

Inspection of St Teresa's Catholic Primary Academy

Malins Road, Parkfields, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 6AW

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a distinctly Catholic school. Pupils are safe and well cared for. Leaders' vision of a school where pupils are 'ready, respectful and safe' is understood by all. Most pupils behave well but there are times when some do not. They lose interest and stop paying attention when work is not matched to their abilities.

Over the last three years, the standards that pupils reach have been too low. Pupils have been let down by a poor-quality education. They underachieve in almost all subjects. Leaders have not planned carefully what pupils should be taught. This means that pupils do not learn all that they should. Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to address this.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know about different forms of bullying and say that they are rare. Pupils know they can tell a trusted adult if they are worried about anything. Leaders deal with incidents of bullying promptly. They also take appropriate action when pupils do not behave well.

There are a range of activities on offer to broaden pupils' experiences. These include visits to museums and different places of worship, and clubs such as Spanish and archery. Pupils enjoy these.

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

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) staff meet with children and their families before children start at the school. This helps establish positive relationships. Early reading, writing and mathematics are promoted through the effective use of texts. Occasionally, leaders select activities that are not well matched to children's abilities. These do not always allow children, particularly the more able, to independently practise their writing. The outdoor area is not used effectively enough. The EYFS leader has the capacity to make the improvements needed.

The teaching of reading has been weak historically. Leaders have now prioritised reading. Phonics training for staff has led to a consistent approach. This has improved the teaching of phonics. Adults hear children read but leaders have not thought enough about how often. Leaders' expectations of the standards pupils can reach are too low. Too many pupils leave the school below the expected standard in reading.

Leaders' plans for what pupils need to know and remember are not clear. They have not considered the order in which pupils should learn important new ideas. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and skills do not build in a logical sequence. In many subjects, teachers receive poor guidance about what to teach and how to teach it. Staff have not had sufficient subject training. As a result, pupils do not learn many important aspects of subjects. For example, in science there is no plan for scientific enquiry and investigations are carried out in an ad hoc way. Many

pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught and have gaps in their understanding. They do not know the correct subject vocabulary. This is particularly true in mathematics.

Leaders and teachers are not ambitious enough in what they expect from pupils. Pupils' work in books is often unfinished or of a low standard. Teachers do not address poor presentation and therefore pupils do not take pride in their work.

In the past, pupils' disrupted learning and attitudes were poor. Leaders' actions have improved the behaviour of pupils. Most pupils now behave well and few are excluded from school. However, in some lessons pupils drift off task and do not concentrate. This is because work does not build well on what has been learned before. Attendance at the school is above national averages. Leaders have systems to ensure that pupils are punctual and attend regularly. These work well.

Disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress. Leaders do not spend or monitor the additional funding available for disadvantaged pupils well enough.

New leadership of special educational needs is already making positive changes. This included ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being identified earlier.

Leaders prioritise the promotion of pupils' spiritual development. Pupils know and understand the school's values but are less secure about fundamental British Values. Too many pupils leave without the academic knowledge and skills they need to thrive at secondary school.

A multi-academy company (MAC) has been working with the school since September. It is supporting staff and providing training. However, currently the school leaders do not have the capacity to make the improvements needed at the school. Both the MAC and the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham are helping leaders build the capacity needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know that safeguarding is very important. Leaders train staff so they know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' well-being or safety. Records show leaders understand the needs of vulnerable pupils. Leaders' quick responses provide support for pupils and families when needed. Leaders and governors check staff are suitable to be employed at the school before they begin work.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not implemented effective plans to improve the school. Leaders' actions have not been rapid enough or sufficiently focused on the right things. They have not demonstrated the expertise to make the changes needed. Lack of leadership capacity should be addressed without delay. Improving the quality of education should be the top priority.
- Curriculum planning is weak. Leaders have not designed plans that sequence learning well. Leaders' evaluation of the curriculum across subjects lacks rigour. Teachers are unclear about what pupils should know already and what they need to learn next. As a result, content is missed out, taught in a jumbled way or not covered in sufficient depth. As a result, pupils sometimes become disengaged when the curriculum is not suitably planned to meet their needs. Leaders should urgently tackle these curriculum deficiencies. Plans should identify and sequence the vocabulary, knowledge and skills that pupils need to know and remember. These should match the breadth and ambition of the national curriculum.
- In mathematics, pupils do not make the progress they should. Leaders have introduced a new curriculum plan. They have not implemented this well. Leaders have not adapted plans to address gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge. This hinders pupils' ability to apply what is taught. Leaders should ensure there are enough opportunities to revisit what has been learned before. Teachers should then use assessment effectively to tackle gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding.
- Leaders have not made sure that teachers have the broad skills and knowledge needed to teach the full curriculum. This hampers pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge to teach across all subjects.
- Leaders have not targeted disadvantaged pupils' funding well enough. As a result, the gap between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and their peers widens as they move through the school. Leaders need to ensure that funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Early years staff select indoor classroom activities that help pupils learn for most of the time. The outdoor environment is not of a high quality. Leaders should make better use of the space available. They should improve the range of resources and planned outdoor activities. Pupils' outdoor learning experiences should be broad and purposeful.

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

Unique reference number	139893
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10122506
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of board	Chris Walker
Principal	Matthew Pitcher
Website	www.st-teresas.org
Date of previous inspection	20 April 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new principal took up post in April 2017. The assistant principal took up post in September 2017.
- The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious education and collective worship took place in November 2018.
- In September 2019 the school became part of the St Francis and St Clare Catholic MAC.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We focused on the following subjects during the inspection: reading, writing, mathematics, science and geography. We visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and examined curriculum plans. We talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are planned and taught. We also looked at work from other subjects and spoke with pupils, staff and parents about the school.
- I examined external performance data about the school and looked at the school's website.
- We spoke to pupils, staff, leaders, parents, governors and trustees about safeguarding arrangements and routines at the school.
- We observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times of the day and spoke to parents, staff and pupils about behaviour.
- We had formal meetings with the principal, other school leaders, teachers and pupils. I met with representatives of the local authority who are providing challenge and support for leaders. We also talked informally and formally to pupils and parents to gather information about the school.
- We considered the nine responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joanne Knowles

Ofsted Inspector

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