

# English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

URN: 149303

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

05–06 June 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

2

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

2

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

2

## What the school does well

- English Martyrs is a welcoming, caring, nurturing, and inclusive family school which enables all pupils to feel safe, secure, and loved.
- Leaders are passionate and committed to driving the vision and mission of the school forward in a compassionate manner alongside a caring staff team.
- Pupils are respectful, knowledgeable, and religiously articulate. They enjoy their religious education learning.
- Staff expertise in questioning in religious education lessons is enabling pupils to think and reflect meaningfully on their learning.
- Prayer and liturgy are delivered well and pupils respond reverently to planned provision.

## What the school needs to improve

- Develop a consistent approach to teaching religious education to improve learning outcomes, focusing on in-depth learning for all pupils.
- Implement a rigorous self-evaluation process for Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship, which reviews the impact of actions taken throughout the school and involves all stakeholders.
- Ensure chaplaincy provision provides planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

## Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

### Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

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

2

#### Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

2

The mission statement of English Martyrs is lived and understood by all. The key terms of 'nurture the potential', 'celebrate achievement', and 'develop an awareness of service to God and each other' are shown through bespoke actions which the pupils embrace entirely. The senses of family and a joyful community are tangible; pupils express their respect for everyone as a unique person made in the image and likeness of God clearly. They speak of mutual respect and kindness and are deeply considerate of themselves and others. One pupil commented, 'God knows us, knows that everyone is different, and we know we should treat everyone with respect'. The staff act as positive role models for all the pupils and demonstrate high levels of pastoral support and care. Pupils enjoy the retreats they have participated in and recognise how opportunities in school support them in serving those in need, particularly the most vulnerable. They thoroughly enjoy charitable fundraising activities, such as supporting the local food bank, Christmas Shoe Box Appeal, fundraising for Cafod, and raising money for Father Hudson's. Further, pupils are responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching through their responses to the English curriculum and exploring key questions in their history learning.

The mission inspires staff, who readily embrace opportunities to promote it, making them excellent role models for the pupils. There is a palpable sense of community at English Martyrs. Everybody is welcomed into an inclusive community. The school environment fully reflects its Catholic character; the many engaging displays include work from the Parent and Child Together (PACT) sessions and a Year 5 display about peace, linking to current worldwide issues. The Catholic social teaching display is valued by the pupils who use it to support their learning about the Holy Father's messages to the world. Each classroom also has displays and prayer foci,

reflecting the times and seasons of the liturgical calendar. Relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is carefully planned to reflect Catholic teachings and principles fully.

The development of all staff is prioritised, leading to high levels of confidence amongst them in understanding the mission. The leadership team is fully committed to supporting their wellbeing; the impact of this strong pastoral support is evident amongst the staff team, who speak with fondness and appreciation for the understanding and care that is shown to them daily. An effective induction programme supports new staff in becoming fully committed to the school's Catholic life and mission. Leaders and members of the multi-academy company (MAC) have supported staff by organising faith formation training. Middle leaders have also been well supported through MAC network meetings. Members of the MAC work as school improvement partners who drive enhancements to Catholic life and mission. Furthermore, the school improvement board provides practical support and challenge to the leaders so that changes happen swiftly. When a local governing body is re-established, an even more rigorous approach to the self-evaluation process should continue to measure the impact of the many improvements made to date. Parents value the school's Catholic ethos, commenting, 'English Martyrs creates a community led by respect and religious celebration; children are kind to each other and respectful of each other' and 'My child has a good understanding of the Catholic faith and is thriving with the help and support of teachers and staff'. The parish priest supports the school in celebrating weekly Mass with the whole school or individual classes. A sacramental programme also enables the school and parish to work together.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

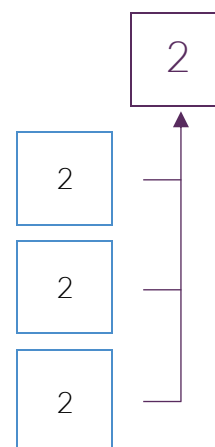
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Pupils enjoy their learning, listen attentively, and readily engage with each other in their lessons; consequently, behaviour in lessons and throughout the school is good. Lessons provide sound stimuli to enable pupils to ask incisive questions, use age-appropriate vocabulary and deepen their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 reflect on why Jesus called humble fishermen to be his apostles. They think about their qualities and relate this to the qualities needed to be a disciple today. Furthermore, the themes of discipleship and mission in Year 6 demand writing 'Mission statements' to promote spiritual, moral, social, and cultural learning, enabling pupils to respond to challenging questions. Subsequently, pupils become more knowledgeable and religiously literate in their learning at English Martyrs. Current analysis of pupil outcomes shows attainment in religious education is good across the school compared to other core subjects.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, and the curriculum is well-planned around the structure of the Church's liturgical year. Following a dedicated staff training programme, teacher questioning is good and adapted well to meet pupils' needs, meaning teachers plan lessons that build on pupils' achievements. Assessment questions at the end of each unit of work have recently been introduced to assess pupils' learning more fully, but it is too soon to evaluate this strategy's effectiveness. A consistent approach to teaching religious education, focusing on concise learning objectives and adapted learning to meet the needs of pupils with higher prior attainment, is yet to be securely in place. Pupils' work is generally presented well, but further opportunities to model and display excellent work are needed for all pupils to aspire towards the same high standards. Teacher questioning is good and generally adapted to meet individual pupils' needs. While staff provide feedback to pupils, which helps improve their learning in lessons, they do not know if they are progressing. Teachers' feedback to pupils needs to make explicit how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve further. Resources are

