



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy

Anstey Lane, Leicester, LE4 0FJ

School URN:	146196
Inspection Date:	21 November 2019
Inspectors:	Mr James McGeachie, Mr Chris Maher and Mrs Hannah Coe

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This Inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- The school is very well led by the headteacher and his senior leadership team. The headteacher is an inspirational Catholic leader, whose personal faith strongly underpins the school's Catholic ethos, which is clearly identifiable in all aspects of the school's work. There is an unwavering commitment to inclusivity so that, regardless of background, all young people in the community are able to benefit from a very effective Catholic education.
- The Catholic Life of the school is exceptionally strong. This is a direct result of the excellent Catholic leadership shown by the school's leaders and local governors. The school's motto, 'May they be one' is a true cornerstone of the school. It is fully understood by all in the school community and is lived out by all staff and the vast majority of pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to encounter Jesus and make contributions to the wider community. Leaders should now develop the Spiritual Life planning group so that there are even more opportunities for pupils from across the school to evaluate and shape the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. The department is well led by two effective leaders. School leaders prioritise Religious Education as a core subject and it has a high standing within the school community. Staff teaching in the department have good subject knowledge and use a range of approaches to ensure good progress. Lessons are generally well-planned and most pupils make good progress. To improve further, the department should focus on some key groups of pupils so that they too can achieve their potential in Religious Education.
- Collective Worship within the school is good. There is an effective programme of pupil-led Acts of Worship, which links to the liturgical calendar and provides opportunities for pupils to pray together and reflect on key themes and issues of the week. These are well respected by pupils, although they could be even stronger, if they were more interactive and involved greater participation. The programme for form time, which has recently been refreshed and extended, provides good opportunities for pupils to lead prayer. However, it would benefit from greater monitoring to address inconsistencies across the form groups.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- English Martyrs' Catholic School is a larger than average secondary school, with 1169 pupils on roll as at the last CES census return (February 2019).
- On 1 September 2018, English Martyrs' joined the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school serves the Leicester parishes of St Peter's, Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of Good Counsel, St Theresa's, St Patrick's, Mother of God, Holy Cross Priory, St Thomas More and St Pius X, Narborough.
- 66% of pupils attending the school are baptised Catholics. 24% are from another Christian background, 7% from other faith backgrounds and 3% have no religious affiliation.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is 19%; this is above the national average
- 8% of pupils are at the 'school support' stage of the special educational needs and/or disabilities register.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Catholic Life:
 - Develop stronger links with the local parish communities, so that there is greater involvement of the school in parish celebrations and activities.
 - Review processes for the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school, so that even more pupils can contribute to this process and then be involved in subsequent developments.
- Religious Education:
 - Increase the curriculum allocation for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 so that it meets the episcopal requirement of 10% of curriculum time being devoted to curriculum Religious Education.
 - Improve the attainment and progress of key pupil groups such as disadvantaged, lower ability and pupils with special educational needs and/or a disability, to increase the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 4+ at GCSE in Religious Education.
 - Support and coach the less experienced staff in the department with their teaching pedagogy and particularly with raising the level of challenge in Key Stage 3 lessons.
 - Develop an approach to marking and feedback which encourages pupils to make targeted improvements to their work at Key Stage 3.
- Collective Worship:
 - Ensure that plans for form time worship are fully embedded so that the school day starts for all pupils with an opportunity for extended worship and reflection which could be linked to a common theme to support with consistency across the school.
 - Increase the impact of the evaluation of Collective Worship by including more pupils, senior leaders and local governors in monitoring and improvement planning of daily Collective Worship.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	1
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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- There is a very strong sense of community at English Martyrs' and pupils are very proud of their school. They show a deep respect for each other and particularly value the contributions made by those pupils and staff of other faiths and backgrounds.
- Pupils from all faith backgrounds and those of no faith participate fully in the Catholic Life of the school. They see this as an integral part of being a member of the school community and can see how they benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The lay chaplain is highly respected and pupils know that 'his door is always open', should they need his support. He has helped pupils to understand their responsibilities in supporting those less fortunate than themselves and they respond enthusiastically to this.
- Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. They show great consideration to others and are very well supported by a highly effective system of pastoral care.
- The Spiritual Life planning group leads on planning and reviewing the religious life of the school and involves a small number of senior pupils. A wider range of pupils could be involved in the planning and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school should seek to develop stronger links with the local parish communities, so that there is greater involvement of the school in parish celebrations and activities.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The school's mission statement, which has recently been reviewed by the school council and local governors, is fully understood by all pupils who can clearly explain how it is an expression of the educational mission of the Church and how it acts as a moral guide for all in the school community.
- Staff and pupils commented on the very positive relationships within the school, which are founded on genuine respect for each other.
- The physical environment clearly reflects the Catholic identity of the school. There are many different visual representations of the Catholic character of the school. In particular, staff and pupils are rightly very proud of the prayer boards seen in every form room.
- Staff within the school promote very high standards of behaviour and pupils respond very positively to this. Pupils benefit from high quality pastoral care and support, including a full-time well-being coordinator who provides support for both pupils and staff.
- A range of relevant policies such as Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and behaviour are in place; these reflect Catholic teachings and practices.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders and local governors, is passionate about the Catholic Life of the school, identifying it as the core responsibility of all staff within the school community.
- The staff induction programme is very effective and is well supported by the lay chaplain. As a result of this programme, staff are aware of what is expected of them and feel confident in participating fully in the Catholic Life of the school.
- Great value is attached to members of the school community from other faiths and no faith. Staff underlined how inclusive this Catholic school is, with one member of staff saying that the ethos of the school had 'enriched my own Christian faith'. Pupils also identified this inclusivity as a strength, with several highlighting the enthusiasm of their Hindu form tutor for Catholic prayers during form time.
- The school uses stakeholder surveys to evaluate the quality of the Catholic Life of the school. This process would be strengthened if more pupils from across the school had more direct involvement in the planning and implementation of reviews of the school's work.
- Leaders, including local governors, should now look to introduce a more systematic approach to reviewing the Catholic Life of the school, so that it focuses equally on the day to day as well as the major events of the Church's calendar.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	2
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – good

