

# English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Preston

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119605
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358591
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Brian Dower

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

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<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>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr S Gillespie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A Dunn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Sizer Street Preston Lancashire PR1 7DR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons and observed the work of eight teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including pupils' books, monitoring and assessment records, minutes of meeting of the governing body, school improvement planning and curriculum and lesson plans. Eighty five completed questionnaire returns from parents and carers were analysed, together with a sample from pupils and staff.

- The range of teaching and learning styles to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Teachers' assessments and the guidance pupils receive on how to improve their work.
- The extent to which barriers to pupils' learning are being broken down.
- Curricular provision to broaden pupils' understanding of the world around them.

## Information about the school

The school is similar in size to most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. That of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, although the proportion of those whose first language is not English is slightly higher than that normally seen. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has Extended School status and a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools status and the Activemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a good school. Having made a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, all groups of pupils learn well in lessons and make good progress academically and in their personal development. Achievement is good.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure and that pupils from different backgrounds and cultures get on well together. They know how to stay fit and well and eat healthy lunches and take plenty of exercise. The older pupils take on responsibilities helping to care for the younger ones. The school council has been involved in formulating plans for the development of the outside environment. All are involved in the local community through the church and sporting, cultural and charitable activities. Their understanding of social and cultural diversity is advanced for their age. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Teaching is good overall. Outstanding practice was seen during the inspection in the teaching of mathematics. There is a purposeful atmosphere in lessons and the pace of learning is brisk. Pupils say they think lessons are fun and interesting and that they are making good progress. In some of the lessons seen, insufficient time was allowed for pupils to work independently and for reflection. Teaching assistants' time was not always used to the full and opportunities were missed to promote whole-class discussions. The curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all pupils and extend their understanding and enjoyment of work through a range of enrichment activities. The care and guidance afforded to all ensure that pupils have the support they need to progress well.

The drive and commitment of the headteacher is focused on ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all with no discrimination, and that partnerships are as effective as possible in benefiting the pupils. The school is at the heart of its community, welcoming and providing effectively for pupils from a range of religious backgrounds other than the Catholic faith. The school's assessment of its strengths and what is needed to take it forward are accurate. The developments seen since the previous inspection in teachers' marking and in pupils' ability to assess for themselves how well they are doing, together with rising attainment in English and mathematics, testify to the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across Key Stages I and 2, by
  - providing more time for pupils to reflect on and consolidate their learning

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- ensuring teachers' explanations and instructions are clear but brief, allowing sufficient time for pupils to work independently
- extending opportunities for pupils to enter into whole-class discussions about their work
- making maximum use of the time and expertise of the teaching assistants.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Pupils enjoy their work and talk enthusiastically about the many activities they are involved in outside of the classroom. In this socially diverse school, pupils show respect for differences in others' beliefs and cultures. In the lessons seen, they were attentive and most worked well collaboratively and independently. A small minority of the younger pupils lacked the social and listening skills for group working. Most pupils are confident and articulate when speaking but a few are hesitant and struggle to express themselves clearly. Pupils have good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and use them well across subjects. Behaviour is good and pupils are punctual to school and lessons. Attendance has improved recently but remains below average. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, attendance is average. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in their education.

Over time, progress and achievement have been good, given most pupils' well-below-average academic and social development when they join the school. This is so for all groups, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language. Attainment in mathematics has risen significantly and is now at nationally expected levels. Attainment in English has risen to below average. The writing seen during the inspection showed that pupils are continuing to improve because they are writing at length with reasonable accuracy. Pupils have a good understanding of the diversity of British society and most have good social skills. Their moral and spiritual awareness is excellent.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers use accurate assessments to plan challenging and interesting learning activities. The written and oral guidance pupils receive on how well they are doing and how to improve is good. Teachers and teaching assistants monitor progress closely in lessons and give timely help when difficulties arise. There are occasions when teachers' explanations or instructions are unnecessarily lengthy and the assistants are not involved fully in the lesson. Pupils are then kept too long listening before getting down to learning activities. This also results in insufficient time towards the end of lessons for pupils to think about and consolidate their learning. In some of the lessons seen, opportunities were missed for whole-class discussion of work.

