

# English Martyrs' RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106352
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	309106
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bernard Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Michael Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr T O'Brien
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Wycliffe Road Urmston Manchester M41 5AH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7487257
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, leadership and management, and the academic guidance given to pupils. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents. In addition, interviews were held with pupils, parents, members of the governing body, the deputy headteacher and the headteacher. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but no evidence was found to suggest that the school's self-evaluation was not accurate.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school with a 52 place nursery class. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The school has a much lower than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There is a small number who are at an early stage of speaking English. The number of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

The school gained the Activemark and the Healthy Schools Award in 2007 and is working towards the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school and gives good value for money. Parents are pleased that the school is very successful in valuing all its pupils, resulting in children from different backgrounds and with different needs getting along well together. They appreciate that it makes a real impact upon their children's all-round development and that pupils are helped to mature and are prepared well for their secondary education. Attendance is above average. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They have very positive attitudes because the school emphasises the need for every child to be happy and to succeed. As a result, behaviour is excellent and pupils enjoy making contributions in school and to the wider community. The school council operates effectively and older pupils take very seriously the responsibilities they are given to help younger children during breaks and lunchtime. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because of the school's focus on developing all-round mature individuals. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils learn very effectively to look after themselves, including how to live healthily and stay safe. The school's partnerships with other local schools and the wider community are strong.

Pupils receive outstanding pastoral care and academic guidance. These provide a solid platform for the good progress they make. Arrangements to track and check pupils' progress and to set individual targets are very thorough. Accurate assessments form the basis for challenging targets, which are largely met. Assessments are also used very effectively to help pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are in place. The school is welcoming and the good care shown by staff ensures that pupils are kept safe. The school works well with a variety of outside agencies to identify and support its most vulnerable pupils.

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. This provides them with a very secure basis for their future economic well-being. Standards have risen in science because more emphasis has been placed on involving pupils in practical investigative work. This taps into pupils' natural curiosity, and harnesses it to encourage pupils to learn about the world in which they live. Past weaknesses in writing are being successfully tackled and as a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 now make good progress in writing. However, boys still do not make enough progress in developing their writing skills in Years 3 to 6. The good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils at an early stage of learning English ensures their good progress.

The quality of teaching is good. There is a significant proportion of outstanding teaching. Very positive relationships in the classroom lead to excellent behaviour and to pupils valuing their learning. Because pupils are presented with stimulating work, they enjoy lessons and revel in their achievement. In the best lessons, planning is very effective in ensuring that the differing needs of all pupils are met. However, this is not true across the whole school and higher attainers, in particular, sometimes do not achieve as well as they could because planning does not specify what they are expected to learn. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to lessons, particularly in helping the lower attainers to fulfil their potential. Teachers use homework effectively, particularly to develop pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. They mark work conscientiously, encourage pupils by acknowledging their good efforts and give them the information to help them progress further.

A strong programme for personal education ensures pupils' develop a good understanding of living in a multi-cultural society. The curriculum is enhanced by extra activities, for example, in sport, and by a good number of educational visits and visitors to the school. Similarly, the introduction of French gives added breadth and interest.

The good quality of leadership and management stems from the excellent lead given by the headteacher in establishing a clear educational direction for the school. In this he receives good support as well as challenge from senior staff. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This provides a solid basis for them to challenge as well as support the senior leadership team. The school works hard to establish good links with parents and carers, but a few parents are dissatisfied with communication about the progress their children make. The senior managers are aware of this and are currently addressing the issue. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and staff and governors know what they need to do to improve further and are keen to do so. The monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching and learning is regular and rigorous. The school's success in raising standards and its very positive response to its previous inspection demonstrate its good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The newly established Nursery is having a significant impact on children's achievement and progress. Children start with broadly average skills for their age and are now leaving Reception with skills that are well above average. Whereas in previous years children made good progress in the Foundation Stage, new and experienced staff now ensure that, regardless of their starting points, they make outstanding progress. They make particularly good progress in their language and communication skills, their mathematical development and their overall personal development. Their good language skills are very evident in the way they communicate with each other and with staff. Excellent arrangements are in place to help children settle in quickly and make the most of the high quality provision they experience. They enjoy the exciting mix of indoor and outdoor activities, especially playing outside in all weathers in the good facilities provided. All staff concerned know and understand the needs of young children very well and hence provide work to stimulate them to learn very well across all areas of their development. Planned learning linked closely to children's interests, and systems to assess their progress are excellent. Children learn to behave very well and to get on well with others. Children gain a great deal from first-hand experience and structured play, which supports their all-round development very well. They learn to use basic numbers, to read and write simple texts and gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. The play element of their daily experience also enables them to develop physically and creatively, as well as ensure much enjoyment in learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in boys' writing in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve teachers' planning to ensure that higher attainers are consistently challenged to achieve their best.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No



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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you all for the welcome you extended to me when I visited your school. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters and for taking the time to talk to me. I judge your school to be good - and some things that the school offers are excellent. I enjoyed joining you in lessons, talking to you and reading your work. I also enjoyed your singing and the enthusiasm you show for staying healthy and fit. Most of all, I enjoyed the way you were all so helpful and friendly.

I would like to compliment you on the way you look after your school. You make it very attractive by helping to produce very good displays in your classrooms and around the school. You are taught to be proud of your school and you keep things very clean and free from litter. I was impressed by the way you take responsibility, for example, in your contribution to the work of the school council and the way you help your teachers during playtimes and lunchtimes. I was impressed by your excellent behaviour, both in classrooms and out and around the school. You say you like your teachers and the way they take good care of you and teach you to be safe and healthy. I appreciate how well your school helps you to develop into mature young people, who get on well with each other and consider other people.

It is usual after an inspection to ask schools to improve some things. To make things even better, I have asked your headteacher and teachers to help boys in Years 3 to 6 to improve their writing skills. I also would like your teachers to plan even more carefully so that everyone can make the best progress they are capable of.

I wish you all well in the future.