

Inspection of a good school: St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Basildon

Elsenham Crescent, Basildon, Essex SS14 1UE

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 October 2021

Outcome

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Basildon continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend their school. They say it is a special place where everyone is accepted. Pupils are polite and well mannered, and they show respect towards each other. Pupils know what types of behaviour are acceptable. They follow the school rules.

The school's core values of love, accept, respect and reflect stem from pupils' suggestions. These values are consistently demonstrated by pupils. They support a positive, nurturing environment where pupils can flourish.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know that staff will look after them and help if they have any worries. Pupils know what bullying is because the school has taught them about it. They say it does not happen here but would be dealt with quickly by staff if it did. They use kind words when talking with each other.

Staff expect pupils to work hard, be polite and make the most of the opportunities they are given. Pupils respond well. They consistently demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning.

Pupils use mistakes as opportunities to learn and improve. They have developed a strong desire to do their very best. Leaders have created a culture where pupils take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils know that what they say and do can affect others positively and negatively. They consistently make the right choices.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders always consider what will work best for pupils. They have designed a curriculum to provide all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities , with the opportunity to succeed.

Leaders have made changes to the curriculum in most subjects to help pupils learn more effectively. For example, pupils are now introduced more quickly to certain sounds when

learning to read. They then practise these sounds more often than they used to. In mathematics, pupils spend as long as they need learning about specific concepts to become confident in how to apply what they are taught.

In a small number of subjects, leaders focus on teaching certain subject-specific skills, such as locating and identifying physical features in geography, more than on the factual knowledge pupils need. As a result, pupils do not have an in-depth knowledge of these subjects.

Leaders have made reading a priority. The reading curriculum includes high-quality texts selected to suit each year group. These books have been chosen to broaden pupils' literary experiences. Leaders are determined that all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged, will become fluent readers. Pupils learn to read as soon as they start school. They quickly learn what sounds letters make, and they practise these sounds daily. This means that pupils become confident, fluent readers. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are reading, and they match the books pupils read to pupils' knowledge.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will succeed. To make this happen, leaders have prioritised behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are enthusiastic and work hard. Pupils are never passive. Hands shoot up when questions are asked. Pupils enjoy debating ideas and celebrating success.

The school is an important part of the community. Support for pupils and families stretches beyond the classroom. Leaders see their role as more than 'school' leaders. They regularly help families more broadly, such as through 'family, fitness, fun', which pupils really enjoy.

Pupils are taught about the importance of charity and local community. The cultural diversity of the school is widely celebrated. Families are invited into school to teach pupils about aspects of their culture. Examples of this include providing foods from around the world for pupils to try, and helping pupils design a 'global' fashion show.

Governance of the school is strong. Governors know the school and local community well. They hold leaders to account for educational outcomes and make sure that pupils receive the support and resources they need to succeed. They recognise the strengths of the school and work closely with school leaders to support actions identified in the school's development plan.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have efficient safeguarding procedures in place to make sure that pupils are kept safe. There are three designated safeguarding leaders who monitor and track safeguarding concerns. Leaders provide staff with ongoing support and training. All staff are kept up to date with any new legislation. All staff know how to report a concern and what will happen next. Staff take their safeguarding role seriously.

The school's ethos around safeguarding is to be vigilant and to believe 'it could happen here'. Leaders are aware of local safeguarding issues. They use expert support from external agencies to educate pupils about how to stay safe and the potential dangers to be aware of.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not included crucial content that pupils need to know as the basis for sequencing the curriculum. This means that pupils start newer topics with insecure knowledge of vocabulary and concepts. As a result, pupils remember only superficial aspects of these subjects. Leaders should, in all subjects, identify the key knowledge that pupils need for subsequent topics and ensure that pupils remember this.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139917
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10200156
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	N/A
Number of pupils on the school roll	233
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	N/A
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Carmel Jones
Headteacher	Nuala Cashell
Website	www.st-teresasrc.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school is Roman Catholic and part of the Christus Catholic Trust. The school joined the trust in July 2013.
- The last section 48 inspection took place on 4 July 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due within the next two years.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. The inspector looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and members of the local governing body, as well as speaking to an independent educational consultant who supports the school.
- The inspector looked at the single central register of recruitment and vetting checks and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the 33 responses made by parents to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 32 free-text responses. The inspector also considered the 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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