

St Therese of Lisieux Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131453
Local Authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	293757
Inspection dates	21 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Hatton HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pauline Shail
Headteacher	Mrs Suzanne Alexander-Sowa
Date of previous school inspection	February 2003
School address	Lamb Lane Ingleby Barwick Stockton-on-Tees TS17 0QP
Telephone number	01642 763623
Fax number	01642 763892

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The school was visited by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors for one day.

Description of the school

St Thérèse of Lisieux Primary School is an average sized voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school. It serves the largest private housing estate in Europe, Ingleby Barwick, and surrounding areas without Catholic education. Overall, the socio-economic backgrounds of pupils are better than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. There are fewer children from minority ethnic backgrounds and fewer with learning difficulties and disabilities than in most schools. Many, but not all, children start school with skills that are slightly above what would be expected nationally. The school has achieved a number of awards including Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Gold Award, ArtsMark Gold, and ActiveMark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Therese of Lisieux RC Primary is an outstanding school. Pupils make excellent progress and achieve very high standards. Their personal development and well-being are exemplary. The headteacher, staff and governors provide a safe, secure environment in which pupils thrive as individuals and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to work together very effectively. Pupils respond positively: they have high levels of self esteem and demonstrate respect for and tolerance of others. They take risks in their thinking and learning because they know that their efforts and ideas are valued. The school motto, 'Growing in love, confidence and happiness' permeates everything that happens in this school.

Parents are very supportive of the school and pleased with the quality of education it provides. They welcome the emphasis placed upon the development of self-esteem and confidence. They recognise the enjoyment that their children experience. One parent wrote 'The school encourages all children to believe that they are special and can achieve their goals'. Another mentioned the 'kind, warm, encouraging environment'.

The standards reached by pupils are very high and the progress that they make is outstanding. These standards, pupils' very positive attitudes and their ability to work independently or in groups, prepare them very well for their transfer to secondary education and the future world of work. Many, but not all, begin school with skills that are slightly above what would be expected nationally. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and become interested and motivated learners. By the age of 7 they reach standards that are consistently above average. This excellent rate of progress continues: by the age of 11 standards are consistently well above average. In 2006 all pupils achieved the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Furthermore, well above average proportions of pupils attained a higher level in mathematics and science. Despite a slight dip in performance at this higher level in English, records show that this was predicted by the school and that these pupils made significant progress during their time in school. The relatively few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding because the care, guidance and support provided by the school are also outstanding. Both are exceptionally strong features of this school. In the Foundation Stage pupils relate well to each other. They play co-operatively and take turns with toys. They persevere with tasks and continue to do so even when an adult leaves an activity. By the age of 11 pupils are confident, articulate and comfortable in the company of adults and other pupils. They think carefully before they speak or act.

When asked to identify the best things about the school pupils emphasised that everyone has positive attitudes and that everyone has a chance to take part in activities and succeed. They found it difficult to think of any improvements that could be made. One child said 'I like all of it!' Their enjoyment of school is reflected in above average rates of attendance. They feel safe in school and recognise that members of staff can be relied upon to help and support them. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust. Pupils understand the need for active lifestyles and

healthy eating. They take part enthusiastically in 'Wake up, shake up' sessions before afternoon lessons, appreciate the healthy lunches provided by the school and understand what makes a balanced packed lunch. At the time of the inspection most pupils were taking part in 'Walk to school' week.

Pupils are very clear about and respond positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour which are based on tolerance and respect. They recognise that rights come with responsibilities. For example, they have the right to be happy and the responsibility to treat others with kindness. They understand and accept the need for sanctions and recognise that they are applied fairly and quite rarely. Pupils feel that their opinions are valued and acted upon. They understand the process of holding democratic elections to select members of the school council.

Pupils are very willing to recognise and praise the achievements of others. This was seen in displays around the school and during an assembly. Pupils explained how every day in each class a 'special person' is chosen. Other pupils are asked to think of good things about this person. The pupils chosen were extremely proud and glowed with pleasure.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Pupils make exceptionally good progress. They are confident learners, able to express their views and consider the views of others. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They know their pupils well and provide learning activities that are of interest to them and which challenge them to think, for example, of alternative solutions to problems. They monitor the progress of pupils carefully and effectively. They ensure that pupils understand the assessment and target setting process. Pupils know their individual targets and what they must do to achieve these.

The school provides an outstanding curriculum which contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment and achievements, and to their personal development and well being. Provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is excellent. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to discuss issues of their choice in philosophy lessons. All pupils appreciate the many extra-curricular activities provided, including the wide variety of out-of-school clubs and opportunities to visit places of interest.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, staff and governors have a common sense of purpose and are very effectively focused on achieving high standards and promoting the well being of pupils. The emphasis given to developing the confidence of all pupils contributes significantly to the school's success in both areas. The school's self-evaluation and monitoring procedures are thorough and rigorous. They demonstrate high expectations and include challenging targets in all areas of school life. The school has an accurate picture of its own performance and is committed to continuous improvement. It is already taking steps to improve further its evaluation of provision and performance by refining its processes for monitoring pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage. The school has a track record of improving performance and the capacity for further improvement is excellent.

The inspector investigated the following issues: the progress that pupils make; their personal development and well being; the quality of teaching; and the care,

guidance and support provided by the school. Evidence was gathered from the school's own self-evaluation (SEF); national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; policies and minutes; observations of the school at work; interviews with members of staff, pupils and a governor; and the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its SEF, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

What the school should do to improve further

No significant areas for improvement were identified of which the school was not already aware and taking appropriate action.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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

¹ 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.



22/05/07

Dear Children

Inspection of St Therese of Lisieux Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees,
TS17 0QP

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited you recently. You helped me to understand how your school works and what makes it so outstanding. I really enjoyed being in your school and talking with you. You expressed your views clearly and with confidence.

You achieve very high standards in your work and you make excellent progress during your time at school. You work well on your own and you also know how to co-operate in groups. You are confident of your own abilities and you are willing to praise other children when they do things well. You behave very well and are friendly and kind to each other. You are clearly aware of each individual's rights and the responsibilities that go with them. You also know a lot about keeping fit and healthy. I particularly enjoyed seeing you all taking part so enthusiastically in the 'Wake up, shake up' session after lunch. Many of you were also taking part in 'Walk to school' week.

You and your parents told me that you enjoy school very much. You know that the headteacher and all members of staff work hard to keep you safe and to make lessons interesting and enjoyable. They are very committed to making your school a special place and they are always trying to improve further. They have very high expectations of you – and you live up to them. Well done!

With very best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely

Sue Hatton
Her Majesty's Inspector