

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education Collective Worship and The Catholic Life of the School

School: English Martyrs' Primary, Acomb, York

URN: 121645

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Headteacher: Mr. Derek Sutherland

Chair: Mr. L McKeown

Date: April 15th April 16th 2008

Inspector: Mrs. Celia Whittingham

A Report from
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Education Service
Section 48 Inspection Team
50a The Avenue
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

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

Key for inspection grades

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

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Factual information about the school

English Martyrs' is an average size primary school, which was federated with a neighbouring Catholic school in 2006 under the leadership of one headteacher and one governing body.

It serves the parish of English Martyrs' with a few pupils coming from other areas.

There are 202 pupils on roll of whom 90% are Catholic and 10% are of other Christian faiths.

The staff comprises:

11 teachers including the headteacher – 7 full and 4 part time, of whom 7 are Catholic, 4 holding CCRS

5 teaching assistants

Class sizes are 28/30 and there is always a waiting list of parents seeking a place when available.

Attainment on entry is at least average overall and attendance levels are higher than average. The proportion of children taking Free School Meals is much lower than average and the percentage of children with SEN is well below average.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

English Martyrs' is a good Catholic school with many outstanding features.

It is a welcoming community where pastoral care is evident for all its members and inclusion and equal opportunities are priorities. Communication between home and school is good overall and at Foundation Stage outstanding. Parents and carers feel confident that any concerns they may have will be dealt with effectively and sensitively. They are actively involved in the worship and prayer life of the school. The work of the School Council, pupil surveys and parent surveys help to inform the School Improvement Plan so that all stakeholders have a part to play in moving the school forward.

Children quoted "relationships" as a strength of the school and qualified this by saying, "everyone shows respect for each other", an aspect which was clearly evidenced throughout the school.

The school has a good relationship with the parish and the Parish Priest is a valued regular visitor.

There is a wealth of outstanding displays around the school and each classroom has a prayer focus and “Here I Am “display.

Through hardworking commitment and challenge the Governing Body works in close partnership with the Headteacher for the benefit of the whole community.

Improvement since the last inspection is good.

All issues from the last inspection have been addressed and despite severe budget constraints senior managers have worked hard to enhance the provision of Religious Education as a core subject. The work done in developing the federation of the two schools has made an outstanding improvement to the Catholic Life of the school.

Capacity to improve

The school’s capacity to improve is outstanding.

The excellent self-evaluation systems and strategies in place ensure that senior managers are fully aware of the schools strengths and weaknesses. All members of staff are encouraged to continue a programme of professional development and are constantly striving to improve. Distributive leadership is a strength of the school and is forging even stronger team skills.

What the school should do to improve further

To improve further the school should:

1. Continue to develop the strong and supportive relationships between the federated schools, making use of the wealth of skills available.
2. Review, revise and refine the Mission Statement, using appropriate language to reflect and support the needs of the whole community.
3. Continue the good work already established in assessment in using levels of attainment and by extending Quality Marking to further inform planning and teaching and so enhance learning.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school is outstanding

The school's leadership is deeply committed to the mission of the school and is a source of inspiration to the whole community. The leadership style is collaborative enabling all to contribute to, and participate fully in, the life of the school including the diocese and the local authority. The Headteacher is outstanding in his efforts to support and inform other schools on behalf of the diocese and local authority, whilst developing and implementing rigorous systems and strategies for self-assessment within the school. The enthusiastic, conscientious Deputy Headteacher works closely with the Headteacher to secure the day to day working of the school and has been instrumental in the development of Quality Marking in basic skills, which she is eager to extend to Religious Education.

All members of staff are excellent role models, working hard with enthusiasm and good humour. They are a very happy group who support each other in all areas of school and personal life.

The Governing Body is efficient and well led and foundation governors are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Leadership and management make an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship is outstanding in its frequency, quality and breadth of vision.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. There are many opportunities for prayer, reflection and meditation. At the end of a year five lesson children were led to 'open their hearts to the Holy Spirit' and in a year three lesson sat, with eyes closed, and were encouraged' to return to the still place within where Jesus speaks to us'. Both outcomes were reflective and children were respectful and dignified.

Assemblies are vibrant and stimulating. At the end of an outstanding assembly we were all challenged when asked very powerfully 'will the risen Lord Jesus be seen in you?'

Singing is of a high standard and the school is blessed to have two very good pianists.

The school has worked hard to introduce children to Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, and there are beautiful displays of Old Testament stories on corridors, which resulted from Literacy work.

Pupils take an active part in planning and delivering acts of worship and liturgies, which are enhanced with song, prayer, drama, reflection and celebration. There are termly and Celebration Masses in school.

Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

Community Cohesion

The effectiveness of the school in promoting community cohesion is outstanding.

The inclusion of all is a central goal and shared vision at English Martyrs'.

