

St Teresa's Catholic (A) Primary School

Stone Road, Trent Vale, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 6SP

Inspection dates

4–5 April 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The latest school performance information, evidence in the pupils' books and lessons confirm that pupils are making good progress in their learning.
- From starting school with knowledge and skills that are typically expected for their age, children are making fast progress in their learning and development in early years so many are well prepared to join Year 1.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception increased well since the school converted to academy status. Early years provision is good.
- Phonics teaching is effective. The proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standard at the end of Year 1 in 2017 is high.
- In 2016, pupils attained standards above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress in key stage 2 was stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement is improving well although a small number of minor inconsistencies remain.
- Pupils behave well around school. They display a sense of pride in their work in books.
- Stronger teachers are not used fully enough to support and improve weaker teaching.
- Pupils' development and welfare needs are exceptionally well met. A strong culture of nurture and support permeates all aspects of school life.
- Vulnerable pupils or those with specific learning needs are exceptionally well supported, enabling them to become successful learners.
- School leaders, governors and directors of the multi-academy company have a good understanding of the remaining weaknesses and how to tackle them effectively. Staffing changes have been managed successfully.
- The school continues to improve under the robust leadership of the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- A small minority of learning tasks are not matched well enough to pupils' learning needs so groups such as the most able and those who are disadvantaged are not always challenged enough in their learning.
- A minority of teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Learning across the wider curriculum is slightly less effective than in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A few teachers do not consistently apply the school marking and assessment policy or have high enough expectations in other subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the consistency of the quality of teaching so pupils make even faster progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics by:
 - ensuring that learning tasks are more carefully matched to pupils' learning needs, particularly the most able and those who are disadvantaged
 - insisting on the highest behaviour expectations in lessons
 - more effectively using highly skilled teachers in supporting those who are less strong to improve learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in a range of other subjects across the wider curriculum by:
 - ensuring that other subjects are taught regularly
 - paying due attention to the wider curriculum
 - making sure that teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - increasing consistency of application of the school's marking and assessment policy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have improved the school effectively since it converted to academy status. They have high expectations of pupils and staff. Leaders expect everyone to perform to the optimum. Thus, pupils are thriving in their education.
- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are highly efficient at analysing the latest school performance information to help gain an understanding of how effectively teaching is moving learning forward. Allied with information from their regular and robust monitoring of teaching, they quickly spot where improvements are needed and act decisively.
- Staff performance is well managed. Targets for teacher improvement are closely linked to school priorities.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in school. They use this knowledge wisely to prioritise and steer the correct improvements.
- The latest school performance information shows the differences between disadvantaged and other pupils are diminishing. School leaders want to eliminate these differences and have commissioned their own external review of the use of the pupil premium to achieve their goal. The diminishing differences demonstrate that the pupil premium is being used effectively to support the disadvantaged pupils.
- Middle leaders are making a powerful impact on improving teaching and learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Music, science, physical education and religious education are led effectively by knowledgeable teachers with a passion for their subjects, although this is not always the case in other subjects.
- Special educational needs provision is effectively led. Additional funding is used wisely to support this group of pupils. Additional funding for sport is being used effectively to provide a vast range of sporting opportunities for pupils.
- The curriculum is rich and diverse. Each termly topic is linked to a visit that enriches learning well. Visitors invited to school share their expertise with pupils, which is helping to extend learning. Recently, a farmer visited school as part of the 'Farm to Fork' project promoted by a large supermarket group.
- The curriculum is well designed and balanced with extra-curricular activities. It is supporting pupils' development and progress effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the curriculum.
- Pupils are thoroughly prepared for living in modern Britain because of how successfully British values are brought to life as part of the everyday school curriculum. During the inspection, pupils from Year 6 visited the council chamber. Previously, the mayor visited school and engaged in a debate with the school council. This is an effective means of reinforcing pupils' understanding of democracy.
- Senior leaders have improved teaching but a few inconsistencies remain. These inconsistencies are slightly reducing the progress a few pupils are making in a small number of year groups in their reading, writing and mathematics.

Governance of the school

- Those responsible for governing the school are effective in their role. They are very strategic and have high expectations of school leaders and pupils. Minutes from their meetings show that they ask many challenging questions about the performance of specific groups of pupils to aid their understanding of how well pupils are learning.
- Governors were instrumental in brokering the highly effective support the school is receiving from the C2C Teaching School Alliance. This support has aided school improvement since the headteacher and deputy headteacher took on their acting roles.
- Governors have ensured that the quality of education has not suffered during the period of enforced change in school leadership. They handled the transition successfully and seamlessly.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A strong culture of safeguarding exists in school. Staff and governors take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Robust processes are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe in school. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding regularly checks that these processes are robust.
- All relevant safeguarding training is up to date and comprehensive records of staff attendance at training are carefully managed.
- Those with greater responsibility for safeguarding work successfully with a range of outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are being well supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Many teachers have very secure subject knowledge, which they use effectively when planning challenging lessons for pupils. One teacher was observed drawing on her wide knowledge of grammar when teaching a group of pupils about the importance of using correct verb types in complex sentences.
- Teachers routinely ask probing and challenging questions of pupils to check on how well they are learning.
- In many lessons, learning progresses at a fast pace. Occasionally learning tasks are not well enough matched to pupils' needs, which slows the pace of their learning.
- Teachers insist on the highest quality of presentation when pupils are writing. This is visible in writing books. In one lesson, pupils were gently reminded to ensure that their handwriting was the neatest they could produce.
- Many teachers match learning tasks effectively to pupils' interests. In a science lesson, pupils participated enthusiastically in identifying the properties of sweets when using a formal system of classification to produce a key.
- Teaching assistants are having a strong impact on learning through working closely with pupils in lessons and in small groups.

