



# The English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College

Catcote Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS25 4HA

School Unique Reference Number: **140867**

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| <b>Inspection dates:</b>     | 07 – 08 February 2018 |             |          |
| <b>Lead inspector:</b>       | Pat Witte             |             |          |
| <b>Team inspector:</b>       | David Lewis           |             |          |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | Previous inspection:  | Good        | 2        |
|                              | This inspection:      | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Catholic Life:</b>        |                       | Good        | 2        |
| <b>Collective Worship:</b>   |                       | Good        | 2        |
| <b>Religious Education:</b>  |                       | Good        | 2        |

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

The English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College is a good Catholic school because:

- English Martyrs is a good Catholic school. Staff and pupils display a sense of belonging to this highly supportive community. The Catholic Life of the school enables the building of strong relationships and respect for all. Staff and pupils play a major role in the activities which contribute to the Catholic Life of the school. The planned developments between the school and the Holy Family parish should enhance Catholic Life even further.
- Collective Worship is good. Pupils and staff are involved in the preparation, planning and leading of prayer and liturgies. Pupils value the prayer life of the school and enjoy the current range of opportunities to pray each day. A greater focus on the response of pupils to liturgical celebrations would enhance Collective Worship across the school.
- The quality of Religious Education is good overall. Achievement across the school is in line with national averages. Pupils enjoy their learning and staff aim to provide a rich experience at all levels. Governors and senior leaders are now involved in monitoring the work in Religious Education. The introduction of a new assessment regime is a strength but is not yet sufficiently embedded to ensure outstanding achievement at all levels.

**It is not yet outstanding because:**

- The response of pupils in community prayers and liturgical celebrations is an area for development. The drive for improvement by the school should enrich the experiences for pupils.
- The school is yet to achieve outstanding achievement at all levels. The new assessment regime is a great strength and once embedded should support this aim.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- English Martyrs is a much larger than average Catholic secondary school.
- The school converted to an academy in April 2014. It is currently the only academy in The Holy Family Education Trust.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority communities is below average.
- The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. However over the past two years there has been a significant increase in the proportion of year seven and year eight pupils requiring additional support for their special education needs and/or disabilities.
- English Martyrs School has close links with the Holy Family Parish.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Enhance the Catholic Life of the school by:
  - reviewing chaplaincy provision to include the recent appointment of the youth ministry coordinator.
- Improve how well pupils participate in and respond to Collective Worship by:
  - further developing opportunities for pupils to lead, share and respond to liturgical celebrations.
- Raise achievement in Religious Education across the school and particularly at key stage four by:
  - embedding the new teaching and learning and assessment strategies across the school.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF 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.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers 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 is good.**

- The pupils of English Martyrs are fully committed to the Catholic Life of the school. They speak with enthusiasm about their school and feel supported by both staff and other pupils. Pupils are respectful of each other; it is clear that the Gospel value of love lies at the heart of the community.
- Pupils are regularly involved in events that enhance Catholic Life such as retreats at the Emmaus Youth Village and at Ampleforth College. The voluntary response to diocesan initiatives is good. A large number of pupils attend "The Source" and participate in the John Paul II Award. Pupils display no reservation in participating in any aspect of Catholic Life. They are keen to serve in the school community and beyond. Sixth form pupils play a prominent role in leading liturgical celebrations in the primary feeder schools and in the retreat programme.
- The behaviour of pupils is of a high standard at all times, inside and outside of the classroom. Pupils feel safe in an atmosphere where respect for all regardless of background is shown. They are always ready to listen to the views of others and value everyone's contribution to the community. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school that contributes to learning and interaction with others.
- Pupils are proud of their Catholic community and the links to the parishes and the diocese. Present and past pupils embrace participation in school liturgical celebrations. The school is proud of its alumni tradition and welcome past pupils who continue to contribute to the Catholic Life. The participation of pupils in the Family Retreat adds a wider dimension to the Catholic Life of the school.
- The house system is a successful vehicle for the promotion of charitable events. Each house adopts their own charity and pupils gladly contribute to organisations such as St Cuthbert's Care. There are real opportunities given to pupils to assist those in need through such undertakings.

#### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.**

- The governing body, headteacher and senior staff display full commitment to providing a Catholic experience of the highest level to all members of the community. The vision of the headteacher is encapsulated in the new mission statement 'Founded on truth, built on justice and animated by love'. Staff and pupils speak of the impact of this vision in the development of the school's Catholic mission.
- The school provides a range of opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all within the community. Prayer life is central to the life of the school and staff and pupils are involved in celebrating the liturgical life of the Church. Careful planning takes place to reflect each season of the liturgical year. Parishioners are welcomed into the school to regularly participate in the varied

prayer life.

- The new integrated youth ministry strategy is a development that should bring school and church communities closer together. The school is fully supportive of the work of the youth ministry coordinator within the Holy Family parish. It is envisaged that the initiative will build relationships where the whole community can grow in faith. The introduction of the Youth Alpha course should support a deepening of understanding among pupils.
- The staff induction programme into the Catholic Life of the school is a high priority. The chaplain plays a key role in the process and staff feel valued and welcomed into the community. The ease of transition supports a sense of belonging amongst new staff. The introduction of an in year induction process has proved beneficial to staff joining the school mid year.
- Pastoral care at English Martyrs is rooted in Gospel Values. The effective year and house system ensures high levels of care to pupils. There is a commitment to the most vulnerable of the community; an example of this is the establishment of the nurture group in year seven and year eight.
- The high standards of behaviour are evident throughout the school and are rooted in Gospel Values where care and concern are paramount. Pupils display a responsibility towards other pupils and strive to ensure that the respectful treatment of others prevails.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.**

- The Mission of the Church is central to the leadership of the school. This inspires the ongoing drive for the Catholic Life of the school. The governors, headteacher and senior leadership team are committed to the further development of the Catholic ethos. Staff and pupils recognise the high priority given to Catholic Life by the headteacher.
- The highly professional governing body, which was restructured when the school converted to academy status, gives full support to the headteacher. They firmly acknowledge his vision for the continued development of the Catholic Life of English Martyrs school. The senior leadership team gives support to the headteacher and together they are fully committed to providing the best possible Catholic education for all.
- The provision for Catholic Life is central to the school's self-evaluation and analysis. Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school. The headteacher has ensured that they are fully informed of all aspects of school life and are therefore able to challenge and support in order to ensure continuing development. Middle leaders, including the head of Religious Education, regularly feedback to the governors on outcomes. This provides a basis for the analysis of strengths and areas for development. The monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school is supported by regular reports from the chaplain to the governing body. This ensures that governors play a vital role in the development of policies ensuring that the Catholic Life is paramount.
- Staff have a full understanding of the school's Catholic Mission particularly through the new mission statement. All pastoral staff share in and support the provision for the prayer life of the school. There are opportunities for feedback and dialogue evaluating and enhancing future developments.
- The school is highly regarded within the local community and is committed in its drive for excellence. The school works well with parents/carers and aims to ensure that they have a thorough understanding of the school's mission and purpose.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers 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 is good.**

- Pupils respond with respect and reverence to the Collective Worship opportunities provided by the school community. They are attentive in assembly and tutor group prayers and reflect deeply in silence.
- Pupils participate in preparing acts of Collective Worship, either in the tutor group setting or whole group celebrations. Each tutor group regularly has an opportunity to participate in morning prayer in the chapel where pupils are willing to lead prayer, with the support of their tutor, and are confident in their delivery. It is evident that there are a variety of approaches to prayer with some developing strategies. In the observed assemblies, only some pupils joined in community prayers. The appropriate verbal response of pupils in community celebrations and to Collective Worship opportunities is an area for development.
- Many pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers. In interview pupils discussed their participation in prayer and liturgical celebrations and the difference this has made to their own spiritual development.
- In the planning of liturgies pupils are respectful of the needs of those of other faiths. Pupils of other faith traditions are at ease in sharing prayer experiences and contributing elements of their own faith journey.
- Pupils display an understanding of the Church's liturgical year. This is evident in the planning of prayer and worship in relation to the religious seasons and feasts. The involvement in events such as the Advent Labyrinth has enabled pupils to gain a greater understanding of the cyclical nature of the year.

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.**

- There are opportunities for staff and pupils to pray together regularly; prayer is part of almost all school celebrations. To see some pupils leading the staff in prayer at their weekly staff meeting was a real testament to the importance placed on providing spiritual community opportunities.
- Staff and pupils enjoy Collective Worship and resources are available to ensure a meaningful spiritual experience. Local clergy support the Day of Reconciliation, which is well supported by staff and pupils. Stations of the Cross are available throughout Lent as is the opportunity to pray the Rosary in the chapel. This gives pupils a sense of the liturgical year within the school.
- Most pupils are keen to contribute to the planning and delivery of quality worship. Form tutors and the chaplain support them in this in order to develop high quality and consistent worship

experiences.

