

# St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104807
<b>Local Authority</b>	St. Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	336368
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Mulgrew 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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	196
<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>	29 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Devon Street St Helens Merseyside WA10 4HX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed nine full and two part lessons and watched all teachers teach. Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority officer, groups of pupils but not with parents and carers. Inspectors looked at the school improvement plan, assessment and tracking information, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, notes of visits by the School Improvement Partner and local authority consultants, documents relating to safeguarding and the results of the 88 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 16 returned by the staff and 114 returned by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the quality of learning and progress, especially across Key Stage 2, in English and mathematics
- the quality of teaching and assessment in all year groups, to establish whether it is sufficiently challenging
- an evaluation of how well pupils display positive outcomes
- an evaluation of the accuracy and use of self-evaluation information to identify weaknesses in provision and pupils' outcomes; set challenging targets and take appropriate action.

## Information about the school

St Teresa's is slightly smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups, while low, has increased since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around the average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, as is those with a statement of special educational needs. The school has received the third green flag for its Eco work and the Healthy School Accreditation.

The 'School's Out' club provides child care and was subject to a separate inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Teresa's is a satisfactory school. Visitors are warmly welcomed into this well-kept and attractive environment. The distinctive Christian ethos underpins the work of the school team in their commitment to raise achievement for all groups of pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school. The headteacher and staff provide good care, guidance and support for pupils and their families. As a result, pupils say they feel safe, behave well and their spiritual, social and moral development is good.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there are examples of good practice. Lessons are most effective when the planned activities are closely tailored to pupils' individual needs, encourage active involvement, excite pupils and capture their full attention. As a result, pupils are keen to succeed and the rate at which they learn accelerates. These features are not consistent across the school; some teaching fails to engage pupils fully and progress slows. Marking of pupils' work is regular and affirms their efforts; a few examples of marking show links to pupils' targets and give clear, helpful advice on how to improve work. However, this is not the general picture across the school and pupils commented on how they would like to know more about how to improve their work.

Children join the school in the Reception class from a variety of pre-school settings with skills and knowledge broadly similar to children of a similar age. Provision in this stage has been enhanced through the purchase of more up-to-date resources. Pupils make overall satisfactory progress across the school and leave Year 6 with broadly average attainment in English, mathematics and science. However, over the last three years progress has been better across Key Stage 1 than across Key Stage 2. Evidence from observing lessons, the schools' tracking information and a scrutiny of books shows that progress is improving for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve better results in 2010.

Systems for self-evaluation provide the school with a broadly accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Priorities for improvement have led to some success. For example, senior leaders have improved attendance by minimising the number of pupils who take holidays during term time. This has resulted in an above average rate of attendance. After the drop in results at Key Stage 2 in 2009, the school acted promptly by engaging with the local authority to put in place improvements in provision, for example in their use of the Improving Schools Programme (ISP). This action is starting to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making. Current action plans identify the correct priorities for improvement but do not describe intended outcomes in sufficient detail to enable a rigorous evaluation. Consequently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By 31 December, 2010, improve the quality of teaching so that 80% is good or better, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - using assessment information to plan activities that are precisely tailored to match pupils' needs
  - planning exciting, practical activities which engage all pupils fully and provide challenge for the more-able.
- Increase the rate of progress made by all pupils across Key Stage 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science, so that 80% make significant improvement each year, by:
  - enabling pupils to have greater opportunities to develop their ability to work independently
  - ensuring marking is linked to pupils' learning targets and consistently informs pupils how to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels to ensure that:
  - improvement planning has clear milestones with sharp and measurable success criteria
  - the school's plan to adopt a system for more effectively checking on pupils' progress, comes to fruition
  - monitoring and evaluation arrangements are regular and rigorous to enable the governing body to contribute more effectively to the process.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Most pupils enjoy their learning and genuinely want to please their teachers. Almost all are well motivated and listen carefully. They try their best at all times and are keen to support each other. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy practical activities which challenge them to think and work out problems; especially if they can work collaboratively with a partner or in a group.

From their starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress. In the 2009 assessments, pupils in Year 2 reached above average attainment overall in reading, writing and mathematics. High levels were reached in writing through the school's efforts in developing this aspect of its work. In the national tests for Year 6, the picture was not so good. Attainment for this group of pupils in English, mathematics and science was significantly below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that progress across

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this stage is satisfactory; the gap between boys and girls is starting to narrow. However, fewer than average pupils are attaining at a higher level because they are not always given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to reach their full potential. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates.

Pupils are courteous, well-mannered and helpful. Successful behaviour management systems are based on respect for everyone in the school community and the environment. Pupils say they feel safe and know exactly who to go to if they are troubled. The school council gives pupils a forum for expressing their views and the opportunity to contribute to the development of the school. Younger pupils would like their ideas to be used and expressed a wish to join the school council. The Eco status of the school contributes to the good progress in the pupils' understanding of the spiritual, moral and social aspects of their lives. The garden in the school grounds enhances pupils' awareness of environmental issues. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the variety of activities that take place to promote their physical skills.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most effective lessons are characterised by high expectation, good pace and a good use of humour and praise to encourage engagement by all pupils. In these lessons, planning is based on the needs of all pupils and practical activities encourage pupils to think creatively. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on balancing equations, the quick-fire mental starter engaged pupils in friendly competition and pupils worked in pairs when problems became a little 'tricky'. Less practical tasks, teachers' long introductions and more mundane tasks result in reduced pupils' attention and progress slows. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils identified as needing extra help. However, occasionally that support too readily results in doing much of the work for the pupils rather than guiding pupils along the steps to success.

