

The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, Preston

Address: Farrington Lane, Ribbleton, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 6LX

Unique reference number (URN): 149414

Inspection report: 3 March 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.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have created a school where staff make time to get to know pupils well. They ensure that pupils' needs are identified quickly. For disadvantaged pupils, those with a social worker and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), support is put in place to reduce barriers to their wellbeing and learning. Staff create clear plans for support so that pupils with SEND can experience success and learn at the right pace. Leaders review plans with parents and carers, alongside external agencies, to make sure that pupils progress well against their targets.

Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to provide the best support for pupils. Staff access a range of training and learn from professionals, who come into school to offer expert advice and guidance. They make careful changes to the way they teach to ensure that lessons are fully inclusive, such as providing additional resources for pupils when necessary. Leaders maintain oversight of how additional funding makes a positive difference to disadvantaged pupils. They work closely with virtual school leaders across a number of local authorities to make sure that pupils known to, and previously known to, children's social care have their needs met.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have carefully designed a personal development programme that is tailored to the school's context. The curriculum is enhanced by high-quality books that help pupils to add meaning to what they learn. Leaders ensure that the relationships and sex education and health education curriculum is age-appropriate and encourages healthy lifestyles. They make sure that staff have the knowledge they need to teach the programme effectively. Pupils build their knowledge of ways to stay safe and reduce risks associated with online activity. This is supported well by a range of visitors to school.

Diversity is celebrated across school. Pupils learn about different beliefs and the importance of valuing and accepting everyone. They talk about equality with maturity. Pupils develop their understanding of right and wrong. They engage in thoughtful reflections about the world around them. Wider opportunities provided alongside the curriculum help pupils to become confident in how they can apply fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect for others.

Leaders and staff provide thoughtful support for pupils' emotional development and wellbeing. Pupils know that pastoral staff are on hand each morning to talk to if they need help to settle to their learning. They benefit from this nurturing approach that helps them build strategies to regulate their emotions and manage conflict successfully. Pupils talk about ways to support their own mental health confidently.

Leaders offer a range of clubs and enrichment activities that help pupils develop their interests and talents. These include engaging in adventurous activities on residential visits, performing at singing events and attending sports clubs. Leaders track attendance at clubs to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully and benefit greatly. Pupils value the opportunities to develop their

social skills and resilience, such as attending competitions, fundraising and holding pupil leadership positions. Leaders ensure that pupils leave school with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe, healthy and culturally aware in life beyond their school.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is below the national average. Recent improvements are beginning to have an impact. For example, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who met the expected standard in their phonics screening check is in line with their peers nationally. This is also true for the Year 4 pupils, who took the multiplication tables check. Pupils generally recall number facts well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make the progress that they should. This means that pupils are becoming increasingly prepared for their next steps.

Current pupils are beginning to make greater gains in their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. However, some pupils have gaps in their learning. This is especially the case in writing. Weaknesses in pupils' writing skills hinder their ability to write fluently, accurately and legibly.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' overall attendance rates are below the national average. More pupils miss large chunks of their education when compared to the national average. However, leaders take appropriate action to bring about improvements in pupils' attendance. They analyse patterns of absence and identify where further support is needed. Leaders work with pupils and their families to remove barriers to regular attendance. As a result, some groups of pupils now attend school more regularly and attendance rates are improving.

Leaders have ensured that staff's expectations of pupils' behaviour have risen. Staff typically follow the school's renewed behaviour policy. Mostly, pupils focus well in their lessons. They enjoy being recognised for making the right choices. Pupils' behaviour means that learning time is calm and productive. The incidents that lead to suspension from school are reducing. Pupils recognise that improvements to their lunchtimes make it easier to seek adult support when needed.

Leaders make sure that staff record incidents of unacceptable behaviour. However, these records lack clarity. They do not enable leaders to identify well enough when there have been incidents of bullying or the use of derogatory language. This sometimes makes it hard for leaders and staff to deal with such incidents swiftly and effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders generally understand what is working well in the curriculum and what needs to be developed further. They are taking appropriate action to make improvements. Many of their

changes are relatively new. They have set out a broad and balanced overview for subjects, which aims to build pupils' knowledge and vocabulary. However, leaders have not identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and build on in some subjects. This makes it difficult for teachers to know what to emphasise when they design learning activities.

Typically, teachers have the subject knowledge that they need to deliver lessons clearly. Staff present learning in different ways to make sure that it is accessible for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Mostly, teachers use careful questioning to understand what pupils have learned. They use this information to design extra sessions for pupils to close gaps in their learning.

Leaders have strengthened the teaching of phonics to ensure that pupils learn to read quickly. Leaders have developed a clearer approach to the teaching of mathematics to help pupils recall number facts. However, the school's writing curriculum is less successful in securing pupils' handwriting skills and spelling knowledge over time.

Early years

Needs attention 

Leaders have designed an ambitious and interesting curriculum. However, they have not ensured that this is taught in a way that means children are consistently well prepared for Year 1. Leaders have recently identified the most important knowledge and skills that children need for later learning. Leaders are beginning to adapt the early years provision to provide frequent opportunities for children to use and apply their knowledge across the curriculum. For example, children practise their fine motor control, which helps them to be ready to write. However, at times, staff do not provide activities that are closely matched to what children need or their starting points. This can prevent children successfully building on what they already know and can do.

Staff engage well with children to enhance their language and vocabulary. They model talk effectively to continually develop children's communication skills. Children in the Nursery Year enjoy story time and rhymes. This helps them to develop familiarity with texts and a love of reading. In the Reception class, phonics is taught daily by well-trained staff. This enables most children in the Reception class to use their letter sounds to start to read with confidence.

Children settle well in the early years. They are happy and develop independence. This is well supported by caring staff and consistent routines. Staff secure effective partnerships with parents and carers to ensure that any barriers to learning are identified. This makes sure that children who face difficulties get the support that they need from the start.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, considerable changes in staffing and leadership have hindered leaders from bringing about improvement as quickly as they intended. As result, some pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed.

The recent support of the trust, alongside external support, has enabled leaders to accelerate the pace of change. For example, there are clearer systems to monitor attendance and the early years' environment has improved. However, leaders' work to improve the curriculum and pupils' achievement is at an earlier stage of development. Leaders show a commitment to managing staff's wellbeing and workload. Staff, including early career teachers, benefit from a high-quality professional learning programme. Many value this and understand how developing their expertise is leading to improvements.

Those responsible for governance have the knowledge and skills to support and challenge school leaders effectively. They understand their responsibilities and ensure that statutory duties are met. Leaders, including governors and trust leaders, make decisions in the best interests of pupils and the community they serve. They remain focused on the impact that changes will have on their most vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who experience other barriers to their learning. Leaders' engagement with parents and carers is improving. Many parents who shared their views during the inspection were positive about how leaders and staff involve them in their children's education.

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

Pupils, especially those who join at different points in the school year, benefit from a nurturing and welcoming school. Staff know pupils and understand their needs. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, feel that they belong and are included in all aspects of school life. Pupils know that the pastoral support team and Buddy, the school dog, are always on hand to help them with any worries they may have.

Pupils enjoy their lessons and try their best. The school has experienced a lot of changes in recent years, including in staffing and leadership. This has hindered leaders' success in fully reducing the variability in the quality of the curriculum and how it is taught. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills. This means they are not as well prepared for their next stage in education as they should be.

Pupils enter school happily each morning and many attend regularly. However, some pupils still miss school too much. This makes it harder for them to thrive and achieve well. Recent changes have led to the school being a calm and orderly place, where pupils generally behave well. They cooperate positively with each other and enjoy their social times of the day. Although, some pupils say that bullying and behaviour incidents continue to happen, they know that they have staff to talk to, who do their best to resolve such issues.

Pupils are taught to keep safe, including when using the internet. They are well informed about age-appropriate risks in the wider community and how to protect themselves. Pupils take on extra responsibilities, such as school councillors, that provide opportunities to make an impact in their school and local community. They are proud of their school and their plans to make improvements, including arranging new playground markings. Pupils understand how they can make a positive contribution to society. They plant trees and pick up litter in

their local area. Pupils develop their knowledge of citizenship, which helps prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that behaviour records contain clearer information about incidents of bullying and derogatory language so that they can act more swiftly and effectively.
 - Leaders should review the writing curriculum to ensure that pupils are able to form letters correctly and spell accurately, so they build writing fluency as they move through school.
 - In some subjects, leaders should identify the most important knowledge in the curriculum to ensure that teachers are clear about what to teach and pupils learn all that they should.
 - Leaders should ensure the delivery of the early years curriculum is closely aligned with children's starting points, enabling learning to build progressively from Nursery to Reception and preparing children consistently well for Year 1.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi 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, Peter Duffy, overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Mason and local governing body, chaired by Ged McKeivitt.

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.

Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also met with governors, trustees and trust leaders, including the chairs of the trust and local governing board. They also spoke with a representative from the diocese, a representative of the local authority and an external educational representative.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in June 2025.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school also, under the same registration, runs a nursery for 3- and 4-year-old children.

Headteacher: Kelly Hannah

Lead inspector:

Emily Morris, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Philip Barlow, Ofsted Inspector

Craig Dewar-Willox, Ofsted Inspector

Usman Kothia, His Majesty's 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

412

Above 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

420

Above 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)

37.27%

Above 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

3.64%

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

20.63%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above 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)	36%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	26%	61%	Below
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)	50%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	74%	Below
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)	59%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	72%	Below
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)	52%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	48%	73%	Below
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)	10%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	19%	46%	Below
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)	34%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	41%	62%	Below
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)	41%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	26%	58%	Below
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)	31%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	59%	Below
2022/23		59%	

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%	
2024/25 (revised)	10%	69%	-59 pp
2023/24 (final)	19%	67%	-49 pp
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)	34%	81%	-46 pp
2023/24 (final)	41%	80%	-39 pp
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)	41%	78%	-37 pp
2023/24 (final)	26%	78%	-52 pp
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)	31%	81%	-49 pp
2023/24 (final)	37%	79%	-42 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

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)	7.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.6%	5.9%	Above

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)	18.8%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	23.0%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	25.6%	16.2%	Above

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.

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