

English Martyr's RC Primary School

Wycliffe Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 5AH

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has steadily transformed the school since her appointment. The building and resources have been improved with more changes planned. Staff morale is high, governance is strong and all work as a team.
- Achievement and progress are good. Pupils leave school with above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy learning because teaching is good. Lessons include opportunities to share ideas with others and to learn through practical activities.
- Behaviour is good and on occasions exemplary. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and kind to each other. This is a very caring school and pupils feel safe.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils' understanding of their role in the world and how they can play a part is impressive.
- More rigorous methods to track pupils' progress and check on teaching have had a positive impact on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching still requires improvement to ensure that the pace of learning and challenge for pupils sustains their interest.
- The outdoor area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not used effectively to extend learning to the outdoors.
- A good number of pupils have a beautiful style of handwriting and work is presented very well but this is not consistent throughout the school.
- The plan to improve the school does not always make it clear how actions are going to impact on attainment and how success is to be measured.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons. They visited all classes.
- Meetings were held with staff, two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils' books were reviewed with a focus on writing and mathematics in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils from different classes read to the inspectors.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's plan for future improvements, evaluation of performance and information about pupils' progress and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.
- The views of 44 parents were analysed through the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Other parents shared their opinions of the school at the start of the day.
- Inspectors analysed 15 returns by staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jennifer Platt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stefan Lord

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. Only a few are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for the children in local authority care, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has achieved many awards in recent years including the Healthy School Award, Bronze Anti-Bullying Award, the Fairtrade Award and the Primary Quality Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the rate of pupils' progress to outstanding by:
 - raising expectations of the quality of handwriting
 - ensuring that all lessons go at a brisk pace and tasks are set at the correct level to enable all pupils to make as much progress as possible
 - making better use of the outdoor space for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensuring adults are on hand to interact with children and make learning consistently exciting both indoors and outdoors.
- Making the school's plan for improvements more effective by clarifying how actions are going to raise attainment and how success will be measured.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with attainment slightly below average especially in communication skills. Overall progress is good and accelerates in Reception where children show great confidence talking to visitors and including them in their role play in their vets. Attainment is rising with an increase in the number exceeding the level expected for their age.
- In Year 1 pupils reached the expected level in the national reading assessment in 2012. The school has adapted a new approach to teaching letters and sounds and the predicted outcome for this year is much higher.
- Pupils make good progress from Year 1 to Year 6. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and has been for several years. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated and dipped last year especially in writing. This group of pupils had gaps in their learning linked to some underachievement as they moved through Key Stage 2. More rigorous tracking of pupils' progress ensures this is no longer the case. Current attainment is above average with a significant increase in the number reaching above average attainment.
- Reading is good throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 make good use of their knowledge of letters and sounds to decode new words especially as they enjoy reading non-fiction books. Year 6 pupils also apply their skills successfully to research information. Writing is often imaginative and in Year 6 paragraphs are used well to structure stories. Handwriting for many is not always neat and easy to read. The challenge in mathematics is high and many older pupils are skilled mathematicians.
- There is no significant difference between the attainment of those in receipt of the pupil premium and other pupils. The small numbers known to be eligible for free school meals make progress in line with other pupils. Although most reach the level expected for their age, overall attainment is slightly lower than for other pupils because few currently reach beyond this level.
- Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective. They receive additional help in lessons and in small groups and these pupils make good progress. Those with a statement for their very specific needs often make excellent progress in lessons due to experienced staff and great patience that enables pupils to make as much progress as possible. These actions show very effective promotion of equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good with examples of outstanding practice, enabling pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers manage behaviour effectively so that lessons are busy in an organised way.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, sessions include a wide range of practical activities. Children enjoy learning in Reception and are imaginative in their independent work. Resources are organised well to sustain children's enthusiasm. However, some resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been well used and now lack the sparkle to attract children's interest. This is more obvious outdoors and the use of this space is not fully exploited to ensure free flow from indoors. Occasionally, especially in the Nursery, tasks do not excite children and adults are not on hand to extend learning.
- In most lessons in the rest of the school, teachers add interest with imaginative use of the interactive whiteboard. This was most effective in an excellent mathematics lesson demonstrating accuracy when measuring perimeters. Most lessons include opportunities to share ideas and pupils learn from each other. Teachers often set a time for activities and this makes pupils work harder.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to question pupils. They insist on accurate use of terminology for different features in literacy and mathematics and pupils use them accurately in their work.

