

# English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100962
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	335631
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Raymond Jardine

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	218
<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 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	St Mark Street London E1 8DJ
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<b>Email address</b>	head@englishmartyrs.towerhamlets.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by 9 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including the school development plan, arrangements for safeguarding pupils, school policies, minutes of meetings and school assessment data. Inspectors analysed completed inspection questionnaires from 142 parents and carers as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of more able pupils, particularly in mathematics, to determine if teaching is sufficiently challenging
- the impact of school partnerships with others to help determine whether the curriculum is outstanding
- the school's contribution to community cohesion
- the extent to which governors systematically monitor and challenge the school's work and its priorities.

## Information about the school

The school is about average in size. It serves an ethnically diverse local community and some pupils come from further afield. Over half of all pupils come from White British, Irish or other White backgrounds and the remainder from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, including Black Caribbean and Black African. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. Almost half of pupils do not speak English as their first language and a few are at an early stage of learning English. Fewer pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. More pupils join or leave the school mid-year than is typical nationally. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school where pupils thrive in a very encouraging learning environment. The many outstanding features reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now also excellent. This track record demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. Staff are highly skilled and work closely as a team under the excellent leadership of the headteacher. Systems for reviewing the school's work are rigorous and their findings acted on promptly. Consequently, any variation in the achievement of different groups of pupils identified is reduced rapidly. Governors systematically monitor the school's work, invest in key areas such as the professional development of staff to sustain improvements and confidently hold the school to account. Pupils' attainment by Year 6 continues to be high in a range of subjects and pupils much enjoy their time at school. The school's ethos and values pervade its work and standards of care, guidance and support are excellent. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and the diverse social and ethnic groups of pupils contribute much to a very harmonious school community. Parents and carers strongly endorse the school's provision for their children. One summed up the views of many: 'I am delighted with my child's education, not just academically, but the focus on ethical and moral values.'

Central to the school's success is the excellent teaching. Pupils enjoy the stimulating contexts for learning and the challenge that they receive in lessons. Assessment is used extremely well to guide teaching, especially so in English. A distinctive feature is the extensive and imaginative links made across subjects, particularly to take opportunities to practise and develop key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are encouraged to speak, explain in detail and to write extensively in many subjects, which they particularly enjoy. They also acquire excellent skills in working collaboratively and independently. Consequently, they grow in confidence and are thoroughly prepared for their next steps in education and for adult life. Teachers routinely mentor each other to draw on their extensive expertise, reflecting a determination to provide the best that they can for their pupils; a feature that is much appreciated by parents and carers. The many partnerships that the school has forged contribute to a rich and stimulating curriculum and to ensuring that pupils' individual needs are met very well. Out-of-school visits and visitors help provide memorable experiences and bring learning vividly to life, for example a visit to a theatre group helped pupils to explore issues around ethnic diversity and racism.

Pupils are very proud of their school and relationships are very good. Pupils' excellent behaviour is an important contributor to their outstanding progress. Incidents of

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harassment or bullying are rare and the school has very effective systems for encouraging pupils to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on others (called Think it Through) and to encourage self-discipline. Pupils contribute much to their school and local community. Senior leaders recognise that the school's contribution to community cohesion is not wide enough, particularly to engage pupils and parents and carers more fully and through more extensive national and international links with other institutions, to help pupils better appreciate ways of life in Britain and elsewhere.

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

- Extend the school's contribution to community cohesion by:
  - harnessing the support and involvement of parents and carers and pupils more fully
  - developing links with contrasting areas of Britain to reflect the diversity of ways of life
  - building on initiatives already begun, to embed an international dimension to pupils' learning into the school's work. □

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Attainment in Year 6 is typically high, most consistently so in English and science. In 2009, attainment in mathematics by Year 6 was not quite as high as other core subjects because fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5 than expected. Senior and middle leaders' careful analysis of pupils' performance in tests and other assessments ensures that such gaps close quickly. Currently, attainment in mathematics is again high with two thirds of Year 6 pupils now securely working at Level 5 or higher in the subject. In lessons and over time, pupils make rapid progress because lessons are consistently challenging and the varied tasks provided engage them all and capture their interest and enjoyment. One Year 6 pupil said: 'I really love maths; it gets your brain working'. She and her classmates were busy making up and finding solutions to word problems relating to probability, averages, ratio and other mathematical principles, using coloured Smarties as their theme and with outstanding effect. Pupils routinely explain their thinking, speculate and offer thoughtful opinions, and they learn to persist at challenging tasks and to celebrate success. A strong feature of pupils' learning and progress is the emphasis placed on speaking and the acquisition of key vocabulary across subjects so that pupils become confident and articulate by the time they leave. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively assessed and supported by well-trained teaching assistants and teachers so that they make particularly good progress in their learning. Those who speak English as an additional language do particularly well by Year 6, partly because the school draws on expertise from partner schools and its own effective support to ensure that they become secure in their spoken and written language. Overall, boys and girls and those from different ethnic groups make similar progress.

