

St Mary Queen of Martyrs RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118052
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	291009
Inspection date	19 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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 on roll	
School	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Bane
Headteacher	Mrs Finola Barron
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Nidderdale Sutton Park Hull East Yorkshire HU7 4BS
Telephone number	01482 825625
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school situated in an urban area with considerable social deprivation. Some pupils travel from outside the area because the school serves two parishes. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small minority learn English as their second language. The percentage of pupils entitled to claim a free school meal is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above average. When they start the school, children have a low level of basic skills.

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 aspects. Parents rightly praise the dedication and commitment of the staff and all the activities on offer. Pupils are confident, happy and immensely proud of their school. The Easter Service, which coincided with the inspection, showed the joyful sense of celebration of Christian faith and values, characteristics of the school that underpin all that it does.

An impressive feature of this school is the sheer level of enjoyment experienced by the pupils. Learning is good because teachers work hard to make lessons challenging, interesting and creative. The good curriculum is regularly reviewed to promote excellence and enjoyment. Very good care is taken to ensure that pupils are safe and secure; the result is that the pupils love school.

Provision in the Foundation stage (Nursery and Reception) is good. Children are cared for very well and presented with a wide range of lively, exciting and enriching activities, which ensure that they progress well in all the areas of learning, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. One parent wrote, 'I know that my son's days are full of experiences and opportunities. He has a clear sense of belonging and being valued.'

Pupils of all ages achieve well. They make good progress and achieve well by the end of Years 2 and 6. In the 2006 national tests, pupils in Year 6 reached the standards expected for their age and above average standards in science, exceeding the school's statutory targets. Pupils achieved well in mathematics and science but were less successful in English because higher attainers do not do as well in writing as they do in reading.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils are well aware of the need to be safe and to live a healthy lifestyle. Older pupils are keen to contribute to the day-to-day running of the school and in helping younger pupils. The school is very much at the heart of the parish and hosts many events for the local community. The pupils are good ambassadors for their school; they behave with courtesy and respect. They have a very good knowledge of their own culture but their understanding and awareness of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom is not as strong. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education because they have a good level of basic skills and the school promotes their confidence and self-esteem very well.

These good outcomes for pupils are the result of consistently good quality leadership and management. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead a dedicated team of staff with a shared vision for constant improvement. Governors are very supportive and have an accurate view of the school's work. Excellent use is made of links with other providers and agencies to ensure that pupils enjoy a wide range of activities and receive the support they need. The school has made good progress since its last inspection. Because of the energy and commitment of all the staff and governors, there is good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for higher attainers, across the school.
- Create opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages achieve well. Starting from a low level of basic skills in the Nursery, especially in language and communication skills and creative development, pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and attain standards that are close to national expectations. Pupils continue to make good progress so that standards are generally average by the end of Years 2 and 6, and above average in science. Pupils have achieved consistently well for several years.

In the 2006 national tests for Year 2, pupils reached standards just above average in reading and writing and just below average in mathematics: this shows good achievement. In the 2006 tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' overall results were just above average. Results in English and mathematics were average and significantly above average in science. Girls performed less well than girls nationally in 2006 but this is not a general trend in the school. The current cohort of girls is achieving well. Reading is a strength of the school. Pupils' progress in writing is less brisk because higher attainers do not do as well as they do in reading. The school has put in place several good strategies to address this.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the provision is good. A few pupils arrive at school with very little spoken English and make good progress in acquiring early English because of the help they receive from skilled support staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding, including their spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' cultural development is good. They have a very good knowledge of their own culture but their understanding and awareness of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom is less well developed. The school's nurturing ethos ensures that pupils become confident, independent and thoughtful. They value good manners and behave responsibly towards adults and to each other. One pupil said, 'Everyone smiles and this is a happy school'. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly to the routines of school and make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. All pupils are enthusiastic and motivated learners who enjoy everything the school has to offer. Attendance is in line with the national average and improving; behaviour is good. Through their involvement in the School Council, pupils gain insights into the democratic process and are very well aware of the responsibilities of representing others. They have a strong sense of fairness and justice. The school promotes Christian values sensitively throughout its work and pupils acquire many qualities of good citizens. This, combined with secure basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), prepares pupils very well for the future. Pupils recognise the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise and try hard to put these principles into action. Their understanding of how to keep safe and secure is excellent.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school. Teachers plan interesting, creative and enjoyable lessons. A particular strength is the teaching of science where pupils achieve very well and reach above average standards. Lessons in the Foundation Stage cover all the areas

