



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

High Street, Hillmorton, Rugby, CV21 4EE

Inspection date 24th and 25th January 2017
Reporting Inspector Mrs Maureen O'Leary

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Type of School | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4-11 years |
| Number on roll | 216 |
| Appropriate authority | The Governing Body |
| Chair of Governors | Fr. Matthew Pittam |
| Telephone number | 01788 543423 |
| E-mail address | admin3564@welearn365.com |
| Date of previous inspection | January 2012 |
| DFE School Number | 937/3564 |
| Unique Reference Number | 125724 |

Headteacher Mrs Gillian Deery

Previous inspection: 1

This inspection: 2

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by one Diocesan Inspector.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the school's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE).
- The inspector observed teaching across 5 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors and one other governor, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, both of whom share the role of RE subject lead.
- The inspector attended a whole school Mass and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.

Information about the school

- English Martyrs is a smaller than average primary school that serves the parish of English Martyrs in Hillmorton, East Rugby.
- The number of Catholic pupils is currently 77%.
- The number of pupils from a minority ethnic heritage group is below the national average.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils attending the school is well below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national expectations.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed. There have been a number of changes to the leadership of RE and the current headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has undertaken the role.

Main Findings

- The Catholic life of English Martyrs is good with several outstanding features.
- The school has an unwavering commitment to the Catholic mission of the school "Where everyone is special".
- Driven by the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has created an excellent, reflective and aesthetically pleasing environment that promotes Catholic values and beliefs.
- The Eucharist is at the heart of the school and the prayer life of the school is good.
- Pupils from the earliest years now need to be given more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship.

- The provision and outcomes for pupils in religious education is good with many outstanding elements.
- Leaders of the school have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The headteacher and chair of governors have a more robust understanding of the school's Catholic life and RE. This knowledge needs to be shared more explicitly with the whole governing body, where it can be rigorously monitored and challenged.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes

- The Catholic life of the school is good with some outstanding features.
- Inspired by the vision of the headteacher and the chair of governors, the whole staff and governing body have a strong commitment to the Catholic life of the school and support the school's mission "Where everyone is special".
- Pupils value and participate well in the Catholic life of the school.
- All staff are thoroughly inducted into the Catholic life of the school. Adequate time and resources are allocated to the induction programme of staff newly appointed to Catholic schools. As a result, all staff have the desire, skills and confidence to support the Catholic life and collective worship of the school.
- Great care and attention has been given to create a vibrant environment that reflects the Catholic ethos of the school. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
- Engaging displays throughout the school enable pupils to reflect on a variety of topics such as vocation, service to others and the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile.
- Prayer areas, in both classrooms and communal areas, are considerably created and beautifully presented by staff. They reflect the appropriate liturgical colours and incorporate thoughtful prayers composed and presented by pupils.
- With the excellent modelling that has been provided by staff, pupils are now ready to take ownership of creating their own class prayer areas.
- The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is outstanding. Both on the playground and in class, they treat pupils and adults alike with respect and kindness.
- The pupils' understanding of the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile and the virtues and values that it promotes is good, and pupils can relate these to their own lives.
- Through pupil participation as school councillors, peer mediators, altar servers, and through the school's commitment to fund raising for charities, pupils have an excellent understanding of their call to serve others. This was demonstrated especially by Year 2's decision to provide hampers for those in need at Christmas and Year 3's support for their class teacher in her voluntary work at the Hope4 Centre for the homeless in Rugby.
- All pupils take part in the school council; electing class representatives and holding class school council meetings. The work of the school council enables pupils to influence some decision making in the school. During the inspection the school council discussed which charities the school would like to support. Pupils have also influenced the formation of the school playground rules, which reflect Catholic values.

