



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

REPORT ON THE MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School:	St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
Address:	Kipling Road Blacon Chester CH1 5UU
Tel No:	01244 981070
URN:	111388
Headteacher:	Mrs N Kirkman
Chair of Governors:	Mr B Larkin
Date of Inspection:	12 March 2015
Inspector:	Mrs E Robb

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School is a welcoming, friendly school and continues to provide an outstanding Catholic education.

Relationships at all levels are excellent and provide an atmosphere of trust and respect where all feel valued, safe and secure.

The inspirational Headteacher is clearly focussed and motivated to provide the highest standards of education and care for the children at St Theresa's school. She is well supported by an excellent Senior Management Team, an effective and efficient Religious Education Co-ordinator, and hardworking and dedicated Staff, Parish Priest and Governors. All are committed to providing the best possible opportunities for the children in their care, and live the sentiments of the School Mission Statement: *Fully valuing everyone in the love of Jesus. Caring and learning together*

The Governors are proud of their school and rightly so. They know their school well and provide challenge and support for the school leadership. The Parish Priest, who is also a Governor, is frequently in and around the school and discusses the various aspects of Religious Education with the Headteacher and its impact for the children's spiritual and moral development. The Religious Education Link Governor plays an important role in supporting and monitoring the Religious Education provision.

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and the children's spiritual and moral development. Children are given many opportunities to experience acts of Collective Worship. They are enthusiastic, respond positively and are encouraged to share thoughts, feelings and opinions with adults and each other.

The children are growing in confidence in their ability to prepare and organise acts of worship. They are keen, creative, prayerful and reflective, and enjoy participating in different ways to celebrate Collective Worship. During the visit the Inspector witnessed *prayer through dance* -a very thoughtful and meaningful expression of prayer. Collective Worship is also used appropriately to remind children of responses during Mass, for example, words to greet and respond to the Gospel. The children enjoy their Religious Education lessons and although their knowledge and experience of Religious Education on entry are very low, the children make good or better progress as they move through the school. Their knowledge of Bible content is excellent and 'The Way, the Truth and The Life' is used to good effect, alongside a wide range of relevant resources, which contribute to lively and interesting Religious Education lessons. There are numerous opportunities available to the children to develop spiritually and morally. They regularly take part in school, parish and community based activities. For example, the older children attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, when the opportunity arises in the parish.

The rigorous monitoring systems provide consistency across classes, and contribute to the raising of standards to ensure children make the best possible progress. Teachers plan effectively, creatively and imaginatively and children's various abilities are well-catered for. Teaching assistants provide excellent support.

There is no room for complacency at St Theresa's. A member of the School Council stated *that the teachers always encourage us to do our best and help us to improve, but they don't pressure us, they encourage us.*

During the Learning Walk the Inspector witnessed examples of outstanding practice. The vibrant, stimulating learning environments, the exciting displays, the standard of work in the children's books, the respectful relationships children have with each other and with staff all indicate a commitment to the promotion of the highest standards. The children are keen and eager to engage, contribute and participate in their Religious Education lessons. Each classroom has a focal area for prayer and there are opportunities to pray together and for individual prayer. The children's prayer books or boxes are included in acts of Collective Worship.

There are many opportunities for children to take on responsibilities. For example, the School Council arranged and led the school in a variety of fund raising and prayer themes linked to such charities as Mission Together, Operation Christmas, and Cafod. The children are very much aware of the needs of others both locally and globally and their contribution and commitment to fundraising is excellent.

The children's behaviour is outstanding. They are very polite, and feel very much involved in the life of the school. They have a voice and are listened to. They are proud of their school. They treat each other and everyone in school community with respect. They are aware of their responsibility for themselves as well as their responsibility for others. They willingly help others who may be sad or upset, and the older children are *Lunchtime and Playground Buddies* and help to support and guide younger children or children new to the school.

The school and parish work together to enrich and develop the Catholic life of the community. The school reaches out to families and offers support, as, and when needed. Family, and members of the local community, are invited to celebrations and parents often provide positive feedback, expressing their pleasure at their children's knowledge and confidence.

In summary, it is apparent that the children are encouraged to live, learn and work together in St Theresa's school in a way that celebrates Christ's teachings and Gospel values.

Areas of outstanding practice

Outcomes for pupils

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Children experience a variety of ways to support their private and public prayer and continue to develop their confidence and skill in all aspects of Collective Worship.

Leaders and Managers

Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and ensure that all children have access to the best possible opportunities. They are fully committed to the Church's mission in education.

Provision

Children enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They benefit greatly from the excellent opportunities provided for them.