



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
of the Education Act 2005

URN 100824

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School
Flint Street
Walworth
SE17 1QD

Inspection date: 19 September 2014

Chair of Governors:	Mr Patrick Gillespie
Headteacher:	Mrs Hyacinth Appah
Inspectors:	Mrs Ann Oddy
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of 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. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 98%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 436. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is generally below that expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational need, or who are supported at the level of school action plus, is higher than in most other schools. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Almost three quarters of these are of Black African heritage. The great majority of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Date of previous inspection:

17 September 2009

Overall Grade: 2

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding
Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Requires improvement
Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE
2

English Martyrs is a good school with a vibrant Catholic ethos. Its strong Catholic identity is evident in the many attractive displays and religious artefacts and the thoughtful provision of beautiful prayer reflection areas. The school's mission statement and core values are central to the life of the school. They are known by all members of the school community, included in Religious Education lessons and related to all aspects of school life. The school is a quiet and well-ordered oasis of calm, providing an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and happy. Parents appreciate all that the school offers. They feel well informed and involved in school life. Staff are welcoming and form a cohesive team committed to the school's Catholic ethos and to school improvement; the most recent pupil outcomes reflect their recent success in improving standards. Governors are supportive of the school and conscientious regarding their responsibilities. They are well informed, conversant with school data and very involved with the life of the school. Governors visit the school regularly as part of their monitoring role.

The school has excellent links with the parish and the wider community.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Rates of attendance are high. Pupils are polite and friendly and considerate of each other. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour in class and around the school was of a high standard.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education are good, but systems of monitoring and evaluation are still at an early stage of development. Recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Ensure that the Religious Education Action Plan includes measurable targets particularly with regard to pupil outcomes and clear success criteria and timescales throughout.
- Develop a portfolio of work samples to provide evidence of level judgments.
- Carry out regular moderation of assessments in Religious Education and use these to inform planning.

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

The Catholic life of the school makes a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility and are conscientious regarding their duties. Prefects appreciate their responsibility to act as good role models and to assist in the smooth running of the school. Older pupils are paired with younger pupils, to the benefit of both parties. Pupils show an awareness of the needs of others and are able to relate this to their religious beliefs and values. They are active participants in fundraising for local and global initiatives. Pupils are interested and inquiring and enjoy exploring issues raised in assemblies and their Religious Education lessons. They know people may be of different faiths and show respect for the beliefs and faith practices of others. They understand the importance of celebrations marking key events in the liturgical year and the life of the school and the parish and enjoy participating in these. They are proud of their school and enjoy being part of their school community.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are keen to do well. School self-evaluation indicates that achievement in Religious Education is broadly in line with levels achieved in writing. This is based primarily on teacher assessment. The school should now develop a portfolio of levelled and moderated work to provide an evidence base.

Pupils from vulnerable groups are effectively supported and enabled to fulfil their potential. The lessons observed used a number of strategies to engage and enthuse pupils, including role play and the use of talk partners. Pupils were keen to talk about Religious Education and its importance in their lives. One said "The more we learn about Jesus and God, the more we make a special relationship. When we do bad things, the relationship breaks" and added that he had learned this at school.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils are enthusiastic and active participants in the school's collective worship. They are involved in planning and leading acts of collective worship which often includes prayers written by the pupils themselves. They participate thoughtfully, responding to questions and issues raised and joining in prayers with the rest of the school community. Hymn singing is joyful and often reflects the many cultures represented in the school, with hymns featuring different languages. Pupils recognise the need for times of silence and personal reflection. They appreciate their parents being invited to school assemblies and celebrations. Both acts of collective worship observed as part of this inspection were well supported by parents.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors and managers are fully committed to the Church's mission in education and to the continued development of the school as a vibrant Catholic community. They ensure that the mission statement informs all school policies and practice. Governors are frequent visitors to the school, particularly at school events and celebrations. Several governors had participated in a recent Learning Walk looking at prayer focus areas and classrooms and made suggestions for improvements as a result of this. The Catholic life of the school is part of the school's Religious Education Action Plan. Procedures for staff appointment, training and induction of new staff ensure the continuing strength of the school's Catholic ethos and identity. Parents, staff and pupils have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors and managers are aware of the importance of monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education. School systems include book scrutinies and planning scrutinies although there is little evidence of these informing the Religious Education development plan. Monitoring should also be extended to include a programme of lesson observations. This is essential to the effective monitoring of provision and quality of teaching and learning. The school has recently adopted "The Way, the Truth and the Life" programme of Religious Education and is currently evaluating this.

Current systems of pupil assessment in Religious Education need further development. An evidence base of levelled and moderated work to validate teacher assessments should be established. Assessment should be combined with target setting, to allow accurate tracking of pupil progress, inform planning and improve pupil outcomes. The Religious Education plan is formulated and reviewed annually. It covers all aspects of Religious Education and the school's Catholic life. It should now also include measurable targets with regard to pupil outcomes and clear success criteria and timescales for each action.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

The school follows "The Way, The Truth and The Life" programme of Religious Education. Four lessons across three key stages were observed as part of this inspection. All were of a high standard. Lessons built on previous learning, were appropriately differentiated and featured interesting activities. Pupils were interested and engaged. Lessons included opportunities for prayer and reflection. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. Work was well presented and pupils responded to teachers' comments. Pupils were encouraged to relate the theme of the lesson to their own lives.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning

Time allocated to curriculum Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Bishop's Conference. Religious Education is enriched by links with other subjects, including drama and music. Many pupils have special educational needs and many have English as an additional language; all are supported to fully access the Religious Education curriculum. Despite low levels of attainment on entry, pupils make good progress and achieve well in Religious Education. The curriculum includes opportunities for prayer and reflection. Enrichment activities include the school's Religious Education week, retreat days and participation in the Diocesan youth day; these are much appreciated by pupils. Pupils clearly enjoy their Religious Education lessons and say Religious Education helps them in their daily lives.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities for formal and informal prayer. All staff fully support the Catholic ethos of the school; staff and pupils pray and worship together. Attendance by parents is encouraged and parents respond very positively. The Church's seasons and feasts are celebrated. Special days and times such as Remembrance Day, October as the month of the Rosary, Lent and Advent are regular features of the school calendar and have their own special celebrations. The diversity of the school community is recognised and celebrated and enriches the school's collective worship.