

St Teresa's RC First, Middle and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102231
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	323606
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	466
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	112
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Watson
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Faint
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Long Elmes Harrow Weald HA3 6LE
Telephone number	020 8428 8640
Fax number	020 8420 1571

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2008
Inspection number	323606

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Teresa's is a larger than average school. It is popular and heavily over-subscribed. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average and this number is increasing year on year. However, the proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above average and encompasses a broad range of needs including language and communication difficulties and hearing impairment. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the Kingfisher Kids Club provides after school care that is not managed by the governing body. The school has received Activemark and Eco Schools (Green Flag) status.

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 and pupils achieve well. A warm Catholic ethos underpins every area of its work. Strong links with families through family learning and parishes helps make the school a harmonious community. The school is deservedly popular and parents especially value the outstanding personal development of their children and the excellent care guidance and support they receive. One parent encapsulated the views of many saying, 'The school has a wonderful feel. Children are caring and respectful and staff lead by example.'

Pupils do well because the school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She manages a committed and very effective team that works conscientiously to promote good academic standards. Management is reflective, ambitious and not complacent in seeking out further areas for improvement. Extremely good links are fostered outside the school to further support pupils' education and care. The governing body is knowledgeable and committed, although some members are still developing or refining their skills in monitoring and assessing aspects of the school's work. The school's sustained drive to secure further improvements, careful monitoring of all areas of its work and current successes indicate that it has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Pupils enter the school working at levels that are broadly similar to those found nationally. As a result of good teaching and a curriculum that meets their needs well, pupils leave at the end of Year 6 attaining standards that are consistently above average. This represents good achievement. The progress that pupils make is closely monitored and has improved notably since the last inspection. However, the school is aware that further work remains to be done to improve the consistency of assessment and planning so that the work planned for pupils in all classes is equally challenging and ensures better progress for pupils of all abilities. There are similar inconsistencies in the overall good quality marking which does not always identify succinctly for pupils how they can improve a piece of work. The inclusion of pupils is excellent and an extensive range of sensitive support ensures all pupils make good progress and are fully included in every aspect of school life. The above average standards pupils attain and the excellent development of their personal skills ensure they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils behave extremely well. They show pride and dignity in the wide range of responsibilities they undertake. Pupils like and respect their teachers and as a result they work hard and enjoy their learning. All pupils have a very clear understanding of how to stay safe and the importance of healthy life styles. Pastoral care is of a very high quality. Academic guidance is good and all pupils find the targets set for them are very helpful in setting goals for them to help them make progress in their learning. Learners know they have an important part to play in the running of their school and the school council plays a vital role in processing ideas and bringing about changes. Links with parishes, schools and business extend the school's community links well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get a good start to school life because of thoughtful induction procedures and the approachability of caring staff. Parents value the happy way their children enjoy school. One parent of a Nursery child reported, 'I was dreading him starting but it's been fantastic.' Children enter EYFS with skills ranging from broadly typical for three and four year-olds to skills that

are just below expectations for this age group. They make satisfactory progress and by the time they move to Year 1 most are working securely within the levels expected for their age. However, children's attainment in writing and calculating is not as good as in other areas. Observations and records of children's involvement in activities are thorough but they are not used well enough to guide planning so that activities always extend children fully and ensure the best progress for all learners. Staff work well to encourage children to share and to consider others. Classrooms are attractive and well organised and the newly developed outdoor learning area is beginning to provide play-based learning activities for a wider number of curriculum areas. The EYFS is well managed and staff work as a well organised and committed team.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve further the quality of assessment and planning so that all teachers provide tasks that better match the abilities of pupils and challenge them to make even better progress.
- Improve the quality and consistency of marking so that it identifies clearly for pupils how and where they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress overall during their time in school and this includes pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average skills and abilities. There are well-planned strategies to develop both literacy skills, especially in writing, and numeracy skills. The careful promotion of these skills is especially valuable to the growing number of pupils who join the school with little experience of English so they too make a sound start to their learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, reaching broadly average standards in reading and writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Pupils build well on the careful foundation laid in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. This represents good achievement overall. The school is well on its way to meeting its challenging targets for next year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are a real strength because every pupil is valued and respected and they in turn feel total confidence in the staff who care for them. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour, relationships and improving levels of attendance. Enthusiasm and pride in their school is obvious and one pupil summed this up by saying, 'Our school is fantastic. The best.' Pupils show respect to staff and to each other, constantly exemplifying the school's mission statement: 'Living, learning and growing in Jesus'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Assemblies are moments of celebration of faith and achievement and are greatly valued. One Year 2 child commented on a class assembly, 'It was great today, Year 6 did a brilliant assembly.' Pupils have a strong voice in school developments through their highly effective school council. They are rightly proud of their role in improving playground areas and updating internal areas of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are interesting and well paced so pupils are interested and genuinely want to learn. Learners work hard, enjoy sharing their ideas and join in discussions with enthusiasm. The purpose of lessons is invariably explained to the class and teachers have good subject knowledge. The progress pupils make is carefully tracked and monitored. Pupils are encouraged to assess for themselves how well they think they have done in their work and to ask for more help from their class teacher or other staff. In the best lessons, teachers explore with pupils how well they have done and use assessment information well to plan future lessons and to challenge all groups of pupils. However, this is not consistently done in all lessons. Most marking is done well but in a few classes teachers do not identify succinct, clear points to help pupils produce better work. Support assistants work very effectively with pupils who find learning difficult and their patience and careful explanations help promote good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. A whole school approach to improving writing skills for all pupils, especially boys, has proved successful because a range of stimulating writing experiences is planned for all pupils. A similar initiative to improving pupils' mathematical skills in mental mathematics, problem solving and calculation is also showing early signs of success. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school has improved since the time of the last inspection. However, opportunities remain to improve further the strength and consistency of the use of ICT in other curriculum subjects. The curriculum is greatly enriched by links with the community, visits out of school, guest visitors and a range of sporting and aesthetic experiences which help bring learning alive outside of the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff assign a very high priority to the care of all learners and as a result pupils are confident in seeking help when they have problems and feel safe. An extremely valuable range of links to external agencies and support services extends the outstanding care provided for pupils in school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust. Academic guidance is very good and pupils respect this; one said, 'Teachers always want to help you so you do better.' There is, for example, an innovative mathematics surgery run each week for any Year 6 pupil who wants some top-up help in mathematics. Learners value the targets set for them in numeracy and literacy. There is a complex, very sensitive and extremely effective network of support for those pupils who require additional help with their learning so they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has moved forward well under the dedicated leadership of the headteacher and is in a good position to improve further. The experienced and enthusiastic leadership and

management team is self-critical and ambitious at all levels. It has established a whole school culture of self-reflection and common purpose. For example, the teaching in the school is closely monitored and good practice shared to raise the quality of more lessons to good or better. Most staff have a management role as subject leaders and have the guidance of senior colleagues as they develop their roles and responsibilities. The school is popular and enjoys the support of the vast majority of parents. Through their clear, structured committee procedures, governors provide good support and growing challenge to the school. However, the level of challenge and critical analysis offered is variable, for example in the analysis of school attainment data, and the skills of some governors require further development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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 learners' needs?	2
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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

24 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Teresa's RC First, Middle and Nursery School, Harrow Weald, HA3 6LE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school last week. You were so friendly and we thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, looking at your work and finding out about the things you enjoy most in school. Attending your assemblies was a great pleasure and your singing was delightful. You told us that you thought your school was good and we agree with you.

We saw that you all behaved extremely well and showed a great deal of enthusiasm in your lessons and wanted to do as well as you could. Everyone works hard to make sure that you are extremely well cared for and safe in school. You understand about keeping safe and what you need to do to be healthy. Your teachers work hard to make sure your lessons are enjoyable and interesting. You like the targets that are set for you and recognise that they help you to move forward in your learning. We think your school is well led and managed and this is why you enjoy learning and make good progress.

We have suggested two things that will make your school even better.

- Your teachers could use what they know about you and the progress you are making to plan tasks for you in lessons that will really stretch you so that you make even better progress.
- Even though your teachers mark your work regularly we have asked that they always try to make it clear to you how and where you can improve your work.

We know you will continue to work hard and help your teachers to make your school even better. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead Inspector