

Inspection of English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

Dewsbury Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 9DD

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The executive head of this school is Sarah Spencer. This school is part of the Bishop Konstant Catholic 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, Lesley Fitton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Utting.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has an ambitious curriculum underpinned by Catholic values. It has worked hard to create a caring and warm culture. Pupils make progress over time and enjoy their lessons. Adults have positive relationships with pupils and care deeply about them. There is an air of friendliness and positivity across the school. Pupils are keen to talk to visitors and tell them all about their school.

The school has built positive relationships with the local community over time. Leaders support pupils and their wider families and engage the help of external support networks, where appropriate. This has a positive effect on the well-being of pupils in school. There is a relationship of trust between the school and the community.

The school ensures that pupils are well behaved and polite. Staff apply the school behaviour policy consistently. Pupils agree that the policy is fair. In most lessons, and at social times, pupils know how to talk to, respect and look after each other. The school has ensured that dedicated pastoral staff are in place to support learning. Pupils can identify 'safe adults' who they can talk to about any issues. Pupils develop leadership skills by becoming peer buddies, librarians, school councillors and eco-councillors. Pupils particularly enjoy the educational visits they experience and say these are their best memories of the school.

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

In most subjects, the school has carefully considered the important knowledge and skills that pupils must learn as they move through school. However, in some subjects, the knowledge that pupils should remember is too broad. For example, in history, pupils are expected to 'know how transport has changed since the past', rather than focusing on specific aspects or periods of transport. In these subjects, the school has not identified the small steps of learning that will help pupils to learn and recall important subject knowledge.

In most lessons, there are regular opportunities for pupils to re-visit prior learning. This helps pupils to recall and embed their subject knowledge. However, staff do not check consistently for gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that learning sometimes moves on before pupils are ready.

The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff adapt teaching, resources and support to enable them to succeed. However, for some pupils, learning activities do not meet their individual learning needs well. This means their progress is not as rapid as it could be.

The early years provides an extremely positive start to learning. This begins even before children start at the school, with home visits and stay-and-play sessions for

families. Staff quickly identify any additional learning and behaviour needs that children may have. This means that children have the help they need to thrive.

Reading is prioritised throughout the school. Staff encourage pupils to read for pleasure and develop a love of reading. The teaching of phonics is consistent across both early years and key stage 1. Staff are experts in teaching pupils to read. Pupils read books that contain the sounds they are learning. This helps them to master phonics quickly and make rapid progress. Where pupils struggle to read, teachers intervene quickly. This helps pupils to develop their reading fluency and confidence. Staff support families to help their children read at home. In key stage 2, some pupils still require phonic lessons to become competent readers. The school makes sure that these pupils have the support they need to catch up quickly.

Pupils know how to stay safe online and in the real world. They know who to get help from if they need it. They know how to stay healthy and keep fit. For example, they can name strategies for getting a good night's sleep. Leaders ensure that pupils understand what the protected characteristics are and how this links to equality and discrimination. The school provides pupils with opportunities to be responsible, respectful, active citizens through leadership opportunities and visits from external agencies, such as the police.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable about the school. They use their experience to challenge and support leaders well. The school and the trust deliver highly effective professional development for all staff. They consider the workload and well-being of all staff carefully. Staff are happy to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, the range of subject knowledge that pupils should learn is too broad. The most important knowledge and skills are not always clear. This means that pupils struggle to secure the knowledge they need for the next stage in their learning. The school should refine the subject knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to remember and identify the small steps of learning that will help pupils embed this knowledge.
- The school has not developed consistent systems for checking pupils' progress and understanding across the wider curriculum. This means that staff do not have the information they need to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should establish procedures for checking what pupils know in all subjects and ensure that staff have the training and support to apply these consistently.

- Support for some pupils with SEND lacks a precise focus on their individual learning needs. This means these pupils do not make as much progress as they should. The school must ensure that staff understand each pupil's individual needs and provide the support these pupils need to succeed.

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	141595
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10290273
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Utting
Headteacher	Sarah Spencer
Website	www.ems.bkcat.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 January 2020 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became part of the Bishop Konstant Catholic Trust in December 2014.
- The school is a Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection was in March 2018.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with trustees, academy council members, including the chair of the council, the trust CEO and the trust director of primary standards.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documentation, including the minutes of governors' meetings and the diocesan evaluation of the school.
- To gather the views of pupils, inspectors took account of the pupil survey. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. They also spoke to families on the school gate.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors took account of the staff survey and met with staff teams.

Inspection team

Helen Haunch, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Stephenson

His Majesty's Inspector

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