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Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school and attendance rates are high. They are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe, including internet safety, and how to adopt healthy lifestyles. Lunch and playtimes are very social and enjoyable periods and the great majority of pupils take and enjoy the very nutritional school meals provided. Many pupils participate in the wide variety of additional clubs and sports and they take pride in their considerable success on the sports field. They readily take the initiative, for example, when raising substantial charitable funds for Haiti and exploring fair trade issues through links with a Ghanaian school. Moral and social development is excellent. Older pupils look after younger pupils. Inspectors saw Year 5 pupils enjoying partnering Nursery children in a picnic with food that they had prepared. Pupils' spiritual development is a very strong feature of their education; they learn a great deal about world faiths and are thoughtful and reflective, through prayer and their learning. The participation of many pupils in varied opportunities for creative arts, dance and musical activities through instrumental tuition or the choir contributes much to their cultural development.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The majority of lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding and the remainder good. Typical features of lessons are the high level of challenge that is well matched to the range of pupils' abilities and the stimulating contexts for learning that capture pupils' interest and engagement. The objectives for lessons are always made clear to pupils and regularly referred to when reviewing their progress. Teachers are very adept at checking how well pupils are progressing in their learning. Teachers' probing questioning reflects their very good knowledge of how children learn and they strongly encourage pupils to explain and develop ideas to share with the class. Resources are used especially well to help children learn through first-hand experience and every opportunity is taken to link up their learning across the curriculum. For example, visiting police officers who worked with Year 5 pupils on Drugs Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) provided the context for poems in literacy lessons about 'saying no to drugs' to be performed at assembly. A very strong feature of teaching is the use of curriculum targets with pupils to guide their work. In English, thorough marking and feedback to pupils on chosen samples of writing help them to improve, and pupils regularly review their own and their peers' work using these targets. Curriculum targets and current working levels are reviewed termly and shared with parents and carers so that they too can contribute to their children's learning. Pupils present their work very well. They write at length across many subjects and teachers' marking is regular and constructive. Central records of pupils' assessments enable teachers and senior leaders to monitor closely how well individuals are progressing so that they do not underachieve.

The curriculum is innovative, exciting and provides pupils with memorable experiences in their learning. Religious education, creative arts and music are strong subjects in the curriculum. Another impressive feature is the many well-established partnerships that contribute to pupils' learning. For example, local business people visit regularly to support individual pupils. Partnerships with other schools provide access to additional expertise to ensure that the needs of all individuals are met. There are many curriculum events, out of school visits and visitors and these are always made integral to pupils' learning in subjects so that the most can be gained from them. Pupils learn Spanish and there is a French club after school, along with many other activities such as cookery, choir and many sports. Much is also done to provide for gifted and talented pupils, both in school and through special events. Staff know the pupils very well and standards of pastoral care are very high. There are very good induction arrangements to Nursery and much is done to smooth the transition to secondary education. Staff work consistently and effectively to promote good attendance, behaviour and respect for others. On the few occasions when poor behaviour does occur, systems for recording and following up the school's actions are effective and monitored by governors. Arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few with language difficulties are highly effective. Inspectors saw some good examples of support given to vulnerable pupils which was enhanced by very good use of outside agencies.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<p><b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms</p>	
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<p><b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<b>1</b>
	1
<p><b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b></p>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b></p>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Staff and parents and carers express full confidence in the school's leadership. The headteacher, well supported by her deputy, sets clear priorities founded on a robust and accurate assessment of the school's performance. Staff work exceptionally well together and are collectively ambitious to provide high standards of care and education. They welcome opportunities to observe colleagues, build on best practice and share their own. They are also outward looking and keen to learn from other schools. Subject leaders are very effective in the drive for improvement because they monitor pupils' work and progress thoroughly for patterns and trends and provide well-targeted support and guidance to colleagues. For example, identified weaknesses in some pupils' speaking and vocabulary have led to sustained action to help improve pupils' writing skills across the school. The school is also vigilant in combating racism and intolerance and its actions demonstrate its outstanding promotion of equality of opportunity.

Governors have improved the quality of their monitoring since the last inspection. The school's work is now systematically reviewed in a detailed programme of work that includes visits, policy reviews and analysis of key indicators of the school's performance. Governors undertake regular training, for example, to enable them to audit rigorously the arrangements for safeguarding pupils, and they now have very good arrangements for consulting with parents and carers through direct meetings, surveys and newsletters. Consequently, the partnership with parents and carers is very strong. Systems for safeguarding pupils are excellent and very well managed by senior leaders with governors. There are thorough checks made on all adults working with pupils and excellent risk assessment systems which are informed by parents' and carers' or pupils' concerns. The school has thoroughly audited its contribution to community cohesion. It makes a very good contribution to its own and local community and is now implementing plans to extend a national and international dimension to its work, drawing in parents and carers and pupils more fully in this endeavour.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<p><b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning</p>	<b>1</b>
	1



<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills a little above those typical of their age. They make excellent progress in all the areas of learning so that outcomes are considerably above national expectations by the end of Reception. Children much enjoy the rich and well-planned activities. Inspectors observed children choose to make up stories, write postcards, explore the shape and texture of shells and stones, and prepare play-dough food, all linked imaginatively through a seaside theme. Typically, activities have a focus displayed for children to keep in mind, and adults carefully observe and record their progress as they work and play. Assessment is used particularly well to monitor children and to look for patterns and trends. A dip in children's mathematical calculation in 2008 led to prompt actions, including guidance to parents and carers, that have brought about substantial improvement in relation to other areas of learning. Excellent leadership, teamwork among staff, and considerable refurbishment of the Nursery have all helped to improve the quality of provision since the last inspection. Staff are very knowledgeable about learning and the requirements of provision, including welfare arrangements. Activities are very well resourced, including for outdoor play, and a good balance is maintained between activities led by adults and those initiated by the children, with a free flow between indoor and outside activities.

### *These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## **Views of parents and carers**

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority who responded were positive about the school's work in almost every area. They all agree that the teaching is good, their children are kept safe and that children enjoy their time at school. A few feel that more could be done to take account of parents' and carers' suggestions and concerns, for example to offer more foreign languages. Inspectors found that the school has many ways of seeking parents' and carers' views and that it does act on them where it can. Many written comments praised the staff, particularly the headteacher. Overall, parents and carers are very pleased with their child's experience at this school.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	98	68	43	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	118	83	24	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	78	55	57	40	3	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	58	55	39	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	69	44	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	79	56	59	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	53	63	44	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	74	52	61	43	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	57	57	40	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	64	42	60	8	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	66	46	62	44	10	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	94	66	46	32	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	99	70	43	30	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



9 July 2010

Dear pupils

Inspection of English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School, London, E1 8DJ

Thank you for the warm welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. Please also convey our thanks to your parents and carers for the large number of responses to our questionnaire. These helped to confirm the judgements that we made. You are clearly very proud of your school; we agree that it is outstanding. We were impressed by your courteous and considerate behaviour to each other and to visitors. It is one key reason why you do so well during your time at school. Another is the commitment and expertise of all the adults who work to provide for you. They look after you very well and you learn much about how to stay safe and to live healthily. Lunchtimes are clearly very social occasions and very many of you take the healthy choices that are offered. Many of you take advantage of the varied additional clubs, activities and sports provided and we hope you all enjoyed your sports day. There are many ways in which you contribute to your school and the local community, through your charitable fund-raising, the choir, other musical activities and dance, for example. The staff and governors realise that more can be done to extend your appreciation of ways of life across Britain and in other countries. We agree and have recommended that this continues to be a school priority.

Pupils reach high standards in many subjects by Year 6 compared with other schools nationally. This is partly because the teaching is so challenging and much of it is excellent. You much enjoy the interesting lessons and we noted the confidence with which you speak, explain and develop your ideas in lessons. Teachers provide you with valuable guidance through their comments in lessons and constructive marking. You write a great deal and we congratulate you on the standards of your presentation and imaginative writing across many subjects. You can help your teachers by using your targets to review your work regularly so that you can improve it further. We know that many of you are already very skilled at doing this.

Yours sincerely

Ray Jardine

Lead inspector

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