

# English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Preston

Sizer Street, Preston, Lancashire PR1 7DR

## Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The new leadership team has taken effective action to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are improving rapidly in these subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress along with their peers.
- Children make good progress in early years, especially those who join in Nursery and benefit from two years in school. This prepares them really well for key stage 1.
- In key stage 1, the proportion of most-able pupils reaching the greater depth standard is above average. Although improving in key stage 2, the challenge for these pupils is inconsistent and, at times, pupils' progress is not fast enough.
- Progress in history and geography is good but less rapid than in other subjects because leaders of these subjects are new to their roles. They have yet to ensure that teachers' planning for these areas builds systematically on secure assessments of pupils' prior learning.
- Historically, too few pupils reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check because some staff lacked a secure grasp of how to teach this subject. This is starting to improve with effective staff training.
- Leaders check carefully on the quality of teaching and ensure weaknesses are swiftly addressed through training and development. Consequently, most teaching is good although there is not always enough challenge in lessons for most-able pupils in key stage 2.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is stimulating and enriched with opportunities for pupils to broaden their learning through trips and visits to interesting places.
- Parents speak highly of the school. They typically comment on the sense that the school is one large family. Pupils behave sensibly and treat one another with respect.
- Governors are effective in holding leaders to account for pupils' academic progress and their physical and mental welfare. They ensure that pupils are safe in school and that the school's resources are put to the best possible use to support learning.
- Attendance is improving. Most pupils attend school regularly and in good time to begin the day's lessons.

## Full report

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

- Build on the success in key stage 1 to increase the proportion of most-able pupils who reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 by ensuring that there is sufficient challenge for these pupils as they move through key stage 2.
- Ensure that staff with new responsibilities for subject leadership have appropriate training and development to make them more effective in their roles.
- Further improve progress in phonics by building on the skills of staff to teach this subject.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- School senior leaders, including the headteacher, are all new to the school since the last inspection. Working with governors, they have swiftly developed an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. This leads to well-constructed, ambitious plans for improvement and focused actions that are rapidly moving the school forward and raising standards.
- Leaders recognised that the dip in pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2016 national tests at the end of Year 6 had to be addressed urgently. They made improving outcomes in mathematics the first priority and introduced new strategies, including daily sessions to help pupils develop their skills in arithmetic. These resulted in pupils' accelerated progress in this subject and the much better outcomes seen in the 2017 tests.
- Further decisive actions to improve pupils' progress in reading and writing, including intensive short-term support programmes, are having a positive impact that is seen in the work of pupils currently in the school.
- The arrangements in place to check on the quality of teaching are robust. Teachers are held to account for improving pupils' progress, although there remains a lack of challenge for most-able pupils in some lessons in key stage 2. There are now more consistent approaches to the teaching of phonics.
- Teachers receive good support from senior colleagues and high-quality professional development opportunities to improve their practice further.
- Leaders make good use of links with other schools and with the local authority to support teachers' continuing professional development through sharing good practice and checking that teachers' assessments are secure.
- All teachers have a leadership role within the school and work together as a well-motivated and cohesive team. Some teachers have only just taken on the leadership of a subject area and require further training and development to support them in coming to grips with their additional responsibilities.
- Leaders have worked hard to engage parents in school and provided a range of opportunities for them to find out how to support further learning at home. These include running workshops, for example, 'fun with phonics', and holding mathematics and English cafés that give parents some insights into how these subjects are taught in school. In response to requests from parents, the school has increased the frequency of reports to parents on pupils' progress.
- Leaders offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced with a wide range of trips and visitors to the school. Links with the local university give pupils opportunities for scientific investigations that are helping to improve progress in science. Pupils in key stage 2 are learning Mandarin with help from a group of students from China and are developing good skills in learning to speak a modern foreign language.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through helping pupils understand and celebrate a range of faiths and cultural

traditions. Pupils learn about festivals such as Diwali and Eid and show respect and tolerance for diversity within their own school family. School council elections give them a basic understanding of life in modern Britain as they learn how democracy operates in our society.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are very well informed on pupils' progress and on the standards they reach in comparison with national averages. Governors recognised the dip in 2016 key stage 2 outcomes and now give more focused attention to checking progress on the school's improvement plan. They ask probing and challenging questions that effectively hold school leaders to account.
- Governors ensure that the school gives good value for money and that decisions about spending or saving are taken bearing in mind the main priorities for school improvement. They ensure that the pupil premium funding is carefully targeted at disadvantaged pupils and is used effectively in accelerating the progress of these pupils.
- Governors have a keen awareness of the school's arrangements for the performance management of staff, including that of the headteacher, and make sure that any increases in teachers' pay are linked to improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Policies and procedures to ensure pupils' safety are up to date and rigorously followed.
- Leaders ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in child protection and understand what to do if they suspect that a child may be at risk of harm, including from radicalisation.
- The school site is well maintained and secure. It provides a safe and nurturing place for children and this is recognised in the school's recent award of the nationally recognised 'School of Sanctuary' status.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- A real strength of the school is teachers' ability to identify pupils who need some extra support to catch up to the level expected for their age at the earliest possible stage. Sometimes this results in pupils having some individual help during the daily sessions to help pupils revisit any misunderstandings, and at other times pupils are given more extensive programmes of support over a number of weeks. All these actions support pupils in making good progress.
- Teachers increasingly ensure that most-able pupils receive a high level of challenge in lessons. This has resulted in a significant increase in the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in national test outcomes at the end of key stage 1, but has yet to show

an impact on the test outcomes at the end of key stage 2.

