

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Worthing

Derwent Drive, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, West Sussex BN12 6LA

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Numerous changes in staffing since the previous inspection have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Recent developments in teaching are not yet established fully across the school. As a result, too few pupils make the progress they should, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- In 2018, attainment at the end of key stage 2 was much lower than the national average in writing, mathematics and science.
- Weaknesses in phonics teaching over time have limited pupils' progress in reading. Inconsistencies in teaching continue to hamper the development of pupils' reading skills.
- Expectations of pupils' learning are not always high enough. Teaching does not deepen or extend learning sufficiently for all groups of pupils, including the most able.
- Leaders and governors do not use information about pupils' learning well enough to monitor the progress different groups are making or to gauge the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- The pace of development in the school has increased in recent years.
- The collaboration between the school, the local authority, the diocese and a partnership school is working well.
- The headteacher is clear about what needs to be done to secure necessary improvements in the school. She is ably supported by the assistant headteacher.
- Pupils are safe and secure. They behave well and attend school regularly.
- Leaders have begun to review and update the curriculum to ensure coverage and progression of learning. However, developments are not yet securely embedded.
- Strong leadership and consistently effective teaching during early years ensures that children achieve well by the end of Reception Year.
- Parental confidence is improving. An increasing proportion say that they are pleased with the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make consistently strong progress across the school in a range of subjects by making sure that:
 - recent developments in teaching and the curriculum are fully established in all year groups
 - all adults maintain high expectations of pupils' learning
 - teaching deepens and extends pupils' learning consistently well, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Improve the teaching of phonics so that pupils develop reliable reading strategies by the end of key stage 1.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that leaders and governors:
 - make better use of procedures for checking that developments in teaching are consistently established throughout the school
 - have a sharper picture of how well developments in teaching are supporting the progress made by different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school's effectiveness has declined since the previous inspection, following a period of turbulence in staffing. Weaknesses in teaching over time have led to lower-than-average proportions of pupils leaving the school with the knowledge and skills expected for their age.
- While leaders' actions to improve teaching are now having a positive impact on pupils' learning, significant variations in pupils' progress remain. Some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, do not achieve consistently well enough.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have high aspirations for the school. Since the previous inspection, they have worked diligently to secure much-needed improvements in the school's work. They recognise, however, that more needs to be done to ensure that all groups achieve well.
- In the past two years, the headteacher and assistant headteacher have introduced a greater sense of urgency about improving the school's work. As a result, the pace of development has increased.
- The headteacher has strengthened middle leadership considerably since her appointment. Middle leaders are ambitious for the school and have high expectations for all groups of pupils. Effective training during the past year has strengthened their leadership skills and they make an increasingly effective contribution to the school's development as a result.
- Middle leaders talk knowledgeably about improvements in teaching and are clear about further developments needed to ensure that the standard of pupils' work continues to rise across the school.
- In the past, leaders have used pupil premium funding very effectively to support pupils' personal development. However, there has been less of a focus on pupils' academic progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils have made considerable progress emotionally and socially but they have not achieved as well as they should academically.
- Leaders have now adjusted the balance and make sure that pupils' academic and personal needs receive equal attention when allocating support. Nevertheless, variations in teaching continue to hamper disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- In the past, the school's assessment procedures lacked rigour. Leaders' and governors' views of teaching were too generous, and they lacked clarity about pupils' learning. However, leaders have worked constructively and successfully with the local authority and with Upper Beeding Primary School to rectify weaknesses in assessment.
- Leaders have established a consistent and reliable approach to evaluating and recording pupils' progress. However, they are not yet making enough use of assessment information to analyse how well different groups of pupils are achieving or to target aspects of teaching which need further development.