of learning effectively with a particular emphasis on promoting creative development. Two outside classrooms enhance the learning opportunities for Foundation Stage children by encouraging healthy physical development, independent learning through play and awareness of the world around them. Throughout the school, teaching typically includes collaborative planning, use of a wide range of teaching strategies, secure subject knowledge and expertise in using ICT. Pupils learn well because they work hard and are stimulated by good teaching and a good range of resources. Assessment is good so that pupils know how well they are doing and how to reach the next level. Their work is marked carefully with many individual targets set to help them to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school offers a rich curriculum firmly based on national guidelines to develop excellence through enjoyment. The teaching of strong basic skills is at the heart of the curriculum, enhanced by a wide range of work across subjects. All pupils do 15 minutes of French every day. Pupils use ICT well; not only for research and presentation but also creatively. A display of art work using ICT was particularly impressive. Music and drama feature strongly and pupils are encouraged to learn to play the guitar and violin. The playing of the school orchestra at the Easter service was delightful. The curriculum for supporting pupils' personal development is good but with more opportunities needed to increase pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of our society. The school has good sporting links with other local schools and encourages pupils to take plenty of exercise. In the summer term Year 6 pupils have a physical education lesson every day to aid concentration and relaxation. Pupils of all ages take part in numerous clubs and sporting activities. They also enjoy the variety provided by visiting speakers and trips to places of historical and geographical interest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care is outstanding. All recommended child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils have an unusually sound knowledge of the importance of the security of the building, fire and road-safety hazards. They are confident that there are many adults they can approach for help and guidance in the event of any problems. The school provides a confidential counsellor for any pupils who appear to be facing difficulties. Care and support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good, as is the care offered to pupils whose first language is not English. The skilled and sensitive support given by well-trained teaching assistants ensures that these pupils make good, and sometimes very good, progress.

Systems for assessment and checking that pupils are making sufficient progress are good. The school has identified that higher attaining pupils are performing less well in writing and is taking steps to remedy this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has provided strong leadership since her appointment 15 months ago. She has a clear vision for raising standards and improving

provision, shared by all staff. Changes to the management structure of the school have provided new and long-serving staff with more challenges, leading to a strong sense of teamwork. Plans for the future show vision and purpose. All members of staff, including support staff, feel valued and all contribute to the developing plans for the school. The headteacher and deputy thoroughly analyse the school's performance and have a clear view of strengths and areas which can be improved. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about their roles and are becoming more involved in monitoring the work of the school. The pastoral work of the school is outstanding, based on Christian values. For example, pupils arriving at the school with very little English are supported very well and quickly drawn into the life of the school to become confident and happy. The school has forged very good links with parents and provides many opportunities for them to come into school and learn new skills. Governance is very good. An experienced and skilled governing body, very well led by the chair, strikes a good balance between supporting the school and encouraging it to do even better. Finances are managed very well. A large deficit from 18 months ago has been eliminated and the school now has a healthy surplus. The school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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?	2

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20th April 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Mary Queen of Martyrs RC Primary School, East Yorkshire, HU7 4BS

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school yesterday. I enjoyed seeing so many happy, smiling faces and can understand why you told me that you enjoy school and are proud of your achievements. I particularly enjoyed your Easter service; the music and singing were wonderful. I would like to thank the members of the School Council for taking time to talk to me and giving me such a vivid picture of all the things you like about school.

These are the things I thought were good about your school:

- The way in which you care for each other and make sure everyone is friendly and well mannered.
- You learn lots of new things and make good progress in lessons.
- Teachers make lessons fun and you listen carefully to what they say.
- Adults take good care of you and are always there to help you.
- You have an excellent understanding of why it is important to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The good knowledge you showed of how the school is safe and secure.
- The very good work you do in science and ICT.
- The lovely space you have in school, all the interesting displays and the two outdoor classrooms
- The way in which the headteacher, deputy and all the other teachers work hard to constantly improve the school.

To make yours an even better school, I have asked the teachers to help you to improve your writing. You can play a part here by working hard in English lessons. I have also suggested that you could learn more about the many different backgrounds and religions of people living in our country.

With best wishes to you all,

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw

Inspector