

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

Callander Road, Hartlepool TS25 3BG

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Joanne Bruton. This school is part of Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michael Shorten, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne Coates.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit greatly from attending this school. 'Do the little things well' is more than just a motto. It is the thread that runs through the work of this school. Trust leaders, school leaders and other staff are united in their determination to ensure that pupils thrive. They have created a very positive learning environment.

Pupils like school. They are happy, safe and enjoy learning. Bullying is very unusual and happens rarely. Pupils trust staff to look after them if they have any problems. Pupils are confident and polite. They behave in a friendly and respectful manner towards other pupils and with adults.

Pupils experience a rich curriculum, which aims to make their transition to secondary school seamless. In some subjects, they develop an impressive depth of understanding. This makes them particularly enthusiastic. Their joy at talking about geography, for instance, is palpable. In all subjects, pupils receive a carefully thought out curriculum offer that supports their learning.

The school has done much to ensure that parents are involved in their children's education. Parents appreciate this and value the chance to work with their children in school. Parents and pupils value the care and support the school provides.

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

The school and trust work together in close partnership. The trust supports the school's aspirations for all pupils to achieve highly. Leaders use the expertise of primary and secondary teachers to determine what pupils need to learn to be fully ready for Year 7.

The school has taken this work and mapped out, in detail, what pupils need to learn in all subjects from Nursery to Year 6.

Leaders have given teachers purposeful training and high-quality resources. In modern foreign languages, for example, leaders give teachers guides to pronunciation. Teachers can focus on teaching because clear expectations and routines ensure that pupils do not disrupt learning.

The curriculum is designed to make sure that pupils in mixed-age classes learn what they need to, at the right time. Teachers are adept at adjusting what they teach to meet the needs of different pupils. This helps all pupils to learn well and is particularly beneficial to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are fully involved in lessons. If they need extra help, such as more teaching or specific resources, leaders and teachers ensure they get it. Pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

In some subjects, detailed curriculum documentation has been in place for some time. It has had a highly positive impact on pupils' learning. In mathematics, for example, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate an impressive understanding. The school knows how well teachers are teaching and how well pupils are learning.

In other subjects, curriculum development is more recent. All subjects benefit from detailed and carefully sequenced plans but, where this work is newer, leaders are still in the process of working out how to best check what information pupils have remembered in the long term. Leaders have not had time to work with teachers to refine how they teach these subjects.

The school recognises the importance of ensuring that pupils learn to read well. Leaders have arranged training for all staff who teach phonics so that they know how to teach it well. Staff follow the phonics programme precisely. They match the books pupils read to the sounds they have learned. They check whether pupils have understood and give extra help to those who need it.

Beyond phonics, the school teaches pupils to read and understand a variety of different types of text, such as non-fiction and poetry. Reading areas around the school are attractive, and pupils visit the local library. Pupils learn to read well and develop a love of reading.

The school offers, and many pupils get involved in, a wide range of opportunities. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about being school councillors and buddies. Pupils can be sports leaders or take part in a range of clubs. The school is careful to ensure that pupils learn about how to treat others and about how to keep safe. Leaders thread these themes through the personal, social and health education and collective worship programmes. In the changes they have made over the last academic year, leaders and staff have worked very hard. Staff are pleased that their workload has now eased and are proud of what they have achieved. They see the value of the curriculum development and know that their efforts were worthwhile. They are pleased with the direction leaders provide and are glad to work in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not check pupils' long-term recall of key concepts in some subjects. Consequently, the school does not adapt the curriculum to help pupils revisit new learning and address any misconceptions. The school should make sure that in each subject, purposeful assessment is used to support pupils to embed and build knowledge over time.
- Leaders have not reviewed how well adults teach the new curriculums in some foundation subjects. They do not know which staff need more help to deliver the subject content well. Leaders should ensure they know which aspects of the new curriculums teachers need help with to ensure that, in all subjects, pupils develop the impressive knowledge they currently do in some.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Teresa's RC Primary School, to be good in April 2013.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148367
Local authority	Hartlepool Borough
Inspection number	10297513
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	323
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Yvonne Coates
Headteacher	Joanne Bruton
Website	www.st-teresas.hartlepool.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2019. Its next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school runs before- and after-school clubs for its pupils.
- St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Hartlepool converted to become an academy school in February 2021. When its predecessor school, St Teresa's RC Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders of the school. He met with chairs of the trust and the local governing committee, as well as other trustees and governors. He also met with the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders and reviewed documentation for art, modern foreign languages and physical education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record of recruitment checks; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey, as well as speaking with staff.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils to gather their views.

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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