

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 119605

Headteacher: Mrs Annalisa Howarth

Chair of Governors: Mr Simon Gillespie

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Frances Wygladala

Date of Inspection: April 14th 2014

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

English Martyrs' is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster. It is an average-sized primary school with 229 pupils on roll, of whom 115 are baptised Catholic, 20 from other Christian denominations, 44 are from other faith backgrounds and 36 have no religious affiliation. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language. The head teacher took up appointment in January 2014.

The school mainly serves the parish of English Martyrs, Preston but also draws pupils from other Preston parishes. A large majority of pupils transfer to Catholic High Schools: Our Lady's, Corpus Christi and St Cecilia's.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	229
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	50%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	9%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	19%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	16%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	22%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	14%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	7
Part-time teachers:	3
Number of Catholic teachers:	8
Number of teachers with CCRS:	5

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

Parish served by the school:

English Martyrs', Preston

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

English Martyrs' is a good self-evaluating Catholic school. All staff have total commitment to the ethos and mission of Catholic education. Rigour has been introduced to the monitoring, assessment and tracking systems to enable pupils' standards of attainment to improve for all groups of learners.

Pupils are happy to come to English Martyrs' school which results in them having a positive attitude to learning. Outcomes for pupils are good and the vast majority of pupils make good progress in the seven years from when they enter the school with below average starting points. Pupils benefit from the vast range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school: their participation in the prayer and liturgical life of the school is outstanding and the promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is good.

The Religious Education curriculum provided is varied and is focused on meeting the needs of all pupils and on raising standards. Planning, assessment and monitoring systems developed since the last inspection have had a positive impact on pupil attainment and progress.

The school provides a good Catholic education. Teaching and learning in RE are good and this enables the vast majority of pupils to make good progress. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding: it is well defined within the school day and pupils respond with respect and reverence. It is a very giving school community, often responding to requests from pupils to help children in their communities both locally in Lancashire and internationally across the world.

The head teacher and the Religious Education subject leader have a very clear vision for RE and for the Catholic Life of English Martyrs' school. The staff are good role models for pupils and offer a variety of prayer and worship opportunities. Governors provide excellent support and challenge for leaders and managers: the chair and RE governor know the strengths of the school and the challenges that it faces.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

All priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed and the school is continuously striving to improve standards. The school's capacity for sustained improvement in all areas is good because of the quality of leadership from staff, governors and clergy and the accurate self-evaluation leading to clear targets and appropriate priorities. These should consolidate success and secure further improvements.

What the school needs to do to improve further

1. Continue to develop and embed assessment, monitoring and tracking of standards throughout the school and share with Governors in a termly report to compare standards and progress in RE.
2. Develop links with the sister parish – St Ignatius.
3. Use the Diocesan '*Fit for Mission? Schools*' document to develop the curriculum, prayer and liturgy opportunities.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

2

The school evaluates outcomes for pupils as good and inspection confirms this judgement, with some outstanding features. Pupils enjoy Religious Education; they speak enthusiastically about their lessons and have positive attitudes towards their learning. During inspection, one pupil stated 'our teachers are very good at teaching us about God and we are very grateful to them for all the opportunities to share our faith'. Assessment data, pupil tracking systems and work scrutiny are all evidence of improvements over the last three years. Standards of attainment in RE are now above average by the end of Key Stage 2; pupils are making very good progress from their low baselines on entry to the school. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection.

Most pupils' attainment in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and the ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) is above average. From below average starting points on entry to school, standards rise to being broadly in line with national norms at the end of Key Stage 1 and are above national average at the end of Key Stage 2 where a number of pupils achieve the higher levels. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because teachers identify their needs accurately and adapt support to meet them. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well in line with their age and capability. They discuss their faith confidently and are able to think spiritually.

Prayer is central to the Catholic Life of the School and pupils act with reverence. They are eager to participate in all of the many different types of worship offered at school: they join in community prayers confidently and with enthusiasm. Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship from their earliest years in a variety of gatherings. They recently enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on Holy Week during a 'mini mission' led by the Castlerigg outreach team, during 'Celebrating RE week'. Pupils understand the importance of key celebrations in school and in the parish community throughout the liturgical year.

All pupils act in a manner consistent with their beliefs and show respect for each other. Pupils take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic Life of the school beyond routine lessons and activities. Most are eager to take part in prayer activities and enjoy planning and leading worship during assemblies and Masses, for example the harvest festival, services of

reconciliation and Lenten reflections. Pupils are considerate to others and caring to anyone in apparent need. They regularly work together to lead and run their own fundraising activities, such as the Year 5 biscuit enterprise, when they were inspired by the CAFOD Universal Church topic to raise money for the Syrian crisis and for the Christmas Shelter cake sale. Recently they have supported CAFOD through helping hands, Derian House, Nairobi Slum School, the Salvation Army food collection, Typhoon in the Philippines and the Pakistani Flood Appeal. During Lent, the focus for the whole school was the Corporal Acts of Mercy, where pupils and staff came together to make a difference to the needy through their actions and shared prayer.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School

2

The school evaluates leaders and managers to be good and inspection confirms this judgement, with some outstanding features.