- Reading is taught successfully. One pupil said he enjoyed learning his letters because it was fun. Older pupils have time allocated to reading for understanding and this improves their use of reading in other subjects. Numeracy is taught well. Staff follow a consistent approach to teaching problem solving and pupils apply their skills well as they move between classes.
- When teaching is less effective the pace of learning slows. This often links to pupils spending too much time listening and sometimes it takes too long to reach the main focus of the lesson.
- Another feature of excellent teaching is the challenge for pupils. Quick-fire questions and hard work move learning on at a very brisk pace. This is less evident in other lessons leading to some pupils losing interest.
- Homework extends learning. In Year 5, pupils researched facts about the poem *The Highwayman*. The use of information and communication technology was impressive and used very well in the lesson.
- Marking is good and pupils assess their own work and know how to make it better.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- At play and in lessons behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- Attitudes to learning are good and in the best lessons exemplary. They are respectful when sharing ideas and providing feedback to others about their efforts. Only when teaching fails to keep their attention do some start to get restless and fail to complete enough work.
- Pupils are very clear about how to keep safe. They know the dangers of using the internet and are aware that this must be used carefully. Pupils recognise the different types of bullying and consider there is little unpleasantness in their school. The Catholic faith is valued by pupils and they try to put what they are taught into practice by showing kindness and respect for others. During anti-bullying week pupils enjoyed making a whole-school paper chain symbolising that their friendship could not be broken.
- Pupils are eager to support others. The school council is fired up to achieve an Eco award to show their support for recycling and conservation.
- Discussions with pupils revealed little they would like to improve other than extend the trim trail which is very popular at playtimes.

The leadership and management are good

- The most effective headteacher established a clear programme of improvements to bring the school in line with current thinking and practice. She has steadily moved the school forward at a rate of change that ensured teachers were supportive and able to cope. Although some changes are not fully embedded, the school now has a firm base to build on.
- The school has an accurate view of strengths and aspects to improve. Priorities are included in the school's improvement plan. Some action plans are very precise. For example, the decisive action taken to improve the teaching of letters and sounds. Success was easy to measure by the number expected to reach the required level. Other plans are not as precise leading to a lengthy school improvement plan and a difficulty in checking on the impact of actions on outcomes and how these will raise attainment.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is more precise and identifies underachievement much more promptly than in the past. For example, in 2012, girls did not do as well as the boys. Response was swift. Girls were asked what would make learning better for them. As a result of adjustments to the curriculum to make it more girl-friendly, girls now do as well as boys especially in the number reaching above average levels.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching identify steps to improve. Most of these are resolved although a few remain leading to variation in the overall quality of teaching. Training links

closely to need.

- Senior leaders hold meetings with teachers to monitor the progress pupils in their class make. When a pupil is not making enough progress explanations are required and action planned. This accountability has been a major factor in accelerating progress.
 - Staff have targets based on their teaching and the progress pupils make and success influences decisions about pay progression.
 - The curriculum revolves around topics shared between two years. This enables an exchange of ideas and makes learning more purposeful. The richness of experience for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not fully developed in the outdoors. Extra-curricular activities are varied and include a residential for older pupils. Art on display is of a high quality. These activities make a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils celebrate their own faith and also show respect for the beliefs of others.
 - The local authority provides effective support. Training is available and useful evaluations of data guide the school when setting priorities.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully informed about what is happening in school. Training on the use of data has enabled them to check regularly on pupils' progress. They query underachievement, as in last year's results in writing, and check changes are being effective. Teaching is observed and governors ask incisive questions when any concerns are raised. Governors set the headteacher challenging targets and ensure all teachers' targets link performance to salary awards. They are fully aware of the allocation of pupil premium money and check vigilantly on the progress of the pupils in receipt of this funding. Governors ensure statutory requirements are met particularly regarding safeguarding.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106352
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	403011

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	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Morgan
Headteacher	Anita Harrop
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
Telephone number	0161 7487257
Email address	englishmartyrs.office@traffordlearning.org

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