

**REVIEW REPORT FOR
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Name of School:	St. Theresa's Catholic Primary School
Head teacher/Principal:	Linda O'Melia
Hub:	Compton
School type:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Not applicable

Estimate at this QA Review:	Outstanding
Date of this Review:	23/04/2018
Estimate at last QA Review	Outstanding
Date of last QA Review	20/03/2017
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	30/06/2015

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising of host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

School Improvement Strategies	Outstanding
Outcomes for Pupils	Outstanding
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Outstanding
Area of Excellence	Accredited
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Growth Mindset Culture 16/11/2015
Overall Estimate	Outstanding

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

1. Information about the school

- St. Theresa's is a one-form entry primary school situated in the Finchley area of north London, an area of moderate social deprivation. There is an additional 'bulge' class in the current Year 5.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is more than double the national average; White British and White Other form the largest groups. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is increasing; the current proportion is double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below the national average. In 2017, there were no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The stability measure in the school is above the national average, indicating that the majority of pupils join or leave St. Theresa's at the usual times.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Follow up from previous review

- Leaders have developed a clear system of assessing the support needs of EAL pupils. This has enabled teachers to plan for those pupils in their classes, which has become increasingly important as the intake of pupils in this group has grown recently. It has assisted in tracking these pupils by helping teachers to look beyond language difficulties to assess whether there may be additional barriers to learning.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The recently established leadership team has skilfully overcome staffing issues so that there is no adverse effect on pupils' learning. Leaders are uncompromising in their drive to ensure that every pupil achieves to the best of their ability. The small size of the school allows them to have precise and in-depth knowledge of each pupil. At the same time, they lead a school with a caring, nurturing culture that fully promotes Catholic values; every pupil in the school is cherished.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and produces realistic goals that feed directly into the school improvement plan. The detailed 'red, amber, green' (RAG) rating of the plan, evaluating clear success criteria and milestones, ensures that there is clarity about remaining areas for development. Leaders are astute at identifying areas for development and taking decisive action to address them.
- Inculcating a passion for reading has not only improved results in this area. It has had wider-reaching implications for pupils' learning across the curriculum because their improved language and inference skills have supported progress in all

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subjects. The strong ethos that 'readers are writers, and writers are readers', has contributed to increased numbers of pupils achieving greater depth in these disciplines.

- The I See Reasoning programme has boosted performance in mathematics because it has helped teachers to improve their feedback through modelled marking. As a result of the implementation of Kangaroo Maths and the White Rose scheme, mathematics has improved across all key stages. Early morning mathematics club on Fridays is well attended and aspires to raise attainment to even higher levels.
- Pupil progress meetings are sharply focused and efficiently identify pupils who need additional support in class. This enables staff to rapidly introduce interventions to raise achievement. It also allows support for issues that may arise that are non-academic. The small number of pupils in the school means that staff know each individual pupil and the circumstances that may be causing difficulties extremely well. Therefore, more effective, bespoke strategies can be initiated.
- Continuing professional development for teaching assistants (TAs) has further developed their contribution in the classroom. As a result, they are able to provide valuable support for identified pupils, increasing their confidence in enabling pupils to talk and express their understanding verbally.
- Leaders have adopted the Cornerstones Curriculum this year which is proving highly successful. It has provided greater balance and depth, and visits to other schools as well as online support from the providers have added to its effectiveness.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...leaders conducted a curriculum review at the end of the summer term to determine successes of the Cornerstones model and actioned any necessary amendments.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Follow up from previous review

- Additional training for TAs and teachers has improved the consistency of their contribution. This has enabled greater support and joint planning with the teacher to make their role more valuable and professionally rewarding.

3.2 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - What went well

- Teaching and learning is a major strength of the school and contributes directly to high-level outcomes. Pupils' books show work that is well differentiated for a range of abilities, with pupils selecting their own level of challenge, adding to the ownership of their learning. The quality and quantity of work is appropriate to age

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and stage and, especially in writing, pupils are able to extend their creativity.

- Positive relationships are abundant in all classrooms. Pupils support each other in their learning and listen politely when their peers are contributing to discussions. Teachers generate a warm, caring environment that is conducive to learning.
- Teachers exhibit strong subject knowledge and use this to plan exciting lessons. As a consequence, maximum engagement is a prominent factor in all lessons; pupils are eager, enthusiastic learners with a thirst for knowledge. They willingly articulate their understanding and happily lead learning when the opportunity arises. Behaviour for learning is exemplary. Teachers' insistence on the use of subject-specific vocabulary adds to pupils' learning development.
- In the vast majority of lessons, challenge is appropriate, giving pupils the opportunity to select their own level under the 'mild, spicy and hot' system. Teachers closely review their choices and suggest alternatives when necessary.
- Questioning is a strong feature of teaching. Staff focus on stretching pupils' understanding and sensitively target groups or individuals so that all pupils are effectively monitored. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, when a Polish pupil with limited English was asked a question. The teacher then gave him a confidence-boosting opportunity to share his workings with the rest of the class.
- The highly skilled team of TAs are well deployed to support those experiencing difficulties in their learning. This happens within the classroom and in 'break-out' groups so that pupils can receive concentrated assistance that enables them to catch up. TAs also confidently challenge the learning of higher attaining pupils.
- The growth mindset approach is totally embedded in the classroom. Teachers ensure that 'learning muscles' are stretched and pupils can state with clarity which 'muscles' they are using. The culture of 'Have a go, Mo' is commonplace in all key stages.
- Vibrant displays abound all around the school, highlighting and celebrating top quality written work. In addition, plentiful learning walls and other visual displays in class support pupils' learning and enable them to work independently with minimal reliance on the teacher. When any misconceptions occur, the adults in the room swiftly eradicate them.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a welcoming and exciting place for children to commence their education. Staff create numerous cross-curricular links and, through the many free-flow activities, allow children to explore, investigate and develop. This contributes to rapid progress, leading to higher than average levels of development.

3.3 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Even better if...

...teachers recognised further opportunities for extended challenge for individuals or small groups of pupils.

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4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Children join St. Theresa's at levels that are typically expected. Their opportunities for learning in EYFS allow them to make rapid progress. In 2017, the proportion achieving a good level of development was above the national benchmark.
- Pupils in Year 1 performed well in the phonics screening check, with a higher proportion than the national average gaining success. This continued a three-year trend of above average attainment in the test. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils have passed.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment comfortably exceeded the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at both the expected and greater depth levels. A high proportion of pupils reached the expected standard or better in the combined measure.
- Key Stage 2 attainment was similar, with higher than national average proportions reaching the expected and greater depth standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The combined figures at the expected and higher levels were also above the national averages.
- In both key stages, reading was by far the strongest area. Progress measures in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 were above average, but particularly so in reading, placing St. Theresa's in the top 10% of schools for this discipline.
- In the spelling, punctuation and grammar test, outcomes exceeded the national figures at both the expected and higher levels.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make strong progress and achieve well.
- EAL pupils make very positive progress. In all measures except reading attainment at the expected standard, they achieve in line with or better than, national averages.
- Boys' and girls' attainment was above the national figures in all three subjects although, within school, girls performed better than boys in reading and writing, while boys were stronger in mathematics.
- Where anomalies exist in the achievement of boys and girls, leaders have taken swift action to ensure that they are minimised. The school improvement plan highlights the actions leaders are taking to raise girls' achievement and success is already apparent.

5. Area of Excellence

Reading for pleasure

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

A number of initiatives have been introduced to promote reading for pleasure and build a reading culture throughout the school. Pupils develop positive attitudes to reading and

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are able to talk about reading outside of the curriculum with enthusiasm. There is a positive outlook towards reading across the school community including pupils, staff, parents and governors. The rationale behind the development of this approach has been:

- To encourage reluctant readers
- To build confidence in lower attainers and pupils with low self esteem
- To build positive attitudes to reading across the school
- To introduce pupils and parents to a wide range of genres and authors
- To motivate and inspire pupils to read
- To use quality literature and enjoyment of texts to inspire writing

Success in these aspects is abundantly clear and in part, is attributable to a change in approach to reading this year. Whole class guided reading has been introduced so that pupils receive concentrated reading time at least three times per week. This has also added to the development of inference skills that can be applied to film and music to give greater understanding and enjoyment of these media.

Pupils' DERIC (decode, explain, retrieve, interpret and choice) skills have been enhanced. The lead teacher has established an Amazon Wishlist. This has really engaged parents, who can directly contribute a book to the school library through online shopping. Many initiatives linked to reading are pupil-led, including the reading trolley to facilitate outdoor reading, and the introduction of mystery books in the library. Pupils have also established the Reading Doctor, where advice on appropriate literary choices can be administered. Spotting a need, one girl in Year 5 has successfully established a weekly book club that is well-attended, where pupils can share their thoughts on books they are reading and make recommendations. Dual language texts are also available to cater for the increasing number and range of EAL pupils.

5.2 What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

The English leader has attended training run by the local authority and has researched many initiatives in order to remain up-to-date with current thinking in reading education. She has led many staff training sessions and assemblies. Staff have been given time to explore and discuss new books during staff meetings. The English leader follows updates on social media including Twitter and teaching blogs from authors, subject leaders, English consultants and teachers to gain ideas and develop knowledge and expertise. This is shared with staff in a regular resource of the week email.

A team of library leaders has been established to maintain and run the library. They also act as positive role models for younger pupils as well as giving valuable advice on which books they can choose or would enjoy reading. In addition, there is a group of Young Interpreters who help and support EAL pupils with limited English.

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Attainment and progress for reading has been well above average by the end of Key Stage 2 for the last three years. In 2017, for example, attainment at the expected standard was 83% (national 71%) and 34% at the higher standard (national 25%). The average scaled score was 107.3 (national 104.1) and progress was +4.03, placing St. Theresa's in the top 10% of schools nationally for reading. The school was also well above the Barnet borough average for reading. Similarly, attainment in Key Stage 1 at both levels was well above national benchmarks, suggesting that the initiative benefits pupils throughout the school, not just at the end of their journey. This data indicates the strength in the teaching of this subject, but staff have also created a culture where reading does not simply lead to a test or is a preparation for a piece of writing. They have engendered a real love of reading that is a life skill that pupils can carry forward into adulthood.

5.4 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Nicola Johnson

Assistant Headteacher

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6. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

No support required at this time.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.