The recently appointed leadership team effectively promotes the Catholic Life of the school. The new head teacher and the RE subject leader promote the Catholic mission of the school well: they ensure it is at the heart of all school life and that pupils' spiritual and moral development are central to the school's vision. Leaders base their plans on sound evidence and data, tackling key areas of weakness systematically and building on areas of strength. Consequently, there is substantial evidence that through lesson observations, sampling work, monitoring plans and talking to pupils and staff, standards of attainment have significantly improved since the last inspection.

Governors provide effective challenge and support for the Catholic Life of the school. They play an active part in planning for improvement, showing determination in challenging and supporting the school in order to address areas of development. They are informed on issues relating to RE and the Catholic Life of the school, understand the school's performance and know what needs to be done to ensure continuous improvement of standards. There are plans to continue the development of assessment, monitoring and tracking throughout the school and to report to Governors standards in RE each term, comparing them to standards in other core subjects. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well and are very supportive of leaders and the staff team. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with pupils and with staff. The roles of the new RE link Governor and of the Chair of Governors are central to continuing to develop the partnership between governors, staff, parents and pupils.

The school's partnership activities and the leaders and managers make a strong contribution to the achievement and the wellbeing of pupils. There is a common sense of belonging amongst staff and pupils and all have a high regard for the Catholic Life of the school. There are very good relationships between pupils, staff and parents, who appreciate half-termly RE curriculum newsletters, keeping them informed about topics covered by their children in RE. Pupils have a sense of the wider world, other peoples' beliefs, cultures and needs; they co-operate

well with each other. The home, school and parish partnership is strengthened by the distribution of the Wednesday Word.

Strong links exist between the school and the parish of English Martyrs': there are plans to continue the development of collaborative projects with their sister parish, St Ignatius. Many opportunities exist for pupils to engage and cooperate with each other through, for example, the effective school council who regularly ask to raise funds or awareness for children around the world. The pupils, parents, staff, parishioners and other local residents bring in gifts of food to help to feed the poor and needy of their community through the Salvation Army food collection.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

2

The school evaluates provision for Catholic Education to be good and inspection confirms this, with some outstanding features.

Observation of an outstanding lesson in an upper Key Stage 2 class confirmed teaching to be a strength of the school. A range of teaching styles, clear explanations, well-paced lessons and good use of ICT ensure that all pupils are consistently interested in their learning and are making very good progress. Effectively planned lessons build on prior learning and meet the needs of most pupils. Recently introduced 'I can' statements in RE lessons have had a positive impact on standards, with pupils in upper Key Stage 2 taking ownership of their work and self-evaluating it in order to make improvements. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and this inspires and promotes confident learners. Staff make learning interesting and this impacts positively on pupil enjoyment, engagement and motivation. RE displays of pupils work around school are of a high quality.

Support staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the pupils. They know the pupils well and share their knowledge and understanding of other world faiths and lead multicultural themed days in school. The school has a broadly accurate picture of pupils' achievement and provides pupils with detailed feedback, both orally and through detailed marking.

The RE curriculum is creatively adapted to meet the needs of most pupils. Teachers enrich it with a variety of imaginative and well-planned strategies and relevant resources, which engage and motivate the pupils. The RE curriculum provides good opportunities for, and makes a positive impact on, pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in full. There are plans to use the Diocesan '*Fit for Mission? Schools*' document to develop the curriculum, prayer and liturgy opportunities throughout the school.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding: prayer is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every celebration. Prayer is fully inclusive, reflective and well-planned, enabling pupils to take an active part. During inspection, an outstanding Collective Worship observed in Foundation

Stage witnessed the teacher washing the feet of her pupils, showing what it is like for a master to act as a servant and what this means for us today. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer and pupils eagerly and confidently share prayers in class and school liturgies. The school facilitates and encourages attendance by parents, other family members and parishioners, to services in church and in the school hall.

Parish clergy play an important part in sharing prayers and experiences with staff and pupils through regular visits to augment the RE curriculum for example in a recent visit by Years 2 and 3 to church as part of their RE topics. The newly appointed priest is committed to strengthening the partnership between the parishes and the schools he serves and to developing collaborative working to benefit everyone involved.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	2
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school?	2
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	1
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic Life of the School?	2
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	2
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being?	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	1
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in RE?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	2
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1