

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108256
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	337045
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Brenda Clarke

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Karen House
Headteacher	Mr Bernard Martin
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent approximately 65% of their time looking at pupils' learning. Inspectors visited 18 lessons, observed all teachers teaching, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including pupils' work, the school's records indicating pupils' progress and attainment over time, a range of school policies and the school improvement plan. The inspectors also analysed 59 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

- pupils' current attainment and progress and the effectiveness of measures taken to halt the decline in standards and rates of progress.
- how effectively the quality and consistency of teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of all groups of pupils to enable them to make good or better progress
- pupils' understanding and appreciation of communities different to their own
- the quality of leadership at all levels and its ability to ensure continuing improvement
- whether the good outcomes in pupils' personal development and care guidance and support have been maintained since the last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is broadly average in size. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is average. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average. Most pupils are White British. A rising number of pupils are at an early stage of speaking English. The school provides for nursery and reception aged children in a newly built Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Since the last inspection the school has experienced significant staffing difficulties. The school has received the Activemark and Healthy School awards. It is an Investor in Pupils.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school which is very well thought of by parents and carers. One parent's view reflects that of many when saying, 'The school provides a warm and welcoming environment for children and cares very much about the individual child'. Strong Christian values underpin all aspects of the school's work enabling pupils to develop outstanding spiritual and moral awareness. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles and many participate in the wide range of sporting activities. They make a good contribution to the school community when acting as monitors or taking decisions on the school council. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding, enabling pupils to enjoy school and feel very safe.

There has been a decline in standards since the last inspection leading to a significant number of pupils making less than expected progress. This has been due mainly to a high level of staff absence that has led to turbulence in pupils' education. The leadership team has begun to halt this decline. Staffing is now relatively stable and pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Attainment is broadly below average by the end of Year 6 for most groups of pupils. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, the pace of learning is not always fast enough to ensure good progress in every lesson and learning activities are not always adapted well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. There is sometimes a lack of challenge in lessons which has an adverse impact on the attainment of more able pupils in particular.

The satisfactory curriculum has some strengths in its breadth and diversity. Clubs such as Young Engineers, initiatives with partner schools, and exciting events such as Book Week enrich the curriculum. Assessment is not being used as well as it could be to ensure that pupils' skills are developed step by step across a range of subjects and applied in different subjects; for example, by applying skills in mathematics to science.

The school is soundly led and managed and benefits from a very experienced and active governing body. The headteacher and senior managers focus strongly on developing the whole child, but are sometimes insufficiently rigorous in evaluating the precise progress pupils make in lessons. Rigorous evaluation and tracking of pupils' progress and newly introduced procedures to tackle the school's weaknesses are resulting in sound improvements in pupils' writing and mathematics. As a result pupils are becoming more confident and independent in these subjects. A clear plan of action together with a whole school approach to improving provision places the school in a satisfactory position to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise standards and accelerate progress in English, mathematics and science by improving the quality and consistency of teaching across the school by:
 - ensuring that more able pupils are consistently challenged
 - accelerating the pace of learning in lessons
 - using assessment more rigorously to meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that teachers' marking informs pupils of what they need to do next
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to apply the skills taught in mathematics and information and communication technology to other subjects.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that lesson observations undertaken by senior leaders have a greater focus on the quality and scope of pupils' learning in lessons
 - adopting a more rigorous approach to tackling weaknesses in teaching
 - monitoring more rigorously the progress made by more able pupils.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy learning. In lessons they are enthusiastic and persevere. They listen attentively and behave well. Pupils get on well with classmates and share ideas with partners responsibly. In most lessons, pupils work at a satisfactory pace but are capable of achieving more. This is because they are not always challenged enough. Pupils enjoy the newly introduced 'maths passport' initiative and show great enthusiasm for the stimulating mathematical activities. This is already beginning to accelerate pupils' confidence and dexterity when solving mathematical problems.

From starting points which are below those expected on entry to Year 1, pupils make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Year 6 standards remain below those expected nationally in English, science and mathematics. Very few pupils attain above the expectation for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language achieve in line with their classmates due to the carefully planned support they receive.

Pupils develop good social skills, are polite and show respect and care for others. As pupils mature, most become confident, articulate learners who care about their school and take an active part in organising school events such as recycling. Pupils' behaviour is good in most lessons and around the school. Pupils develop a strong sense of community enabling them to feel happy and safe but have limited understanding of communities that are different to their own. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their next stage of education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good practice. Pupils make best progress when learning gets off to a brisk pace and in lessons where learning activities are well matched to the abilities of pupils. In such lessons, teachers ensure high levels of engagement so that no time is wasted. In satisfactory lessons, assessments are not used as effectively to match activities to the full ability range in the class. In a significant minority of lessons too much speaking by the teacher results in pupils losing concentration and on occasion behaving inappropriately. The use of targets to help pupils improve their work is at an early stage of development. Inspection of pupils' work over time indicates inconsistency in teachers' marking so that pupils are sometimes unsure how to improve their work. Teachers ensure that classrooms are well organised and that pupils' work is displayed attractively. Relationships are very caring and supportive. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and give good support to less able pupils. A good range of intervention strategies, for example to improve reading, gives pupils effective additional support.