- Attainment in Religious Education has been broadly in line with the diocesan average for the last three years. In 2017, GCSE attainment at grades 4-9 was 65%, in 2018 it was 69% and in 2019 attainment at grades 4-9 was 67%. The average point score from FFT Aspire was +0.06 in 2017, +0.05 in 2018 and +0.01 in 2019. This represents broadly average progress in Religious Education against a national benchmark.
- Pupils are engaged in their lessons; they approach them with enthusiasm and interest. Pupils demonstrate good behaviour for learning and speak positively about their Religious Education lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and pupils are able to articulate the genuine and authentic care that teachers demonstrate for their vocation.
- Most pupils, relative to their age, display good religious knowledge and language. The Religious Education department has developed knowledge organisers at Key Stage 4 to support knowledge recall. The use of these, alongside homework booklets is having a positive impact on pupils' theological literacy and knowledge retention.
- During most lesson visits, pupils were engaged in a number of activities that promoted good learning. The lesson content frequently touched on moral and ethical questions. For example, in a Key Stage 5 lesson, pupils were able to make reference to contemporary ethical issues to further develop their arguments.
- The quality of most pupils' current work is good, however, for some pupils, particularly boys, presentation needs to be a focus when teachers are reviewing classwork and providing feedback.
- The attainment and progress of some pupil groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, low ability and pupils with special educational needs and/or a disability is an area for improvement. This will improve the number of pupils achieving a grade 4+ at GCSE in Religious Education.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education – good

- Teachers consistently plan good lessons and most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. Resources used by teachers are of a good quality. Some teachers in the department would benefit from a more collegiate approach to planning and support on how to use these resources to improve the learning in their classrooms.
- Lessons visited during the inspection showed a range of teaching strategies being used; in particular, there was evidence of debate, discussion, a range of questioning strategies and creativity. The department is working hard to develop pupils' knowledge of scripture so that they can use this to support their written answers.
- Teachers communicate high expectations in lessons, particularly regarding behaviour. The schemes of work for Key Stage 3 are currently being re-written to provide more challenge and a stronger foundation to the Religious Education GCSE, so that learning is sequential and religious knowledge is built upon throughout the key stages.
- Most teachers manage time effectively and in the majority of lessons, pupils respond positively to this. Where progress in learning was less effective, this was often as a result of pace with too much time being spent on discussions or debate.
- In both Key Stages 3 and 4, assessments are structured and focused on developing skills and knowledge to answer GCSE examination questions. The department has adopted an approach of dedicating time to pupils reflecting on and responding to improvement targets. However, this is inconsistent and is not always helping pupils to develop their learning at Key Stage 4.
- To further improve the quality of learning, teachers need to ensure that all lessons are carefully pitched in order to promote the appropriate level of challenge for all pupils. This will help with improving the attainment and progress of lower ability pupils.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – good