The curriculum provides an appropriate balance between provision for pupils' basic skills and for their understanding of the world around them. It is enriched by theme days and a range of extra-curricular activities, residential experiences and visiting speakers. These broaden their education and add to their enjoyment of school. Christian values underpin the school's work and engender the tolerance and respect pupils have for each other. Effective transition arrangements guide pupils well from one stage in their education to the next. They receive good guidance on how to be healthy and safe. All possible measures are in place to improve attendance, including the deployment of a family support worker and first day follow-up when the reason for an absence has not been forthcoming. Highly effective care and support for the most vulnerable pupils ensures their equal access to all the school has to offer and their good progress. The school's after-school club is well led and managed and complies with all regulations.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

All who work in the school are ambitious for its success and have high expectations of the pupils. Staff work well as a team and morale is high. They make good use of challenging targets to raise standards, evident in the rising attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The priority given to the on-going development of teaching, particularly in the use of assessment to support learning, has quickened pupils' progress in lessons. Development planning is rooted in an understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of the community the school serves. Its influence extends to a wide range of groups outside of school, contributing to the cohesion of the local and wider community. Partnerships with other organisations contribute to pupils' good achievement. The links with the university, for example, have brought improvements in pupils' ICT skills. The highly effective way in which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles the rare instances of discrimination ensure that all pupils progress well. The school has a very positive impact on community cohesion within school and beyond. The school's close links with parents and carers enables them to support their children's learning and well-being. The governing body is well informed and closely involved in the day-to-day life of the school. It monitors its performance closely and provides encouragement and support. Safeguarding procedures are effective and safe working is evident in all activities. Health and safety checks are undertaken regularly. The school gives good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education. On entry, the level of their skills varies, but overall it is well below what is expected for this age group. This is particularly apparent in their language and social skills. Children settle quickly and are soon happy and secure because of good induction arrangements and close links with parents and carers. They make good progress and by the time they start in Year 1 their overall attainment is just below average. Adults work well as a team and they are ably led by a highly effective coordinator. They blend high expectations with a supportive and welcoming approach, encouraging children to try things out for themselves and make their own choices. This approach is balanced with a good range of adult-led activities. Children are well cared for and their safety and well-being are paramount. Provision is well managed. There are opportunities for imaginative and structured play indoors and outside. Assessment is thorough and accurate and there are effective systems for tracking and recording progress. Close links with outside agencies ensure that potentially vulnerable children receive the support they need.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Approximately three-quarters of families returned completed questionnaires. Almost all were fulsome in their praise for the school's work. The very few where a concern was recorded were related to individual problems and there was no pattern of dissatisfaction.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Preston to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	66	28	33	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	76	20	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	53	39	46	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	51	40	47	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	56	37	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	48	43	51	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	44	46	54	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	46	43	51	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	40	50	59	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	33	47	55	6	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	33	51	60	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	42	49	58	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	66	28	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



Dear Pupils

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when we inspected your school recently. We are grateful that so many of you made time to speak to us and for your valuable contribution to the inspection.

Yours is a good school. Your attainment has improved, particularly in mathematics, where your progress is good. You have also progressed well in English because the quality of your writing is improving. You have an understanding of the world around you because of the wide range of other subjects and the activities outside of the classroom. You behave well and you told us that everyone gets on well together. We saw how you helped each other in lessons and were friendly and kind to others during the break and lunch periods.

Your teachers and the assistants work hard to give you the best possible education. They give you the care and support you need. The result is that all groups make the same good progress, not just academically but in your self-confidence and maturity. You will know that even a good school works hard to improve. We have asked that you get more time to think about and discuss your learning. There are times when you have to listen to the teacher for a long time. We have asked that these explanations and instructions are shorter and you have more time for working independently. We have also asked that the teaching assistants' time is used to the full to help you in your learning.

You can play your part by continuing to work hard and showing concern and support for each other. Our best wishes to you and we hope that you have an interesting and enjoyable academic year.

Yours sincerely

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