

Inspection of a good school: English

Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School

Flint Street, Walworth, London SE17 1QD

Inspection dates:

4–5 March 2020

Outcome

English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school. They are happy, caring and kind to each other. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They want to do their very best in their learning. Behaviour is always positive and respectful.

Pupils are nurtured well. The school's core values, including faith and respect, are followed by all. Parents and carers reported that the school has a strong sense of community. One pupil told me, expressing the views of others, 'We are all children of God in one family.'

Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in art, music and physical education (PE). They enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit museums, theatres and galleries. They develop a strong general knowledge of historical events and geographical facts.

Leaders, including governors, are committed to ensuring that this is an inclusive school. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive. Staff have the highest expectations of all pupils.

Pupils play an active part in the life of the school. School council members, junior chaplains and prayer monitors support the care and well-being of others. Pupils enjoy their playtimes and report that bullying and name-calling are rare.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have developed a clear structure of what pupils should learn in each year group. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They help pupils build on their previous learning. Pupils' regular practice and rehearsal of skills help them to remember more. Pupils behave well in lessons. They are fully engaged in their learning and by the end of key stage 2 are well prepared for secondary school.

Teachers prioritise reading across the school. Adults read to pupils every day. Classrooms have a wide range of high-quality books for pupils to read. Pupils visit the school's well-stocked library. In the early years, children's reading books are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. Phonics sounds are taught well across all year groups. Pupils use their sounds to self-correct. This supports their reading.

Children make a strong start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They settle well, make friends and are happy in their learning. Staff introduce vocabulary through much loved books and rehearse new words through play opportunities. Children are confident to recount their favourite stories and quickly develop early reading skills. However, in the early years and key stage 1, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their phonics sounds to their writing. Pupils' accurate use of grammar and vocabulary in key stage 1 in longer pieces of work is not consistently strong.

Pupils in key stage 2 develop confidence and fluency in their reading and writing skills. Leaders' actions to improve pupils' writing have been positive. Pupils write at greater length. They can edit and improve their work. Pupils' presentation and handwriting is of a high standard. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are well supported. They receive a wide range of therapeutic support and additional teaching. Teaching assistants are effective. They ensure that pupils receive the support that they need to catch up with their peers.

Leaders have given careful thought to the order in which history is taught. Pupils use their previous learning and speak confidently about events from the past. Pupils have a strong knowledge of historical facts. They use these to explain why events occurred. Pupils have a strong understanding of social justice. They can explain time periods of prejudice, discrimination and conflict.

Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy learning French. They are confident in using role play to rehearse and practise their language skills. Pupils are developing their French vocabulary and can write using full sentences. They visit the French Institute to deepen their understanding. Pupils have a good understanding of French geographical facts, culture, cuisine and history.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that goes far beyond the academic. Pupils have a strong understanding of the world around them. They demonstrate fairness, responsibility and compassion towards the needs of others. Pupils are proud of their school and their local community. They have a clear understanding of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff told me that leaders are very supportive and care for their well-being. They enjoy working at the school and appreciate that leaders are considerate of their workload. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and praise the leadership of the headteacher.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. Leaders know their pupils and families well. Staff have a clear understanding of how to report concerns. They are vigilant to any signs of risk or harm.

Staff offer strong support for pupils' mental health and well-being. Leaders have placed a worry box in each classroom, so pupils can share their fears or anxieties. Staff work closely with a wide range of external agencies, to ensure that vulnerable families receive the support they require. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and also the need to keep safe in the wider community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils learn their phonics well. However, they do not have regular opportunities to apply their phonics knowledge to their writing. As a result, pupils' writing is not as fluent as it should be. Leaders must ensure that pupils have well-planned opportunities to apply their learned phonics sounds to their writing.
- In key stage 1, pupils' accurate use of grammar and vocabulary is not consistently strong. Leaders must ensure that staff's professional development and consequent expectations of pupils' quality of work, particularly in longer pieces, are high.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100824
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10121623
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Patrick Gillespie
Headteacher/Principal	Hyacinth Appah
Website	www.englishmartyrsrprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 July 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the averaged-sized primary school and is based on two sites.
- This is a Catholic primary school.
- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Southwark, in November 2019.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the school improvement adviser, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of teachers, the home school support worker and the learning mentor.
- I met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- I visited all classrooms with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- I observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and I met with groups of pupils to hear their views of the school.
- I reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, the school's single central record of employment checks for

staff, behaviour logs, first aid records, risk assessments, safeguarding records and attendance data.

- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, history and French. This involved meeting subject leaders to discuss curriculum plans. I also spoke with pupils about their learning, looked at their work and listened to them read.
- In addition to the twelve parents I spoke with informally at the start of the school day, I viewed the three responses made to Ofsted's free-text service. I also considered the school's most recent parents' survey.

Inspection team

Tom Canning, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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