

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Bishop Auckland

Murphy Crescent, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 6QH

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 January 2025

Outcome

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Bishop Auckland has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Joanne Sands. This school is part of Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education 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), Stuart McGhee, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne Coates.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this nurturing school. Relationships are strong between adults and pupils. Pupils are proud of their school and say that they would recommend it to others.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite and well mannered. Pupils display positive attitudes toward their learning. There is a calm and purposeful environment in classrooms and an excited buzz at breaktimes as pupils play together outside.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. For many pupils this is achieved. The school is further developing ways to better support those pupils who are not making the progress that they are capable of.

Pupils benefit from a range of additional activities. These include a range of clubs and visits, such as a trip to Denmark to meet civic leaders. Pupils enjoy leadership responsibilities across the school. They say that these roles make them feel proud and help them to set a positive example to others. For example, pupils elected as chair and vice chair of the school council, support others to have a voice in decision-making and to lead on charity work across the school.

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

The school, in collaboration with the Trust, has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. This meets the needs of most pupils well. Learning is carefully sequenced, so that pupils are able to build on their knowledge as they move through the school. For example, pupils develop a sense of chronology through the history curriculum. This begins in the early years as children develop a sense of themselves in relation to their family members. The curriculum is designed to develop pupils' curiosity about the world. It makes links to the local area and places further afield. These experiences enrich the curriculum and bring learning to life.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present learning to pupils clearly. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit their previous learning. In the early years and throughout the school, there is a strong focus on developing communication and language. For example, pupils in year one develop new vocabulary by linking stories to dance lessons.

Reading is prioritised from the moment children start school. Staff are trained to teach early reading effectively. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise and consolidate their phonics knowledge. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning well. Pupils develop their reading skills and fluency well as they move through the school.

The school swiftly identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those facing disadvantage. Staff are skilful at supporting pupils' well-being and readiness to learn. However, the curriculum is not always suitably adapted to meet the needs of these pupils. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they should. Some pupils do not yet receive the precise support that is needed to build their knowledge and skills well.

The school has developed a nurturing and inclusive environment. In the early years, adults quickly get to know the needs of children. Routines are established early. This helps children to follow instructions and settle into school well.

The school has a strong personal development offer. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, they learn about democracy through voting for student council members. Pupils understand healthy relationships and know what it means to be a good friend. Pupils know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy as well as how to stay safe online and in the wider community.

The school works closely with families to understand and overcome potential barriers to attendance. This has been successful for a number of pupils, who in turn enjoy the benefits of greater attendance.

Trust leaders and local governors know the school well and understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff appreciate the steps that the school takes to support their well-being

and workload. They are proud to work at the school. Relationships between staff, pupils, trust, governors and parents are extremely positive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the curriculum is not suitably adapted to enable all pupils, including pupils with SEND and those facing disadvantage, to access learning. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school and trust should ensure that staff are supported to make appropriate adaptations, so that all pupils learn well across all subjects.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2019.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148915
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10346795
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy convertor
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Yvonne Coates
CEO of the trust	Stuart McGhee
Headteacher	Joanne Sands
Website	www.stwilfrids.bhcet.org.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, most recently in February 2024.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- St. Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in February 2022. When its predecessor school, St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work and met with a number of school staff.
- The inspector met with the diocese lead, headteacher, deputy head, Trust leader and those responsible for governance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

Inspection team

Catherine Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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