

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Worthing

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126051
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315413
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	4
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Thompson
Headteacher	Sue Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2009
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Derwent Drive Goring-by-Sea Worthing BN12 6LA
Telephone number	01903 502868

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Inspection number	315413

Fax number

01903 503149

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a similar size to others. It has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. Children come from a wide area. There is a very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just below average and their needs are both academic and behavioural.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

English Martyrs is a good school. It has some outstanding aspects. At the heart of its success is the strong teamwork fostered by staff and governors. As a result, the pupils enjoy attending and readily adopt the values the school promotes, such as collaboration, creativity and developing independence. Their consistently good personal development and well-being result in mature, polite and helpful pupils who behave exceptionally well in and around the school.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children start school in Reception with skills that are often below the expected levels for their age. The progress children make during their Reception year has improved considerably recently because of improved provision. This means when they enter Year 1 all achieve at least average levels, with some achieving higher. Achievement is good across the school because effective teaching and support throughout Years 1 to 6 enable most pupils, including those few from minority ethnic backgrounds, to make good progress in most subjects. As a result, they attain above average standards in English by the time they reach Year 6. Standards in science and mathematics are more broadly average as pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly those who are more able, do not do enough 'real life' investigative work in these subjects. Pupils use their well-developed skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to good effect in other subjects. Teaching promotes good relationships between pupils, and develops their social and basic academic skills effectively, particularly in English. Teaching assistants work closely with pupils and provide high quality support. This ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and make good progress.

The good range of learning opportunities provided in the curriculum for all pupils meets their interests well, particularly in developing their spiritual, moral and social awareness. Their adoption of healthy lifestyles is excellent and pupils really care about exercising and about what they eat. There are strengths in the way that pupils show understanding and consideration for others, but their awareness of the diverse range of cultures found in the UK or in the world at large is not sufficiently extended. Pupils are well cared for and procedures to keep them safe within school are effective. The school has considerably improved its procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements. As a result, teachers are gaining more insight into how well pupils are improving, spotting those needing extra help and providing additional support.

Good leadership and management are evident in many aspects of school life. Leaders at all levels are committed to further improvement. Governors are supportive and challenging to the school and understand how well it performs. The vast majority of parents are extremely pleased with the school. Comments like, 'It's fantastic' and 'My child is proud to say he attends' were typical of many. A small minority of parents felt that improvements could be made in areas such as consultation, communication and homework. Given its track record of improvement, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in its monitoring procedures, the school has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are keen to come to school. They enjoy their time in the Reception class and quickly settle. The good provision ensures that there are always lots of exciting things for children to do. For example, during the inspection they played eagerly in their Enchanted Forest and this

effectively developed their skills in creative play and social skills. Children behave very well and they willingly share resources. Children are kind to each other and work together well. Skilled teaching, often aided by well-briefed teaching assistants and helpers, ensures that children achieve well. Just occasionally some children work a little too long without some adult help to extend their learning. Records ensure that personal development is monitored carefully and this helps staff identify who needs help to develop their confidence. The class have access to very good outdoor resources for learning and there is a good balance of outside and indoor activities. Children are confident users of wheeled toys and simple computer-based skills. Leadership and management are good and leaders know children well. Well-developed links with parents and children before they join ensure children have a smooth start to school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly those with higher ability, more 'real life' investigative work in mathematics and science to help raise standards to those reached in English.
- Strengthen the opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of the different cultures and communities in Britain and beyond.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school and make good progress in almost all areas of learning. Progress in mathematics and science, particularly for the more able, is improving but does not match the very good progress in English. The changed approaches used to teach mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science are beginning to improve pupils' confidence and they are on track to meet their targets. Pupils, particularly the most able, are not always given enough investigative work and as a result, their problem solving skills develop more slowly. Those few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as classmates, as their levels of spoken and written English are often good. Pupils across the school achieve particularly well in ICT, music and sports because of the strong emphasis placed on these areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of early identification of their needs and the good support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good spiritual, moral and social development underpins all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils behave exceptionally well, being very kind and helpful to each other and to those younger than themselves. Nearly all parents agreed that behaviour in and around the school is excellent. Pupils really enjoy school and like attending. They show high levels of enthusiasm for the wide range of experiences offered to them, such as 'walking the cross' in the school's outside labyrinth. Older pupils have a very good sense of responsibility and regularly undertake jobs such as buddies for other pupils or helping with equipment at playtimes. Pupils' cultural development is good. Very good community links contribute significantly to pupils' overall personal development. Their awareness of the different cultures that make up modern Britain or countries further away is too limited, although the curriculum ensures that they have many opportunities to celebrate the traditions of their own faiths and those of others. Pupils have an excellent attitude and commitment to eating healthily. They exercise regularly, taking very good advantage of the sporting clubs on offer. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure at

school. As a result of their good achievement and levels of maturity, they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers create a positive learning environment in classrooms. They know pupils very well and relationships in lessons are a key feature that helps foster their good attitudes to learning. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught well. In Years 1 to 6, teachers plan most activities effectively and involve pupils in practical activities. Pupils feel their teachers help them quickly and explain things carefully. In some activities, however, teachers talk for too long and there is not enough time for pupils to give their verbal responses. The setting for mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 6 is helping staff to teach in a more focused way and standards are rising. Teachers plan effectively for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensure that they are supported well in lessons. Marking of pupils' books is good and comments are helpful and aid their improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good range of learning experiences is provided for pupils of all ages. These contribute very well to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their good progress. There are emerging strengths within the curriculum. For example, the links made between subjects are helping pupils to see how skills gained in one subject can be used in others. ICT skills are used well in other subjects such as studies about rivers in geography. Children also like opportunities to learn French. The revised literacy strategy has been effectively introduced and the pupils' good writing skills are the result of them responding enthusiastically to well-planned and interesting topics. The relatively new setting arrangements for mathematics are helping teachers pitch work at a narrower ability range, but some activities in mathematics and science would be improved with more 'real life' investigative approaches. The range of additional activities, including sports, music and arts clubs, both before and after school, is good and well attended and helps enrich the class-based learning activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and procedures to keep them safe at school are systematic and effective. They know that there is always someone to talk to if needed. Class 'emotional registers' play an effective part in helping staff monitor pupils' personal development and ensure that their needs are well known. Parents see this aspect of the school as particularly strong and one commented that 'the school's huge help has made a real difference to our family'. Pupils' academic guidance is generally good. Most pupils know their own targets and know what they need to do to improve, but as this is relatively new to them, not all are as clear about how they can help guide their own learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from early identification and the good quality support and guidance provided by school staff and from external agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The effective self-evaluation and closer monitoring of pupils' progress enable senior leaders to accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Led by an energetic and effective headteacher, senior leaders have high aspirations for the pupils. The challenging targets chosen are setting the pace to improved standards across the school, not only in key skills, but also across the curriculum. Good relationships and teamwork are key factors in motivating staff, governors and pupils to work together for the benefit of all. Governors are challenging and supportive. They regularly hold the school to account for its decisions. Links with parents are valued and the vast majority of parents believe the school works well. A small minority, however, pointed to possible improvements in aspects ranging from wanting regular consultation to the setting of different homework. The school promotes community cohesion well at the local level, but not at the national or global level, where pupils' knowledge is less secure. Local community links are particularly strong.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 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?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 March 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of English Martyrs Primary School, Worthing BN12 6LA

I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection we carried out recently. We really enjoyed visiting you. Your school is providing you with a good education. Nearly all of your parents and carers agree with us that your school is a fun, caring and welcoming place.

Here are some of the things we found out:

- You reach the standards you should in lots of your work, but your writing is often better than this. Well done.
- The children in the Reception class make good progress, particularly in the way they learn how to write and speak clearly. They have lots of fun.
- Your behaviour is excellent and we liked the way you all work as a team.
- You really like doing lots of exercise, eating the right food and know how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The range of things you get to do is good. We enjoyed looking at the good work you do, especially in art.
- The school cares for you well, and is particularly good at helping you if you feel sad or worried at times.
- Your links with the local community are good.
- The teaching is good and teachers really help you to enjoy lessons with exciting work.

We have asked the school to do a couple of things to help it improve further.

- Give those of you in Years 3 to 6 more 'real life' investigative work in mathematics and science so you become more confident in problem solving. This particularly applies to some of you who can do harder work.
- Help you learn more about the way of life of children and adults who live further away and have different backgrounds or cultures to your own.

You can help your teachers by keeping up your brilliant behaviour and being helpful to your friends, so that your school can be even better.

Yours faithfully,

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector