



Diocese of Westminster

INSPECTION REPORT

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

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DCSF Number: 211 3619

URN Number: 100962

Headteacher: Miss B. Nugent

Chair of Governors: Mr P. Edwards

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

Date of inspection: 6th October 2010
Date of previous inspection: May 2007

Reporting Inspector: Mrs M. Betts

Description of School

English Martyrs Catholic primary School is a one form entry school with nursery provision for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. There are 228 pupils on roll, 93% of whom are Catholic. There are 13 teachers in the school of whom 9 (69%) are Catholic. The school serves the local parish of English Martyrs although many pupils come from St Patrick's parish in Wapping. The school serves an ethnically diverse community. Over half of all pupils come from White European backgrounds. A few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about the national average. More pupils join or leave the school mid-year than is typical nationally.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

English Martyrs' is an outstanding Catholic school. The extremely strong Catholic identity is present in the school's daily life. The committed leadership of the headteacher and deputy is instrumental in effectively maintaining and developing the Catholic ethos. Prayer and worship have a very strong central role in the school's life. The pupils explained, "Everything we do here is related to religion and God". Relationships within the school are very good and reflect Christian respect and concern for others. Pupils said, "We all care for each other". The pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding and this is reflected in their good behaviour and positive attitudes. The standards achieved in religious education are high and pupils make very good progress in this subject. Staff are committed to the high profile given to religious education.

Grade 1

Improvement since the last inspection

The last diocesan inspection report described the school as an outstanding Catholic school and this high standard has been maintained. The issues for improvement related to revising the mission statement and to developing a tracking system to enable teachers to more accurately set targets. The school has made very good progress with both these targets. The new mission statement is highly visible and understood by pupils who can describe how it is lived out in the school. The national attainment targets are used to give pupils a religious education assessment level and these are recorded regularly to ensure pupil progress. Diocesan officers have led training so that all staff can understand these levels more fully. The school is now in a position to link these firmly to pupil outcomes from the new religious education scheme and use these to set pupil targets.

Grade 1

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The headteacher and her deputy undertake thorough monitoring and have a very good oversight of the school's strengths and development needs. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurate. The religious education plan is integral to the school development plan. Views of parents on the Catholic life of the school and religious education are regularly sought. The school leadership promotes a clear vision which is well supported by the staff. They have recently adopted a new religious education programme which is more suited to the needs of the school's pupils and staff. The staff are committed to the success of the school and to improving their skills by attending training. Sometimes governors are present as well. School

leaders attend local Catholic and diocesan training to keep up to date with new initiatives. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve.

Grade 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Embed the use of attainment level descriptors in planning future learning and setting pupil targets.
- Embed the use of developmental marking linking it to the assessment focus to ensure pupils are challenged towards achieving their target.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The headteacher, the deputy and governors form an effective partnership for promoting the Catholic life of the school. They communicate a clear vision of Catholic life which inspires the fullest possible faith development of pupils. The school mission statement which contains the words "...as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus" is integral to all aspects of the school's daily life. High quality displays around school confirm the Catholic identity. Governors are well informed about the school's religious life and provide appropriate support. They undertake monitoring visits and record formal feedback. Leadership promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development very well. Pupils enjoy their responsibilities in supporting younger children especially sharing Bibles together in both the prayer gardens. They value and praise the friendly, caring attitude of the teachers who listen to them, help them to solve any problems and encourage their learning. Parents are very positive about the school. Links with both local parishes are strong.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Worship and prayer are integral parts of each school day and of all religious education lessons. The liturgical calendar is systematically celebrated and pupils become very aware of the festival cycles. Class assemblies are linked to the Church's year. Pupils frequently write prayers and use these in their worship. They are also given opportunities to pray for their own intentions. During whole school worship, visual presentation and artefacts create a prayerful atmosphere. Pupils are very respectful during prayer, participate with sincerity and enjoy these experiences. Pupils enjoy being involved and their high quality singing and instrument playing enriches the worship experience. They appreciate quiet reflection times and particularly mentioned meditation experiences as challenging their thoughts. Prayer foci in classrooms and around the school are of a very high quality consisting mostly of pupils' contributions. These are used well in worship. Mass is celebrated regularly and a daily decade of the Rosary said at appropriate times. Opportunities for confession are provided. Parents of the younger children are invited to join prayer sessions. Prayer and worship have a very strong impact on pupils' spiritual development.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school /college promote community cohesion?

Leadership promotes community cohesion very well. The school is a welcoming and inclusive community. The rich diversity of cultures within the school is positively valued and celebrated as

shown by the community display and prayer in the hall. Plans are being made for a continuation of the project where pupils worked with others from different faith backgrounds. Parents are involved well with school projects as demonstrated by the recent Fairtrade initiative. They are invited to share in all services and celebrations. Teaching about other faiths has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of other beliefs within the local community. Worship and religious education provide reflection opportunities for all to link the theme with their own experiences. The pupils show their compassion for others and understand they are living out their Catholic duty by frequently supporting local, national and international charities, for example giving money to a new school in Bangladesh. Links have been made to a local old people's home and gifts and entertainment provided to the residents.

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

All pupils are gaining religious literacy at a very good rate throughout their school life and display a growing depth of thought. The standards gained in religious education are high with many pupils exceeding national expectations. Pupils are gaining an understanding of the life and teaching of the Catholic Church and are able to apply this to their own experience. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their books which are very well presented. They evidence a full coverage of the curriculum with a good variety of written outcomes. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons. They are aware that the skills, knowledge and understanding developed during religious education will form a basis for their whole lives. They work well together in groups.

Grade 1

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching is consistently good with many outstanding features. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan thoroughly with clear learning objectives made explicit to the pupils. Teaching creatively uses visual presentation and artefacts to stimulate the interest of the pupils. Key words linked to the topic were used and clearly explained. The activities planned consolidate and develop pupils' thinking very well. Work was differentiated by a variety of tasks or by outcome to challenge the pupils at an appropriate level. The committed and experienced support staff make a very good contribution to encourage the learning of all children. Work is very well marked, giving suitable praise. In the majority of books marking provided feedback concerning improvement strategies and pupils were given opportunities to respond and make the improvements. The school's assessment procedures are very thorough. Regular assessments recording pupils' attainment are used to ensure progression. Parents are given information about future religious education topics.

Grade 1

Quality of the Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good, and suitable for the age of the learners. It fulfils the requirement of the Bishops' Conference. 10% of curriculum time is used for religious education using the "The Way, the Truth and the Life" programme with other work linked to special occasions such as the Pope's visit. Pupils are encouraged to question and reflect so becoming

aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Scripture is used very well to illustrate learning. The religious education curriculum is linked creatively with other areas of the curriculum, particularly with ICT (information and communication technology), drama, literacy, and art. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils are taught to respect other faiths and visit places of worship of other religions. The church is used as an extra resource for learning. Pupils visit the local Catholic retreat centre. Attractive religious education displays give added value to this core subject.

Grade 1

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The religious education co-ordinator, as deputy headteacher, ensures that this subject has the highest profile across the school. The pupils know how important it is. Teachers attend courses and invite other professionals to lead training in the school. The subject leader guides and supports teachers very well, demonstrating religious education teaching skills to less experienced staff. Rigorous monitoring ensures that the school's self-evaluation is accurate. Comprehensive feedback is given to staff and individual targets set. The religious education governor also takes on a monitoring role. All teachers have one performance management target linked to religious education. Equality of opportunity is promoted very well. Four teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) and two are on the course. The budget for religious education and worship is high and in line with that allocated to other core subjects. The school is well resourced for delivering the curriculum.

Grade 1