

# St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 119692         |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Blackpool      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313393         |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 8–9 May 2008   |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Ruth James HMI |

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

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|---|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Voluntary aided   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 176   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Jim Cleary   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Elizabeth Yates   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 June 2005   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | St Teresa's Avenue<br>Thornton-Cleveleys<br>Lancashire<br>FY5 3JT |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01253 852457  |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

St Teresa's School is smaller than average. Compared with national averages fewer pupils receive free school meals and a lower percentage is from minority ethnic background or has a first language other than English. Slightly fewer have additional learning needs or a statement of special educational need. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Basic Skills Mark and Sportsmark Gold.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Teresa's is a satisfactory school with some strengths. The Catholic ethos and mission of the school contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and the care and support they receive. There is a strong family atmosphere with very caring staff, both commented upon by many parents. The school provides a good curriculum and good pastoral support and care for its pupils. Because of this, pupils' personal development is good.

Standards declined in 2007 and were below average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level at the end of Year 6 was well below the national average. After two years when achievement was inadequate, leaders and managers put in place strategies to improve progress. School data and lesson observations show that progress has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although some good and outstanding lessons were seen. Teachers are caring, encouraging and supportive and lessons include a range of interesting activities. In the best lessons, teaching astutely builds on previous lessons and the teachers' knowledge of individual children's particular needs. However, in other lessons teachers' expectations are not always high enough and work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers sometimes talk for too long at the start of the lesson and instructions are not always clear. Marking of pupils' work uses praise well but does not give enough guidance on how pupils can move on in their learning.

Pupils' personal development is good. Attendance and behaviour are good and these are the result of the school's effective policies. Pupils' social and moral development are strong features and pupils learn to act responsibly. They enjoy their positions of responsibility such as reader leaders and school council members and they make a good contribution to the school and wider community.

The curriculum includes an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities particularly in sport.

The care and support given to all pupils and particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very good. Academic guidance is developing and pupils, particularly older pupils, have some understanding of their targets. The transition from nursery to Reception is well managed, helped by the development of a nursery on site. The majority of parents are supportive of the school, although a few raised concerns mainly about provision in mixed age classes.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation was over generous for several important aspects. Insufficient attention has been given to evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on outcomes. This year more systematic monitoring of pupil progress is evident. Governance and capacity to improve are satisfactory.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provision is good. Children's attainment on entry shows an upward trend since the opening of the nursery on the school site. Their abilities are now broadly typical for children of this age but slightly below in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children make good progress in all areas of learning by the end of the Foundation

Stage as a result of good teaching and their own eagerness to learn. Children are well prepared for their next stages of learning. They enter Year 1 with standards broadly typical for their age. Carefully planned activities are informed by rigorous assessments which are used to plan next steps of learning. There is a good mix of child initiated activities and teacher led activities encouraging independent learning and decision taking. Behaviour is good and children know what is expected of them. The outdoor learning environment is well used by children giving opportunities for them to work cooperatively. Children enjoy their learning and are happy to talk about what they are doing. For example, whilst painting rainbow fish pebbles, the children were able to retell the story of the rainbow fish and sound out the word 'fish'. Leadership and management are good and there is a clear drive on raising standards. Effective team work between the nursery nurse and the teacher gives children a sense of security. The improved links between nursery and the Reception class enable children to settle quickly. Parents are given useful information before their child starts school encouraging parental involvement in their child's learning.

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

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics.
- Improve teaching and learning to ensure that all work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and all pupils make good progress.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work, including teaching and learning, to accurately identify areas for development.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were broadly average for reading, writing and mathematics. This represents an improvement on the previous two years. In 2007, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 declined. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were below national averages for English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in mathematics was particularly low. In English fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5 than is the case nationally. Only half the pupils achieved the expected levels in both English and mathematics. Achievement in both 2006 and 2007 was inadequate. Boys did not do as well as girls. School data and inspection evidence show that pupils' progress this year has improved. This is due to improved support programmes and better use of assessment information.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points. This is due to the good level of support they receive in small teaching groups which provides them with work closely matched to their learning needs.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Moral and social development are particular strengths. Opportunities to explore world cultures and the diversity of cultures across Britain are less well developed. Pupils enjoy school and take advantage of a range of extended