- Pupils swiftly gain confidence as learners in the school's warm and stimulating classrooms. They respond well to instructions and are unafraid to contribute their views in class discussions.
- Teachers' skilled questioning encourages pupils to think hard about their answers and deepens their understanding.
- Teaching of writing is effective. Teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities to write for a range of different purposes and not just in English lessons, and this is one of the reasons why their progress in writing continues to improve. The level of challenge for most-able pupils in key stage 2 is improving, but has yet to show an impact in the proportion of these pupils reaching the higher standard in the national tests at the end of key stage 2.
- A school-wide focus on improving the teaching of mathematics has been particularly successful in improving outcomes for pupils in this subject. Teachers are successful in teaching a range of approaches to help pupils develop their basic calculation skills, including the 'Christmas maths market'. There is also a daily focused session on basic skills, such as fluency in multiplication tables, that is laying the foundations to strengthen pupils' skills in solving increasingly complicated problems.
- The teaching of reading is good. The teaching of letters and sounds has not yet been fully effective because some staff lacked a secure understanding of phonics.
- Teachers' planning for pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is based on an accurate understanding of their level of ability and prior learning in these subjects. In history and geography, progress is not quite as rapid because teachers are not always building on prior learning quite as systematically as in other subjects.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Many pupils come to school with a range of social and emotional issues that make it hard for them to learn. Leaders understand this and ensure that everything possible is done to nurture vulnerable pupils and to include them in everything that is happening in school.
- Effective use of the physical education and sport premium funding means that pupils have increased access to sporting activities and events both during and after the school day. This supports pupils in learning how to keep themselves fit and healthy.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying of any kind, and are confident that adults will always listen and intervene to put a stop to any unkind behaviour.
- Leaders ensure that pupils understand how to keep themselves safe from harm, including when they are using the internet.
- The school provides effective support for families at the beginning and end of the school day with a breakfast club and a range of after-school clubs that include sports

activities.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils are keen to learn. They respond well to instructions and are sensible when they move in and around the school.
- Pupils are respectful of one another, polite and courteous with staff, and welcome visitors in an open and friendly manner.
- Attendance and punctuality are improving because leaders do everything they can to support families in bringing children to school regularly and on time. The behaviour and attendance mentor is key to this improvement. She supports pupils and their families and also helps teachers to manage behaviour effectively in the classroom.
- A very few pupils find it hard to always behave well, usually due to the impact of difficult circumstances in their life outside school. Staff are aware of this and have steps in place to manage incidents of poor behaviour so that any disruption to the learning of other pupils is minimal.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Inspection evidence, including stronger teaching, shows that the changes put in place by the new leadership team are starting to have an impact on progress and attainment across subjects and years. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress across years and subjects.
- From generally low starting points, pupils make good progress and, by the end of key stage 1, they reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Historically, progress across key stage 2 was not good enough and standards were well below average in the 2016 national tests. While remaining below average, standards improved in 2017 and pupils' progress in mathematics showed significant improvement.
- Inspection evidence gained from observing learning and looking at pupils' work in books shows that standards in key stage 2 continue to rise and progress is accelerating, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where teachers' expectations are higher. Teaching of mathematics is now strong and more pupils are working at the level expected for their age.
- Historically, too few pupils reached the required standard in the statutory check on phonics at the end of Year 1. This was linked to variability in the teaching of these skills, which is now improving due to effective staff training.
- Teachers promote pupils' development of language well, particularly for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English. As a result, these pupils make good progress and most reach average standards by the time they move on to secondary education.
- The progress of the most able pupils is good in key stage 1. A higher than average proportion of pupils reached the greater depth standard in the statutory tests at the

end of key stage 1 in 2017. Progress is improving in key stage 2, linked to stronger teaching (especially in Years 5 and 6), but is not always fast enough when work lacks challenge.

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well from their individual starting points. The differences in the proportion of these pupils reaching expected standards compared with others nationally are rapidly reducing due to the good support they receive to catch up in their learning.
- Similarly, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points due to tailored support for their individual needs.
- New leadership in history and geography ensures that progress in these subjects is accelerating, although not quite so rapidly as it is in other subjects.
- Pupils' increasingly good outcomes mean that they are well prepared to move on to secondary education.

### **Early years provision**

**Good**

- Children's skills on entering Nursery are typically lower than those found in children of a similar age nationally. Owing to good provision, they swiftly settle into the school and make good progress, with around two thirds of them reaching expected standards by the end of Reception Year.
- More than half of the children enter the school from other Nursery provision, or with no prior experience in education, at the beginning of Reception Year. Their progress is good, but a smaller proportion of them reach expected standards at the end of the year than those who have had two full years in school.
- Teaching is effective and teachers observe children's learning closely and make detailed plans for the next small steps that will harness children's enthusiasms and help them develop as confident and independent learners.
- Most children behave well and are keen to learn new things. Some children find it hard to take turns and share toys and play resources. Staff make every effort to help children develop these personal and social skills, giving lots of praise when children make the right choices and are kind to one another.
- The early years is managed effectively, and the leader has built a strong team of staff who know how children learn best and understand how to keep them safe. Classrooms are safe, warm and attractive to young children. The outdoor area includes a range of activities to entice children to continue their learning through play. However, sometimes resources and materials are not readily available to give children opportunities to practise their early skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

## School details

Unique reference number	119605
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10042484

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

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	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Gillespie
Headteacher	Annalisa Howarth
Telephone number	01772 556092
Website	<a href="http://www.englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk">www.englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk">head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- English Martyrs is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school provides daily breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. They observed the teaching of early reading skills.
- Inspectors talked with pupils about the school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They also took account of 20 responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day and took account of the 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation of its current performance, the school's most recent information on the attainment and progress of pupils, information relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils.

## Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Rigby

Ofsted Inspector

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