

# Inspection of English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

Dewsbury Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 9DD

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Inspection dates: 7–8 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Over time, pupils have not done as well as they should by the end of Year 6 in a wide range of subjects. New leaders, governors and teachers want the best for all pupils. Recent changes are helping pupils to catch up, but there is a long way to go.

In the early years, children get off to a swift start when learning to read. However, pupils who find reading more difficult do not always get the right help as they move through the school.

Pupils say they love coming to school, but some do not attend as often as they should. Pupils develop strong relationships with adults. Pupils feel happy, safe and secure. When they do have worries, they know who to go to for help.

This is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils take their jobs as playground pals very seriously and behaviour has improved. When the odd case of bullying occurs, adults deal with it well. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and other adults. They enjoy learning together.

Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is a priority. Pupils have an important voice. When they asked for more competitions and a girls' football club, leaders listened.

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

The quality of education at this school is not good enough. However, new leaders are united in their determination to address this. The trust has taken effective action to improve the school since the last inspection and things are moving in the right direction. The right people are now in the right positions to make the necessary improvements.

Most leaders are new to their roles. Some are in the early stages of their leadership development and many have taken on new responsibilities. The trust is providing appropriate training and support to help them to carry out their roles effectively.

In some subjects, such as mathematics and science, pupils are starting to remember more of the curriculum. This is because leaders have mapped out how pupils' knowledge, vocabulary and skills should build up over time. This is not the case in all subjects, but leaders know that they need to tackle this.

Over time, provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been weak. However, leaders' recent actions to address this have been effective and things are now looking up. In mathematics, pupils receive the right support which is helping them to learn well. This is not the case in reading.

Pupils who find reading tricky struggle to read the books teachers give them. This dents their confidence and enthusiasm. Leaders know about this and have placed an

order for new books. When pupils receive extra help, it is not sharply focused on the things that will help them to catch up quickly. Pupils do not have a strong grasp of vocabulary. This means they do not always understand what they are reading. However, teachers are starting to plan reading lessons that help pupils to learn and remember new words.

The new early years leader has started to make improvements to the early years curriculum and provision but knows there is lots to do. The environment does not support children's learning well enough. Adults do not ask the right questions to help children build on what they already know. Teachers plan a wide range of activities to develop children's early speech and language skills. In the Nursery, children join in with rhymes, songs and traditional tales. This prepares them well to learn phonics and enjoy reading.

Throughout the school, pupils play and learn happily together. We did not see any examples of poor behaviour during the inspection. Leaders are taking effective action to ensure that pupils' attendance improves. Their actions have led to improvement in the attendance of some pupils who were previously often absent from school. However, leaders know that they have more work to do with families to improve pupils' attendance overall.

Leaders provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to be active at school and learn the importance of healthy lifestyles. Pupils told inspectors how a recent visit from a local rugby celebrity had helped them to learn about resilience and good health. Leaders ensure that pupils know how to manage stress and anxiety. Pupils benefit from meditation, yoga and mindfulness breathing strategies. Extra support for pupils and families through the Catholic Care organisation has been well received. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to their local community through the Mini Vinnies programme. Pupils also vote for specific charities they want the school to support.

Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular clubs, trips and residential visits on offer. In addition to many sporting opportunities, pupils can sing in the choir and attend the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) club.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding and well-being officer has an effective relationship with external agencies. She makes sure that vulnerable pupils and their families get the right guidance and support. Regular training helps staff to recognise any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders complete all the necessary recruitment checks on people working at the school. Pupils know how to stay safe and who to ask for help.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most staff are new to their roles and to the school. Although these appointments have strengthened the school's capacity to improve teaching and leadership, many need to learn their craft. Trust and senior school leaders should continue to build and deliver their programme of support and training to ensure that plans for improvement are implemented effectively.
- In the foundation subjects, leaders have not considered the content and structure of the curriculum carefully enough. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their understanding. Leaders should ensure that the knowledge, vocabulary and skills pupils need to learn are identified, and carefully sequenced, in all subjects.
- Over time, leaders have not embedded an effective reading curriculum. The new reading approach is in its infancy. As a result, teachers are not using the associated strategies with confidence and skill. Leaders need to embed the new reading strategy as a matter of urgency and continue to provide additional support and training, as required.
- In phonics, leaders have not mapped out the sounds they expect pupils to learn each term so that they can keep a close enough eye on those who struggle to keep up. As a result, the catch-up arrangements for some pupils are not matched closely enough to their knowledge gaps. Leaders need to clarify their termly expectations for reading and phonics and make the necessary checks on provision and progress.
- Adults have not given enough thought to the books they provide for weaker readers. These pupils are unable to decode effectively and, therefore, cannot read with fluency, confidence and enjoyment. Teachers should ensure that pupils read books they can decode and learn the vocabulary they need to understand these texts.
- The environment does not support pupils' learning well enough in the early years. Staff lack the training they need to extend children's thinking successfully. As a result, children's knowledge and skills are less developed than they could be. New leaders should continue to improve the environment, including resources, both indoors and outside. Leaders should ensure that all adults know how to intervene effectively in children's play with careful questioning and provocation.
- The rigour behind leaders' actions to improve attendance has improved. Although persistent absence is reducing, attendance remains too low. There is a need, therefore, to review the approaches to tackling absence and provide additional or alternative action to support parents and carers in making sure that their children attend school each day.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141595
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121724
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair</b>	Claire Skinner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tina Connell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.englishmartyrswakefield.org.uk">www.englishmartyrswakefield.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20–21 September 2017 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust.
- The governing body was replaced by a 'Rapid Improvement Group' in June 2018.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing. An interim consultant headteacher led the school in 2019 and a new headteacher was appointed on 1 January 2020. Most teachers have been appointed within the last 12 months. Five teachers joined the school in September 2019.
- The school operates a breakfast club.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2018.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the new headteacher, previous interim consultant headteacher, deputy headteacher, class teachers, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), trustees and governors.
- We visited lessons, talked to staff and looked at pupils' work across the

curriculum.

- We spoke with pupils about their experience of school. We also considered the 51 responses to Ofsted’s online pupil questionnaire.
- We looked at a range of documents, including the school’s improvement plans and self-evaluation document. We also looked at records for behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- The school’s records of safeguarding checks were scrutinised. We spoke to staff about how they keep pupils safe and sought the views of pupils. We looked at the risk assessments and plans for pupils with additional needs.
- We observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime. We also visited the breakfast club.
- We took account of the 19 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and the lead inspector spoke to one parent on the telephone. There were 11 comments on the free-text service.
- We considered the seven responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire and met with staff new to teaching.
- We looked closely at the teaching of reading, mathematics, physical education and science during this inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Bentley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Soutar

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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