



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL RUGBY

Inspection dates 11th -12th January 2012
Reporting Inspector Teresa Quick

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Mixed Primary
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr Tony Mills
School address	High Street Hillmorton Rugby Warwickshire CV21 4EE
Telephone number	01788 543423
E-mail address	head@englishmartyrs.net
Date of previous inspection	June 2009
DCSF School Number	937 3564
Unique Reference Number	103726

Headteacher Mr Stuart J Hallahan

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by a Diocesan Inspector. The inspector visited 3 full religious education (RE) lessons to observe teaching and learning, and pupils' behaviour. She held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and spoke with a priest. She observed the school's work, including Mass and a class prayer service and looked at a range of evidence, including key documentation such as the school's development plan, subject action plan, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE, and pupils' work.

Information about the school

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School is situated in the Hillmorton district of Rugby in Warwickshire and serves the needs of the Catholic children of the parish of English Martyrs. The school is below the average size nationally with 218 pupils on roll of whom 86% are baptised Catholics. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds but there are now more pupils from ethnic minority groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and /or disabilities is lower than the national average. A small proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average so too is the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The school is situated on the same site as the church but the church has been out of use for a long time. Attainment on entry is generally above that which is expected nationally but in RE capability on entry is very wide.

Overall effectiveness of the school as a Catholic school

English Martyrs Catholic Primary school is an outstanding Catholic school. There is a clearly evident Catholic ethos which is shared with the governors, staff and pupils and has the support of the parents. The staff promote an atmosphere of welcome and acceptance for all who enter the school. The ethos provides a secure supportive environment for the pupils. The excellent leadership of the school enables pupils to feel safe and secure and grow confidently in their faith with the support of excellent care, guidance and support. The headteacher provides this clear vision for the Catholic life of the school which is shared with the whole school community. All staff support the ethos of the school. Provision for RE is excellent and there is dedicated leadership of the subject. The subject leader works closely with the headteacher. They support the staff to ensure the excellent delivery of the RE curriculum within a strong Catholic ethos. Assessment has continued to develop since the time of the last inspection.

The provision for collective worship and the spiritual and moral development of the pupils is outstanding. This is central to the life of the school. Pupils participate in collective worship with great maturity. At Mass older pupils look after younger pupils and are excellent role models for them. On entry pupils' RE capabilities are exceptionally wide. By Year 2 through exceptional teaching and the Catholic ethos of the school pupils' achievement is above expectations. Their written work is well presented and of a very high standard. They have a clear understanding for their age of the life of Jesus Christ, the Parables he told and many of the miracles that took place. In a corridor display there was a particularly good piece of Year 2 written work on St Bernadette. By Year 6 standards are well above national expectations. Pupils can discuss their faith and many moral issues with confidence. Theirs is a very mature approach to religion. Many of the pupils do not have the opportunity to transfer to a Catholic secondary school so the staff work to ensure that pupils leave the school with as good a knowledge and understanding of the faith as possible. Pupils are proud of their school.

With the present leadership the school's capacity for sustained improvement in RE and Catholic life is outstanding. All staff and governors are supportive of their aims. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. Much work has been done on assessment by the teaching staff who inform governors of the outcomes. Opportunities are being provided for the professional and

spiritual development of the staff. The limited budget curtails the number of opportunities that can be accessed for professional development. The subject leader cascades well the information she gains. The mission statement has been reviewed to make it more meaningful to all pupils. All stakeholders were involved in its formation. The school's self evaluation is detailed and accurate. It gives a clear picture of the school's present state and what is needed to be done so as to improve further. A special feature of the school is that it recognises the great importance of interacting with those beyond its boundaries particularly beyond the parish. They recognise their ministry of "service" and the promotion of the faith.

