



# Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic VA Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114269  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279350  
**Inspection dates** 5 April 2006 to 6 April 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Margaret Shepherd

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Durham Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Esh Winning
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Durham, County Durham
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3734343
<b>Number on roll</b>	81	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3734343
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Jack Boyle
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Erica Smith

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5 April 2006 - 6 April 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279350
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average primary school, though the numbers on roll are rising. Children are organised in three mixed-age classes in the afternoons. In the morning, an additional part-time teacher allows the children to work in four classes according to ability. The morning sessions focus on English, mathematics and science. More children than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The school judges itself to be satisfactory with good features. Parents hold it in high esteem. Achievement is good. Standards are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. The school gives children a firm foundation for their reading in Reception and continues to provide a stimulating reading curriculum as they move through the school. A strong emphasis on practical, investigative science results in above average standards in science. In mathematics, where standards are average, teachers do not provide enough practical work or give children enough opportunities to explain their mathematical thinking. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. However, the more able children do not achieve consistently across different subjects. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. This is a result of the very high quality of care, support and guidance that children receive, within a clear Christian framework and with the help of outside agencies. Teaching is good overall. In the Year 4/5 class, lessons have some outstanding features. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The curriculum for personal development and well-being is outstanding, but the problem-solving aspect of the mathematics curriculum has too little emphasis. Although the quality of education and standards in Reception are satisfactory, and the Reception curriculum is well balanced in whole-class and group work, it does not cover the full curriculum well enough to support children's own learning. Leadership and management are good overall, and good on the part of the headteacher. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, and there is a good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

- Adjust the curriculum for mathematics to place more emphasis on practical activities and problem-solving and give children more opportunities to explain their thinking.
- Challenge more able children's learning more consistently in all subjects.
- Provide a wider range of stimulating independent activities for Reception children in both their indoor and outdoor learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children enter the school with standards that are broadly average. By the end of Reception standards are at the expected level, except in reading, where standards are above average. This is a result of the systematic teaching of letter sounds, the partnership with parents and the strong emphasis on reading in this class. Standards in Year 2 are average. Fewer children reach the higher levels in writing than in reading and mathematics.

The school sets itself challenging targets. The emphasis on improving provision in English and science has raised standards in these subjects over the past two years. Progress in the junior classes in English and science is good. By Year 6, standards are above average in both these subjects. In English this is due to the continuing emphasis on reading in the junior classes, and the high quality opportunities for speaking and listening. The good progress in science is due to the well-balanced science curriculum, with its clear emphasis on investigative skills, and to some outstanding teaching. Standards in mathematics are average and a smaller proportion of all children reach the higher levels than in English or science. For the more able children, achievement is inconsistent.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well in mathematics. These children tackle their learning positively because of the school's high emphasis on raising children's self-esteem and through sensitive support from the teaching staff.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development and well-being are excellent. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children show great respect in their spiritual responses and have an excellent understanding of moral issues. The Junior Justice and Peace group discuss moral issues with great sophistication. Children approach their learning very positively. They thoroughly appreciate their teachers' efforts. They also take every opportunity to attend the wealth of extra curricular clubs. Some attend up to seven clubs each week. Behaviour is exemplary. Older children offer an excellent model for the younger ones. Children take on high levels of responsibility. They lead assemblies without adult support, and plan and lead clubs such as the prayer group. Every child performs confidently in whole-school productions. Attendance is good. Children have an excellent understanding of healthy living. The school Nutrition Action Group makes firm recommendations to other children, such as bringing healthy packed lunches. Children also have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. They develop a real understanding of contributing to the community through projects such as collecting food for asylum seekers. Children have excellent citizenship skills. The school council expects to make a real difference to the school's provision and writes sophisticated letters to officials, such as architects, in order to make sure their school remains safe. The development of economic well-being is excellent.