school activities including a breakfast club and after school club. Older pupils take their responsibilities of 'Play Pals' seriously and see it as a privilege to help look after the younger children and encourage them to play games at lunchtime. The pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles which is supported by the achievement of the 'Healthy Schools Award'. They are proud of their sporting achievements and opportunities to represent their school at local and county events. Pupils know and understand the rules and routines of school which is reflected in their good behaviour in lessons and when moving around the school. They enjoy school, which shows in the above average attendance. The school council feel that their voice is heard and that they are able to contribute to decisions about school life. Their achievements include raising money for charity by organising a toy sale. They further report that they feel safe and the rare incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately by staff.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons are better in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, although this is not consistently the case. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and manage them well. They are caring, encouraging and supportive. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, form good relationships and behave well overall. Lessons include a variety of interesting activities to engage pupils, although in some lessons teachers miss opportunities to provide visual examples where it would aid understanding. In lessons where learning is good, and on occasions outstanding, teachers' expectations are high and teaching is well planned to meet the full range of needs within the class. The teacher astutely builds on previous lessons and knowledge of individual children's particular strengths and difficulties. In these instances, pupils find their lessons interesting and challenging and make good progress. Such lessons are not typical of Key Stage 2, however. In other lessons expectations are too low, the pace is not brisk enough, teachers sometimes talk for too long at the start of the lesson, instructions are not always clear and the work set does not match the full range of abilities within the class. In these instances, progress slows.

Teaching assistants give good help to pupils finding particular difficulty with learning or behaviour, although occasionally the high number of adult helpers in a class means that pupils are not encouraged to be independent learners or do not try and work things out for themselves. In marking, teachers use praise well but feedback is not sufficiently clear about how pupils can improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Teachers plan a range of activities to engage and motivate children. Interactive whiteboards are used to good effect in some lessons. Cross curricular links are made through the use of timetabled topic afternoons. French is now included in the curriculum and is taught by a specialist language teacher. Extra-curricular activities are offered and sport is a particular strength. Curriculum developments to improve literacy skills include the teaching of phonics in Foundation Stage and a peer mentoring reading programme. A homework club and breakfast club with sessions which focus on numeracy are offered as part of the school's drive to raise achievement. The

needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for. Links with the local high school have been used particularly to benefit gifted and talented pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a very caring school, which works effectively with parents and outside agencies to provide good care and support for pupils. Procedures for child protection and for safeguarding pupils are in place. Transition arrangements for children progressing from the nursery to Reception are very effective. Staff know their pupils very well and there is a mutual respect between pupils and staff. The recently improved systems to track pupil progress are starting to be used to inform targets for children. Some teachers are beginning to use the improved information on pupils' progress and achievement to inform next steps of learning. Most children are aware that they have learning targets but are less sure how to use their targets to improve their work. Clear and effective systems contribute well to the very good quality care and support for pupils with additional needs. These pupils talk enthusiastically about how the additional support helps them understand their learning and that they can now do things they could not do before. They enjoy going for individual and small group sessions particularly when working on the computer.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has been through a difficult period when standards declined and pupil numbers fell. The introduction of mixed-age classes has occupied much time and attention, as has the development and expansion of nursery provision. The leadership team has been expanded to include an assistant headteacher, and the drive to raise achievement and standards has resulted in the improved assessment and tracking systems now in place. Pupil progress is improving and is now satisfactory overall.

The leadership of literacy is well established and evident in the work that is being done to improve pupil writing. There have been recent changes in the leadership of mathematics and science. The school's assessment of its own performance differed from that of inspectors and was over generous in several important respects. The school has been slow to recognise the link between the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes. There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation, particularly of the quality of teaching and learning.

Governors are aware of the decline in achievement and standards and the strategies put in place to reverse this. They have been actively involved in the expansion of the nursery, which has helped to increase pupil numbers transferring into Reception. Value for money is satisfactory.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3   |
| 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?   | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3   |

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 3   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 3   |
| 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

12 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Blackpool, FY5 3JT

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school. You were polite and answered our questions thoughtfully. Your behaviour was good and you told us that you know there is someone to help you if you have a problem. This is because all the adults care about you very much. Some of you who need extra help with your learning do well because of the good support you receive.

We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. Teaching is satisfactory and because of this your progress is satisfactory. There are some good opportunities for you to participate in activities such as sports and you told us you enjoy these. You also get some good opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as reader leaders.

We have asked your headteacher to work with all the staff to make some improvements. These are:

- helping you to do better in English and mathematics so that you get better results by the end of Year 6
- making sure that in all your lessons you are given work at just the right level so that you make good progress
- checking the work of the school so that senior staff know exactly what needs to be improved.

You can help your school by making sure that you tell your teachers if your work is too hard or too easy, and by asking them how you are doing with reaching your learning targets.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth James HMI