What the school should do to improve further

- Maintain the development of monitoring and assessment of pupils' learning in RE involving both staff and governors.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Most pupils make outstanding progress and enjoy their learning in RE. A limited number of pupils come into school with any appreciation of the faith or prayer life. As each year passes the teachers note that a decreasing number of pupils are familiar with prayer and the Church when they start school. From this low starting point pupils make rapid progress. They benefit from some outstanding teaching in RE in the early years and this high expectation of teaching and learning continues throughout the school. Pupils are supported by a living dynamic faith in the school community. All pupils make very good progress. Pupils with special needs and/or disabilities are ably supported to provide for their individual learning in RE. Pupils learn that each one of them is special. The pupils in their early years even sing their song "I am special". Year 2 pupils reach standards in RE that are above those one would expect for their age. Evidence shows that many Year 6 pupils reach standards in RE that are well above what would be expected nationally. In lessons observed during the inspection the best learning was when lessons moved at a good pace, pupils were interested, actively involved, and thoughtful. Through expertly led discussion they learn how all people should be treated and this learning is put into practice throughout the school. This leads to outstanding moral development. Teachers challenge pupils to think about the learning and discuss it. Written work is carefully presented and shows clear progression. The RE lessons give pupils the opportunity to develop their writing skills but also their speaking and listening. Throughout the school consideration is given to matching work to different abilities. Teachers' marking is supportive showing care and dedication but there is a lack of developmental comments to support further learning.

The extent to which pupils contribute to the Catholic life of the school is very good. Pupils soon learn right from wrong. They understand and absorb the values of the school. Pupils benefit from the Catholic life and they are encouraged and enabled to make a valuable contribution to the community including the parish, town, national concerns and international relations. The pupils from an early age are caught up in the Catholic life which permeates the school. They plan and lead worship. The older pupils are sure that no bullying occurs in the school. There are trained peer mediators from among the pupils, as well as the staff, all able to support pupils in need. If bullying did occur they are sure that it would be quickly dealt with

The pupils' response to collective worship is excellent. Prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school are strong. The Mass during the inspection was well planned. Pupils responded with mature reverence. Older pupils came into the Mass with a younger pupil and sat and looked after them during the Mass. Responses were said well and singing from the whole school was of a high standard. The behaviour of all the pupils was impeccable. All pupils went reverently for Holy Communion or a blessing. There were a large number of parents, young children and parishioners attending. A number of parishioners spoke of their enjoyment of attending a school Mass and the behaviour of the pupils. Class prayer services are simple and reverent and the one during

inspection ensured a calm, prayerful start to the day. Prayer develops as pupils progress through the school in both their own knowledge of the traditional prayers of the Church and the ones written by the pupils. Prayer is an area of excellence but it is still an area that the school is working to develop further to give pupils experience of the differing types of prayer. Sacramental preparation is school based, the school working with parents. The school also works with parents of children in non Catholic schools in preparation for their children for First Communion. After Confirmation pupils receive a Bible from the school.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership of the Catholic life is outstanding. The headteacher sets high expectations for the whole school community. He inspires them towards a clear Catholic ethos and a mission of service and vocation. Self evaluation of the Catholic life of the school is thorough and accurate. The governors, who are not at full strength, fulfil their canonical responsibilities well. They are confident in the development of the Catholic life of the school and support rather than challenge the school. Formal reports on Catholic life are given by the headteacher to the governing body. As a result of the previous inspection the first point on the RE development plan considered by governors, staff, parents and pupils was the formulating of a new mission statement that is more meaningful for the pupils. This has been achieved. There is no link governor for RE to support the monitoring of Catholic life or the learning in RE within the school. The chair of governors knows how mature in their faith the pupils can be and how they become capable of conversations about their faith.

Leadership and management of RE are excellent. The subject leader is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and passionate about her role. She works in close co-operation with the headteacher to lead and support the staff to understand and provide a vibrant Catholic life for the pupils. Although she works in the Foundation Stage she has developed ways of ensuring she is aware of the Catholic life and learning in RE throughout the school. This is supported through her other roles as manager of PSHE and music. She has been working with the staff to strengthen assessment procedures. The development of assessment and monitoring is on-going. Pupils' personal and religious development is greatly enhanced by the care and guidance they receive from the leadership. Pupils develop a clear understanding of service. The residential visit for the pupils to Alton Castle enhances support for Catholic life. It was here during the night prayers that pupils experienced spontaneous prayer. Further visits to enhance the pupils' understanding of their Catholic heritage are planned. A day at Alton Castle is now planned for the staff's spiritual development. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural developments are outstanding. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They develop their understanding of justice and peace through their RE teaching and the ethos of the school.

