

Inspection of a good school: St Teresa's Catholic (A) Primary School

Stone Road, Trent Vale, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 6SP

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

St Teresa's Catholic (A) Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, leaders aspire for all pupils to 'be the best they can be'. Parents, staff and pupils are all committed to this aim. Pupils rise to these high expectations, both academically and personally. One parent's comment was typical of many when they said, 'Staff work hard to ensure that pupils make good progress in all areas, are happy and well cared for.'

The school is led well. Leaders ensure that the school's values underpin nearly all of their work. Leaders want every pupil to develop a lifelong love of learning. They also want pupils to understand how such learning will help them in later life.

All pupils are encouraged to follow their interests and to develop leadership skills. They thrive on any opportunities and apply for roles such as student leader, as well as sharing their interests in 'passion projects'.

Pupils are happy and feel safe at school. Parents and carers feel the same. Pupils have a trusted adult to who they can turn if they are worried about anything. Bullying is rare. Pupils have a clear understanding of what to do if it does happen. Any issues are dealt with quickly.

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

Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum is suitably ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy the subjects that they study. As a result, they focus during lessons and are eager to learn.

Teachers use assessment strategies well. The assessment information they gather supports them effectively to plan new learning for pupils. Subject leaders are knowledgeable about the curriculums they lead. They use their expertise to support teachers to deliver these curriculums well. Pupils build on their prior learning as they progress through the school. For example, in history, older pupils learn about a range of

ancient civilisations. They understand that some of these civilisations existed at the same time. A small number of subjects, such as design technology, have been recently revised. This is because the previous subject curriculums did not allow pupils' learning to build logically over time. In these subjects, pupils do not always remember the important knowledge and vocabulary they have learned.

Children in the early years settle well into school life. Children who need additional support are swiftly identified and get the help they need. Staff plan learning carefully based on what children know and can do and build children's learning from this point. The early years curriculum helps to ensure that children are well prepared for learning in key stage 1. Leaders and teachers in the early years have thought deeply about how knowledge and skills build over time. This helps children to achieve well.

Reading underpins the school's curriculum. Children and pupils across the school experience a broad range of appropriate texts. Pupils in key stage 2 make reading recommendations of books they have enjoyed to their peers. They also play an active part in supporting younger children's early reading skills as reading ambassadors. Leaders have prioritised the teaching of early reading. The vast majority of pupils learn well and become fluent and confident readers. That said, a new phonics curriculum has been introduced and teaching is even more systematic. Books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils have learned. However, some staff have not had the opportunity to use their recent training to ensure that every pupil makes the progress they could. This includes teachers in key stage 2. This means that a minority of pupils who struggle with reading do not read as fluently and confidently as they could.

Leaders and staff know all pupils well, especially those with SEND. Systems are in place to make sure that pupils with SEND are identified quickly. These pupils are well supported in lessons. They follow the same curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

Pupils understand the systems in place which help them to follow the rules. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Provision for pupils' personal development is a strength. They are provided with a wide range of opportunities to further engage in their learning through visits, visitors and the use of artefacts. For example, in history, they used Egyptian artefacts to discuss what life at different times was like. Pupils are given a wide variety of roles and responsibilities, for example as house captains and wider curriculum leaders. By carrying out these roles, they support leaders to improve school life.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and put practical measures in place to support this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors understand their role in keeping children safe and work together to achieve this. Leaders ensure that staff attend regular safeguarding training.

This helps staff to be alert that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff record and report any concerns swiftly. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep each other safe. They know how to raise concerns with trusted adults in school.

Online safety is taught across the curriculum and through special events and visitors.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff have not had sufficient training in the new phonics curriculum. This means that a minority of pupils do not develop their reading fluency and confidence as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff are well trained in the implementation of the new phonics curriculum.
- In a minority of subjects, the curriculum has been recently revised and is at an early stage of implementation. At times, pupils' learning does not build on what they already know, and they do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that pupils' prior knowledge is considered before they move on to new learning.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2017.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	140804
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10227074
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Margaret Regan
Headteacher	Nathan Price
Website	www.st-teresas.stoke.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 April 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2017. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place no later than 31 August 2025.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher and three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also met with three members of the multi-academy trust, including the chair of the trust.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the multi-academy trust and a representative of the diocese. He also spoke to parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.

- The inspector viewed a range of safeguarding documentation. He examined checks on safer recruitment and spoke with members of staff to check their safeguarding knowledge.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and viewed examples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke with pupils. The inspector also spoke to the subject leaders for art and design, history and modern foreign languages.
- The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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