



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITHERLAND

Tuesday 19 June 2007

Inspectors Mrs. Marie Connolly Mrs. R. Purcell
 Mrs. M. Eves

URN 104931

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	3-11
Number on roll	412
Chair of governors	Mrs. Bernadette Coxon
School address	School Lane, Litherland, Merseyside, L21 7LX.
Telephone number	0151 928 5601
Fax number	0151 928 3570
E-mail address	pobrien@englishmartyrs.co.uk
Date of last inspection	12 March 2002
Head teacher	Mrs. P. O'Brien

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2006.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Description of the school

English Martyrs is a larger than average Catholic primary school. The school is situated in Litherland, a suburb of Liverpool. This is an area of mixed social and economic background and some high unemployment. Two thirds of the learners are drawn from English Martyrs parish. There are currently 412 children on roll of whom 378 are baptised Catholics. There are 33 children attending this school from other Christian denominations and 1 from another faith tradition. The majority of children come from a white British background. Attainment on entry overall is below that expected. There are 18 teachers teaching Religious Education. The majority of teachers are Catholic, 14 have a Religious Education qualification. A further 2 teachers are currently undertaking the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

English Martyrs is an outstanding Catholic school. It is an inclusive community, underpinned by an exceptionally strong Catholic ethos, which establishes a positive climate for work. This is a school where the uniqueness of every child is valued and celebrated. The gospel values of love, care and mutual respect very evidently underpin every aspect of school life. Excellent relationships exist throughout the school at every level. All are made welcome and made to feel that they matter. The school works closely with the parish, and the wider community. Outstanding links are made with home. Standards are outstanding. Learners achieve well consistently and make outstanding progress throughout the school. Overall, teaching is outstanding. Assessment provides very clear guidance on learning. The curriculum is well planned. Learners' behaviour is exemplary. Collective Worship is outstanding. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. The initiatives undertaken to support children's emotional intelligence are at the heart of all that takes place. This is exemplary. Creative and imaginative strategies have been employed to enable this to happen through the curriculum and informally. Both curriculum Religious Education and Collective Worship make a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of children. The headteacher and subject leader are exceptional in the manner in which they direct and guide the school. They understand the outstanding nature of the school but are realistic in appreciating the hard work and effort that enables this to be maintained and developed further.

Grade: 1

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Inspection in March 2002 effective steps have been taken to address any minor areas for development plus the areas the school had already identified. A monitoring programme is in place to cover all aspects of teaching and learning. This has further raised standards. The Mission Statement has been revised and re-written, including the children interpreting the Mission for themselves. Sacramental preparation is now parish based. The development of the school council has been tremendously successful as it provides an additional voice for the children who are very pro-active in identifying ways in which the school can further develop. Portfolios of work and the most exemplary display and photographic evidence bears witness to the outstanding Catholic life and work of this school community.

Grade: 1

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is excellent. The judgements made in this document match the judgements made in this report. The updating of the school's self-evaluation is undertaken regularly. The leadership has a clear understanding of development opportunities, and openness to change. There

is outstanding capacity for further improvement as shown by the shared commitment to Religious Education and related whole school issues by all. Despite its exemplary performance English Martyrs is a school that constantly seeks to improve and share its expertise with others. This is highly commendable.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement any outstanding development strategies outlined in the self-evaluation document.

Achievement and standards

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is below average. Learners make outstanding progress in the school. Standards in Religious Education are outstanding, with the majority of learners meeting the learning objectives and outcomes set, according to their age and stage of development. There is no significant difference in performance by learners of different gender. Learners with special needs make excellent progress in Religious Education with the help provided by excellent teaching assistants and differentiation of tasks to meet their needs. The school checks on the progress made by all through rigorous assessment and some positive but challenging marking. In all key stages learners show confidence in discussion and feedback, showing a real knowledge and understanding of the subject and its relevance in their lives. They have a very mature attitude to Religious Education. All children show joy, enthusiasm and excitement in their work. Standards will continue to rise and further progress be made by the ongoing use of the information gathered through the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and scrutiny of the formal assessments made each term.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual and moral development. Children have a very good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus. Many wonderful strategies are used to enable them apply this teaching to their own lives and experiences. Examples of this on the day of inspection were awesome. The work undertaken on *Other Faiths* has helped the children understand how others make sense of the world in which we live. This has proved most successful and enjoyable. New ways of making links with the parish and wider community are being explored. The behaviour of children throughout the school is exemplary. Children have an excellent sense of right and wrong. The school provides outstanding opportunities for their spiritual and moral development. Creative and imaginative displays and photographs provide evidence of this excellent practice. This is strength of the school. This outstanding practice will be shared throughout the Archdiocese. The children make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. They are respectful of each other's views and committed to supporting those less fortunate than themselves. Their parents, governors and teachers are understandably proud of them and the school.

