



# DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

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## DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

### **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: 10 March 2020

Inspectors: Mr K Toms  
Mrs M Bulmer  
Mrs E Inman (shadowing)

## Mission Statement of St. Theresa's

In St. Theresa's we fully value everyone, in the love of Jesus, encouraging them to feel confident, happy and secure in work and play.

We aim to prepare our children for life -

- By teaching children to care and be considerate, to be tolerant and respectful of others, so enabling them to grow and be responsible within the community.
- By giving them reasons for hoping and living, through our teaching of the Catholic Faith.
- By being a place of learning and development, discipline and organisation, working closely with parents, carers and family members and keeping them well informed.
- By giving them a well-balanced education, based on an individual child's needs and meeting the National Curriculum requirements.

## St. Theresa's Core Professional Purpose Statement

Caring and Learning Together



**SCHOOL: St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, Blacon, Chester**

**DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: March 2015**

**JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Outstanding**

**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

No points for action were identified at the last inspection. The school, however, clearly identifies its own action points in its review of the Religious Education Action Plan. These include:

- Developing the school's approach to creativity in the Religious Education curriculum.
- Developing the resources to support and challenge assessment through the school.
- Review the Mission Statement.
- Continue to strengthen Parish and community links and the pastoral support offered in partnership with the Catholic High School.

**PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

The school has remained focused on these points for action and continues to ensure outstanding provision for the Catholic Life of the School.

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

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**This is an outstanding Catholic school**

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*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

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- St Theresa's is an outstanding Catholic Primary school truly inspired and driven by its Mission Statement, *Fully Valuing Everyone in the love of Jesus and Caring and Learning Together*.
- It is an extremely caring community in which relationships at all levels are firmly based on Gospel values and lived out through day to day interpretation of their *Christian Values* work.
- There is a rich learning environment through the school evident in all the displays and resources to support teaching and learning in Religious Education.
- Pupils feel safe to be themselves and thrive in a community in which Jesus is at the centre of all they do and reflected in how the Mission Statement is a living reality in the school.
- Prayer and worship are central to the school's ethos and Collective Worship is an outstanding feature of the school.
- The Headteacher and all the staff and Governors lead by example and this has a powerful impact on the pupils and the whole community. It is frequently commented on by all who visit and know the school well.
- Pupils make good progress in Religious Education lesson and attainment is in line with other core subjects and sometimes exceeding them.
- Very effective monitoring of provision for the Catholic Life of the School reflects the ambitious approach all Senior Leaders, Staff and Governors have for the pupils and the pastoral care at the school is outstanding.
- There are strong links between School, Parish and home and all are focused on maintaining outstanding provision for the pupils.
- All statutory requirements are met, and an excellent school website clearly reflects the dedication and commitment of all here at St. Theresa's.

## Summary of key findings:

### What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to develop and strengthen Diocesan training and support for all staff and Governors.
- Continue to share the outstanding practice in the school where knowledge, pace, passion and purpose sets such high standards for the pupils.

### Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The Inspection was carried out by two Inspectors over one day:

- Five lessons were observed across the two Key stages and Foundation Stage.
- Four Collective Acts of Worship were observed, one being for the whole school led by the Headteacher and the older children and other short prayer services led by children in Foundation Stage, Year One and Year Two.
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher, who is also the Religious Education Coordinator, four Governors, including the Chair, RE link Governor, Parent Governor, a Foundation Governor and the Parish Priest, Pupils, RQT and Staff Mentor.
- A sample of Pupils' Religious Education books was scrutinised from every class, along with the Coordinator's file and other related documents as specified in the Inspection Handbook.

- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the School Development Plan and the Religious Education Action Plan, attainment and progress data, class timetables newsletters, Minutes of the Governing Body meetings and the Headteacher's Report to Governors.
- Displays around the school and in every classroom were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- St Theresa's is a one form entry Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School, catering for children from 3 to 11 years old. The annual admission number is 30 and there are currently 1777 on roll including nursery, 145 on roll from FS2 to Y6. Of these 58 are baptised Catholics. The majority of children are of White British heritage.
- The school serves the parish of St. Theresa's, Blacon.
- The experienced Headteacher has, following the resignation of the Religious Education Coordinator, incorporated this into her overall leadership role.
- Staffing includes 5 full-time teachers and 6 part-time teachers (9 full-time equivalent) There are 12 Support Assistants. Two teachers possess the CCRS or equivalent. 55% of the teachers are Catholic.
- The school is organised into 7 single age classes and there is a 52 place Nursery.
- The Chair of Governors and Religious Education link Governor are both experienced in their respective roles.

## Full report – inspection judgments

### CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- St Theresa’s Catholic Primary School is a vibrant Catholic Primary school in which the Catholic mission of the school, *Fully Valuing Everyone in the Love of Jesus and Caring and Learning Together*, is a living reality and fully understood by the pupils.
- The pupils were able to articulate how the Mission Statement informed their actions and behaviour towards each other, both in and out of lessons.
- All pupils from the youngest upwards spoke of how welcoming their school is and how everyone respected each other.
- They fully appreciated the example set by the teachers, one saying, ‘Teachers don’t just tell us about being kind, they show us’.
- They clearly understood their part in this Catholic community both here in Blacon and the wider global community. This was evident in the recent work they had done reviewing the Mission Statement and incorporating British Values into the school’s own work on Christian values.
- The pupils are actively involved in supporting local SVP initiatives, food banks and other charities they have identified as needing their support.
- Pupils value the opportunities they are given to participate in activities which promote the school’s Catholic ethos.
- Pupils have taken into their hearts the Pope’s plea to take care of our environment and have produced some thought-provoking work on looking after *Our Common Home* and to *Think Deeply and Act Wisely*.
- The pupils readily volunteer to help around the school and are very responsive to the needs of others. Their behaviour throughout the inspection was exemplary.
- Pastoral care throughout the school is outstanding and all said how valued and loved they felt.
- The vibrant displays around the school and the thought and care given to all opportunities to celebrate and worship together are a real strength of the school.
- Governors are extremely supportive of their school and are frequent visitors. They know their school well and are keen to develop their own roles to support the changing needs of this community. They have good monitoring systems in place and play a full role in the Catholic Life of the School.
- The Parish Priest is newly appointed and keen to support this community. He spoke of how well the school promotes its Catholic ethos and the depth of knowledge the pupils have.
- The School Leaders, particularly the vision and direction of the Headteacher, are passionate about ensuring the Catholic life of the School is outstanding and remains so by constantly reviewing and evaluating their provision.
- The school works closely with other local Catholic Schools and especially the Catholic High School to ensure continuity of provision and pastoral care.

- The parents are overwhelmingly supportive and value the ethos and care provided at St. Theresa's. They commented that they have 'Amazing teachers and the children come home enthusiastic about their Religious Education lessons'.
- Recent consultation with all stakeholders regarding the school's provision for Relationships and `Sex Education has resulted in some significant improvements to provision in this area.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Religious Education is outstanding.**

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- In discussion with the pupils they said how they enjoyed their lessons and that teachers made them enjoyable - one commented that 'they could be themselves'.
- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points as indicated in a very effective Baseline Assessment and outcomes at the end of both KS1 and KS2 are good.
- All pupils were fully engaged in the 5 lessons observed, and their enthusiasm shone through when incorporating dance into one lesson and equally when observing discussions in others.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding and especially so when pace and challenge guided their progress.
- Good planning and very effective teaching help pupils make good progress overall.
- SEND pupils are particularly well supported so that they too are able to make good progress.
- Where outstanding practice was observed, one which incorporated creative dance, teachers displayed excellent subject knowledge, enthusiasm, pace and challenge.
- Religious Education is given full parity with other core subjects and the Coordinator, who is the Headteacher, ensures that this plays a central role in curriculum planning. The Headteacher, in her role as coordinator, ensures that all staff are well supported, and that training is accurately targeted in the school. Her modelling of the subject is exemplary, and she motivates all her staff to meet the challenges they face with calm and vision.
- Accurate monitoring and assessment procedures ensure that staff are able to support all pupils, thus helping them to make good progress overall and standards in Religious Education are in line with or better than other subjects.
- Beautifully presented workbooks and displays reflect the high status given to the teaching of Religious Education.
- Moderation and assessment opportunities with other schools in the area help all staff to keep focused on maintaining and enhancing teaching and learning opportunities in Religious Education.
- Every opportunity is given to provide prayer and reflective opportunities for the pupils. Stations of the Cross were developed by the pupils in the outside space and good use was made of an outdoor prayer garden.
- Most teachers are very confident in their subject knowledge and make good use of *The Way, The Truth and The Life*. Good use is made of resources to supplement the scheme whenever necessary.
- The pupils are able to use appropriate literacy in their Religious Education lessons. They know traditional prayers and are confident in developing their own prayers.

- The Governors take their role very seriously, playing a full part in guiding, challenging and supporting this faith community. They know their school well and are totally committed to ensuring it remains outstanding in its provision for Catholic Life.
- They ensure all Diocesan requirements are met and that they too, whenever possible avail themselves of appropriate training and support.
- They value and support the visionary and selfless support the Headteacher and all the staff give to the community of St. Theresa's.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is outstanding

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- Collective Worship is a real strength of the school and is at the heart of all they do.
- The Headteacher is exemplary in the way she leads and supports all aspects of Collective Worship through the school.
- One whole school Act of Worship and three other class prayer opportunities were observed. All were prayerful with children showing huge respect, singing joyfully and playing a full part in leading the services as appropriate.
- Each Act of Worship drew on the school's Mission Statement and their *Christian Values* developed to support this, which also very effectively incorporates the British Values initiative.
- The Headteacher very effectively wove the story *How much do I love you?* into the whole school assembly in which the pupils took a very effective lead. All pupils were very responsive and fully engaged in this Act of Worship. They sang well and showed deep respect throughout.
- Similarly, class prayer services reflected the growing leadership skills of the pupils and were age appropriate.
- A very effective timetable of liturgies through the week has been established and reflects the Church's liturgical year. It also incorporates the Christian Values developed through each week. These systematic themes ensure all are aware of developing themes and therefore fully engaged in incorporating them in their daily lives.
- Parents are invited to these celebrations and have commented how welcome they feel and how much they enjoy their involvement in the prayer life of the school.
- Staff are actively involved in taking appropriate leads in these celebrations and are committed to supporting and developing pupils' own leadership skills, encouraging even the youngest to engage in leading at their own level.
- In discussion, pupils show how well developed their own skills are in leading these Acts of Worship at an appropriate level. They know of the need to incorporate a theme from their Christians Values, the next one being compassion, and consider how prayers, resources and hymns could be used. They also value the importance of their own informal prayers and periods of reflection.
- The Religious Education Action Plan clearly identifies training and support for all staff and Governors to assist in this outstanding provision at the school.
- St Theresa's is truly an oasis of prayer and celebration in which all can find a home where they are loved and supported, and individual needs are recognised.
- As one pupil remarked, 'You can be yourself in front of other people.'