- Pupils value their involvement in evaluating aspects of the Catholic life of the school, through pupil questionnaires and the school council, and how adults have acted upon their ideas.
- Teachers contribute to pupils' vocational development. However, the school recognises that this needs to be further enhanced throughout the school.
- Collective worship within the school is good with some outstanding features.
- The support of the priest chaplain to deliver collective worship in the school is outstanding. His child friendly homilies and reflections, and engaging manner captivates all pupils attending Masses and liturgies.
- Pupils from the youngest years conduct themselves with great reverence and engagement during acts of worship. Most pupils are inspired by their participation and can apply their experiences to their everyday lives.
- The leadership of the school has placed the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of the school. Other liturgies such as Benediction, a May Procession, and the Rosary are also celebrated in school.
- Adults prepare pupils well to participate fully in Mass, enabling the youngest pupils to read with confidence and to conduct themselves in a reverent way.
- Teachers make good use of their class prayer areas to help pupils focus during class collective worship. Prayers are said regularly each day but are mainly led by adults. Adults sometimes read out prayers composed by pupils and occasionally pupils are invited to read out their own prayers.
- Pupils are given some opportunities to prepare and lead collective worship, for example Year 6 planned and led a retreat day. However, this is not yet embedded in all year groups.
- The schedule of collective worship is arranged by the headteacher and although it does reflect the liturgical seasons and most other relevant themes, these are not specifically planned.
- As a result of suitable provision for collective worship, the pupils have a comprehensive knowledge about the liturgical year of the Church.
- Pupils have a good understanding of most traditional Catholic prayers. The school is currently addressing any gaps in knowledge by requesting pupils to learn traditional prayers as homework. Although the setting of this homework is being monitored by senior leaders, pupils' knowledge of these prayers now needs to be assessed by class teachers.
- Pupils are regularly given opportunities to pray spontaneously in Key Stage 2 and to some extent in Key Stage 1. Both key stages have regular opportunities to write their own prayers in class, and pupils make excellent use of these opportunities to compose well written and heartfelt prayers.
- Collective worship is beginning to be monitored formally by all stakeholders and the school's leadership has recognised that this as an area for development.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and Collective Worship

- The leadership of Catholic life and collective worship of the school is good with some outstanding elements.
- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in Catholic education. Senior leaders and the priest chaplain are truly an inspiration to the school community; they are fundamental in maintaining the high standards of the Catholic life of the school, in the face of rising diocesan expectations.
- The range of monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and collective worship has recently been improved and it informs the school's overall understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

- The headteacher and chair of governors, however, have a more robust understanding of the standards of the school's Catholic life. This knowledge needs to be shared more explicitly with the whole governing body, where it can be rigorously monitored and challenged.
- The school leaders and governors have ensured that the school improvement plan and performance management targets for staff adequately reflect the Catholic mission of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- Religious education at English Martyrs School is good with many outstanding features.
- The leaders of the school conduct rigorous monitoring of RE. Although evaluation of this monitoring is sometimes informal it is always feedback immediately to staff. Consequently, the monitoring process has led to many improvements in teaching and learning.
- Leaders produce clear actions for improving RE as part of the whole school learning improvement plan. Within this plan they have accurately identified the need to make explicit how RE monitoring and evaluation informs future planning and improves teaching and learning.
- Governors, through the regular attendance of the RE link governor at the school, have a good oversight of the provision and standards of RE.
- Teachers who are new to teaching in a Catholic school are well supported and inducted. The deputy headteacher and headteacher ensure new teachers receive diocesan training and ongoing support within school. As a result, all staff demonstrate very good knowledge, skills and understanding in RE.
- Teachers work hard to improve their subject knowledge and teaching of RE, building on recommendations from senior leaders. The commitment of teachers to deliver excellent RE lessons means that the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and is often outstanding.
- Staff plan lessons carefully to include a wide variety of tasks to engage and instruct pupils. Consequently, the pupils' enjoyment and engagement in RE lessons is outstanding. Pupils are eager to express how they enjoy RE lessons and how they apply what they learn to their daily lives.
- The school has focused effectively on improving pupils' ability to learn from RE. Regular, high quality feedback from staff to pupils enables them to reflect on the meaning and purpose of RE. This is a strength of RE at English Martyrs.
- Teachers' oral and written feedback ensures pupils understand how to improve their work. Red pen responses are highly valued by pupils as a means of demonstrating understanding of RE and to assess their work. As a result, pupils make very good progress in RE from a low baseline knowledge when they enter Reception class.
- Pupils' attainment in RE is in line with diocesan expectations and for many pupils it is above expectations.
- Questioning of pupils in lessons is challenging and thought provoking. Pupils are often guided to relate their learning in RE to their everyday lives. This was a noticeable strength in most lessons observed during the inspection.
- The whole school curriculum provides well for: pupils' spiritual and moral development; pupils' awareness of other faiths, religions and beliefs; and pupils' growing understanding of vocation as a call from God to a life of service to others.

- Pupils at English Martyrs are highly motivated and enjoy school life. Consequently, their behaviour both in class and on the playground is outstanding.
- Relationships and Sex Education is taught in an age appropriate way and in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities well in regards to RE.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school should:

- Monitor Catholic life and collective worship formally by all stakeholders, including pupils and parents, at more regular intervals, so that it can inform improvement planning more fully.
- Allow all pupils to take ownership of planning and leading Catholic life and collective worship within the school.
- Ensure pupils have a very good knowledge of traditional Catholic prayers.
- Enable the headteacher and chair of governors, who currently have a more robust understanding of the school's Catholic life and RE, to share their knowledge more explicitly with the whole governing body, where it can be rigorously monitored and challenged.