Senior managers make every effort to engage the children with people from many backgrounds, cultures and countries. A charitable year fundraising plan is in place including: CAFOD, HCPT, York Night Shelter, Fair-trade and ITU, York, from which children develop a broad knowledge of the needs and beliefs of others. They are quick to show concern for the well being of each other, especially the weak and vulnerable. When considering the lives of child miners, children showed maturity beyond their years when discussing campaigns to confront governments and world leaders.

At the end of a Y4 Circle Time children acknowledged that everyone has opinions which deserve to be considered and when we show lack of respect for others and their property things can go very wrong.

The development of the federation has provided many opportunities for sharing experiences and teachers from English Martyrs' share good practice with other schools with generosity of spirit. Children share sports activities with other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good.

The progress of pupils in each key stage is good and at Foundation Stage is outstanding. There is also an increase in progress in Y5. Work in books is good in quality and quantity and children have a secure knowledge of their religion. Pupils show respect for each other by taking turns to listen attentively to each other and to teachers and they focus well in partner, group oral work. Behaviour across the school is outstanding at all times and in all activities and as a result all teaching time is used to maximum effect. Circle Time supports behaviour strategies in developing respect and understanding for the opinions and feelings of others.

Quality of provision for Religious Education

Learning and teaching in Religious Education are good.

Teaching and learning are good across the age range and a variety of teaching strategies ensure the involvement of all pupils. Highly qualified, skilful assistants make a significant contribution to lessons. In an outstanding Y5 lesson teaching was dynamic and creative with a wealth of experiences provided, sustaining motivation and effort. Children responded with enthusiasm and produced high quality work.

There is a sense of ordered calm and hard work within the school and children demonstrate enthusiasm for further learning. Provision for children with additional learning needs is outstanding.

The curriculum in Religious Education is good.

Religious Education is treated as a core subject and is taught enthusiastically. The school meets the recommendations of the Bishops' Conference in its use of the Here I Am programme, which is delivered through 10% of teaching time.

The Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

Leadership and Management of Religious Education

Leadership and management of Religious Education are good.

The Religious Education co-ordinator is enthusiastic, experienced and well qualified. She is engaged with other York schools in developing systems for assessing the children's work using Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools and Colleges. A timetable is in place for the co-ordinator to develop systematic monitoring of teaching and learning in Religious Education. The co-ordinator is also planning a format for fully informing all stakeholders of the work being covered in curriculum Religious education. After a period of severe budget constraint there is now a plan to build up resources e.g. God's Story. The building, which is maintained and cleaned to a high standard, has recently been extended to provide a new administration block enabling the refurbishment of areas for ICT, the Library and Music.

Inspection Judgements Form

Area	Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 is good, grade 3 is satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	Judgement
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Overall effectiveness

A1	Effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Catholic education	2
A1.1	Distinctive nature of the Catholic life of the school	1
A1.2	Overall effectiveness	2
A1.3	Effectiveness of the home / school / parish partnership	2
A1.4	Improvement since the last inspection	2
A1.5	Capacity to improve further	1

The Catholic Life of the School

B1	Effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school	1
B1.1	Governing Body	2
B1.2	Leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction	2
B1.3	Quality of the leadership of the Headteacher and senior staff in developing the Catholic life	1
B1.4	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1
B1.5	Effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation	1

B2	Quality of collective worship	1
B2.1	Frequency and quality of provision	1
B2.2	Learners' response	1
B2.3	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1

B3	Effectiveness of the school in promoting community cohesion	1
B3.1	Effectiveness of leadership to promote community cohesion	1
B3.2	Inclusive nature of the provision	1
B3.3	R E curriculum and the promotion of community cohesion	1

Religious Education

C1	Achievement and standards in Religious Education	2
C1.1	Learners' success in achieving targets, trends over time and variations between groups of learners.	2
C1.2	Standards of work	2
C1.3	Progress	2
C1.4	Enjoyment	2
C1.5	Behaviour and strategies in use	1
C1.6	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1
C1.7	Learners' contribution to the school community	2
C2	Quality of provision for Religious Education – teaching and learning	2
C2.1	Match to learners' needs and curriculum requirements	2
C2.2	Suitability and rigour of assessment in planning, monitoring and informing learners' progress	2
C2.3	Additional learning needs	1
C2.4	Involvement of parents and carers	2
C3	Quality of provision for Religious Education - curriculum	2
C3.1	Match to aspirations and potential	2
C3.2	Match to external requirements and response to local circumstances	2
C3.3	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1
C4	Quality of provision for Religious Education – leadership and management	2
C4.1	Effectiveness of leadership and support of staff	2
C4.2	Effectiveness of monitoring of performance – quality assurance and self-assessment	2
C4.3	Equality of opportunity	1
C4.4	Adequacy and suitability of staff	1
C4.5	Adequacy and suitability of resources and accommodation	2
C4.6	Deployment of resources	2
C4.7	Effectiveness of Governors' responsibilities	2