

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 125724 |
| Local Authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 328384 |
| Inspection date | 6 May 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Alison Grainger |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 210 |
| 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 | Tony Mills |
| Headteacher | Stuart Hallahan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 June 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | High Street Hillmorton Rugby CV21 4EE |

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|--------------------------|------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
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Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the consistency of teaching and academic guidance in meeting pupils' needs
- the contribution of the curriculum and resources to learning in the Reception Year and in information and communication technology (ICT) and science across the school
- the quality of pupils' personal development
- the contribution of subject leaders and governors.

Evidence was gathered from: data on pupils' attainment and progress; visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work; observation of an assembly; discussions with staff, a governor, parents and pupils; and analysis of responses to the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The vast majority of pupils in this average size primary school are from White British backgrounds, although the school is starting to attract more pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Many children enter the school having attended the nearby English Martyrs Playgroup.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Aspects of its work are outstanding. Exceptionally good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils' personal development and well-being are of the highest quality. Almost all pupils enjoy school tremendously. As one pupil told inspectors, 'We look forward to coming to school, especially after a holiday.' As part of their work in English, pupils in Year 6 have written reports on the school. In these reports, comments such as 'Every single child is treated with respect and everyone is extremely special' and 'Pupils are always going to remember this school with clarity' are typical. It is not surprising that behaviour is very good and the attendance rate is above average.

Pupils achieve well. Taking the intake as a whole, children's starting points are slightly above the level expected when they join Reception. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. Although overall progress is good in almost all years, with particularly rapid gains made in Years 5 and 6, there is some variation in how well pupils move on from year to year. Additionally, within the picture of good progress, some ability groups move on more quickly than others in some classes. Where there has been a particularly strong focus on challenging the more able pupils, for instance, some pupils of average ability do not progress quite as quickly.

Variations in progress relate directly to some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Most of the teaching is good and there are instances of outstanding practice, particularly in Years 5 and 6. However, there is a small amount of satisfactory teaching. The substantial amount of good teaching is characterised by high expectations of the standards all pupils are capable of attaining. Teaching assistants are deployed well. Activities are varied effectively to maintain the full involvement of pupils, moving, for example, between whole-class sessions and independent work. As a result, pupils enjoy almost all lessons in all subjects. In one outstanding English lesson in Year 5, pupils were highly motivated by the challenging and very interesting task of using video clips and creating their own voice-over narratives. In this lesson, the pupils excelled in selecting direct and indirect speech to convey feelings. This activity not only promoted excellent learning but it also had a truly spiritual dimension. Where teaching is satisfactory, it is less closely matched to pupils' differing learning needs and does not challenge all pupils fully.

Academic guidance is good. In most classes, pupils are given clear and helpful feedback through marking and this contributes much to their progress, particularly in writing. In Year 2, for example, more able pupils speak confidently about the targets set for them in English and mathematics and explain how these targets help them to know what they need to focus on most. Although not universal across the school, most marking shows pupils clearly what they have done well and what they need to do next.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving resources for information and communication technology (ICT) and in increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their computer skills across the curriculum. Although the school has no space for an ICT room, laptops have been purchased and are being used well to supplement a bank of computers in the main corridor and the few computers in each classroom. Within the provision for science, the school reports that new ICT resources are contributing positively to pupils' learning and enjoyment. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' progress. The range of activities in addition to daily lessons, such as clubs, visits and visitors, is very good.

These activities, and the highly effective programme of personal, social and health education, contribute hugely to pupils' personal development. Pupils are very well prepared to make sensible lifestyle choices. Through many activities encouraging physical fitness and the emphasis the school gives to promoting healthy eating, pupils develop a keen awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils are taught about how to stay safe in school and outside. They feel safe at school and are sure that they have an adult to whom they can turn should the need arise. They say that bullying is rare and not tolerated by the school.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. Leadership qualities are developed through responsibilities, such as those of peer mediators. Of particular note is the extensive involvement of pupils in raising funds for charities. Pupils have, for example, taken part in a sponsored pancake race, the proceeds of which were donated to a local hospice. Working in partnership with the parish, pupils raised a substantial amount of money that paid for the building of a new school in Burma. The school promotes community cohesion well. It develops pupils as outward-looking young citizens, aware of the needs of others locally, nationally and globally. Pupils and families from other faiths are welcomed. Different backgrounds and beliefs are respected and celebrated. All in all, the excellent personal attributes that pupils develop prepare them very well for their future lives.

One parent spoke of the school's 'loving and caring environment'. The dedicated staff team provide pupils with excellent role models for how to treat others. Leadership and management are good. A particular strength is the way in which the headteacher and senior leaders support others to make improvements that benefit the pupils. Subject leaders make a good contribution. As a result of the combined work of senior and middle managers, the school has a good capacity to improve further. Its self-evaluation is incisive and accurate and it understands clearly what it needs to do next. The governing body is supportive, informed and consulted but is not well involved in actively reviewing and improving the school. While most parents are very pleased with the school, a small number told inspectors that they would like the communication with them to improve. Although inspectors judge communication with parents as good, senior staff recognise that there is scope to improve it.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class. By the time they transfer to Year 1, standards are firmly above average. Children make good progress because teaching is focused, accurate and well matched to their needs. Lessons are well paced, with a good variety of activities, and additional adults are effectively deployed. There is good coverage of all the areas of learning, with a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children select for themselves. While the indoor curriculum is rich, the outdoor curriculum is less well developed. The purpose of outdoor activities is not always clear to children and so there are missed opportunities to promote learning. Although canopies are used outdoors in the summer to shelter children from strong sun, there is no permanent sheltered area that can be used all year round. Good use is made of the adequate resources available to support learning. As a result of excellent attention to children's welfare, including the arrangements for settling children into school, children's personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is impeccable and children have very good attitudes to school. They are confident and independent. The very small number of children at an early stage of learning English are given good support, as are those with learning difficulties. The Reception provision is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching is always closely matched to all pupils' needs and challenges them fully.
- Improve the opportunities for Reception children to learn outdoors.
- Increase the involvement of governors in reviewing and improving the school's effectiveness.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ 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/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

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|---|---|
| How good are 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 |
| The extent to which 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| 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? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| 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? | 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 | 3 |
| 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**

7 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Rugby CV21 4EE

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. You made us feel very welcome. We enjoyed talking with you, watching your lessons and looking at your work. Your school provides you with a good education, and some aspects of its work are outstanding. We are not surprised that almost all of you enjoy school hugely.

We saw that your school develops you as very sensible and caring young citizens who are very aware of the needs of others. You do a fantastic job raising funds for charities. Well done, in particular, for working so well with others in the English Martyrs community to raise the money for a new school in Burma.

Your behaviour is very good. You get on extremely well with the adults in your school and with each other. The adults are very good at looking after you and keeping you safe. They provide excellent role models for you.

You make good progress during your time at English Martyrs. This is because there is a lot of good teaching. The curriculum is good as well, with many interesting and exciting activities in addition to daily lessons.

Your headteacher and the staff team are committed to making the school even better. We have asked them to do these things.

- Make sure that all of the teaching is closely matched to your learning needs and gives you the right level of challenge.
- Improve opportunities for the Reception children to learn outdoors.
- Get the governors to be more involved in checking up on how well the school is doing and helping it to become even better.

You can help by continuing to be such considerate and pleasant young people and by always doing your best. Your school council could also help the adults to improve the school, for example, by meeting with some of the governors. Thank you once again.

Yours faithfully

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector