



# DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on  
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

**URN 100824**

**English Martyrs Catholic Primary School**

**Flint Street**

**Walworth**

**SE17 1QD**

**Inspection date: 5 November 2019**

**Chair of Governors: Mr Patrick Gillespie**

**Headteacher: Mrs Hyacinth Appah**

**Inspectors: Mr Stephen Beck**

**Mrs Penny Rickard**

## **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR  
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**Director of Education: Dr Simon Hughes**

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## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Cathedral Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Southwark Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is English Martyrs Walworth with a smaller number of pupils being drawn from the parish of St Wilfred's Kennington Park. A significant number of pupils of Spanish background attend their chaplaincy celebrations with another group of pupils also being involved in local Pentecostal churches.

Whilst the majority of pupils are baptised Catholics, this is reducing with families worshipping in a variety of churches of different Christian denominations. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 66%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages. The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number currently on roll is 333. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is generally well below that expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is above the national average. Around 11% of the pupils receive extra SEN support in class with a higher than average proportion of pupils having learning difficulties largely centred around speech, language and communication. Whilst the largest minority ethnic group is of Black African heritage, a wide range of backgrounds are represented within the school population. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language at 94% is significantly above the national average of 21%.

The school is located in a challenging area of London that is recognised as one of the most deprived in Europe. It has been significantly affected by the regeneration of local areas which has, in turn, altered the population of the school. This has resulted in a falling roll and made it more difficult for the school to recruit staff. Work is ongoing to address these issues whilst the school continues to serve its local community very well.



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

English Martyrs is a good Catholic school because:

- The school's Catholic life and mission is the first concern of the governors and school leaders and this has been successfully maintained through a period of significant population change. It is a fully inclusive school where all pupils are made welcome and show respect and genuine interest and care towards each other.
- The conduct and behaviour for learning of pupils is of a high order and contributes much to the spirituality and ethos of the school. The pupils are proud of their Catholic school and willingly embrace and live out the values it promotes.
- The quality of teaching is typically good and this results in good achievement and steadily rising standards.
- The capacity of the school community to improve and develop is good. This is a school that knows itself well and has built procedures for self-evaluation, which enable strengths and weaknesses to be highlighted and action taken to improve practice and outcomes.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Continue to develop the role of the new Religious Education leader in conjunction with the implementation of the new Diocesan assessment guidelines.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to plan and lead acts of Collective Worship throughout the school to reinforce their strong work as ambassadors for the school.
- Continue to monitor teaching to ensure consistent utilisation of a range of teaching strategies to make some lessons less teacher led.

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## Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

### Catholic Life

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

2

### Religious Education

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

### Collective Worship

2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship.

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

2



## CATHOLIC LIFE

**The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- It is commendable how the school motto was developed by the whole school community and is clearly understood and lived out in the school's daily life that sees them, 'Worship together, Achieve Together and Excel together'.
- The school's context has necessitated a drive by all to instil aspiration in pupils. As a result of the impact of this work, pupils have a sense of self-worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and are aware of the demands of religious commitment in their everyday life. They feel safe, are happy and confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils foster a sense of lifelong vocation and sense of belonging and sharing God's truth, faith and love by working together for the school and parish community. Pupils model themselves on regular visits from the Sisters and the Parish Priest.
- Pupils willingly give of their time and gifts both within school and in the wider community. They are always keen to volunteer for responsibilities in school, as Junior Chaplains, Prayer Monitors, the School Council and tasks around the school.
- Pupils in upper KS2 willingly give up their lunch breaks to support and mentor younger pupils. At playtimes they act as peer mediators and at school Masses older pupils are responsible for caring for younger partners in Church.
- Annually, pupils in Year 6 attend a careers workshop where they find out about a range of careers available for their future and for the service of others.
- Pupils are involved in the planning of assemblies including Masses and are responsible for the readings, hymns and bidding prayers. Monday's worship assembly is tightly linked to Sunday's Gospel and/or Gospel values. A weekly goal is then set for the pupils based on a Gospel Value; this encourages and supports pupils to live their lives in accordance with Catholic teaching.
- The school curriculum endeavours to maximise cross curricular links. There are a range of cultural and extra-curricular opportunities on offer: art, music, sport, dance and other academic enrichment activities. Year 6 go on a school journey where they try out a range of outdoor activities which are experiences that are new to a vast majority of pupils. This further builds both their respect for each other, self-confidence and interpersonal skills, thereby also supporting their preparation for secondary transfer.

**The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- Safeguarding is a priority in the school and pupils are trained to be responsible and to make the correct choices independently.
- Pupils attend training in road safety, cycling proficiency, e-safety, drugs education, fire safety, swimming, hate crime workshops, junior citizenship, and attend a range of after school clubs and participate in anti-bullying week.



- The parish priest supports pupils by providing opportunities for reconciliation, lessons related to the sacraments and involves them with the chaplaincy. Pupils are altar servers and read at Mass for both the school and parish.
- The quality of relationships is a major strength of English Martyrs. The community is permeated by an atmosphere of care and concern for each of its members. There is a sense of order and respect for all. It is commendable, for example, that a bank visits the school regularly to support parents to complete application forms and give them interview technique training through which many have sourced employment.
- Pupils have a deep experience of belonging and as a result demonstrate their full commitment to the school. They are well mannered, polite and their behaviour is very good. They listen readily to the views of others and recognize that forgiveness is a value that is implicit throughout the community. To give a fresh start to individuals is acknowledged as a key Gospel value.
- Pupil voice is actively considered and pupils feel their opinions matter. As a result of pupils asking for further places to pray the school has opened a Chaplaincy room. This provides a quiet space to pray and reflect, for Junior Chaplains to meet and provides access to Bible stories and other resources. The role of the Junior Chaplains helps the school to operate as a community of faith.
- The school operates in an old Victorian building. It is notable how well it has been developed and used, creating a bright and inviting learning environment.
- The school has appointed a part time Home School Support staff member. This is a highly effective provision in supporting vulnerable families, impacts on their wellbeing and is greatly valued by parents and staff.
- A parent wrote, *'The teachers are very helpful. They always talk to parents about their queries. I can see lots of progress in my child's education'*.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.**

- The school's mission statement shines through and informs all aspects of leadership. It inspires the ongoing drive for the development of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The self-evaluation document provided for this inspection reflected the school's clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. It is a useful working document that is enhanced by appendices reflecting information about pupils' achievements, outcomes from parental questionnaires and the school's action plan for Religious Education.
- The highly professional governing body gives full support to the headteacher and is dedicated to the continuing growth of English Martyrs. The senior leadership team likewise give full support to the headteacher and together they are fully committed to providing the best possible Catholic education for all.
- Governors play a vital role in the development of policies ensuring that the Catholic Life of the school is paramount.
- The provision for Catholic Life is intrinsic to all aspects of the school's self-evaluation and analysis and reflects the Headteacher's long service to the school. She is a role model and her dedication and aspirations have fostered a strong secure Catholic school ethos for English Martyrs.



- Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school. They are ready to challenge, as well as support, in order to ensure continuing development. They receive regular feedback from school leaders. The very effective Religious Education link governor works well with the school and provides a good link to the governing body.
- The Religious Education leader only recently took on the role. She is able, enthusiastic, committed and clear about her subject priorities. She has made a good start and is well supported by the school's leadership reflecting a capacity for ongoing development.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good.**

- In classroom Religious Education lessons, behaviour for learning is good and pupils are able to assess their strengths and areas for development. This could be developed further to ensure a higher degree of self-challenge. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and are generally on task.
- Pupils attain well in Religious Education, particularly taking into account that the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and with lower than average starting points. At least 75% of pupils in each year group are attaining at the expected level or higher and school data shows that this has been sustained for the last three years.
- Pupils make steady progress from the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that by the end of Key Stage 1 they are meeting expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils are meeting their targets with some exceeding expectations.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements and demonstrate a positive interest in 'learning new things and ideas' and feel confident enough to express their own opinions at an age appropriate level. Pupils are polite and respectful and their positive conduct in lessons and around the school reflects the school's successful strategies to channel their energies and promote the highest standards of behaviour.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.**

- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Teachers follow 'The Way the Truth and the Life' scheme of work and generally use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Books are monitored regularly in school and include some external scrutiny.
- Pupils books are well presented and generally of a good standard and pupils are proud of their Religious Education books and learning.
- Pupils talked enthusiastically about how they enjoy learning about worldwide figures; Mother Teresa, Maximilian Kolbe (their patron saints) and how their belief in God changed their lives. They are able to contextualise this to their own lives.
- The development of vocabulary and particularly religious vocabulary is generally a strength across the school with teachers also being good at sharing their own personal experiences and thereby giving a current context to their teaching.
- Teaching is good across the school. Pupils get an excellent start in the Foundation Stage through high expectations that sees the early development of strong behaviour for learning. This is built on successfully as pupils progress through the school. Where teaching is strongest, teachers utilise a range of teaching strategies including, for example, the use of art, music, hot seating, and drama. allowing pupils opportunities to expand their thought processes. An example of this was seen in a Key Stage 2 lesson on the topic of persecution where pupils were allowed to widen their discussions to explore political aspects relating to refugees, a subject particularly pertinent to some pupils. This good practice could usefully be shared to secure greater consistency



across the school and secure a stronger pace in some lessons and avoid overly directed teaching.

- Surveys indicate that pupils are interested and engaged in their learning. In a recent school survey, 99% of parents agreed that Religious Education is challenging and exciting at the school.
- The teaching of Religious Education effectively contributes to pupils' overall academic progress, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and most pupils make good progress over time.
- Teachers are developing strong subject knowledge and are supported by strong leadership. They work together to support and promote effective teaching and learning across the school. This was highlighted by an external review in January 2018 undertaken by a National Leader in Education (NLE).
- Teachers have high expectations and employ a wide range of strategies including cross-curricular learning, which is particularly strong in the areas of drama, art and reading although this is not yet consistent across the school.
- There is a thorough and well established process for assessment, with assessment tests at the end of each module of learning (each half term), which are tracked centrally. Assessment in Religious Education is as important as it is in other core subjects and is reported directly to governors. The monitoring process also includes the deep tracking of progress of three/four pupils in each class, for each assessment cycle, in a monitoring progress file to physically gauge progress. Leaders use an electronic system for recording assessments and are in the process of incorporating the new Religious Education assessment on to this system.
- Assessment data is reported to Governors termly at the Curriculum and Pupil Progress Committee. Senior Leaders have attended Diocesan meetings on changing assessment to assessment without levels and are ready to adopt new Diocesan guidance.

#### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good**

- The school shows sensitivity to the needs of pupils of other denominations, faiths and cultures and takes every opportunity to celebrate other faiths through religious celebrations and festivals, for example, Hanukkah, Diwali, Eid, and Chinese New Year.
- During the school's Religious Education week, each year group visits a place of worship and at the end of their journey at English Martyrs pupils will have visited a place of worship from each major faith. These include a synagogue, Buddhist temple, Hindu temple, Mosque, Sikh temple and a Church of England church. This aspect of the curriculum is a considerable strength.
- There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths. The school is a place of mutual tolerance and respect.
- The school has established Personal, Health, Social and Economic Education (PHSE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programmes for which parents expressed considerable support. With changes to national expectations the school plans to review its current programme to reflect Diocesan guidance in consultation with staff, governors and parents.
- Religious Education is a core curriculum subject and its status is treated in the same way as other core subjects in terms of the school's CPD programme, budget



allocation, resourcing and accommodation. Subject leaders attend Diocesan meetings and work to implement any requirements.

