

INSPECTION REPORT

Telephone: 0161 817 2204

Email: education@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

**Inspection carried out Under Canon 806
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Name of School: English Martyrs RC Primary School, Wycliffe Road, Urmston. M41 5AH

Inspection date 6th July 2018

Reporting Inspectors Peter Eavers, Dennis Harrison

Type of school	Primary
URN	106352
Age range of pupils	3 – 11
Number on roll	215
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Grace Carruthers
Headteacher	Carole Partington
Religious Education Subject Leader	Paul Bastin
Date of previous inspection	24 th June 2013

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	2	
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	1	
The quality of Religious Education (incorporating Word)	2	
The quality of Worship	2	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

English Martyrs RC Primary School is a one form entry primary school serving the parish of Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Urmston, and with a catchment area consisting mainly of private houses in central Urmston. There are 215 pupils on roll including 16 nursery age children in the Early Years Foundation Stage class. 100% of the teachers and 92% of the children are baptised Catholics. Almost all the teaching staff have completed or are currently studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS). 8.9% of the children are entitled to Free School Meals and 9.3% have been identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), both of which are below the national average. 1.7% are supported by an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) which is slightly above the national average. 3.5% of children have English as an additional language.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **Bright, articulate and delightful children who behave with respect, courtesy and excellent manners towards everyone in the school**
- **The role of the headteacher and senior leaders in developing a strong sense of teamwork and shared mission**
- **The welcome which all in the school extend and which embodies the widely held opinion that the school community of English Martyrs is “one big family”**
- **The nurture and care afforded to adults and children alike which ensures that all feel loved and valued as unique children of God**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

English Martyrs RC Primary School is an extremely welcoming school which embraces all into its Catholic family, ensuring that they feel valued and loved. Since the last inspection, there has been a change of leadership with a new headteacher and Religious Education subject leader, but the school has continued to develop as a thriving Catholic community. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and together with her senior leadership team has created a strong sense of teamwork and a shared sense of mission and purpose amongst the dedicated and talented staff. Staff morale is high. They feel supported and cared for and that there will always be a ‘listening ear’ should they need one. The recently reviewed mission statement, together with its core values, is a ‘rallying cry’ for all in the school and is clearly evident and known by pupils and staff. Parents are supportive of the school. They speak highly of the Religious Education the children receive and feel that the school is helping their children to “grow in courtesy and respect” and is keeping them safe. They feel welcomed and that the school listens and responds to their concerns. Children are very happy and greatly enjoy their school experience. They have excellent relationships with each other and with the adults in the school and are a pleasure to spend time with. They are proud of their school and feel safe and cared for. The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is consistently good leading to good outcomes for the children. The school is well placed to take this even further so that Religious Education is outstanding in all its provision. Governors are dedicated, reflective and very supportive and there are excellent links with the parish. The parish priest is a regular and much-loved visitor to the school who is described as “one in a million”. His work is highly valued by all in the school.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The headteacher is deeply committed to the school and has a clear vision of how she wants it to continue to improve. She is very well supported by a skilled senior leadership team, including the Religious Education subject leader, and together they have helped to develop a strong and tangible sense of togetherness, teamwork and shared purpose with the talented and hard-working staff. All staff are strong witnesses to Gospel values in all that they do and they work hard to model and

promote these values in the children. The governing board are highly committed, reflective and supportive. They share the ambition of the headteacher for the school to improve still further to become “the best it can be”. They are very keen and eager to develop their skills further to enable them to more fully support and challenge the school’s improvement journey. The parish priest is a highly valued visitor to the school who is fully involved in school life, especially with the GIFT Chaplaincy Team and the ‘Mini Vinnies’, and is loved by children and adults alike. He has helped to strengthen even further the already very close relationship between the school and parish. Children have a wide range of leadership roles in the school, including head and deputy head boy and girl, School Council, Eco Council, GIFT Chaplaincy Team, Mini Vinnies and Sports Council. They are proud of these roles and take them very seriously. They speak with confidence about the work they do and can give good examples of how they have had an impact on the life of the school, for example supporting younger children in prayer, leading assemblies and helping to develop the outdoor environment.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness) IS OUTSTANDING

