

Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Preston

Address: Lightfoot Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 3LP

Unique reference number (URN): 149307

Inspection report: 20 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders take a proactive and deliberate approach to promoting the importance of attendance. Regular communication with families and the use of high-profile rewards help to maintain high levels of attendance and minimise absence. Older pupils speak positively about their own attendance and understand why it matters. On the rare occasions when attendance declines, leaders take highly effective action. They put targeted support in place for individual families, tailored to their needs, which leads to notable improvements.

Pupils behave very well. They follow rules and routines closely, creating a calm, organised and purposeful atmosphere across the school. Pupils are courteous and greet adults respectfully. Members of the public, for example, consistently praise pupils for the way they conduct themselves on visits and at community events. Pupils engage positively in their learning and enjoy lessons. Behaviour is managed very well through leaders' clear and consistent expectations and a whole-school approach rooted in helping pupils learn from mistakes and put things right. Staff manage behaviour sensitively, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide targeted support when needed. Bullying and unkind behaviour are rare. When incidents do occur, staff address them quickly and effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have an accurate oversight of the curriculum. This enables them to make well-informed decisions when improvements are needed. Across subjects and phases, curriculums are ambitious. They clearly identify key knowledge and progression. There is a sharp focus on communication, language, reading and vocabulary, which is further strengthened through the school's current oracy project.

Teaching across the school consistently reflects leaders' clear curriculum intent. Teachers use their expertise effectively. In lessons, they skilfully probe pupils' understanding and deepen thinking through high-quality questioning. Teachers model processes with clarity and precision, guiding pupils towards independent practice. Pupils are given regular opportunities to explain their ideas, deepen their understanding and work collaboratively. The effective checking systems that leaders have developed are now being implemented across all subjects in the wider curriculum. Leaders intend for these to enable staff to identify with precision gaps in pupils' learning and shape future teaching accordingly.

Adaptations to the classroom and curriculum enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with other barriers to learning, to succeed. For example, in mathematics, staff use pre-teaching in small groups and practical resources. Pupils who struggle with reading receive effective phonics support to help them catch up swiftly. As a result, pupils develop the secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics that they need to succeed.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders identify pupils' needs swiftly and accurately, using a well-embedded, tiered approach to ensure that support is timely and closely matched to pupils' needs. Parents and carers are fully involved in this process. Where appropriate, high-quality learning plans are in place. These clearly demonstrate how staff reduce barriers to learning and measure pupils' progress effectively.

Leaders keep up to date with current research and best practice. Staff receive appropriate training and ongoing support to meet the needs of the pupils they work with. Warm and positive relationships between staff and pupils underpin the school's inclusive culture. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in whole-class learning. Staff skilfully adapt the provision so that pupils participate successfully alongside their peers. Personalised strategies, such as structured workstations and calming and sensory techniques, enable pupils to manage their emotions and remain engaged in learning. These approaches demonstrate the school's strong commitment to meeting individual needs and the positive impact of tailored provision on pupils' wellbeing and achievement.

The pupil premium strategy is carefully planned to accelerate learning and broaden the experiences of disadvantaged pupils. The progress of all pupils who fall within the school's inclusion framework is closely monitored and used to inform teaching. This is supported by highly effective collaboration between staff and families.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders have a detailed and precise understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They make well-informed and timely decisions regarding resources, curriculum design and staffing, ensuring that school improvement is purposeful and sustained.

The trust maintains accurate oversight of the school and provides clear strategic direction, informed by regular and rigorous monitoring. Governors and trustees offer effective challenge and support to leaders, demonstrating a perceptive understanding of the school's context. Governors and trustees value the expertise of school leaders and staff and hold them to account with clarity and in line with their statutory duties.

Leaders have a deep commitment to inclusion and pastoral care, firmly rooted in the school's religious values. They act in the best interests of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils known to children's social care and those facing other barriers to learning or wellbeing.

The school's approach to staff development is highly effective. Leaders provide regular, purposeful and evidence-informed professional development, including the trust's 'learning communities', which support career progression and collaboration. Teachers who are in the early stages of their careers receive effective support. Staff feel valued and supported in their roles. They appreciate that leaders prioritise their wellbeing and workload.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school, appreciating the nurturing environment and wide-ranging opportunities that enrich pupils' learning and development. They particularly

value the consistent and effective communication from school staff that keeps them well informed.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school provides an impressive and well-developed personal development programme. From the early years, pupils have frequent opportunities to develop independence, social skills and self-confidence. Older pupils support younger children as buddies, modelling positive interactions through activities such as arts, crafts and reading. Pupils take pride in responsibilities, including school councillors, reading ambassadors and house captains, which fosters a distinct sense of belonging and contribution.