- The assistant headteacher is committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. However, assessments are not precise enough to measure pupils' progress against their targets and to ensure that teachers are held to account rigorously for pupils' learning.
- Parental confidence has dipped since the previous inspection, following an unsettled period in the school. However, parents' views of the school are now improving. While some have understandable concerns about the quality of teaching, many recognise positive developments in the school's work. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that they are happy with the school, a view reflected by the school's own recent parent surveys.
- Leaders are currently working with staff and governors to review and update the curriculum. They have made a good start by considering the school's core values and increasing the profile of subjects such as science. As a result, pupils experience a broad, balanced and increasingly engaging curriculum. Leaders continue to focus on making sure that developments in the curriculum are securely established and taught consistently across the school.
- The school promotes British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school's religious ethos provides a strong framework for the school's work. Pupils learn about a range of world religions and develop a strong respect and appreciation of different beliefs.
- Visits and visitors provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives, as well as those of others. For example, a recent visit by an imam inspired thought-provoking discussions among pupils about Islamic beliefs.
- Following the previous inspection, the local authority and diocese recognised that leaders needed support to improve the school. They have provided useful and sharply focused advice for leaders and governors, including the brokering of a training partnership with Upper Beeding Primary School.
- The well-planned training programme has been particularly successful in helping middle leaders to develop their leadership roles. All staff who responded to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire felt that leaders use professional development well to encourage, challenge and support improvements in teaching.
- Leaders use the physical education and sports funding wisely to support sports teaching in the school. For example, sports coaches work alongside teachers to develop pupils' skills, while pupils benefit from a wide range of sports clubs which contribute well to their physical fitness and emotional welfare. The school is rightly proud of its sporting successes. For example, at the time of the inspection, the football team was celebrating its recent championship win in a local tournament.
- The school's recent turbulent history has impacted on staff morale since the previous inspection. However, staff morale is now buoyant, as developments in the school begin to take shape and the benefits of improved teaching become more evident in pupils' learning. Most staff who responded to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire believe that the school is led and managed effectively and feel well supported. One member of staff commented, 'I feel that our needs are listened to and taken into account', while another said, 'Leaders are always approachable and helpful if we have any concerns.'

Governance of the school

- Governors do not hold leaders to account sufficiently for pupils' achievement. They do not possess a strong enough understanding of how well developments in teaching and leadership have improved pupils' learning.
- Governors are dedicated to supporting the school's ongoing development. Since the previous inspection, governors have worked well with the diocese and the local authority to improve their roles. They make increasingly effective use of a range of activities to help them to understand the school's work, including visits to the school, conversations with pupils and parents, and discussions with leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A small minority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed concerns about pupils' safety. Inspection evidence indicated that leaders take appropriate steps to ensure pupils' welfare. Well-established routines and consistent safeguarding procedures ensure that the school operates smoothly and safely.
- The school completes rigorous checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children and that staff meet the requirements for their roles.
- The headteacher has tightened up site security since the previous inspection. For example, improvements in site access ensure that only those visitors who have been authorised by the school's office staff are able to enter the school.
- Leaders liaise well with external agencies, including the local authority designated officer for safeguarding, whenever necessary. Leaders review and improve procedures and policies regularly in response to specialist advice and ensure that staff are clear about their responsibilities for pupils' safety. They make good use of relevant training to ensure that staff are well qualified and knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not strong enough to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving steadily but is not yet consistently good.
- Improvements in teaching mean that assessments of pupils' learning are now more robust and accurate than previously. However, as yet, teaching does not take account of pupils' starting points or needs sufficiently. As a result, teaching does not deepen or extend pupils' learning well enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Variations in teachers' expectations lead to inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' work and in their progress. For example, teachers do not always insist that pupils do their best when completing work in their books and, as a result, some pupils do not try hard enough.

