive about the work at the school. The overwhelming majority of parents would recommend the school to others. Many parents commented about how caring and nurturing they found the school to be. They reported that their children are happy at the school.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum with a particular focus on the literacy and numeracy skills pupils need.

Leaders have established a clear curriculum for phonics and reading that is understood by all staff. Staff teach phonics well and ensure that younger pupils learn the different sounds that letters represent. The plans for reading are well organised. They clearly outline the necessary steps teachers need to take to teach pupils how to read well. Teachers match the books pupils read to the sounds they are learning. Pupils read fluently and with increasing confidence. Teachers ensure that struggling readers are well supported to overcome their difficulties.

Leaders' carefully constructed curriculum enables teachers to teach mathematics well. The plans are well organised. Teachers introduce new concepts that build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers explain complicated mathematical methods clearly. Pupils develop their confidence and understanding in mathematics well over time.

The curriculum in English and mathematics is well established. Other curriculum areas are at different stages of development. Leaders are in the process of improving the curriculum for all subjects. Leaders' improvements in some areas have gone well. In geography, for example, leaders have created well organised plans from Reception to Year 6. Other curriculum areas, however, need further development. This is because plans for these subjects do not always make clear what pupils need to know in each year group.

Teachers use leaders' approach to assessment well. They check pupils' understanding and use this information to plan next steps.

Leaders provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) the necessary support to help them overcome the challenges they face. Teaching assistants know pupils well and the school uses specialists where needed. Staff make sure that pupils with SEND are fully included in the curriculum.

Children in the early years learn well across the different areas of early learning. Adults quickly establish routines that ensure that children make the most of their time in Nursery and Reception. Children develop independence and are involved in a mixture of well-considered and stimulating activities. Children develop an understanding of the world around them.

Leaders' curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of the wider world, including financial responsibility, personal safety, independence and community responsibilities. Pupils benefit from wide-ranging provision for personal development which is responsive to pupils' needs. Pupils learn about being good citizens. They have opportunities to take responsibility as a school councillor, anti-bullying ambassador, forest ranger or work as an 'Apostle of Mercy'. The wide range of clubs and activities, alongside the trips and visitors to the school, helps to broaden pupils' experience.

Leaders thoughtfully consider workload of staff. Staff feel well supported and think leaders are mindful of staff's well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All procedures and policies are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm. Rigorous checks are carried out on adults before they start working or volunteering at the school. Staff receive regular training and have a shared understanding that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. They act swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise.

Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online. Pupils know how to report any concerns they have to adults.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum for some curriculum areas is not sufficiently clear. Leaders need to ensure that plans for all areas of the curriculum clarify exactly what pupils must know, understand and be able to do. Leaders then need to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum to make any further improvements.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Teresa Catholic Primary School to be good on 7–8 June 2016.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117466
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121476
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Angela Carazo-Gormley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Teresa McBride
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stteresas.herts.sch.uk">www.stteresas.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7–8 June 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.

## Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy and assistant headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, some curriculum leaders, the school business officer and members of the governing body. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a local authority improvement partner.
- The subjects considered as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics, geography and art. The inspector spoke with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work, and met with teachers and pupils.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school to seek their views about the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised school policies, procedures and recruitment records. Meetings were held with the designated safeguarding leader to review examples of actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector also checked staff's knowledge of how to keep pupils safe from harm.

- The school's website was scrutinised, along with a range of school documents including: the school's own self-evaluation; improvement plans; and records about behaviour, safeguarding children and attendance.
- The inspector considered the 41 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire and the 39 responses to Ofsted's free-text system. The inspector also considered 15 responses to Ofsted's online staff and 56 pupil questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Ashley Best-White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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