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## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

**How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good.**

- Pupils participate reverently in Collective Worship, whatever their personal faith.
- They process into whole school celebrations demonstrating reverence and sing with enthusiasm.
- They join in prayers readily and confidently. They confirmed how much they appreciated the school's peace garden which is used for both learning and worship. They commented on how much they enjoyed laying stones in the crucifix feature displayed in the area and the Chaplaincy room which they asked for and which provides a quiet space in which they can pray and reflect.
- The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts. In their whole school acts of Collective Worship, they share the Sunday Gospels, helping them to understand the liturgical year.
- Pupils can demonstrate verbally their knowledge and understanding of the Church's liturgical year, feast days and seasons.
- The established pupil chaplains and prayer monitors ensure that the school's prayer life has a high focus in school and help facilitate pupil access to voluntary prayer groups at lunchtime. The roles of these groups are rather blurred and would benefit from some re-evaluation and clarification and consideration could be given to using them to further develop pupil led class based worship, thereby widening their impact.
- Pupils can express how the themes of Collective Worship impact on their daily life. They stated that their experiences of Collective Worship '*help us to copy Jesus and live a good life*'.

**The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good.**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. It reflects the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- Opportunities for Collective Worship at English Martyrs occur every day and are at the heart of the community.
- Themes for Collective Worship are carefully thought out and include the key liturgical themes of the Church's year, Gospel messages and statements to live by.
- Parents and governors are regularly invited into school to attend Collective Worship and said they appreciate and enjoy the experiences. They are invited to join the school in worship, recognising that they are an important part of the school community and that prayer and worship are part of all school celebrations.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Provision includes a range of prayer and worship opportunities and supports their spiritual development and sense of being part of a worshipping community.



- Acts of collective worship have a clear purpose and direction. They explore Gospel teaching, events in the liturgical year, topics in Religious Education and school events. Effective use is made of resources, including film clips, music and artefacts. Drama, dance and role play are used to illustrate the message.
- Staff are currently further developing the role of pupils in planning and delivering worship and their skills in this important area of school life. As this becomes established it will greatly enhance provision.
- In an assembly attended on the topic of remembrance pupils were very reverent and settled. They gathered quietly and a peaceful atmosphere was created through the use of music and singing. The worship was well led with good questioning. One pupil commented that November reminded them of Jesus dying to wash away our sins, with another saying that it helped him to remember when Jesus died on the cross. The teacher gave personal reflection on the loss of her mother. She talked to the pupils about the importance of memories and how people live on in our memories. She commented that she was no longer sad but had hope that she will see her mother again in heaven. She related to these memories her mother teaching her to be strong and this again reflected the school's strength in relating Religious Education to the daily life of everyone. It clearly resonated with the pupils.
- The school is also good at using scripture as evidenced in lessons and the assembly, when the idea of people living in our hearts was explored further and linked to scripture.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good**

- Leaders have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year. They act as role models for the school community.
- The school self-evaluation and improvement plans reflect the Catholic nature of the school and governors are briefed on the provision of Collective Worship.
- The school leaders treat their responsibility to lead and model best practice in Collective Worship with very high importance. The headteacher routinely leads acts of Collective Worship.
- Governors are dedicated and highly committed. They visit the school as frequently as possible and are acutely aware of the need to develop succession planning and thereby are actively looking to recruit new governors particularly in regard to parent representation.
- All classrooms have prayer focus areas. These are attractive, well-resourced and feature contributions from pupils
- The headteacher is ably supported in her mission by all other leaders, staff and governors ensuring worship is consequently inclusive, focused and faith filled.
- Leaders continue to model good practice themselves and are visible during acts of Collective Worship.
- Leaders are keen for pupils to plan and deliver worship and although acts of Collective Worship are led well by adults, opportunities to expand the role of pupils in planning and leading worship remains a priority for the school.
- Pupils pray in formal settings and are growing in confidence in expressing their private intentions through opportunities provided, like their class prayer books of which they are very proud.