Children make real life decisions about spending, taking into account moral issues. For example, they trawl the Internet to find tee-shirts that have an eco-friendly source.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with outstanding features in one class. Teachers use resources well to stimulate children's interest and motivate them to approach new learning positively. They provide a good balance between whole-class sessions and group work. They work well with additional adults in lessons to provide sensitive support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The good use of computers in small groups extends children's learning in different subjects and effectively reinforces skills in information and communication technology (ICT). In mathematics, teachers miss opportunities for children to explain their mathematical thinking and they do not challenge the learning enough during whole-class sessions at the end of lessons. Teachers do not consistently challenge more able children to reach their potential across all subjects. The outstanding teaching is in Years 4 and 5. These lessons proceed at a very fast pace; every child plays an active part in the learning; and the teaching and learning in whole-class sessions at the end of lessons are exemplary. In most respects, teachers make very effective use of the school's excellent assessment information. As a result, pupils learn to set and use their own targets very well. However, this practice works much less effectively for the more able pupils, especially in mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that there is a balance in the different subjects over time, and that there is no repetition in the mixed-aged classes. The organisation of the curriculum in the mornings, when children work in classes of similar ability, works well and has had a positive impact on raising standards in English and science. Pupils have good opportunities for learning through practical, real life problem-solving in science, but not enough in mathematics. The curriculum for reading, speaking and listening is very effective, with many high quality opportunities for children to speak in whole-school contexts. The daily whole-school provision of 'brain gymnastics' works very well, and sets the right tone for learning. The Reception teaching balances the curriculum carefully for the Year 1 and Reception children in whole-class and group sessions, but does not provide a well balanced programme of independent activities in the outdoor and indoor areas. The curriculum for personal development and well-being is outstanding. The school provides a wealth of opportunities, for children to develop these skills systematically over time.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. The school uses its small size to great advantage to provide a safe and secure family context that supports all

children's learning. Staff understand child protection procedures well. They have high levels of communication with each other, and a very good understanding of the individual needs of all the children in every class. Children have every confidence that they could go to a range of adults with a problem, or take it to the school council for action. The school provides high-quality guidance for children to understand what they need to do to improve, both in literacy and numeracy. The partnerships with parents, carers and the community are excellent and contribute extremely well to providing a united context for children's learning. Partnership with other agencies is good.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good overall and have a positive impact on raising standards in the school. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good, and particularly effective in promoting the highest standards of personal development and well-being. She has a very firm vision of how she wants the school to improve and systematically works to achieve her goals. Her reorganisation of the morning sessions, when children work in ability classes, has had a positive impact on raising standards. Teachers who have roles as coordinators work systematically to extend their subjects, despite having a heavy load of responsibilities. The governance of the school is satisfactory. A governor very effectively supports the personal curriculum, through weekly contributions to music and sport. Governors have a clear commitment to include every child equally in the school's work. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. Parents and children are fully involved in this process and expect to contribute to it. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and the school has a good capacity to improve further. Value for money is good.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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The Children

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs RC VA Primary School

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7 April 2006

Dear Children

Thank you very much for welcoming me into your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work.

The best things about your school are:

your excellent personal development and the way that you take responsibility for leading events like assembly and prayer groups

your high-quality whole-school performances

your school council, the school Nutrition Action Group and the Junior Justice and Peace group

you know your own targets in literacy and numeracy very well

the good levels you reach in English and science by Year 6

the way that your teachers use laptops in lessons

the support that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive in lessons

the very wide range of clubs that you go to

your headteacher and the way that she knows every one of you so well

the partnership that your school has with your parents and carers.

I have asked your school to help you reach higher standards in mathematics by talking about your mathematical thinking more, and by getting you to work harder at the end of lessons, doing more practical and problem-solving mathematics. I have also asked your school to help the more able children to reach high standards in all their subjects. Finally, I have asked your

school to give children in Reception a wider- range of subjects to support their own learning in the classroom and outdoors.

Best wishes

Maggi Shepherd

Lead inspector