

St Teresa of Lisieux Catholic Primary School

Utting Avenue East, Norris Green, Liverpool, Merseyside L11 1DB

Inspection dates

12–13 October 2016

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- St Teresa of Lisieux has improved significantly since its previous inspection. School leaders have addressed previous weaknesses with great determination and have established an ambitious vision for the school.
- Governors play an active role in checking on school improvements and hold leaders very effectively to account.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and enjoy coming to school. This is because provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is good.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is now good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they make skilful links between subjects that help to capture pupils' interest.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in the school, and the very large majority of parents share this view. Pupils' conduct around school and at playtimes is good. School leaders have put additional support in place for those pupils whose behaviour can be more challenging.
- Attendance has improved markedly so that it is now typically in line with the national average. This reflects the very effective work of leaders and staff in tackling persistent absenteeism.
- Provision for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and ensures that they achieve well from their different starting points.
- Outcomes over time have improved greatly. In phonics, improvements in teaching and assessment have led to three times as many pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics check as before.
- Standards reached by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6, and the proportions making and exceeding the expected amount of progress, have also improved over time.
- Leaders responded swiftly to an apparent dip in progress in mathematics in 2016, making changes that are already having a positive impact on progress in mathematics for pupils currently at the school.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the quality of writing that the most able pupils can produce.
- Not all teachers apply the school's marking policy with the same rigour, and so marking has less impact in some classes than others.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not consistently focused on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. As a result, teachers are not given clear information about how to make their teaching more effective.
- Not all staff share the same consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In some lessons, pupils who are working independently lose concentration, and their off-task behaviour is not addressed as quickly as it could be.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school in order to raise standards by:
 - developing pupils' confidence and resilience as learners so that they are able to learn as well when working independently as they do when working with an adult
 - ensuring that teachers always demand the highest standards of writing from the most able pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders' monitoring activities are sharply focused on the impact that teaching is having on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently follow the school's marking policy
 - ensuring that all staff share the same consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders, including governors, have shown great determination and resilience as they have sought to make the necessary improvements to the school. Their efforts have paid off, and St Teresa of Lisieux is a much improved school since the time of the previous inspection. Teaching and learning across the school is now good and this has led to improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have created a vision for continuing to move the school forward that is shared by staff, parents and governors. The overwhelming majority of staff say that they are proud to work at the school, and show great confidence in the school's leadership and management.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is thoughtful and accurate, and plans for improvement plot a clear course ahead. Effective systems to check on pupils' progress and attainment have been established and these are used well to identify areas to focus on. Leaders, including those with responsibility for different subjects or age groups, ensure that improvements are swiftly addressed. As a consequence, the school shows good capacity to continue to improve.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional help and support for disadvantaged pupils. Additional staff are deployed to give extra support to pupils who need it so that they can catch up with their classmates. The most able disadvantaged pupils are challenged to aim high, and there is evidence in pupils' work that many are meeting this challenge. Pupils and families also benefit from a range of other well-planned support, including high levels of pastoral care through the school's 'pastoral team'. This is typical of the school's effective commitment to providing all pupils with equal opportunities to succeed.
- Sport premium funding is making a positive difference to pupils' participation in, and enjoyment of, physical activity. Pupils are gaining a broad experience of different types of sport both in school and through extra-curricular clubs. They also enjoy taking part in military-style fitness and teamwork activities. Governors speak proudly of the school's sporting successes, including for both boys' and girls' football teams.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Pupils who need additional support, whether from staff in school or through external agencies, are identified quickly and appropriate provision put in place. This has a positive impact on both the academic achievement and personal and social development of these pupils.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that engages pupils and contributes to their enjoyment of learning. Teachers are encouraged to bring historical topics to life, and the key stage 2 corridor resembles a journey through time – from the stone age to the second world war. The curriculum is further enhanced by a wide range of additional opportunities, including an annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6 as well as other shorter educational visits.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong because leaders ensure that the school's mission, 'to love, learn and grow together', underpins the work of the school. The curriculum encourages pupils to think about other people, develop an understanding of British values and to appreciate the role that many different

people play in modern society.

- Teachers are supported to develop their own skills and knowledge through a programme of regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning and access to different professional development opportunities. Sometimes, these checks have lacked precision and so have not focused clearly on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and achievement, which has lessened their effectiveness.
- Leaders have yet to eradicate some inconsistencies in the work of the school. For example, not all teachers are equally rigorous in checking that pupils have responded as requested to their marking. Also, expectations of pupils' concentration and focus on their work are not consistently high across all classes.
- The local authority and the archdiocese have provided appropriate and helpful support for the school. The headteacher has also been proactive in accessing support from other external sources, such as teaching schools and other schools in the local network. As the school has improved, it has also been able to share aspects of its effective practice with other schools.

Governance of the school

- The quality of governance is a strength of the school.
- Governors display great commitment to the school and its community and share the same high ambitions that school leaders have to make St Teresa's the best school that it can be.
- Governors know their school well and are confident and skilled in asking challenging questions. As a result, they very effectively ensure that leaders are held to account for school standards and ongoing improvements.
- The governing body has a good understanding of performance management procedures and ensures that teachers' pay progression is dealt with fairly.
- Governors fully recognise the importance of safeguarding. They take their responsibilities seriously and are diligent in accessing training. They ensure that appropriate filters are in place to keep pupils safe while using the internet.
- Governors know how additional funding, such as the pupil premium and the primary physical education and sport funding, is being spent and they ensure that they receive detailed information so that they can check on the difference that this is making.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is given a high priority by the school. Staff and governors all receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date and, as a result, are able to recognise the signs that may signal pupils who are suffering from harm.
- A 'pastoral team' is in place to ensure that concerns in relation to safeguarding and pupils' well-being are quickly addressed. Clear procedures mean that staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil.
- Where concerns have been identified, school records confirm that they have been acted on appropriately. Good partnerships with external agencies ensure that support is put in place for pupils and their families when it is needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. As a result, pupils now make good progress.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge, which enables them to provide pupils with clear and accurate explanations of concepts and information. Adults use questions skilfully to aid pupils' thinking, thus moving their learning forwards. This is particularly true in mathematics, where pupils are now regularly challenged to apply their knowledge and explain their reasoning.
- There is a rigorous and robust system of assessments in place that allows teachers and leaders to make regular checks on pupils' learning and progress. Leaders meet with teachers, typically each half term, to discuss this information and to identify where pupils may benefit from additional support or challenge.
- Teaching assistants across key stages 1 and 2 are deployed effectively, providing support for pupils who may be struggling or providing additional challenge to stretch the thinking of the most able pupils. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and make a good contribution to learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with good quality, well-planned support which is clearly linked to their individual targets. As a result of this support, these pupils are making good progress from their different starting points.
- The teaching of reading has been a high priority for the school, and work to develop pupils' skills and confidence as readers has borne fruit. A systematic approach to teaching phonics has proved highly effective and pupils are then encouraged to build on their phonics skills to become increasingly fluent readers. The most able pupils develop keen analytical skills and talk confidently about the impact of authors' language choices – such as when identifying powerful pieces of description in their favourite texts.
- The impact of improvements in the teaching of mathematics can be seen in pupils' approach in mathematics lessons and in the work in their books. A greater emphasis on using calculation skills to solve problems, and to be able to explain their reasoning, is increasing pupils' confidence in themselves as mathematicians. The most able pupils tackle high-level challenges with determination, allowing them to further develop their skills and knowledge.
- Pupils are given opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills both in their English work and when writing in other subjects, such as history or religious education. As a result, pupils become adept at using increasingly complex grammar and adventurous vocabulary. However, the level of challenge for the most able pupils that is seen in mathematics and reading is not so clearly evident in writing. Over time, this has led to fewer pupils reaching the high levels in writing compared with mathematics and reading.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' work is marked regularly and in line with the school's policy. Through their marking, teachers tell pupils what they have done well and give guidance on how their work could be improved further. Teachers are not as consistently rigorous with their marking of pupils' written work as they are with work in mathematics. As a result, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to aim for the highest standards in their writing, and teachers' requests for pupils to correct

mistakes, such as spellings, are sometimes not followed up.

