

St Wilfrid's Catholic High School & Sixth Form College: A Voluntary Academy

Address: Cutsyke Road, Featherstone, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF7 6BD

Unique reference number (URN): 138951

Inspection report: 10 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.

Strong standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's personal development programme is woven through all parts of the school. Regular professional interactions between staff and pupils, subject curriculums and extra-curricular activities come together. They create an offer based on pupils' interests and experiences.

The school designs a curriculum that promotes debate and leads to pupils' understanding different viewpoints. