

# English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Preston

Sizer Street, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 7DR

**Inspection dates** 24–25 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- English Martyrs' is highly valued by pupils, their families, staff and the local community.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress during their time at school.
- Results have improved since the previous inspection. Standards are at least in line with national expectations in English and mathematics, and for some pupils are higher.
- The teaching of reading is extremely effective. By the time pupils leave Year 6 they are very competent readers and well prepared for the next stage of education.
- Teaching, overall, is good and some is outstanding. Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy the wide range of activities in lessons.
- Those who need extra help receive precisely tailored support from teachers and teaching assistants. The 'Gold Room' is a very well staffed facility that provides a welcoming and supportive room for pupils and their families.
- Good links with home help staff to develop parents' skills to support learning at home.
- This vibrant school community greatly respects and celebrates pupils' many different faiths and cultures. Together with many trips and a wide range of visitors to the school, this contributes extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have a good attitude towards each other and the adults around them, and are keen to learn. All staff are committed to providing a stimulating environment to encourage pupils' personal and academic development. Pupils feel safe.
- English Martyrs' is an improving school. It is well led by the headteacher and his senior leadership team. Leaders and managers have secure systems which enhance the quality of teaching and ensure continual improvement in pupils' achievement.
- The ambitious governing body provides a good balance of support and challenge. Together with senior leaders it is concentrating on raising the quality of teaching even further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. The opportunities for staff to observe outstanding practice is not fully developed.
- There is a lack of consistency in the quality of marking across the school.
- Some pupils miss too much school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed eight teachers and visited 16 lessons. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with: school staff; groups of pupils; senior staff and leaders with responsibility for a specific subject; parents; the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, its development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- The inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's most recent survey of parent views. The 24 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Machell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- English Martyrs' is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much higher than that found nationally. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than the national average as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average. The proportion of those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- In 2013, some pupils won or were runners-up in their respective categories in the Reading Recovery Child of the Year national competition.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to sustain and accelerate progress in English and mathematics by:
  - consistently providing challenge throughout the whole lesson, particularly for the more-able
  - improving further the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils are clear about how to improve their work
  - providing more opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice.
- Improve attendance so that all pupils can benefit from uninterrupted learning and have a better opportunity to reach their full potential.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children settle very well into the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of very effective transition arrangements between school and home. Nursery and Reception-aged children benefit from the wide range of activities that they can use both in the classroom and outdoors.
- Most children start school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age, particularly in personal and communication skills. Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the clear focus on communication, language and calculation skills. Good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 so that pupils now join Year 3 with attainment levels which are broadly in line with those typical for their age in English and mathematics, although reading is higher.
- Younger children learn effectively how to link letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). Phonics is well taught in small groups based on pupils' abilities. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in reading in Year 1 is higher than the national average. Similarly, the proportion attaining the higher levels in reading at the end of both key stages is above average. Writing is not as strong, although pupils reach standards by the end of both key stages which are broadly in line with the national average.
- The whole-school systematic approach to teaching mathematics ensures that pupils have mental mathematics skills to help with problem-solving. Standards reached at the end Year 6 are above average.
- The proportion of pupils making expected and better than expected progress in reading from their individual starting points is generally higher than that found nationally. An increasing number of pupils are making better than expected progress in writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make the same good progress because of timely and sharply focused help from teachers, teaching assistants and external agencies. Pupils whose first language is not English and those from minority ethnic groups also make good progress. The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is at least similar to that of other pupils in English and mathematics and sometimes better. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and some teaching is outstanding. This has led to improvements in the engagement and enjoyment of pupils in their learning, resulting in improvements in achievement for all groups of pupils.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants plan activities really well together to ensure that pupils are given work designed to get the best out of them. Consequently, pupils learn quickly because they are given work which matches their ability and they are finding out things for themselves.
- For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson the teacher helped pupils recall a recent educational visit when they had to walk to the lift before being taken up Blackpool Tower. This proved highly effective in reminding them to plot the 'x' axis before the 'y' axis when using coordinates. Pupils demonstrated their understanding by plotting coordinates on the interactive whiteboard before moving quickly onto a range of different tasks to challenge their individual needs. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed finding out things for themselves, with the teacher and teaching assistant supporting their learning. All groups of pupils made rapid progress.
- In a one-to-one Key Stage 1 lesson supporting the acceleration of reading skills, the teacher had precisely planned a wide range of fast-paced activities which the pupil clearly enjoyed. Repetition of words within a range of sentences, the use of magnetic letters, and cutting up sentences and putting them back together again while being timed against the clock ensured