The satisfactory curriculum is planned appropriately in developing pupils' basic skills. Some teachers link subjects together to make learning more meaningful for pupils but this is at an early stage of development. For example, the whole school take part in a Victorian week which includes drama, dance and role play; this theme is then studied in depth by Year 6. Visits, visitors and the out-of-school activities enhance the curriculum and are appreciated by pupils.

Relationships are good across the school; emphasis is placed on knowing all pupils individually. The school works well with external agencies to provide valuable support and guidance for vulnerable pupils. Arrangements for pupils joining the school in the Reception class are effective in enabling them to settle to school routines and are appreciated by parents. Similarly, arrangements for pupils at the end of Year 6 ensure a smooth move for transition to high school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers demonstrate a commitment to improvement and share a vision for embedding ambition. Since the last inspection, achievement for the younger pupils and attendance have improved. However, the significant drop in achievement at the end of Year 6 in 2009 was not fully expected. The school engaged with the local authority to identify the reasons for this and take urgent action to remedy any underachievement throughout the rest of the school. Systems for checking pupils' progress have been reviewed and teachers are more robustly held to account for the progress pupils make

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over the year.

Members of the governing body are well organised by a knowledgeable Chairperson and very supportive of the school's aims. They regularly check on the progress of improvements identified in the school improvement plan. However, they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision or of pupils' progress. This is in part due to a lack of rigorous information to enable them to plot pupils' progress over the year.

Relationships with the vast majority of parents and carers are good. Similarly, good partnerships with external agencies contribute well to pupils' personal development and learning. Safeguarding arrangements are well-managed to ensure pupils are kept safe, for example, all staff have appropriate training on child protection procedures. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils' involvement in local and parish events enhances the harmonious nature of the school. However, their knowledge and understanding of other contexts within the United Kingdom and the world are less developed. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. It has information about the groups of pupils it serves, but has yet to evaluate their participation in all aspects of school life and more-able pupils are not all pushed to do as well as they should

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly similar to those of children of a similar age. Their social and emotional, communication language



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and literacy development varies. Much attention is given to improving these skills. Good teaching and a clear knowledge and understanding of the needs of this age group are evident in the well-planned curriculum. Good management and support during guided reading sessions develop children's communication, language and literacy skills. Home visits and settling in periods prior to entry build good relationships with parents and carers and ensure their contribution to their children's learning. They also provide an initial starting point for observations that are used to plan an interesting and challenging range of activities geared towards children's individual needs. However, occasionally these observations do not make it sufficiently clear what the next steps in children's learning are. The classroom, sensory area and outdoor area are used effectively and provide a balanced range of adult-led and child -initiated activities. As a result, most children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and move into Key Stage 1 are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners who enjoy school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

About 45% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. These parents and carers have an overwhelmingly favourable view of the school. Most are strongly of the opinion that the school keeps their children safe and healthy; and that their children enjoy school. This is in line with the views of the staff, and the inspection team's judgement that procedures to safeguard children are good. A small number of individual parents and carers expressed concern about specific aspects of the school's work. These were investigated throughout the inspection and form part of the evidence used to arrive at the judgements.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	68	27	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	73	24	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	56	35	40	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	50	43	49	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	53	60	35	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	57	37	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	52	39	44	2	2	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	50	38	43	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	48	44	50	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	49	40	45	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	38	48	55	5	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	51	58	33	38	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	66	29	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street, St Helens, WA10 4HX

You may remember that Mrs Veall, Mr Dorgan and I visited your school recently to check how well you are learning. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure to meet you all and have the opportunity to talk to so many of you. You shared your views about the school very well and we listened carefully to what you said.

We judged your school to be satisfactory. This means that it does some things well and it could do other things better. You enjoy school, are polite, behave well and you have good attitudes to your learning. You are learning to be considerate to others and developing valuable qualities which will help you in life. Your parents and carers told us that you are happy and feel safe in school. We agree.

The children in the Reception class get a good start to their education. Things have got better in Key Stage 1 and pupils are reaching higher standards at the end of Year 2. Until recently things were not so good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Before we visited your school we were concerned about this. But your headteacher, staff and governors realised that things needed to improve and have started to do just that. The local authority is helping them in this work and we can see standards are already starting to improve. We have asked your headteacher and staff to take some more action to make sure improvements continue quickly. We want them to improve the quality of teaching and the progress you make by ensuring your teachers plan exciting, practical lessons just at the right level for each of you and have high expectations of what you can achieve. Also, to make sure the plans they have to improve the school are clear, sharp and measurable and involve the governors of the school so they can check that it is improving.

Your challenge is to work hard and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Eileen Mulgrew

Her Majesty's Inspector

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