

St Teresa's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105247
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	308810
Inspection date	21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Jones

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Denise Kelly
Headteacher	Mrs Diane Bohan
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2005
School address	Redcar Road Little Lever Bolton Lancashire BL3 1EN
Telephone number	01204 333163
Fax number	01204 333164

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; teaching and learning; curriculum; and some aspects of care, guidance and support and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, parents' questionnaires, the scrutiny of pupils' work and of assessment data and other documents. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, the chair of governors, two foundation governors and key staff. 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 self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small primary school in a residential area takes in pupils from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the Sports Activemark and Investors in People awards and has Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and displays dedication and skill that enables pupils to achieve very highly academically and in their personal development. She is extremely well supported by a highly effective senior leadership team and governing body. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and reflects rigorous monitoring at all levels. The school maintains its excellent standards through careful analysis of pupils' progress and a commitment to continually improving the effectiveness of its teaching and learning. This has resulted in outstanding improvement since the school's last inspection. The excellent value for money the school provides is exemplified by pupils' consistently very high standards and the excellent progress they make in all subjects. The very positive atmosphere within the school enables pupils of all abilities to flourish and grow in confidence. Parents are well aware of the school's merits and offer overwhelming support. They say their views are listened to, and that, 'The school genuinely cares for the welfare of all its pupils.' The quality of the relationships throughout school is very strong and underpins the school's success. Staff show exceptional awareness of pupils' individual needs and this contributes to their excellent all round development.

Pupils really enjoy their school. Their attendance is consistently very high and they take real pleasure in their learning. They are enthusiastic, friendly and extremely courteous towards visitors and each other. Their behaviour is impeccable at all times and they show a maturity and confidence beyond their years. There is a strong tradition of service to the school and the wider community. Pupils belong to different Houses and through these are able to make suggestions that have led to improvements in resources and to the playground. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of taking exercise and leading a healthy lifestyle. The award of the Activemark and Healthy School status are endorsements of the school's high quality work in these areas. Pupils say they feel safe and staff show a high level of care for pupils' well-being. Safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current requirements.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Foundation Stage (Reception) with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make a good beginning to their learning and by the time they reach Year 1 their standards in all areas of learning are above expectations. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach exceptionally high standards in English, mathematics and science (core subjects). This is the result of very challenging teaching. Because pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are extremely well supported by highly effective teaching assistants they also make outstanding progress. In the core subjects, the majority of these pupils attain the expected level for their age.

Staff have very high expectations of work and behaviour and pupils of all abilities thrive in the stimulating, well planned lessons provided. Pupils are encouraged to question and to be curious. As they proceed through the school their speaking and listening skills develop to a high level thanks to the many well-structured opportunities they have to debate and discuss. A Year 2 mathematics lesson typified the importance the school places on encouraging problem solving skills with these young pupils explaining their answers in confident detail. Staff show excellent subject knowledge and make good use of information and communication technology to provide opportunities for many pupils to attain standards that are much higher than those expected for their age. Teachers also help pupils achieve extremely well by adapting their teaching methods to suit pupils' preferred learning styles. The school's curriculum is highly focused on meeting the individual needs of all pupils. At the same time it ensures that all pupils study the

full range of National Curriculum subjects in considerable depth. The curriculum is exceptionally effective in meeting its aims.

Pupils benefit from excellent academic guidance that encourages them to do well and also points out the next steps for their learning. Their progress is tracked very carefully towards their targets and any additional support needed is provided quickly and effectively. This is another example of the excellent way in which the school provides for its pupils as individuals.

The school is not complacent about its success. It monitors its work conscientiously and analyses performance data very effectively. Staff are keen to extend and develop their skills for their pupils' benefit through a comprehensive programme of training. Governors contribute significantly to the outstanding leadership and management of the school. They use their considerable experience and expertise to advise and support the school and have played a major role in improving the school's resources and accommodation. The school's finances are meticulously managed to provide excellent value for money. The school's record of maintaining and extending its high standards in all areas demonstrates an outstanding capacity to improve in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle into the Reception class quickly and happily as a result of effective induction arrangements. Attention is given to developing children's personal and social skills and they grow in confidence thanks to the sensitive and individual teaching they receive. They cooperate well with adults and other children and follow well established routines. Children begin to show confidence in working independently. This is the hallmark of their success as they move through the school. They enjoy the bright, well resourced classrooms and the well equipped outdoor learning area. Children's progress in all areas of their learning is good. Staff work particularly hard and successfully to improve children's language and communication skills. They assess children's progress regularly and carefully. Some of the Foundation Stage staff are inexperienced and this is why children make good rather than outstanding progress as elsewhere in the school. This area is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

The school's leadership is very clear about what must be done to sustain school improvement. Consequently, there are no further issues to add.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of 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
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	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
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 the 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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	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

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

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed my visit very much. I would like to share with you what I found out.

Everyone I spoke to told me how special your school is and about the exciting lessons and activities you all enjoy. I agree that you go to an outstanding school. Your attendance and punctuality are most impressive. Your behaviour is excellent at all times and you are very enthusiastic and hard working in your lessons. The staff work very hard to make sure you learn as much as possible and also to make your lessons interesting and fun. You make excellent progress and reach high standards as a result. You are proud of your school and appreciate the many opportunities to take part in clubs and after school activities and the memorable visits to places such as Salmesbury and Smithills Halls. Your school looks after you very well and makes sure you know how to improve your work. The House Captains do a great job and have helped to make your playground more exciting.

The headteacher and the other adults who help run the school are very clear about what needs to be done to make sure St Teresa's continues to be an outstanding school. You can help by continuing to work hard and behaving very well.