rapid pace and challenge. This meant that the pupil made outstanding progress.

- Occasionally, pupils, particularly the more-able, are not provided with enough challenge in their work during whole-class lessons, which slows progress.
- Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking and the time given in lessons for pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants who support those with special educational needs, pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and those pupils for whom English is not their first language are well trained to provide for the individual learning needs of each pupil.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils behave very well together and are polite and friendly towards staff and visitors to the school. All staff are dedicated to ensuring that pupils' needs are well met. One parent who moved her children here from elsewhere, referred to the school as being, 'one in a million...this was the best change in my children's lives for the better'.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and this is reflected in responses from parents who told inspectors that behaviour is much better than it used to be, and is good. Pupils are successfully taught how to measure risks and why and how to choose good behaviour.
- Pupils say that bullying does not happen at English Martyrs', but they would be able to talk to any adult if they thought that this was happening to them or someone else. Incident logs show that there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils' good behaviour both in lessons and around the school results in positive attitudes to learning and care towards each other. This was reflected in conversations with pupils and their families, and from all the views expressed on Parent View.
- The quality of art work displayed in school reflects the pride that pupils take in their work. The assemblies encourage pupils and staff to celebrate hard work and achievement.
- Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and activities after school. This encourages them to pursue sports which help them to stay healthy and promotes their well-being.
- Overall attendance is below average but it is slowly improving with the recent introduction of new policies and procedures. Although many pupils enjoy and attend school regularly, the learning of some pupils is interrupted by absences from school which limits their chance to reach their full potential.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher and senior leaders have a good understanding of how to drive whole-school improvement. The school's systems to check on pupils' progress are effective. Leaders and managers check the quality of teaching within their areas of responsibility and act as excellent role models.
- The headteacher ensures that all staff are well supported through training opportunities both within the school and beyond. Improvements to the quality of teaching are clearly evident and, as one member of staff commented, the school is 'a fantastic place to work and learn'. As yet, staff have not had enough opportunities to help improve their teaching from observing outstanding practice within or beyond school.
- The local authority effectively provides guidance for the school with 'light-touch' support.
- The curriculum encourages pupils to find out things for themselves, particularly during topic weeks. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength and supports pupils to make an excellent contribution to the positive atmosphere in school. Music and art are central to the life of the school. All Year 4 pupils get the opportunity to learn to play the guitar which they clearly enjoy.
- The experiences of pupils are extended through a range of well-managed excursions. Visits to places such as Blackpool and to a farm take pupils beyond their city centre environment and

provide valuable social experiences for them which are used in the classroom.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is committed to continually driving improvements at this school. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities; all staff have been vetted and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe. They have an accurate overview of the overall provision. The governing body works closely with the senior leadership team. Governors challenge staff about pupils' progress and have a secure understanding of performance data. This level of enquiry and accountability contributes to shaping the short and long-term plans for the school, based on how well pupils are progressing compared to other schools. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching which is linked to teachers' appraisal. Salary progression is based on meeting targets. Governors check that staff make effective use of pupil premium funding to ensure equality of opportunity and that all groups of pupils achieve well.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119605
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426293

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Gillespie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Adrian Dunn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 556092
<b>Fax number</b>	01772 201291
<b>Email address</b>	head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