- Leaders and local governors share a common purpose and understanding of the importance of Religious Education. It holds a place of significance within the school and is seen by all as a core and leading subject within the school.
- The subject leaders for Religious Education have a clear vision and high expectations of both staff and pupils, which result in Religious Education having a high profile in the life of the school. They have led the department well through a number of recruitment challenges.
- Leaders and local governors ensure that Religious Education is comparable with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, staffing, professional development and accommodation.
- The local governing body should ensure that its monitoring of standards in Religious Education becomes more regular and systematic and that they hold school leaders to account more rigorously over the quality of provision and outcomes.
- Leaders and local governors need to continue to focus on pupil groups to ensure that all groups make progress which is at least in line with other pupil groups in the school from their relative starting points.
- Leaders and local governors must also ensure that the school meets the episcopal requirement for 10% of curriculum time being devoted to the study of Religious Education at Key Stages 3 and 4. The school does not currently fulfill this in Key Stage 3 and this must be addressed.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship – good

- Pupils regularly plan and lead Acts of Collective Worship, which are known in school as 'assemblies'. They are ably supported in this by the lay chaplain and members of the senior leadership team.
- During the Year 10 Act of Worship, pupils were very respectful and fully engaged, but they were not given sufficient opportunities to be 'active' participants in the worship. This Act of Worship on 'being significant' was described by one pupil as, 'a good message, coming at the right time'.
- The school's expectations are that form time features an opportunity for pupil-led prayer. Inspectors observed some excellent examples of this, when there were opportunities to extend this worship for the full form period and pupils had planned a reflection. However, this is not consistently the case and a number of pupils stated that in their form times, there are no opportunities to extend the prayer into a wider reflection. Often the prayer selected has not been written by the pupil leading the prayer, but comes from a bank of prayers written by pupils at the beginning of the year.
- Form time worship would benefit from more systematic and regular reviews, involving more pupils, senior leaders and local governors. It would also benefit from a more structured approach, for example with an identified broad theme, which would still allow pupils and staff to personalise the worship.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- Collective Worship is highly regarded by pupils and staff at the school. They regard the Acts of Worship as good opportunities to reflect on a relevant theme, usually linked to the Church's liturgical calendar, and to pray together.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils and staff to pray together. Pupils are encouraged to write and share their own prayers in form time and are all comfortable and confident in doing so.
- The lay chaplain supports form groups on a rota basis as they take responsibility for planning and leading the weekly Act of Worship. Pupils value these occasions and the themes they address.
- Collective Worship is planned sensitively so that pupils of all faith backgrounds are included; diversity is regularly celebrated at the school.
- The school's vision for form time worship has not yet been fully embedded and staff would benefit from support in ensuring that the school day consistently begins for all pupils with an opportunity for extended worship and reflection, which could be linked to a common theme in order to support consistency.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship – good

- Leaders have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year and when they plan and lead worship, it is well received by pupils.
- The lay chaplain and other school leaders use their expertise to encourage and support pupils in planning and leading Acts of Worship and form time worship.
- Local governors are active in their support of the main liturgical events and give feedback to senior leaders and the local governing body on the quality of these experiences.
- The school has begun to evaluate the quality of pupil-led worship, but this evaluation is not yet fully established and senior leaders and local governors do not yet regularly evaluate form time worship, which means that inconsistencies have not yet been addressed.
- The school seeks the views of pupils on Collective Worship through pupil surveys. However, this would be more effective as a method of refining and improving Collective Worship, if more pupils had a focused role in evaluating form time worship and Acts of Worship specifically.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	146196
CMAT	St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law in accordance with the *Evaluation Schedule* (September 2018) for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors visited 9 Religious Education lessons, 4 form periods and 1 Act of Collective Worship. All lesson visits were conducted jointly with members of the school's senior leadership team or leaders from the Religious Education department. The lead inspector carried out a learning walk with the headteacher.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leaders for Religious Education, the lay chaplain, the Trust CEO, director of performance and standards and the lead lay chaplain, two local governors including the chair of governors and a local the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils from all key stages and a selection of school staff

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the local governing body, action plans, the school development plan, monitoring forms, assessment information and parental response forms. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

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Headteacher:	Mr Marius Carney
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WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 18 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.