



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**



### **Inspection Report**

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

**Local Authority:** Essex

**Unique Reference Number:** 115165

**Inspection Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**Reporting Inspectors:** Derek Kelly and Patrick Moloney

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

**Type of School:** Primary  
**School Category:** Voluntary Aided  
**Age range of pupils:** 4 - 11  
**Gender of pupils:** Mixed  
**Number on roll:** 200  
**Appropriate Authority:** The Governing Body  
**Date of previous Inspection:** July 2011

**School Address:**  
Ashingdon Road  
Rochford  
Essex SS4 1RF  
**Tel. No.** 01702 547918  
**Fax No.** 01702 530193  
**Chair of Governors:** James Van de Vyver  
**Headteacher:** Nikki Stevens

## **Introduction:**

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

## **The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:**

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through;
  1. Worship
  2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

## **The Section 48 Report**

**St Teresa's Catholic Primary School**  
**Ashingdon Road**  
**Rochford**  
**Essex**  
**SS4 1RF**

**Head Teacher:**                      **Nikki Stevens**

**Date of Inspection:**              **11<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

## **Description of the School:**

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in the County of Essex and in the Diocese of Brentwood. It is a smaller than average-sized primary school. It admits pupils aged 4 to 11 years, 56% of the pupils are baptised Catholics with the remainder from other Christian denominations. Almost all pupils are from White British heritage. The school serves the Catholic Parish of St Teresa, Rochford. The school has Healthy Schools status, the Quality in Study Support Established award and an Activemark award.

### **Record of Evidence Base:**

Two Inspectors were in the school for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of seven lessons.
- Scrutiny of pupils' written work.
- Participation in one assembly and class prayers.
- Meetings with the Headteacher, Religious Education Co-ordinator, Assessment For Learning Key Leader, a Foundation Governor and the School Council.
- Observations of R.E. displays in the classrooms and around the school.

### **What the School does well:**

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is good in its effectiveness as a Catholic school. The headteacher and governors provide strong leadership to the school's Catholic life and ensure all pupils are challenged to develop spiritually, morally and ethically. The dedicated headteacher is committed to the Catholic mission of living out the Gospel values, which she effectively shares with all the staff and pupils. Guided by the School Mission Statement of 'being inspired by the Gospel values', the whole school community work together to create a safe, stimulating and prayerful learning environment which has a direct impact on the personal well-being and educational success of the pupils.

Religious Education (R.E.) is central to the mission of the school. The R.E. curriculum is good and based on the 'Come and See' Religious Education Programme, recommended by the Bishop of the Diocese. It has been implemented in all Key Stages. The school meets both the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught Religious Education. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) complements the R.E. curriculum, whilst provision for Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is comprehensive and the school has implemented the Diocesan Sex Education programme, 'Journey in Love'; which supports parents and is greatly appreciated.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in R.E. is good and lessons are well planned. In the best lessons there are clear learning intentions and a good range of teaching strategies are used, so that lessons are lively and pupils are engaged. For example, in the lessons observed, talk partners and drama were used to good effect, as was Information and Communication Technology (ICT) through the use of a PowerPoint presentation, which featured videos of the Passover Meal with links to the Eucharist and picture prompts of the significant objects in St Teresa's Church. This made the lessons interesting and encouraged pupil participation through discussion, whilst also reinforcing and extending their religious vocabulary. Teachers and support staff work closely together to ensure that pupils are well nurtured in their learning and pastoral care is of a high quality. The pupils benefit from good teaching in Religious Education and therefore most groups of pupils generally make good progress based on

their starting points. The pupils' written work is regularly marked and the best examples contain both praise and guidance about ways to make progress.

Assessment in R.E. is a high priority and the school uses focussed assessment opportunities at the conclusion of each of the 'Come and See' topics, which informs the school of the progress of all pupils. The school is working to enhance its assessment procedures, so that it can be used to provide more information about attainment of groups of pupils, so that curriculum planning can be developed further to increase the level of challenge for pupils, so that they can reach the highest levels in R.E. as in other core subjects.

Good leadership and management of Religious Education by the R.E. Co-ordinator has enabled the school to effectively introduce the 'Come and See' R.E. Programme throughout the school with appropriate training for staff delivered by the R.E. Co-ordinator. She monitors R.E. planning and is extremely supportive of all staff as they continue to implement the 'Come and See' Programme throughout this first year of its introduction. It is evident that there are very good links between R.E. and the liturgical life of the school, as exemplified in an observed Key Stage 2 lesson which effectively developed pupils' understanding on the Introductory Rite of the Mass, in preparation for attendance at the forthcoming Ash Wednesday Mass. In conjunction with the Assessment For Learning Key Leader they drive the assessment procedures used by all the teachers and with the Headteacher they effectively monitor all aspects of Religious Education provision. As a result, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

The school leaders are well supported by the governing body, which takes an active role in monitoring the R.E. curriculum and its impact on pupils' learning, exemplified by governors visiting for a day, which focused on the implementation of 'Come and See' through visiting classes, talking to staff and pupils and viewing pupils' work. The governing body has a good understanding of the school and its needs. Governors demonstrate that understanding and their commitment through the frequent interaction they have with the school community.

R.E. displays and artefacts in the classrooms support learning and enhance opportunities for prayer and reflection. Each classroom has an appropriate focal point for prayer highlighting the school's core values, the current 'Come and See' R.E. Programme topic or the liturgical season, which is well used to support personal reflection.

The pupils willingly undertake a number of responsible roles, such as Prefects and representatives of the School Council. The interview with the School Council revealed an articulate group of pupils with clear ideas about how they help the school. The School Council is proud of its achievements in raising money for a variety of worthy causes and purchasing new playground equipment, to benefit the pupils. In discussions with inspectors, the pupils were clear that difficulties of any kind could be quickly sorted out because there is always an adult about who can help to ensure that they are safe in school at all times.

Relationships in the school are positive and pupils are generally courteous, respectful and friendly towards adults and each other. Overall, pupils' behaviour is very good because they follow the school's Code of Conduct: 'Be Kind. Be Safe. Be Responsible.' Pastoral care is very good because it is based on the school's personal knowledge of pupils' needs.

Provision for prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school is very good because pupils have a reverent approach to their faith and show respect for other faiths. Collective worship is well planned to reflect community celebrations, significant events and the liturgical year. Music is a liturgical strength of the school, as observed in the assembly and classroom prayers attended by inspectors, with pupils using their vocal abilities effectively to enhance worship.

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School values links with parents and carers. Parents, who talked to an inspector at the start of the inspection, spoke very positively about how their children enjoyed being part of the caring, safe and happy community provided by the school. They appreciate the sense of belonging to the school, which is encouraged by the welcoming atmosphere, good communication systems, including a regular Religious Education newsletter to enable parents and carers to support their children at home and invitations to attend assemblies and school Masses. The strong partnership with home and the local parish nourishes provision and makes the school a supportive and inclusive community.

There is a proactive Friends of St Teresa's School which organises social and fundraising events, such as the Summer Fete and End of Year Party, to strengthen and support the school community.

There are close links with the Parish of St Teresa's and the Parish Priest, who is a regular and welcome visitor to the school and leads assembly every week and his active participation at many levels helps to ensure that the school is a cohesive faith community. Class Mass, on a rota basis, is celebrated weekly at the church, in addition to Feast Days and parents and carers are invited to attend and are keen to accept the invitation. Pupils are given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent. The school actively supports the sacramental preparation programme offered in the parish, through relevant topics from the 'Come and See' R.E. Programme.

Contributions to the wider community are through fund raising for charities, such as; CAFOD, Children in Need, Brentwood Catholic Children's Society and Macmillan. The school sings Christmas carols at a local home for the elderly and are regular participants at the annual Brentwood Diocesan Citizenship Awards. Strong international links have been developed with a Catholic school in The Gambia, in addition to fundraising for the school, both schools benefit from learning from each other.

All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are very good. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. Relationships throughout the school community are very good as exemplified by the way older pupils look after younger ones.

**What needs to be improved?**

- To further develop Religious Education assessment procedures and tracking in order to improve outcomes for pupils.
- To develop lesson planning so that it more consistently matches the abilities of pupils and raises attainment for all pupils.

The Inspectors endorse the areas identified by the school for improvement in the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Form and Religious Education Action Plan.

Overall, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a good Catholic School. It prepares its pupils well for transition to the local secondary schools and pupils understand the importance of appreciating the unique qualities of every individual in the local and wider community.