Grade: 1

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of provision for Religious Education is outstanding. The learning needs of all children are addressed through the use of some exceptionally creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies, differentiation of tasks and by additional support. Sharing outstanding practice through the monitoring process enabling teachers to share each other's strengths enables the ongoing development of all. Teaching is enthusiastic and exciting which helps learners engage with the material presented and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Some excellent use is being made of information communication technology. This is to be shared throughout the Archdiocese and will significantly support other schools. Well-prepared resources of outstanding quality enhanced the delivery of lessons. Teachers and support assistants provide a highly creative and stimulating environment which supports and challenges learners. Teachers make use of very good teaching assistants to support those learners with additional learning needs.

The quality of planning is excellent. The coordinator monitors planning to consistent rigour throughout the school. The lessons observed had good pace and timing, which maintained the interest and concentration of learners and kept them on task and focussed. Work is provided that enables learners to work independently and collaboratively. Teachers ensure that learners understand the purpose of the lesson by sharing the learning objective. This is then re-visited during the plenary session. Learners' religious literacy is being enhanced by use of the key words for each topic. Assessment is rigorous; and portfolios of work show clearly which targets have been met in order to inform future planning.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education by the provision of regular newsletters and curriculum meetings informing them of what is to be covered. Reports are sent home.

Grade: 1

Curriculum

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding in meeting the needs and interests of learners. The school, using the *Here I Am* programme recommended by the Archdiocese, meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. A whole school approach is used and appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets national and diocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. The leadership of the school ensures suitable positioning of Religious Education on timetables. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents. Effective links are made with home and the parish.

Parents are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. Outstanding links are made with the home to enable parents not only to support their children's learning but also significantly enhance it. Samples of their contributions are displayed around the school and are a powerful example of faith in practice e.g. the work undertaken during the *Freedom/Responsibility* topic in Year 6. The school and governors are continually thinking of ways to further improve links with both home and the parish. Overall the Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. The overwhelming enthusiasm and energy of teachers in caring for the children and each other is a powerful example to the children of 'living faith'. They make the curriculum exciting and deeply relevant.

Grade: 1

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education are outstanding. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on raising standards even further. The subject coordinator supported by the headteacher provides effective and efficient support to staff. She is outstanding in the area of school religious leadership, showing enthusiasm, flair and commitment. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in their delivery of the subject. Coordinators' meetings have been attended regularly and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Regular in-service is provided for all staff in Religious Education. This is a priority of the school. Performance in Religious Education is monitored and feedback given. The ongoing scrutiny of planning, workbooks and teaching and learning, Collective Worship and display ensures consistency and continues to raise standards. Self-assessment is undertaken for each topic by staff and learners. English Martyrs is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Of the 18 staff teaching Religious Education 14 have a suitable qualification. A further 2 are currently undertaking *The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Priorities for the subject are identified and targets set. Funding for Religious Education is very good. Outstanding resources have been purchased or created by members of staff and are deployed to achieve exceptionally high standards. The school is making excellent use of interactive white boards. They have agreed to share this expertise throughout the Archdiocese. This is most generous and is highly indicative of the school's understanding of the mission of service so evident in the school. Display and photographic evidence annotated in portfolios is awesome. The subject coordinator and headteacher keep the governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively, and are most supportive in the life and work of the school. They are regular visitors to school assemblies and services.

Grade: 1

Catholic Life of the School

The leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement are outstanding. English Martyrs is a place in which the gospel spirit of love, consideration, care and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work. It is a place that brings the 'Good News' to life. Relationships in the school at every level are excellent. An atmosphere of calm, joy and happiness permeates the school. The school has a clear sense of its mission in reaching out to those less fortunate than itself. This is shown in the work it has undertaken for CAFOD, 'Sharing our World'. Each year group has been responsible for looking at one of the millennium goals and sharing its findings with the rest of the school. The school has currently set itself the target of becoming a 'Fair Trade' school. Teachers and children support a variety of local, national and international charities both by becoming better informed and by raising funds and resources. The Mission Statement is displayed in the entrance hall, classrooms documents and other places around the school. Its aims and objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life. Each class discusses its implications for them. Their interpretations of the Mission are framed and displayed in classrooms. This serves to ensure ownership and also affirm the enormous contribution made by all.

Grade: 1

Collective Worship

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class and whole school gatherings. Throughout the year Collective Worship provides a variety of experiences for children. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A policy that states the nature and purpose of Collective Worship has been produced. Guidelines that support the planning and delivery of Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place have also been produced and included in this policy. The inclusion of the ideas and creative strategies staff have used effectively enhance the planning and delivery of Collective Worship throughout the school. Collective Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. The school monitors the planning and delivery of Collective Worship to enable good practice to be shared.

A beautiful focus for worship is provided in each classroom using suitable religious objects and artefacts. A suitable focus for worship is set up in the school hall when children gather there for worship. This helps children reflect more readily on the concept being covered. Children are encouraged to participate in a meaningful manner both in class and larger gatherings. This enriches their experience. Teachers ensure time is given to individual reflection and are helping them develop skills which enhance this e.g. visualisation. Creativity is used to support learners' ongoing spiritual and moral development during acts of Collective Worship e.g. use of different types of prayer, music and symbol. The garden area created outside is also

used for acts of worship when the weather permits. Parents, governors and friends of the school community are invited to a variety of assemblies and services. This is greatly appreciated.

Grade: 1