- The planning of Mass, throughout the year and the weekly Mass is important in the life of the school. Provision is made for pupils to play an active role in these celebrations. Local clergy are keen to support this vital aspect of sacramental experience.
- The school opens its doors to the local community and welcomes parents and parishioners to liturgical celebrations. The response to the invitation is mostly positive.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is good.**

- Leaders and managers at English Martyrs are committed to the planning and delivery of good quality experiences of Collective Worship. Continuing professional development (CPD) for staff in this area is given a high priority. Opportunities are provided for staff and governors to deepen their own spiritual formation; an example of this is in the recent staff and governor retreat.
- Leaders understand the seasons and feasts of the Church's liturgical year. The planned events reflect this. Pupils are able to access these and their response is at least good.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team along with the chaplain regularly lead and attend Collective Worship; their example models good practice for the whole community. They are able to evaluate at first hand the quality of provision, which informs future planning.
- Collective Worship is reviewed as part of the school's self-evaluation processes. The chaplain reports on a termly basis to the governing body giving an opportunity to monitor and evaluate developments in this area.
- There is an informal dialogue between the senior team, middle leaders and pupils in order to review and improve acts of Collective Worship. Pupils contribute to the evaluation process following visits in the wider community. Feedback following retreats occurs regularly.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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#### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good.**

- For many pupils and sixth form pupils, Religious Education is their favourite subject at school. In all lessons observed, pupils were keen to do well and never a second was lost in the learning process. Behaviour for learning was very strong and every lesson was carefully constructed and delivered to enable progress to be made by pupils.
- There was clear evidence in lessons that good and better progress is now being made over time. Books are marked consistently with helpful feedback to improve pupils' work. The new assessment policy and practice is clearly having significant impact and this should translate into high attainment and achievement in the future.
- Peer assessment is an integral component to the assessment process and the newly revised schemes of work have helpfully divided the programmes of study into clear and cohesive units of work.
- Lessons were characterised with a remarkable consistency of approach. It was clear that the Religious Education team have worked closely to collectively design and develop good materials including video, the use of information and communications technology and group activities. The impact of this is that most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress and book scrutinies confirmed that the rate of progress is increasing across all key stages.
- Standards of attainment are at least in line with diocesan and national averages overall and recent excellent developments in the use of data now effectively track achievement and inform intervention strategies.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.**

- All lessons observed were at least good with some outstanding examples. Progress is now good overall and improving over time as a result of the consistent approach of the Religious Education team and their ability to inspire young people.
- Resources are well developed and consistently applied to support the learning of all pupils. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and many examples of good question and answering techniques were observed during the inspection. This demonstrated the pupils' confidence in their teachers who sensitively tackled subjects including marriage, divorce, the seven sacraments, the cosmological argument for the existence of God, and artificial insemination.
- Pupils are articulate and considered in their responses and questions. They challenge teachers and each other to explore and develop their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education.



- Homework is regularly set and this, together with key assessment tasks, consolidates pupils' learning.
- The new assessment strategy is already showing positive impact in the classroom, but will take time to translate into improved outcomes, particularly at key stage four. Nevertheless, pupils knew their target grades and how to improve their work and were keen to achieve well in Religious Education.
- Peer assessment is well developed both formally in written work and informally in group discussions and feedback.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good.**

- Leaders and managers are clearly committed to ensuring The English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College becomes a beacon of excellence in Religious Education. Governors keenly receive and analyse data and reports on Religious Education and act as a critical friend in driving up standards. They know the strengths and areas for development of the school well and that Religious Education is central to the life of English Martyrs. They check for themselves by attending all school events, masses, liturgies, and celebrations, are involved in learning walks, and regularly meet with pupils, parents, and staff to ensure that improvements are becoming embedded.
- There is a committed team of dedicated Religious Education teachers, which includes the headteacher. Their palpable passion is already having a significant positive impact on raising outcomes.
- The cohesive Religious Education team is ably led by the capable head of department who has developed a remarkable team spirit amongst his colleagues, ably supported by other post holders in the department. The team has a complementary and excellent range of skills that are harnessed to work effectively in promoting Religious Education as an exciting and vibrant subject for all.
- The school meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

**2**

### CATHOLIC LIFE:

**2**

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

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

2

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

**2**

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

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

2

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

**2**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

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How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

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| <b>School name</b>  | The English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College  |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>  | 140867   |
| <b>Local authority</b>  | Hartlepool   |
| This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005. |  |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>   | Mrs Susan Harrison (Local Governing Body)<br>Mrs Gillian Proudlock (Directors of The Holy Family EducationTrust) |
| <b>Head teacher</b>   | Mr Stephen Hammond   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>   | February 2012  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01429 273790   |
| <b>Email address</b>  | admin@ems.hartlepool.sch.uk  |