



# St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104807  
**Local Authority** St. Helens  
**Inspection number** 277224  
**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Alan Hardwicke

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

|   |                    |                         |                     |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary            | <b>School address</b>   | Devon Street        |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Voluntary aided    |                         | St Helens           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11               |                         | Merseyside WA10 4HX |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01744 678667        |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 209                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01744 678668        |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Mrs J Ashcroft      |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Mr P Allen          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 12 June 2000       |                         |                     |

|                  |                         |                          |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b> | <b>Inspection dates</b> | <b>Inspection number</b> |
| 4–11             | 29–30 November 2006     | 277224                   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Teresa's is an average sized primary school where most pupils are from a White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average, although those with statements of educational need are lower than average. The school holds the Green Flag Award as an ECO School and has been named a 'sustainable school' by the Groundwork Trust.

## Key for inspection grades

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  |
| Grade 2 | Good         |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   |

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Teresa's is a good school with some outstanding features. It has made good improvement since its last inspection. It provides good value for money, and shows good capacity to make further improvement. This is because leadership and management, including governance, are good. There is a realistic shared view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher's commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities is very well shared and understood by all staff and very clearly reflected in the daily life of the school.

When children enter the school they have a variety of pre-school and nursery experience. Standards on entry are below those expected nationally, particularly in terms of children's speech and language. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good provision for their learning. This good progress continues throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Good teaching, which is sometimes outstanding, ensures that achievement is good for all groups of pupils. The quality of marking, however, is variable and does not always provide helpful information on what pupils need to do to improve.

A distinctive feature of the school is the full inclusion of all pupils and the importance placed on equality of opportunity. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported, both by good teaching and by the good support provided by teaching assistants. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The school's outstanding work on ecological awareness ensures that they develop increasing understanding of their responsibility for each other, and the environment. Pupils are courteous and well behaved. They develop a good understanding of a variety of world cultures. Pupils feel safe and there are harmonious relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils' views are sought and acted upon and their opinions are valued and so they grow in self-confidence.

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to help pupils learn. A good range of extra-curricular activities, local visits and visitors, and parish activities enrich the basic curriculum and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Pupils' safety is given a high priority in all the school's activities. Staff care for pupils well. Information about pupils' attainment is carefully used to check the progress of different groups and to ensure that work is matched to their needs. However, short-term targets for improvement are not discussed with pupils in order to give them a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how good their progress is.

The school works successfully in partnership with others to promote pupils' well-being. There are good links with the local high school and the school also benefits from participation in the local Primary Learning Network, through which teachers share expertise, for instance, in the teaching of ICT. Links with parents are very good and they are very positive about the work of the school. The school has a realistic view of its work and is justly proud of its achievements so far.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make clear what pupils need to do to improve their work through the marking of their work.
- Involve pupils in setting their short-term targets for improvement so they understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From a below average starting point in the Foundation Stage, children make good progress and go on to achieve close to average standards by the end of Year 6. The large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in any one year group does mean that overall standards vary from year to year. Achievement is good throughout the school. Performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 over the past three years shows an improving trend, continuing with the unconfirmed 2006 results. The school exceeded its targets in English because of successful work to improve writing. In particular, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels substantially exceeded the target. In mathematics the school narrowly missed its target for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 but exceeded its target for Level 5. The work of current Year 6 pupils confirms this continuing good achievement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The strong focus of the school ethos on responsibility for each other and the environment is reflected through the work of the school council and initiatives such as 'bully busters', prefects and the school's ECO committee. The school council makes a significant contribution through raising money for charities and suggesting new clubs such as a maths club. Because of the wide range of opportunities provided, pupils make exceptional progress in developing personal qualities of responsibility and citizenship. Opportunities to make positive contributions to the school and wider community are outstanding. The development of an ecological garden has been an outstanding initiative which is maintained by volunteer parents and improves the quality of the playground environment. It also gives pupils opportunities to grow and eat their own vegetables. Behaviour is good and pupils know that bullying and other oppressive behaviour are not tolerated. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Attendance rates are broadly average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this results in good teaching and learning. Classes are well managed and lessons are generally interesting and enjoyable. Pupils say they enjoy school and appreciate their opportunities for learning. One child said, 'Every day I come home smarter and smarter'. Teaching assistants provide sensitive and well-judged support, and make a valuable contribution to learning. The use of interactive whiteboards is developing well with teachers using good ICT skills to make their lessons more exciting. Specialist teachers are effectively used throughout the school to teach Spanish, swimming, music, dance and football. Their good subject knowledge and expertise contribute well to pupils' good learning. Teachers are good at providing the right work for pupils of different abilities. Teachers' commitment to equality of opportunity is very good and ensures that the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are well provided for. When they mark children's books, however, teachers do not often provide enough guidance on what to do next. Pupils also need to be more involved in setting their own individual and personal targets so they understand how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's good curriculum meets the full range of pupils' needs. It promotes academic and personal development well. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. Basic skills are well provided for, and have a positive impact on standards. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports clubs, art club, peripatetic music and choir. Work involved in gaining the Green Flag ECO award and the Groundwork Trust's sustainable school status has enriched the curriculum in science, geography and personal, social and health education in particular. It allows all aspects of the Every Child Matters agenda to permeate the curriculum. Pupils' involvement in playground improvements are well appreciated - 'We planned it so that we could take care of our environment' one child said. The school is currently looking at ways of linking subjects together so as to develop key skills in a more manageable way.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

This is a very caring school where pupils feel safe and happy. Because of the good pastoral care provided, pupils behave well and generally have positive attitudes to their work. All aspects of child protection, risk assessment procedures and other health and safety measures are in place. Academic support and guidance are good overall, although marking and the clear setting of targets is not consistent. At present there is too little guidance in marking to tell pupils what they need to do next in order to

improve. Pupils are not told their short-term targets for improvement so that they do not know how well they are doing and how they could do even better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher's clear vision of ecological awareness, inclusion, equality of opportunity and commitment to the success of all pupils permeates the daily life of the school. Through consistent leadership he has ensured good improvement of the school since the last inspection. The school's managers have successfully focused on using assessment information to identify areas for improvement. Well structured measures have then been put in place to remedy them. Managers have made good use both of their own resources and those of outside agencies such as local authority support and the Primary Learning Network. These measures make a good contribution to promoting higher standards.

All those with management responsibilities work well together to improve pupils' learning and achievement. There is a clear sense of unity from the governing body, senior managers, and all others with management responsibilities.





## Inspection judgements

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | <b>School Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 2   |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 2   |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 2   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 2 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 2 |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 2 |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 2 |

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 2   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 2   |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?  | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures?   | No  |
| Does this school require a notice to improve?  | No  |

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about the things you do.

Yours is a good school and it has some outstanding features. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and enjoyable. Because you like the lessons, most of you do well in your work. You learn how to take care of the environment, and of one another, and we think the work you have done to make your school and playground more attractive is very good. You know how healthy eating is good for you, and get plenty of exercise through your games and sports. Your mums, dads and carers think that your school is a good place, and we agree with them.

You told us that you enjoy all the clubs and other activities you do outside lessons. You understand the school rules well, and this helps you to behave well in lessons and around the school. You like the way your teachers help you to become more responsible as you get older by doing jobs such as being school councillors, prefects and playground buddies. All these things make your school a good place in which to learn. We have asked your teachers to help you when they are marking your books, by telling you what you need to do to improve your work. We also want them to set you targets and discuss them with you so that you will understand what you are aiming for in your work. You can help with this by thinking about how hard you are working, and whether you can do even better.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.