

Inspection of English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy

Bracken Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 4DA

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Gemma Ellis. This school is part of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Kevin Gritton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Noon.

Ofsted has not previously inspected English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they feel pleased and proud to attend English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy. Parents also value the school. One parent voiced the views of many, when they said: 'My children cannot wait to get to school. I feel happy that kindness and respect are key elements in their learning.'

Pupils behave well. They understand the '4bs' (be kind, be respectful, be a hard worker and be safe) and the school's rules and routines. They show respect to their peers and to their teachers. Many lessons are calm. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They appreciate that their teachers are well trained. They feel reassured that there are many staff to turn to if they need help. Bullying is rare, in their view.

In some lessons, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The curriculum is not as well planned and constructed as is needed. It does not ensure that all pupils have the depth and breadth of knowledge required to achieve well.

Pupils explore the world outside of the classroom. They protect the environment. Recently, the school won a national sustainability award for its work. Pupils say that many of the things they do in school make them better people.

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

The school is developing the curriculum. This work is not yet completed. The school has identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. In some subjects, including mathematics, the school has not planned or sequenced this knowledge effectively to ensure that pupils know and remember more.

The school has adopted the 'progress pathway' in lessons. The intention is to make sure that pupils' prior knowledge is carefully built on and retained. This approach is not consistent. In some lessons, this is because teachers are unclear about the order in which new knowledge needs to be taught.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They offer clear explanations. They use questions effectively to address pupils' misconceptions. Sometimes, the checks in lessons do not make sure that pupils' learning is secure. At times, opportunities are missed to deepen pupils' understanding, extend their thinking or address misconceptions. This limits the achievement of some pupils.

Many subject leaders are new to the role. They have great talent, enthusiasm and passion for the subjects that they lead. They are ambitious to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Some have not yet received the full training and guidance required of the role. This is planned.

Pupils learn to read as soon as they enter Reception. They receive expert help to catch up if they need it. However, some books do not closely match the letters and sounds that some pupils are learning. This prevents them from reading with accuracy and confidence.

The school is determined to promote pupils' love of reading. Pupils have daily opportunities to read. They sit engrossed when listening to their class teacher read to them. High-quality books are everywhere, including in the early years. Pupils have exciting opportunities to meet published authors and create their own books. They appreciate 'having their eyes opened to different worlds through books'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), attend school regularly and are rarely late.

The provision for pupils with SEND has improved. The new special educational needs coordinator is skilled. The identification of pupils' needs is swift. Learning in lessons is suitably adapted. However, some parents of pupils with SEND are still worried about the provision for their child. The school has conducted work to improve communication with parents. This is a continuing priority.

Children in the early years receive rich learning opportunities in a stimulating environment. The adults demonstrate great care.

The school has a strong Catholic ethos. Pupils say that the 'light mission' is the foundation of everything that they do in the school. They are involved in their community. They lead and practise faith. The school council members take their role to represent the views of their peers seriously. They said that they keenly 'promote democracy'. They 'test themselves to gain effective resolutions'. The sports facilities at playtime have improved due to their hard work.

Pupils play sport, get involved with art, take part in visits and learn from experts. Well-being days are hugely appreciated. Pupils say they know they are well cared for 'by experts'.

Leaders are new to their role and are ambitious. They know the rapid steps needed to improve the school. This work has started. They receive high-quality support from the trust. Staff appreciate leaders' efforts to improve their workload and well-being. They express great pride and joy at being part of this caring school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is not well planned and sequenced. The order in which component knowledge is to be learned is not always clearly identified. The key knowledge for pupils to revisit is unclear. This means that some pupils are not taught the knowledge they need in an appropriate order and to the correct depth and breadth. Some pupils underachieve. The school must ensure that a well-planned and sequenced curriculum is in place and that ambitious end-points are identified. The school should ensure that the curriculum is taught consistently well.
- Sometimes, staff do not use the information from checks made in lessons to adapt the curriculum according to pupils' needs. Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding, address misconceptions or deepen pupils' knowledge. The school must ensure that teachers accurately check pupils' understanding and then act swiftly to address pupils' learning needs.
- Some reading books do not match the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. This means that some pupils do not become accurate and confident readers. Leaders must make sure that reading books precisely match pupils' phonics knowledge so that they are able to learn to read accurately and with confidence.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140070
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10228983
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Noon
Headteacher	Gemma Ellis
CEO of the trust	Kevin Gritton
Website	www.englishmartyrslong Eaton.srscmat.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since January 2023. The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2023.
- The school does not use alternative provision for any of its pupils.
- The most recent Diocesan Canonical Inspection took place in March 2020.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders to discuss their evaluation of the quality of education. The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and the CEO of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust. She met with members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors met with the trust's primary director of performance and standards and the trust's mathematics lead.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors also met with the subject leaders of science and geography. They reviewed the curriculum plans for these subjects and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the early years leader. They reviewed the early years provision.
- Inspectors observed pupils during the school day as they moved around the school. They observed lunchtime and playtime. They spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and the pastoral lead to discuss the actions taken to keep children safe. She reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record of staff. She looked at information about the actions taken to protect the most vulnerable pupils. She reviewed information relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The views of parents and staff were considered.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Stewart	Ofsted Inspector
Sylvie Newman	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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