- The quality of teaching has improved in the past two years. Some teaching is very effective, builds pupils' knowledge and understanding well and inspires pupils to learn more. However, recent improvements in teaching and assessment are not established fully and consistently across the school.
- Mathematics teaching has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Teaching provides pupils with regular opportunities to practise and strengthen their mathematical knowledge through a range of activities, including problem-solving and the use of practical equipment. As a result, most pupils develop a secure grasp of fundamental mathematical concepts, including number, place value and shape. However, as in other subjects, the quality of mathematics teaching is too variable to ensure that all groups of pupils do as well as they should over time.
- English skills are taught increasingly well. Good-quality training and coaching has improved teachers' subject knowledge since the previous inspection. The teaching of phonics, however, requires improvement. Teaching does not equip pupils securely enough with phonics skills. Recent developments in the curriculum have ensured that teaching covers the ground needed to enable pupils to develop early reading skills adequately. However, as yet, teaching is not strong enough to ensure that all groups of pupils develop reliable phonics skills.
- Teaching assistants' contribution to pupils' learning has developed during the past year. They have a clearer understanding than previously of how to support pupils with differing needs well, including pupils with SEND.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Strong relationships are evident throughout the school. Pupils get on well together and respect adults. They say that adults in the school take good care of them and they are confident that their teachers would protect them from any danger. Most parents who responded to Parent View agreed with this view and feel that pupils are safe and well behaved.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. For example, they know some of the steps they can take to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils understand how some of the school's rules and routines help to keep them safe. For example, they know that adults keep first-aid kits on hand during playtimes so that they can attend to any minor bumps and grazes.
- Pupils know what bullying is and how best to respond. For example, one pupil said, 'Once you tell someone it's dealt with almost immediately.' They say that bullying is rarely a problem, a view confirmed by the school's records of incidents over time.
- Most pupils are keen to do well and are proud of their work. However, variations in teachers' expectations of pupils' learning mean that some pupils do not take as much care with their work as they should.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well during lessons, playtimes and when moving around the school.
- Pupils' good behaviour in the dining hall ensures that lunchtimes are positive and enjoyable occasions. Pupils queue patiently while waiting for their lunch and eat lunch sensibly while chatting politely to adults and to each other.
- Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully. They work positively and successfully with parents and with agencies to ensure that all groups of pupils attend regularly. As a result, pupils' attendance is consistently higher than the national average for primary schools.
- Most pupils work hard and behave well during lessons. However, some find it difficult to sustain concentration during lessons. At times, they lose focus and fidget or chat when they should be listening to the teacher or working on a task. When this is the case, they make slower progress than their classmates.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, too few pupils have secured the expected standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This means that some pupils have started secondary education lacking the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the next stage of their education.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was much lower than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. As a result, pupils start key stage 2 with substantial gaps in their knowledge and understanding and do not make the progress they should.
- Phonics skills are not taught with enough rigour to ensure that pupils develop secure early reading skills. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been lower than the national average for the past two years.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress varies according to the quality of teaching. While some make secure progress, others do less well. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is lower than that of other pupils nationally.
- Weaknesses in teaching over time have hindered learning for the most able pupils, who do not achieve well enough as a result. In 2018, no pupils achieved greater depth at the end of Year 2. The proportion attaining the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was much lower than the national average.
- Attainment in science at the end of key stage 2 was lower than the national average in 2018. However, improvements in teaching mean that pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are beginning to improve. Work completed since September 2018 indicates that pupils are becoming more familiar with scientific topics and are now beginning to develop the scientific skills needed to achieve well in this subject. In 2018, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard for their age in science at the end of Year 2 matched national averages.

- Pupils' work indicates improvements in their learning and progress. Developments in teaching mean that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are identified more quickly and addressed more successfully than previously. Pupils are making better progress in English and mathematics as a result.
- Standards are higher in reading at the end of key stage 2 than in writing and mathematics. In 2018, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard for their age was in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Adults have established a calm, settled and welcoming atmosphere in early years. Well-established routines, high expectations and caring relationships ensure that children settle quickly into school life.
- The early years areas are carefully organised to provide children with a wide range of attractive, appealing and engaging activities. As a result, children are busy and interested in learning, often concentrating for extended periods of time so that they can complete a task. For example, during the inspection, a child persevered because he was determined to complete his writing about a fox, proudly showing an inspector his finished work.
- Children make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education by the end of Reception Year. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has steadily increased since the previous inspection and matched the national average in 2018.
- Disadvantaged children and their classmates achieve equally well. The early years leader makes sure that disadvantaged children are supported well from the outset.
- The early years leader is passionate about making sure that children get the best start in their schooling. She has established a broad and engaging curriculum which provides children with the experiences and learning they need to achieve well.
- The early years leader has secured notable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. For example, she has made good use of training to ensure that all adults use their discussions with children effectively to explore and extend children's understanding. Adults assess children's progress accurately, adjusting teaching and activities skilfully to support children's individual needs.
- Adults give children's safety an appropriately high priority. The early years areas are well maintained and suitably equipped, both indoors and out. As a result, children play and learn safely and securely.
- The early years leader recognises that, as in other year groups, phonics teaching is not as effective as it should be in developing children's early reading skills. She describes developments in the teaching of phonics as 'a journey – a journey that the school is just beginning'.
- The early years leader has established strong links with parents. As a result, teachers have a good understanding of children's needs and parents are knowledgeable about their children's learning and know how they can help at home.

- Parent speak highly of the early years team. They appreciate the way that their children have settled into school and are very pleased with the progress that their children are making.

School details

Unique reference number	126051
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10058191

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary O'Dell
Headteacher	Helen Townsley
Telephone number	01903 502868
Website	www.englishmartyrs.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	head@englishmartyrs.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2015

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club. Both clubs are operated by private providers and were not included in this inspection.
- A section 48 inspection took place on 15 June 2017, when the school's religious provision was judged as good.

- The school is currently receiving support from Upper Beeding Primary School. This arrangement has been brokered through the local authority's school support programme.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited all classes with a senior leader.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, subject leaders and a local authority representative. They also met with two representatives from the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspection team took account of 131 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 48 free-text comments, as well as the views expressed by parents informally during the school day. Inspectors also considered 22 responses to the staff questionnaire and several letters from parents.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including safeguarding policies, the school's self-evaluation document and information about pupils' progress and attendance.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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