The school makes excellent provision for community cohesion. English Martyrs is a welcoming community with a clear set of shared values. Pupils work and play harmoniously together and are supportive of each other. Pupils become part of a community where there is respect for the staff and for each other. All members of the school community share and support the values and ethos of the Catholic school. All staff and pupils celebrate together in acts of worship. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community taking on roles and responsibilities within the school either through the School Council, being peer mediators on the playground or by being Prayer Partners and the older pupils looking after a younger pupil during Mass. The headteacher ensures very good links with the parish community. The school is seen as an integral and significant component of the parish of English Martyrs especially as the parish church is not available. The school continues to reach out into the town and the wider community. It maintains links with the other Catholic parishes of Rugby and uses their churches for celebratory Masses, and also links with the other Christian faiths in the area including the Salvation Army, the Baptist Church and various community groups. Sharing regular Sunday Masses with the parish can no longer take place but the parish are made welcome at Masses in school. Pupils have many opportunities to provide help and support for those in need. Pupils raise funds for the local hospice and CAFOD and

the choir sings regularly at a number of events and in local homes for elderly. The school has its own special charity, a school in Burma, Myanmar. The school as a whole raise money for this charity but individual pupils raise money themselves. Together with the links the school has with a school in China and a Catholic school in America they give the pupils the opportunity to develop their understanding of other faiths and cultures. The school has achieved the International School Award. Through their support for CAFOD pupils are gaining a greater understanding of the global nature of the Church. This contribution to the wider community is outstanding. Pupils have an understanding of other faiths from teaching in school but have not had the opportunity to visit places of worship of non Christian faiths but planning is in place. Links with the local Catholic community of schools and in Warwickshire are very good.

The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education

The quality of teaching in RE is outstanding. The judgement is made from the teaching seen, the work in the pupils' books, from displays and from discussion with pupils. Teaching in RE lessons is mainly based on units from the diocesan scheme the *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education*. The subject manager monitors the progression from the planning and from the developing assessments, some lesson observations and book trawls. Planning is developing formal links to other areas of the curriculum. Behaviour in all lessons is outstanding with pupils actively involved in their learning. Pupils enjoy their learning in RE. The best learning occurs in lessons where questioning is very good and the pace of the lesson ensures that concentration is never lost. Teachers are skilled at ensuring that questioning and tasks are linked to pupils' abilities. Pupils are taught to think about their learning and encouraged to discuss what they have learned. Written work is of a very high quality. It matches that in literacy with which there are close links. Pupils have a pride in their work. It is well presented with interesting different ways of presenting their learning. The pupils work well independently, with partners and in groups. ICT is used well by teachers to support learning in class. There is some very good pupil use of ICT linked to the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with skilled dedicated help and work to match their needs. The assessment process is developing in impact.

Resources meet the needs of the curriculum. Some resources are held centrally but each class has its own liturgy box providing for the needs of the classroom and their prayer table throughout the year. The percentage of time allocated to RE is in line with that agreed by the Bishops' Conference. Family life and sex education follow the diocesan scheme *All that I am* and is led by the headteacher in extra time to that dedicated to RE. RE is taught as a discrete subject but can also form part of cross curricular work. There are good links with ICT, literacy, art and music.

Provision for collective worship is outstanding. Masses are planned by the headteacher and the parish priest enabling there to be a Mass in school each week involving different combinations of pupils and either the parish priest or his curate celebrating the Mass. Every day starts with staff prayer before the pupils arrive in school. Prayer in differing forms for pupils and staff is an integral part of school life. From the school entrance, the school hall and all around the school there are some eye catching displays, crucifixes, statues and artefacts that remind everyone that this is a Catholic school. A number of large displays are linked to Confirmation with some very colourful computer-generated work by pupils. Each class is named after a saint. The school lacks any space to provide an area for quiet, individual reflection or group prayer. Pupils gain experience of differing types of prayer in class prayer services and voluntary prayer groups. As the pupils move through the school they develop the knowledge of how to write prayers. By Year 6 there is some outstanding writing linked to prayer. The opportunity for some differing liturgies previously enjoyed is curtailed without the use of the church and the limitations on space within the school. Each classroom has a prayer focus and appropriate artefacts. ICT supports collective worship with words and pictures in Mass and other sessions of prayer. Collective worship supports pupils' spiritual and moral development very well.