



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**

### **Denominational (S48) Inspection Report**

**Name of School:** St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

**Local Authority:** Essex

**Inspection Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Reporting Inspector:** Pamela Brannigan

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 and 2011.

**Type of School:** Standalone Academy  
**School Category:** Primary  
**Age range of pupils:** 4 – 11  
**Gender of pupils:** Mixed  
**Number on roll:** 219  
**Appropriate Authority:** The Governing Body  
**Date of previous inspection:** March 2014

**School Address:**  
Clairmont Road  
Lexden  
Essex  
CO3 9BE

**Tel. No.** 01206 508445  
**Headteacher:** Marie Kelly  
**Chair of Governors:** Sean Clements

## Information about the school

St Teresa's is a one form entry Catholic primary school situated in Lexden, Essex and part of the Diocese of Brentwood. The school serves the parishes of St Teresa's Lexden and St Mary Immaculate and the Holy Archangels Kelvedon. It is also the designated Catholic school for army personnel in the local garrison. There are currently 219 pupils aged 4 - 11 on roll, the majority of whom are from White British backgrounds with around 9% speaking English as an additional language. Almost 90% of pupils are Catholics with 5% coming from another Christian denomination and 5% from other faiths or none. 55% of the teachers are Catholics and four have the CCRS or similar qualification. The proportion of pupils with special needs is around the national average. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities including before and after school clubs. The school has very good links with other deanery schools and there are proposals to form a Multi Academy Trust in the near future. Since the last inspection, there have been several changes of staff including a new headteacher, a new subject leader for Religious Education and new members of the senior leadership team.

## Key grades for inspection

1: Outstanding      2: Good      3: Requires improvement      4: Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

## Grade 1

St Teresa's is an outstanding Catholic school. Strong and effective leadership at all levels gives a clear sense of purpose and direction to the 'Catholic Life of the School' which is shared by all staff and governors. Prayer and Collective Worship are an integral part of the school's daily life and central to the spiritual and moral development of pupils who have a sense of belonging to a community where helping and supporting others is part of their faith journey. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to attend parish Mass where they take a leading role as altar servers, readers, singing and composing bidding prayers. Outcomes for pupils are very good with provision for all abilities and needs. Members of the senior leadership team offer very good support to new and less experienced teachers. The Subject Leader and Headteacher monitor teaching and learning which has led to good standards of attainment. The parent body offers very good support through fund raising and involvement in the wider life of the school. Parents praise the good standard of education and the Catholicity of the school. They are kept informed of the content of the curriculum through a termly newsletter which outlines the topics for the term including religious events and Holy Days of Obligation. A weekly newsletter includes a reflection linked to the 'Catholic Life of the School'. Pupils say they enjoy school and appreciate the many opportunities given to be involved in its life.

The school has an excellent capacity for sustained improvement. The last inspection in 2014 identified areas for development linked to shared moderation of pupils' work, developing the role of the 'Liturgy Group' and supporting home-school links. These areas have been well addressed and are constantly under review. The experienced Headteacher is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and shares her vision with the whole community. Along with the Subject Leader, she has put in place a Religious Education action plan which also includes 'Catholic Life' and Collective Worship. The school's Mission Statement, 'We love God and each other and follow the example of St Teresa of Lisieux. We enjoy learning together and doing our best in a happy, healthy and welcoming community. We learn to be responsible and caring citizens. Let us do little things well today,' is well known by pupils and regularly reviewed with all stakeholders.

## What the school should do to improve further:

As identified in the religious education action plan:

- Introduce, monitor and maintain a new assessment system in line with diocesan directives.
- Further involve pupils in the evaluation of the 'Catholic Life of the School'.

At St Teresa's, pupils contribute to and benefit from the 'Catholic Life of the School' to a very great extent. They have an excellent understanding of the Mission Statement which is included in prayers. They are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities to develop the Catholic character of the school through membership of the school council, as liturgy leaders and as prefects. Pupils spoken to have a very strong sense of belonging to a Catholic community and value the ethos of the school and the many opportunities they have to contribute to its Catholic life through service to the school including care for the environment and running lunchtime clubs. They understand that all pupils share responsibility for caring for each other and can link this to Christ's command to 'Love one another as I have loved you' Pupils are also given opportunities to help the wider community through raising money for charities which have included Children in Need, Harvest for the Hungry, Brentwood Catholic Children's Society and Cafod.

Provision for the 'Catholic Life of the School' is outstanding. The school's Mission Statement and values underpin the behaviour of all members of the school community. A wide range of assemblies and collective worship are part of the school's provision where key celebrations in the Church's liturgical year enable pupils to develop their faith journey. There are weekly 'Global assemblies' to broaden pupils' understanding of global issues including climate change and the importance of recycling. Pupils frequently visit the nearby church for Masses and to learn about the Sacraments and aspects of Catholic worship. All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are excellent role models for pupils. Pastoral care includes meeting the needs of staff as well as pupils and aims to promote the 'Catholic Life of the School'. Play therapy and creative play sessions are available for pupils who need extra support. Parish links are excellent with school and parish coming together for celebrations and fund-raising activities. The Religious Education curriculum is delivered through the 'Come and See' programme and is enhanced by the 'Journey in Love' scheme.

Leaders and Governors are most effective in promoting the 'Catholic Life of the School'. This is demonstrated by the way self-evaluation and the school improvement plan are explicitly focused on Catholic life and aim to enhance current provision. Leaders monitor and evaluate provision and outcomes in order to plan future improvements. Continuing professional development is offered to all staff and is engaging, well planned and effective. The Subject Leader attends diocesan courses linked to the new Religious Education framework and assessment. She provides a model of good practice by demonstration lessons for teachers new to Catholic education and offers support in planning and assessment. She has developed the Liturgy Group in recent years and enabled it to play a key role in the 'Catholic Life of the School'. Governors make a highly significant contribution to Catholic life by their commitment and involvement in school activities. Each governor is linked to a year group and spends time in school engaging with staff, pupils and subject leaders. Governors regularly attend Collective Worship and whole school services. They take collective responsibility for Religious Education and have engaged in assessment activities linked to the new framework. The local parish priest demonstrates a high level of commitment to the school by weekly visits, involving pupils in Mass celebrations and acting as an additional teaching resource.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION****Grade 1**

Religious Education at St Teresa's is very good. Pupils achieve well and enjoy their lessons. They make very good progress and behaviour for learning is excellent. Pupils are given a good foundation in Early Years which is built upon as they progress through the school. In lessons pupils are actively engaged and keen to contribute to discussions. They enjoy a range of activities including art, drama, music and discussions and say they like religious education. They are religiously literate and can think ethically and theologically through referring to Jesus' message when considering how they should act. They have an understanding of what it means to be a Christian as well a knowledge of other faiths, enhanced by visitors. Workbooks are very well presented and show coverage of the curriculum and a range of activities. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in Religious Education meet and often exceed diocesan expectations.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and adapt their teaching style to meet the needs of their classes. This ensures all pupils are fully engaged. Lessons observed during the inspection were at least good, some with outstanding features. Tasks are differentiated to enable all pupils to achieve well. There are strong cross-curricular links particularly between English and Religious Education. Good quality resources including class sets of bibles are used effectively to engage interest and enable pupils to become familiar with scripture. Marking and constructive feedback points the way to further improvement and leads to a high level of engagement. Teachers new to Catholic education are well supported and encouraged to undertake further training. Teaching assistants are used well to support individuals and groups of pupils. The Headteacher and Subject Leader are currently revising the assessment process in line with diocesan guidelines. They are also engaged in developing moderation of pupils' work across the deanery to ensure consistency in judgements.

School Leaders and Governors are strongly committed to Religious Education and ensure the curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference with at least 10% of curriculum time devoted to the subject. The Headteacher along with senior leadership ensure that Religious Education and the Catholic ethos of the school are central to self-evaluation. Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects and includes provision for professional development and resourcing. The rigorous system for monitoring and evaluation is leading to good outcomes for all groups of pupils. Governors visit frequently and the whole governing body is aware of developments in Religious Education and use monitoring data to plan further developments.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **Grade 1**

Pupils enjoy many opportunities to participate in Collective Worship at St Teresa's whether at Mass, in class or during assemblies. Collective Worship occurs regularly through the week from the Monday morning 'Gospel Assembly' led by the Headteacher or Subject Leader, through the Wednesday global assembly, class-based liturgies which include pupils' own prayers and a Friday celebration assembly. Each class has a Collective Worship book which contains plans and photographs of liturgies held in class on Tuesdays. Pupils' role in participating at Mass was observed on the day of the inspection during the Ash Wednesday Mass. They acted as welcomers, altar servers, readers, composed prayers, sang and signed. The Church's liturgical year is celebrated through whole school acts of worship which includes the wider community in Advent, Lent, Holy Week and First Holy Communion. Members of the Liturgy team supported by the Subject Leader hold a lunch time 'Rosary Prayer Group' during May and October and 'Stations of the Cross' during Lent. In addition, they are taking increasing responsibility for the preparation of Masses and whole school celebrations. Pupils across the school are eager to participate in collective worship and are becoming skilled in planning and leading.

Collective Worship at St Teresa's is central to the life of the school and prayer is included in every celebration. Staff have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year which is reflected in assemblies and in classroom prayer tables. They are confident in leading morning prayer and key stage assemblies. During the inspection a Year 1 class assembly included Christ's feeding of the 5,000. Responses showed pupils had a clear understanding of the relevance to their own lives. They showed interest, concentration and sang very well. Parents are always invited to Masses and other celebrations which are also attended by parishioners and governors. 'Services of Reconciliation' are part of Collective Worship during Advent and Lent.

Leaders and Governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship by giving a high priority to the planning of quality liturgies and assemblies. They ensure all staff are given guidance on liturgical formation and the delivery of Collective Worship through the provision of a Collective Worship planner which gives guidance to staff and pupils as they plan class liturgies. Governors are active parishioners who hold key roles in the life of the Church and are known to pupils. Leaders are visible and committed role models for the whole school community and have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year with its seasons and feasts. School Leaders and Governors, including the local parish priest, regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes.

The inspector would like to express her thanks and appreciation to all members of the school community for their welcome and openness during the inspection.