The personal, social and health education and relationships, sex education and health education curriculums are carefully ordered so that pupils build their knowledge logically. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and consent in an age-appropriate way. They have a secure understanding of fundamental British values and how these apply to how they treat others. For example, pupils develop respect for differences and act with kindness. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe both online and in the wider community. Pupils develop detailed knowledge and strategies to maintain their physical and mental health.

Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide range of trips and visits. For example, pupils engage positively with science through a visit to a wildlife centre, participate in singing performances, and take part in a residential stay at an outdoor activity centre.

The school actively nurtures pupils' talents and interests through a structured programme of clubs and wider opportunities. In gardening club, for example, pupils grow, harvest and prepare produce, developing understanding of food, sustainability and practical life skills. Participation in clubs and trips is closely monitored to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers, are able to benefit fully.

Pastoral support at the school is highly effective. Staff build trusting relationships with pupils and families, enabling pupils to access support confidently when needed.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

From the early years onwards, pupils make steady progress through the curriculum and achieve outcomes in national tests that are in line with, or above, national expectations. Leaders are keen to strengthen outcomes further. Recent refinements to the mathematics curriculum are having a positive impact on pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts and vocabulary.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those who face barriers to learning, secure foundational skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. This commitment

begins in the early years and continues throughout pupils' time at the school, enabling them to be well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Work in pupils' books shows broad curriculum coverage and carefully selected tasks. The quality of pupils' work is high, reflecting the pride and care they take in their learning. Pupils articulate their understanding with confidence. However, their depth of knowledge is more developed in some subjects than in others.

Early years

Expected standard 

Early years staff are knowledgeable and have implemented a comprehensive curriculum with a clear emphasis on communication and language and personal, social and emotional development. Staff build warm, nurturing relationships with children, ensuring they feel safe, supported and confident. By the end of Reception, most children are well prepared for Year 1.

Children engage positively in their learning, with environments designed to capture their interest. Adults skilfully facilitate small-group interactions, for example during water and play dough activities. Leaders identify the key vocabulary that children should learn. They ensure staff model high-quality language consistently, reinforced through classroom prompts such as the 'wow words' display. As a result, children typically develop their communication skills securely and understand the meaning of key vocabulary.

Staff check children's starting points on entry and use this information to provide targeted support where it is needed. Despite this, there is scope to develop this assessment system further to accelerate the progress children make across the curriculum.

Reading is central to the curriculum. Phonics is taught well, with teachers modelling sounds accurately and supporting children to segment and blend effectively as they develop decoding skills. Staff work closely with parents and carers to support and reinforce children's learning and development at home.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are greeted warmly each day as they enter the gates of this happy, welcoming school. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that all adults are kind. Staff provide warm, attentive support, which helps pupils to feel safe and settled. Members of the wider community speak about the school with pride.

Pupils consistently rise to the high expectations set by leaders. Pupils achieve outcomes that are at least in line with, and sometimes above, national age-related expectations. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This applies to all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Pupils who encounter barriers to learning benefit notably from the school's strong commitment to inclusion and its determination to support them. Staff identify and address barriers promptly so that these pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points.

Pupils move around the school calmly. They are friendly and polite and immerse themselves fully in their learning. Their behaviour reflects a clear understanding of the school's values alongside the fundamental British values, such as respect. Pupils trust adults to deal with the rare behaviour incidents or bullying issues that may arise.

Pupils' personal development is given the same high priority as their academic achievement at this school. A wide range of activities and events enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. This not only helps to sustain high levels of attendance, but also broadens pupils' horizons and nurtures their talents. Pupils benefit from a well-thought-out range of clubs, including baking, football and art. Leaders place a strong emphasis on ensuring that opportunities to represent the school in competitions are open to all pupils. The pupil reporters' club rounds up sports competition results and school event highlights to publish on the school's website.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen some of the school's assessment systems even further, particularly in the early years, so that gaps in pupils' learning are identified precisely and addressed swiftly.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Mater Ecclesiae trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Peter Duffy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr Roger Mason.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. They also met with members of the governing board, including the chair of governors, members of the trust board, including the chair of trustees, the CEO and the director of primary learning.

To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.

Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection was in November 2021.

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Karen Woods

Lead inspector:

Ruth Moran, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Steven Rooney, Ofsted Inspector

Cole Andrew, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

218

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

5.96%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.21%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

4.59%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	64%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	61%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	76%	75%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	79%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	2.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.3%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.6%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	2.7%	13.3%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	2.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.9%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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