

# English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School

St Mark Street, London, E1 8DJ

**Inspection dates** 30 April – 1 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leaders, managers and governors have maintained well-above average standards by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils make good progress because teaching is almost always good and some is outstanding.
- Imaginative teaching involves pupils very well and encourages them to learn by themselves.
- The presentation of pupils' work is very neat and their handwriting is extremely well formed.
- Teachers inspire pupils to write extended pieces of work related to their topics.
- Teachers use questioning well to assess pupils' learning and to extend their thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress to reach average levels of attainment.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in class and around the school and they say they feel safe.
- The school's beautifully tended grounds provide a haven of peace for pupils in the busy heart of the City.
- Staff are united in wanting the best for pupils and in pursuing excellence.
- The school offers extremely effective training to its staff, and this has helped leaders to improve teaching.
- The lively curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Just occasionally, more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Marking is uneven in places when showing pupils what they do well and how they can improve their work.
- The outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage is underdeveloped, especially for reception children.
- Leaders at all levels do not check the quality of teaching and learning systematically or share their findings enough with governors and staff.
- Subject leaders have not completed action plans setting out how the school's key priorities for improvement relate to their areas, pending agreement of the school's new curriculum.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, attended a whole-school mass and looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, phase leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and one written communication, and spoke with several parents and carers outside school.
- The inspectors considered 21 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which is additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed services) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding so that a greater proportion of pupils make more than expected progress by:
  - making sure that more-able pupils are given sufficiently challenging work
  - fully securing the new marking and feedback policy in practice so that pupils know what they are doing well and how they can improve
  - developing the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage to challenge reception children more.
- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels by:
  - making sure leaders check the quality of teaching and learning more systematically and report their findings more widely to governors and staff
  - completing subject leaders' action plans that relate the school's key priorities for improvement to their specific areas as soon as the final draft of the new curriculum is agreed.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well-above average and have been maintained at these levels for some considerable time. This is because staff know pupils extremely well as individuals and make sure that they have every opportunity to succeed.
- Children join the Nursery with a wide range of abilities that are typically as expected and a little better in some areas such as physical and creative development. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because learning is purposeful and matched to their interests.
- Children are given a thorough grounding in phonics (the sounds that letters make) and grow in confidence when tackling new words. In last year's Year 1 reading check, pupils scores came out above average and the present Year 1 are on course to do even better. The school has supported the few pupils who did not do so well last year, so that they have caught up with their classmates.
- Consistently good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 enables pupils to reach well-above average standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils achieve well across all year groups and subjects but just occasionally learning is not as rapid as it could be because pupils spend too long practising work they can already do.
- The proportion of pupils meeting or exceeding expected progress compares favourably with the national picture. Achievement is not yet outstanding because the proportion exceeding expected progress, while a little above, is not significantly above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve particularly well. Their needs are identified early and individual programmes of support help them to do as well as all pupils nationally.
- The school has considerable expertise in supporting pupils who join speaking little or no English so that they soon make gains in acquiring the language and are able to access learning as well as their peers. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well and attain better than similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make similar good progress to their peers and reach standards well above those of eligible pupils nationally. The funding is spent on one-to-one support, a learning mentor and a speech therapist. Because the other pupils' attainment in 2012 was particularly high, there was a gap of up to two terms between eligible pupils and the rest. This is closing this year.
- Pupils make good progress in writing across the school. Handwriting is very neat and pupils join their letters from an early age. They are encouraged talk about what they are going to write first, which helps them to channel their thoughts. Spelling is also good.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of mathematical concepts and apply them well to new situations.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and make sure that learning proceeds at a rapid pace. They expect pupils to explain their learning, as when Year 5 pupils had to prove that the angles of a triangle add up to 180 degrees.
- Teachers use questioning well to find out what pupils understand and to extend their learning. They make sure that all pupils are involved in discussions, not just the ones who put their hands up.
- Learning is often imaginative and enjoyable. Year 6 pupils identified the key features of a radio interview and put these into practice when interviewing one another.
- The teaching of phonics is outstanding. This enables pupils to make rapid progress in reading, so that by the time they leave Key Stage 2 they can talk about a wide range of authors and why

they would recommend particular books.

- Teachers actively involve pupils in learning and give them responsibility, which promotes their independence. For example, Year 4 pupils researched farming techniques in ancient Egypt and then became 'professors' to give a talk to other groups in the class so that their classmates could make notes of the key points they were explaining.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers quickly establish routines to enable children to achieve well. They use resources purposefully to encourage children to find things out for themselves.
- There is a good level of challenge inside but the shared outdoor area is geared more to the Nursery and is not sufficiently demanding for reception children. For example, only the numbers one to 10 were available for children to put in order, when Reception should be counting at least up to 20.
- Teachers are particularly successful at promoting writing across different subjects linked to their topic. Pupils enjoy researching at home, for example about the Cutty Sark. Year 1 pupils wrote poems linked to a science topic on reversible and irreversible changes.
- Exercise books show that work is of a consistently good quality, is well presented and that pupils make good progress over time. The school identified some inconsistency in approaches to marking and so revised the marking and feedback policy. This is being secured to iron out a few remaining inconsistencies in how teachers praise pupils' work and show them what they must do to improve further.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and take great pride in their work. Their behaviour is impeccable in class and around the school. They manage their own behaviour very well.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying such as homophobic name calling and racism, but say it is rare in school. They know that any incidents will be sorted out immediately. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- All parents and carers spoken to were very positive about pupils' behaviour, and those who responded to Parent View mainly agreed.
- As a 'rights respecting school' pupils are aware that the school aims to be fair, and know that they have rights and responsibilities. As one pupil put it, 'It's not about what you have but what you give to others.'
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe in a busy part of the City of London. They undertake cycle training and have regular advice from the police, Transport for London and other organisations about dealing with potential danger.
- The school council runs its own meetings and organises fund-raising activities. Pupils have recently supported a school in Zimbabwe. The older pupils are keen to take responsibility and help the younger ones, for instance playing games with them or acting as referees.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. An excellent personal and social health education programme gives pupils information on dealing with dilemmas and their well-being. Pupils support the school's Catholic values and this sets their moral compass and gives them a strong desire to serve.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a strong vision for making the school outstanding, which is embraced by all staff. They know the school very well and form accurate views about its effectiveness. For example, during joint observations, senior leaders and inspectors were in complete agreement about the quality of teaching.
- There is regular checking of the quality of teaching and learning, but this is not systematic and the high-quality findings from lesson observations and looking at books and planning are not shared with all staff and governors enough.

- Leaders are highly effective at identifying the needs of individual pupils and arranging support or challenge to help them succeed. They also analyse the performance of different groups. In this way all pupils are included and given equal opportunities to succeed.
- Leaders, managers and governors have been successful at maintaining well-above average standards over time. Their high expectations are shared and everybody works together for the benefit of the pupils.
- Training is organised particularly well, so that staff receive the help they need to become even better. For instance, a speech therapist was engaged to work with teaching assistants so they could promote rich language and accurate grammar with pupils.
- The management of teachers' performance is robust and their targets are linked to how well pupils are doing.
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of their areas, even those new to their roles. However, subject leaders have not completed action plans that relate the school's key priorities for improvement to their subjects as they are waiting for the school's new curriculum to be agreed. This currently makes it difficult for them to measure how successful they are being in driving improvement.
- The curriculum is well organised and gives pupils many memorable experiences. The outdoor space is particularly attractive and peaceful and contributes to pupils' spiritual development, as they can reflect quietly in the beautiful gardens. The school is finalising an updated version.
- The local authority provides effective but light-touch support to this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very experienced and bring a wealth of expertise. They are very supportive but also ask searching questions, based on their regular visits to see the school's work and to meet subject leaders.
- While governors know about the quality of teaching in general terms, they have not been given detailed information about the proportion of teaching that is good or outstanding. They know how good teaching is rewarded and what is being done to tackle any underperformance.
- Governors know about pupils' achievement and how this compares with similar schools. They know how targets are set for teachers and check their progress against them. They are involved in setting challenging targets for the headteacher.
- Governors keep an eagle eye on the school's finances and know how the pupil premium is being spent and the impact this is having. They make sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fully met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100962
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	412026

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	222
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bronagh Nugent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7709 0182
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