

Inspection of a good school: St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street

Devon Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 4HX

Inspection dates:

8 to 9 July 2021

Outcome

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Teresa's is a family-oriented school. It provides a nurturing environment for all pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are polite and behave well. They respect people's differences. Most pupils listen carefully in lessons and work hard. They play happily together at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Pupils who spoke with the inspector said that they feel happy and safe at the school. They know that staff are there to help them if they have any worries. Pupils told the inspector that bullying is uncommon. They are confident that staff would deal with any incidents that occur.

Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the extra-curricular activities that they experience, such as musical theatre. They enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, such as playground buddies and school councillors.

Many parents and carers spoke highly about the positive work of the staff and the support that their children received with remote education during the disruption caused by COVID-19 (coronavirus). A typical comment was, 'I am delighted with the way my child is progressing and the care and support provided each and every day.'

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

Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils learn the full range of national curriculum subjects. Curriculum plans clearly set out what pupils should know and when. This helps teachers to build on pupils' learning as they move through the school. Pupils achieve well. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception Class. Staff are well trained and all follow the same approach in teaching daily phonics sessions. In the early years, children have many opportunities to develop and extend their vocabulary. Children and pupils read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Staff make sure that

children and pupils who struggle to read receive extra support to help them catch up quickly. Younger pupils use their phonics knowledge well to sound out unfamiliar words. They are becoming confident and fluent readers. Older pupils said that they enjoy reading and spoke enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books.

Leaders have changed the order of content in some practical subjects, such as science and music. This is helping to plug gaps in pupils' knowledge which may have been missed due to the pandemic. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge, such as in art and mathematics, to explain subject content clearly. Children and pupils have opportunities to revisit and build on their previous learning.

Teachers use assessment information well in some subjects, such as in mathematics, to check what pupils know and can do. However, in some other subjects, the systems used to check pupils' learning are not well developed. This means that teachers are unaware of how well pupils are understanding and remembering new content.

Some subject leaders are new to their roles. Senior leaders have plans in place to develop their expertise so that they can monitor the delivery of their subjects more effectively.

Teachers adapt their plans and resources to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met. Leaders work well with a range of external agencies to support these pupils. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school. They achieve well.

There is a calm and orderly atmosphere both in lessons and around the school. This helps pupils to learn without disruption. Leaders place a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' mental health. This helps pupils to deal with difficulties in their lives.

Leaders promote pupils' wider personal development well. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. This helps them to be prepared for life in modern Britain. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils enjoyed a wide range of opportunities to enhance their learning. For example, pupils told the inspector how much they enjoyed attending residential visits. Pupils spoke excitedly about a recent outdoor education visit and sports activities, such as judo and cricket, which have restarted.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They said that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Governors want the best for pupils. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they meet regularly with leaders. Governors challenge and support leaders in equal measure.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all necessary checks are undertaken on adults before they can work at the school. Staff are well trained and have a good awareness of the signs and

symptoms of abuse. They know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupils' welfare. Leaders take appropriate and prompt actions. They work well with a range of external agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The assessment systems in some subjects other than English and mathematics are not well developed. This means that teachers do not know how well pupils are learning in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that assessment processes in all subjects are fully developed and used consistently well to provide teachers with the information that they need to plan learning that builds on what pupils already know and can do.
- Some leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have been recently appointed. They have less experience in their roles. This means that they are not able to check the effectiveness of their curriculums. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the training and support that they need to carry out their new roles effectively.

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 or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 the school to be good on 12 and 13 June and 20 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 [here](#).

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	104807
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10194682
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Atherton
Headteacher	Rachael Brookes
Website	www.st-teresa.st-helens.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 May and 7 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. A new headteacher, deputy headteacher, leader for reading and chair and vice-chair of governors have been appointed during this period.
- St Teresa's is a voluntary-aided Catholic primary school. The school had its most recent section 48 inspection in June 2013. The date of the next section 48 inspection has been delayed due to the pandemic. It is likely to take place in the summer term 2022.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with seven members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector held an online meeting with a representative of the local authority and two representatives of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

- The inspector spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. He also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. He also looked at minutes of governing body meetings.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector looked at safeguarding policies and reviewed leaders' record of checks on the suitability of staff and governors. He met with the designated safeguarding leads. The inspector also spoke to pupils and staff about safeguarding and considered parents' views.
- The inspector considered 121 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 19 responses to the staff questionnaire. He spoke with parents before school to gather their views. The inspector also considered 21 responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire and 21 free-text responses.
- The inspector did deep dives in early reading, art and design and mathematics. He visited a sample of lessons in these subjects, met with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and photographic evidence and had discussions with teachers and a small group of pupils. The inspector observed pupils reading to familiar staff.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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