used to support learning for most pupils. However, regular use of Bibles to learn about the Word of God is now required in some classes, rather than predominantly relying on worksheets and video clips. The additional adults in classes effectively engage and motivate the different groups of children across the school, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are developing knowledge, understanding, and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* because they work sequentially through the scheme of work. Leaders ensure that religious education regarding resourcing, timetabling and staffing is comparable to the other core subjects in the school. The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for the subject and the knowledge to drive further improvements. She has worked hard to support and upskill staff to ensure pupils develop secure knowledge and skills. As a result of well-crafted professional support, teachers plan creative and engaging lessons for their pupils. All leaders are committed to securing regular, high-quality staff training in religious education about subject knowledge and teaching techniques. Staff benefit from the training on questioning in lessons to elicit deeper thinking. Leaders have ensured staff confidence has increased as their subject knowledge has developed. Consequently, staff are committed to achieving good outcomes for religious education across the school.

## Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2

2

Pupils engage well in experiences of prayer and liturgy, and there is full and active participation from all. Pupils demonstrate prayerful silence and attentiveness in their responses. They have a detailed understanding of how to pray, which is shown daily by every pupil. This results in a shared and communal raising of the heart and mind to God. Pupils work well with others to take ownership of prayer and liturgy whilst also having good practice modelled by all those around them. Opportunities to pray through song are planned for, along with enabling pupils to learn the traditional prayers of the Church. For example, in Year 2, pupils focus on the D-Day Anniversary and reflect on how God is always with us; prayer leaders guide spontaneous prayer, and pupils are asked to share a scripture passage with their families and friends as the 'go forth' task. This facilitates the involvement of families in the school's prayer life. Pupils do not yet routinely evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy, so they are unsure how to improve further the prayers they lead or articulate how their experiences of prayer and liturgy lead them to action.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of this school. It is a time given to every pupil that is fully respected and is a core element of the school's provision. The environment is established carefully during prayer to create a space for meaningful reflection. Prominent and attractive prayer areas in classrooms allow pupils to spend time conversing with God. Clear routines are in place to signify the importance of this time for pupils, which is followed and respected by all. Scripture is chosen carefully to be relevant to the session and the children's lives, ensuring this is creative. More time is needed for pupils to continue developing their skills in prayer and liturgy and embedding their knowledge of Catholic ways of praying. A prayer board in the school hall is used for pupils to write their prayers. Owing to limited space to further develop prayer areas, the school recognises that the outdoor provision should be utilised more fully.

The school's prayer and liturgy policy has been recently updated and is accessible and valuable for all staff. Leaders lead liturgy well, modelling expert knowledge and high expectations for pupils and staff. The development of skills for pupils and staff in delivering prayer and liturgy is ably supported by leaders. Leaders act as good role models; for example, a whole school liturgy on the Sacred Heart of Jesus demonstrated the gather, listen, respond and go forth model well so that all staff and pupils know what the school's prayer and liturgy policy looks like in practice. Staff training concerning prayer is a vital feature of the leaders' commitment to improving the school's provision, resulting in staff confidence growing rapidly. The school calendar reflects the Church's liturgical calendar. Significant feast days are celebrated, enabling pupils to have a growing understanding of the Church's liturgical year. The setting up of a Mini Vinnie's group, delivered by parishioners, demonstrates the school's commitment to integrating the parish and broader community into the school's prayer life. Parents are appreciative of the school's commitment to prayer and liturgy. One parent commented, 'My child enjoys participating in prayers and liturgy assemblies and recently enjoyed a retreat day with other prayer leaders.' Senior leaders further recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy when allocating resources. However, they do not yet systematically support pupils in evaluating the quality of pupil-led prayer and liturgy across the school. Consequently, pupils do not always readily reflect on the changes they want to make to improve their experiences.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	English Martyrs Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	149303
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	937 3564
Full postal address of the school	High Street, Hillmorton, Rugby, CV21 4EE
School phone number	01788 543423
Headteacher	Charlotte Miller
Chair of governing board	Yvonne Brennan
School Website	<a href="http://www.englishmartyrs.warwickshire.sch.uk">www.englishmartyrs.warwickshire.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of the Magnificat Catholic MAC
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Krystyna Bickley  
Vicki Wayman

Lead  
Team

## Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement