

Inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School

Kipling Road, Blacon, Chester, Cheshire CH1 5UU

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in school. They know that staff care for their well-being. Pupils said that their school is a kind and friendly place where everyone is welcome. They go out of their way to make sure everyone feels included. Older pupils look after younger pupils through the school's buddy system. Pupils value the diverse nature of their school. They celebrate the many different backgrounds of their friends.

The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement. It wants the best for everyone. Pupils try their hardest in lessons. When pupils need extra help with their learning, they receive close support to help them catch up. This means that pupils achieve well in most subjects.

Pupils follow the school rules and behave well in class and around the school building. This means that the school is a calm place to be. Pupils show high levels of respect to each other and to adults.

Pupils spoke excitedly about the many trips and visits that they access. They appreciate that they can attend lots of different clubs to develop their talents and interests, for example the zoo club. Pupils can also hold positions of responsibility, such as becoming sports ambassadors, house captains and members of the ethos club. Pupils enjoy these roles and the contributions that they make to weekly assemblies.

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

The school has recently refreshed the curriculum from the early years to Year 6. It is an exciting and ambitious curriculum. Pupils' learning in all subjects is carefully structured so that they can build new knowledge on what they have learned before. Subject content is broken into the small steps of learning that pupils need to build their knowledge over time.

Typically, teachers are following the new curriculums well. They check how well pupils understand the content of lessons. They mostly support pupils to address any misconceptions. This helps most pupils to achieve well. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not select the most appropriate activities to help pupils learn the content of the curriculum. This sometimes hinders pupils' progress in these subjects. Subject leadership is at various stages of development. This means that some subject leaders are not adept at picking up when the curriculum is not delivered as well as intended. Consequently, some teachers do not get the additional help and guidance that they need to improve their practice.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), as early as possible. It puts support in place to help these pupils to learn the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has made the teaching of early reading an absolute priority. Children in the Nursery class enjoy songs, rhymes and stories that prepare them well for learning about letters and their sounds. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics curriculum, which starts from the beginning of the Reception Year. Pupils who find reading difficult are identified quickly. They catch up due to the extra support that they receive. Pupils develop into fluent readers who show a love of reading and books.

Within lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. In the early years, children quickly start to follow the rules and routines which help them to become independent, resilient learners.

The school does everything that it can to promote good attendance. It makes its high expectations clear to parents and carers and it works with families to support them to bring their children to school every day. Attendance is in line with the national average.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about different cultures, both through the curriculum and from each other. They understand that people may be different to them in some way, but that everyone should be respected and treated equally. Visitors to school, such as police officers and fire safety officers, support pupils to stay safe within their community and online.

Governors know the strengths of the school and its areas for development. They have overseen steady improvements in the quality of education over recent years. Staff are positive about how the school looks after their well-being, for example by giving them dedicated time to develop their subject leadership roles. The school communicates well with parents so that they understand what their children are learning and how they can help them at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, some teachers do not select the most appropriate approaches to deliver the curriculum. This means that some pupils are not secure in the knowledge that they need for the next stage of their learning. The school should ensure that teachers are fully equipped to deliver the curriculum as intended.
- Subject leadership is at various stages of development. This means that gaps in teachers' subject and teaching knowledge are not spotted quickly enough. This leads to some variation in the effectiveness of curriculum delivery. The school should ensure that subject leaders have the knowledge and expertise to support

teachers to implement the curriculum consistently well from the early years to Year 6.

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 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	111388
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10294274
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Bernard Larkin
Headteacher	Lisa Holland
Website	www.st-theresas.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a new headteacher in place since the school was last inspected.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school within the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2020. The next inspection will be in five years.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During this inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and their wider school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; 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 inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and while in lessons.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 inspectors also spoke with subject leaders and viewed examples of pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed key documents, including the school's self-evaluation form, school action plans and monitoring records.

Inspection team

Liz Davidson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Valmai Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

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