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' expectations are not so consistently high in other subjects.
- Occasionally, the match of learning tasks to pupils' learning needs is inconsistent, leading to groups of pupils such as the most able attempting work that is too easy or the disadvantaged attempting work that is too difficult for them to complete.
- Pupils' books show that they do not complete much work in subjects such as history and geography. In these and other subjects, teachers do not consistently follow the agreed school guidelines on marking and feedback. Teachers' expectations are not as high in these subjects as in reading, writing and mathematics. There are wide gaps between dates when topic lessons were taught.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are benefiting exceptionally well from the caring and nurturing approach of staff. This approach permeates school life.
- Teachers and other adults are very successfully helping pupils to become resilient, independent and successful learners. Pupils explained to inspectors that adults in school are kind and helpful.
- Pupils are regularly encouraged to take on many additional responsibilities in school. At lunchtime, older pupils step into the role of friendship buddies who encourage younger pupils to socialise and play with each other nicely on the playground.
- Strong emphasis is placed on educating pupils to stay safe. Pupils reported that they are confident about what actions they should take to stay safe when using the internet. These skills have been well taught.
- Pupils report that bullying happens occasionally but it is resolved quickly, and to their satisfaction, by adults in school. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- Breakfast club is well attended. The school successfully encourages those who benefit from getting a good start to their day to attend.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite. Good manners abound around school. Pupils are respectful of each other and adults. They display a strong sense of pride in their uniforms, their school work and their school building.
- Pupils enjoy attending school regularly. Their attendance is above average.
- Parents, staff and pupils who responded to questionnaires during the inspection agree that behaviour is good. This view is supported by evidence gathered by inspectors.

- Pupils behave well at breaktimes on the playground and when moving around school. Assembly times are calm and well ordered as pupils gather to pray together. In the hall during assembly, there is a tangible sense of reverence.
- In many lessons, pupils behave well and display good attitudes to their learning. In a small minority of lessons occasionally, there is some low-level disruption when teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of how pupils should behave.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From their individual starting points, pupils make good progress in their learning. The latest school performance data shows that pupils are continuing to make fast progress. This is reinforced by the contents of pupils' books. In lessons, pupils were observed making fast progress in their learning.
- In 2016, at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment was well above average in writing and broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics. Through key stage 2, pupils make good progress and left Year 6 last year attaining high standards in reading and writing and above-average standards in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year is extremely high. Recent external moderation confirms this, and inspectors concur. Reading is taught effectively.
- Overall differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in school are diminishing well because of the careful use of the pupil premium to support their needs.
- The latest school performance information shows a little variation between groups of pupils such as the disadvantaged and the most able who in a small number of year groups are occasionally not making similar fast rates of progress when compared with other pupils.
- Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities currently in school are making similar rates of progress to other pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a flying start in their education in the early years. Learning and development in the early years proceed at a fast pace for children. The classrooms and outdoor area are used very well to enable children to make good progress in their learning.
- Leadership of early years is effective. From starting early years with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age, children make fast progress in their learning.
- Most children are leaving Reception well prepared to begin learning in Year 1. This proportion is increasing.

- Teaching is effective in early years. Behaviour is good and children are very confident and articulate, and socialise well. One child explained to an inspector that he was looking forward to visiting the mud kitchen to produce some exciting new creations.
- Plans to meet the needs of children are updated regularly so no opportunity is missed to effectively support their development.
- Adult support for children is highly focused on meeting their needs. The provision is language rich. This is helping children to learn basic literacy skills effectively.
- Funding to support disadvantaged children is having a positive impact on their learning. Their attainment is at least in line with, and in some cases, greater than, that of other children.
- Staff are fully trained in the latest up-to-date developments in early years education, which is effectively helping accelerate learning and development. School works closely with other early years providers locally.
- Parents are very pleased with how effectively school staff help their children to settle into early years education. Staff carry out home visits before children start school and many opportunities are provided for parents and children to visit school.
- Differences are diminishing in the attainment of boys compared with that of girls. The difference this year is leaving a small number of boys at a disadvantage compared with girls starting in Year 1. Early years staff have viable plans to overcome these differences over time.

School details

Unique reference number	140804
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10025153

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Whittingham
Headteacher	Nathan Price
Telephone number	01782 235005
Website	www.st-teresas.stoke.sch.uk
Email address	stteresa@ctkcc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have statements or education, health and care plans is below average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Early years provision is full time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The substantive headteacher was appointed to his post in March 2017 after acting in the role since February 2016. The acting deputy headteacher was also appointed to her role in February 2016.
- The school converted to academy status on 3 April 2014. It is part of the Christ the King Catholic Collegiate Multi Academy Company.
- The school is supported by the C2C Teaching School Alliance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, school staff and the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with two representatives of the multi-academy company and a representative of the teaching school alliance supporting the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with more than 20 parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons, and during break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised the pupils' work during lessons and work produced over time in a wide range of their books. They also listened to a small number of pupils from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 reading.
- Inspectors closely observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school performance information showing the progress that pupils currently in school are making.
- Other documentation scrutinised included plans for school improvement, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors considered 32 free-text responses from parents, 17 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Prince	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Hanson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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