The welcome that all receive in English Martyrs is outstanding. The school rightly takes pride in the widely-held opinion that the school community is “one big family” and this is embodied in the wonderfully warm and calm atmosphere which pervades the school. Relationships within and across the school are excellent. Children behave impeccably and get along with each other very well. As one child put it, “We are all friends and all in it together”. They say that incidents of bullying are very rare but feel confident that they would be dealt with very well should they arise. They feel very safe and that they are valued and loved. There are very effective procedures in place to keep children safe. The school works hard to ensure any children with specific needs are well supported. Parents feel that they are welcome in the school and that any concerns they may have are listened to and acted upon. One parent commented that staff “always have an ear” for them. They speak highly of the values which the children are learning and of the standards of behaviour in the school. The children enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities which are celebrated in excellent half-termly bulletins, written by the children themselves. These activities greatly enhance their school experience and help in their development as well-rounded children of God able to have “life to the full” (*John 10:10*). The school takes its role as advocate for the poor and marginalised in society very seriously and the school community supports a wide range of charities including Cornerstones, Stretford Foodbank, CAFOD and CARITAS. The children are developing a very good understanding of their role as stewards of creation through the work of the Eco Council as well as class and whole school activities. Members of the GIFT Chaplaincy Team led a very thought-provoking assembly on stewardship and the damage humans are doing to God’s creation and what we can each do to protect our environment, during which they asked some very searching questions of their schoolmates and encouraged prayerful reflection.

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS GOOD

The school has recently reviewed its Mission Statement, involving children, staff, governors and a number of parents, and this together with the supporting values of Faith, Respect, Growth and Working Together, is well known and evident across the school. It is clearly having an impact on the children’s school experience and children can give examples of how the mission statement has influenced their behaviour or attitude. One child explained that when he gets stuck, he thinks of the value of growth and sees that a problem is an opportunity for growth. Religious Education is given a high priority in the school and meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory through the use of the *Come and See* scheme. Pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education, describing it as “fun”, “entertaining” and “the best”. Inspectors saw children responding attentively and with enthusiasm in lessons and some very good examples of teachers using open-ended questions to encourage the children to think deeply. The school is starting to develop its use of Big Questions to further this depth of thinking and the Religious Education subject leader has clear plans for how he intends to develop this and the Religious Education curriculum to fully embed the use of *Come and See* and take the children’s learning in Religious Education even further. The children are developing a secure knowledge of their faith and of key events in the Gospels. They speak eloquently about other faiths and how important it is to understand, respect and value the beliefs of others. The school has created firm foundations to be able now to raise the expectations of children even higher in their Religious Education work, to further increase the children’s independence and give them greater ownership of their learning. This will enable the children to realise even more of their clear potential in Religious Education.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

At English Martyrs, excellent work has taken place to begin to increase the children's expertise in preparing and delivering acts of worship and prayer. The GIFT chaplains confidently lead prayer and worship under the skilful guidance of the Chaplaincy lead. This has brought a new dimension to the prayer life of the school. As these young leaders grow in confidence they will be ready to share their skills so that all children have the opportunity to prepare special moments of reflecting on Sacred Scripture, choosing their own bible stories and to sit silently in the presence of God. The children should have every confidence in preparing Worship in a range of opportunities, like dance, drama, art, singing and play, because they are profoundly reverent in prayer, behave outstandingly well and enjoy new challenges with enthusiasm. This was evident in an impromptu act of worship in the EYFS where the youngest children played out their leadership roles with skill beyond their years, showing that even at their tender ages they can demonstrate exceptional ability in leading prayer. Prayer is at the heart of this caring school community. English Martyrs has a sense of calmness with a special atmosphere. In classes the children pray together comfortably and question one another about the themes that are chosen. In a time of quiet prayer in KS2 it was lovely to see the children take ownership as they sat and shared a special moment with God. On this most positive foundation the school is more than ready to introduce greater creativity and freedom with a wide range of traditions because the children are so confident in their faith, do not worry about when things are not working out and because they know they are so very well supported at every step. There is indeed so much for English Martyrs to be proud of!

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **Raise expectations even higher, encouraging children to think even more deeply and take greater ownership of their learning, so that provision and outcomes in Religious Education are "the very best that they can be"**
- **Build on the very positive foundations of pupil leadership to further ensure that all children have the opportunity to lead and plan collective worship**
- **Continue to develop the role of all leaders, including governors, in the school's ongoing journey to outstanding**