The school is rightly focused on improving the curriculum to promote and improve pupils' skills in mathematics and written work. There is a greater emphasis across the school on giving pupils steps to success when writing and using creative stimuli such as drama and role play to extend pupils' thinking. This is at an early stage of development in some year groups but is successful overall because pupils' have the support they need

¹ 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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and are beginning to build skills in a consistent way. Strong links with the Catholic partnership and other professionals such as visiting musicians enrich provision and offer exciting creative and enjoyable opportunities. There is effective provision overall for information and communication technology but there are occasional gaps in pupils' learning.

The school takes good care of its pupils. An inclusive ethos provides pupils with good guidance and support to ensure that they work and play well together. Pupils feel extremely secure and say that there is no bullying. Pupils, parents and carers know that adults within the school will give support and help. The child and family support worker makes a significant contribution to the pastoral care of pupils and their families ensuring that their differing needs are met. Pupils are given good guidance on their personal development. The school is working with parents and carers to improve attendance from average to above average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are clearly focused on driving improvement and addressing areas of weakness, such as improving pupils' progress in mathematics and the quality and content of pupils' writing. Systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress have become more rigorous; however, procedures to monitor the quality of teaching are not as robust and this has led to some inconsistencies in provision and a lack of focus on the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Governors are very committed, well organised and are directly involved in setting priorities for improvement. They are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school. Good links with parents and carers and the school's 'open door' policy result in high levels of parental satisfaction.

The school works diligently to ensure equal opportunities so that all pupils are fully included and their differing needs met. Harassment is not tolerated. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are outstanding with exemplary practice in all areas of provision. Strong partnerships with a range of professionals enhance provision and ensure that the needs of vulnerable pupils are quickly met. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. The school enjoys strong community and international links but has yet to develop a cohesive plan to extend pupils' understanding of other cultures and communities in multi-ethnic Britain.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills mostly well below those expected for their age. They settle well and make good progress due to skilled teaching and the wealth of well planned learning opportunities in the unit and outdoors. Progress slows in the Reception year because not all activities are so well matched to children's needs. Planned activities frequently lack a clear learning intention and opportunities are missed to reinforce children's learning in stimulating ways. This results in children making satisfactory rather than good progress. Evidence over time indicates that children enter Year 1 with skills typical for their age in personal development and early mathematics but below in the significant areas of reading, linking sounds to letters and writing. Although there are carefully structured opportunities to learn the sounds that letters make, opportunities are missed for children to write for a variety of purposes.

Adults take good care of children enabling them to feel very safe in this welcoming environment. Parents and carers particularly appreciate the good arrangements for induction into the nursery, enabling children to settle quickly. Relationships are strong so that children are happy and get on well together. Leadership is developing. Provision is sometimes organised into two separate age groups rather than as a cohesive unit. Hence, although most staff have considerable expertise opportunities are missed to use their skills more widely, for example developing a range of story telling opportunities to more closely match children's' differing stages of development.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About one fifth of the parents or carers responded to the questionnaire. A very large majority of these are happy with the school's provision. Most feel that their children enjoy school and that school keeps them safe. Almost all believe that teaching is good. Inspection findings judge the quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory overall. Parents and carers rightly state that the school takes good account of suggestions and concerns. A very small minority feel that their children are making insufficient progress. Inspection findings agree that a significant minority of pupils are capable of achieving more highly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 251 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	72	18	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	74	16	24	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	56	26	38	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	53	27	40	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	59	26	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	54	27	40	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	60	25	37	2	3	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)	34	50	28	41	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	59	23	34	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	44	29	43	5	7	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	41	35	51	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	40	59	25	37	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	69	19	28	2	3	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



Dear Children

Thank you very much for making the inspectors so welcome and answering all our questions. We really enjoyed finding out about your work and the ways in which you help around the school.

Yours is a satisfactory school and you make satisfactory progress. You really enjoy school and most of you feel very safe. We agree with you when you say adults take good care of you and that your school helps you to be healthy. Your behaviour is good and you are very polite. You are kind and considerate to others. Well done! In some lessons you are not always challenged to work at a fast pace and the work is sometimes too easy, especially for those pupils who are working at the higher levels.

We have asked your headteacher, other staff and governors to do some important things to make the school even better for you. These are to raise standards in English, mathematics and science particularly for those of you working at the higher levels by making sure that work is not too easy. To make sure that teachers' marking helps you to know what you need to do next to improve. Also to make sure that senior leaders carefully monitor the teaching and learning in classrooms to ensure that you always make good progress.

You can help by working hard and using the new things you have learnt in your 'maths passport' lessons to become really good mathematicians!

Yours sincerely

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