- Teachers typically have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, and the vast majority of pupils respond to them by getting on with their work sensibly. On some occasions, pupils lack confidence when working without the support of an adult, and at these times can lose focus and become engaged in off-task chatter. Some teachers are not as quick as others in picking this up and this leads to progress for some pupils slowing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The importance placed on these aspects is evident throughout the school. Pupils spoke warmly about how staff help them if they have a problem, encourage them to respect each other and to think about issues happening in the world. Displays around the school celebrate the work that pupils have done to raise money for charity and their participation in cultural events such as the 'International Rocket Project'.
- Pupils were well aware of ways in which they could keep themselves safe, such as taking precautions when using the internet. Some pupils had taken on roles of responsibility as 'e-cadets' to help younger pupils.
- The large majority of parents spoken to by inspectors, and those that responded to Parent View, expressed praise for the school and the work of the staff. One parent's comment that 'The staff in St Teresa's work hard and always have the children's best interests at heart' was typical of the opinions of the vast majority of parents. Parents felt that their children were happy, safe and well looked after. Pupils themselves shared this view.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection understood what bullying is. They were not concerned about bullying currently and a number of older pupils spoke about how they felt behaviour had improved. Pupils did say that there was occasional name-calling in school, but that this involved a small number of pupils and that incidents were quickly dealt with by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around school is good. They walk sensibly along the long corridors and are eager to help visitors by holding doors open. Pupils display good manners towards adults and each other. This adds to the school's calm and good-natured atmosphere.
- Pupils' pride in their school is evident in the care they take to keep the school environment neat and tidy – for example, by ensuring that books in the school's well-stocked library are always put back on shelves. Pupils also take great care with their appearance and look very well presented in their school uniforms.
- At playtimes, almost all pupils play well together. Small groups can be seen chatting together in one of the quiet, sheltered areas while older pupils mix well with younger pupils. Occasionally some pupils' eagerness to win leads to disagreements over games of football. When this does happen, staff step in promptly to resolve matters.
- For the vast majority of the time pupils display positive attitudes in lessons and clearly

enjoy their learning. They are keen to answer questions and tackle the activities that they are given. However, in a small number of lessons pupils' concentration and attention levels drop, leading to off-task chatter. This is particularly the case when pupils are less confident working without the direct support of an adult. On these occasions, most teachers are quick to step in and re-focus pupils' learning; in some classes, teachers are less quick to do this and so learning slows.

- Pupils are aware of the school's behavioural expectations and the consequences of poor behaviour. The school's behaviour logs confirm that any unacceptable behaviour is firmly dealt with. Pupils who have been identified as having behavioural needs are well supported to ensure that their behaviour does not get in the way of their learning and does not distract others.
- Pupils' attendance is improving each year. From being below average at the time of the last inspection it was broadly average in 2016 and is continuing to rise. All groups of pupils attend school regularly and the number of pupils who are regularly absent has fallen considerably.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement, by the end of Year 6, has risen steadily since the last inspection. In 2015, pupils made strong progress to attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were broadly in line with the national average. Consequently, they were well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A similarly positive picture of improvement over time can also be seen at the end of key stage 1. Historically, the majority of pupils have entered key stage 1 with lower than average skills and knowledge, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They make up ground quickly and typically reach standards in line with the national average by the time they leave Year 2.
- Results in 2016, for which tests were based on the new national curriculum, were lower than expected in all subjects, and most noticeably in mathematics. School leaders diligently analysed the information from these results and realised that pupils' skills in arithmetic and calculation were strong but that all but the most able pupils struggled when challenged to put their mathematical knowledge to the test by tackling problems. Evidence in mathematics books across the school shows that problem solving is now a regular feature of mathematics lessons and pupils' skills and confidence in this area are rapidly improving.
- The school's internal tracking data, which carefully monitors pupils' progress and attainment, indicates that the results in 2016 are not typical and that the progress of pupils currently in the school is good.
- The work in pupils' books, across different classes and subjects, confirms this view. The standards that pupils attain in phonics have risen rapidly since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has trebled so that attainment is now in line with the national average. This reflects a concerted and highly focused effort across the school to improve pupils' phonics knowledge.
- Improvements in phonics are having a positive impact on pupils' reading. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils read with confidence and understanding, showing positive attitudes towards reading. In their final years in key stage 2, pupils are happy to read a

range of texts and are able to talk animatedly about favourite authors, such as Michael Morpurgo, and books such as *The Jungle Book*.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets. Assessment data is well used to identify areas in which pupils would benefit from additional support, and the support offered by teachers and teaching assistants is effective and ensures that pupils succeed in their learning.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they make good progress in key stages 1 and 2. The small numbers of most-able disadvantaged pupils across the school achieve well and make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Outcomes for the most able pupils are typically stronger now than at the time of the previous inspection. In mathematics, a productive link with a local high school has allowed the most able pupils to attend challenging additional sessions. In 2015, this led to a number of pupils achieving the very highest level in mathematics at the end of Year 6. Similarly, high expectations are reflected in pupils' current mathematics work but are not seen as consistently in pupils' written work. This is reflected in the infrequency with which pupils reach the highest levels in writing.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of learning opportunities. Their work in history is particularly noteworthy. The Year 5 classrooms have been transformed into wartime houses, promoting high levels of interest in their history topic. In Year 4, pupils enthusiastically used their historical knowledge and skills when discussing Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe, noting that her appearance was not typically regal: 'She looks like a warrior', one pupil observed.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a flying start to their school lives in the early years. The environment both indoors and outdoors is well resourced and welcoming, and staff ensure that children settle in quickly. Parents welcome effective, regular communication between themselves and school and speak highly of the level of care and support that their children receive.
- Children start in Nursery with skills and knowledge that are lower than is typical for their age in almost all areas of learning, but particularly so in their personal and social development, and their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make strong progress during their time in Nursery thanks to highly effective teaching that engages them and makes learning enjoyable. In one session, children were observed enthusiastically pretending that soap bubbles were snow. This captured their imagination and staff skilfully encouraged the children to develop their language skills by describing the 'snow bubbles'.
- Good progress is maintained in Reception because staff continue to observe and assess children's learning and development carefully and plan activities that build on children's skills and interests. Particular emphasis is placed on developing children's early mathematics and literacy skills, including phonics.
- A number of children come to the school at the start of the Reception Year, having either attended another provider or with no prior experience of school. They settle in quickly and are soon making similarly good progress to the other children.

- The early years leader provides knowledgeable leadership and has been instrumental in improvements made since the last inspection. As a consequence of these developments, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen each year so that it is now broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development is lower than that for other children, and so fewer are fully prepared for the demands of Year 1. However, tracking of their progress and evidence in their 'learning journey' files shows that they are making progress from their starting points that at least matches that of other children in their class.
- The Nursery and Reception classes at St Teresa of Lisieux are happy places to be. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive; children learn from adults' modelling of caring behaviour and learn to care for each other. All statutory welfare requirements are met and children's safety and well-being are given a high priority.

School details

Unique reference number	136686
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10019823

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	464
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John McCormack
Headteacher	Andrew Tremarco
Telephone number	01512 265 018
Website	www.stteresaoflisieux.co.uk
Email address	admin-ao@stteresas.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2014

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Nursery part-time and Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher took on the substantive headship of the school in September.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across different year groups. This included some sessions where pupils were being taught in small groups.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils from across the school. Inspectors also talked informally with pupils around the school and on the playground.
- Pupils' work in books and information about their progress and attainment were scrutinised with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered the 64 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as seven written comments that were received. Inspectors also talked briefly with some parents before school. Responses to the inspection questionnaire completed by 17 members of staff were also considered.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with school leaders responsible for a range of subject areas, including provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children in the early years.
- Meetings took place with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Pupils from Year 6 were not in school at the time of the inspection as they were on a residential trip. Inspectors were able to look at work in these pupils' books and their classroom and consider the school's information about their progress and attainment.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kevin Ward	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Kynaston	Ofsted Inspector

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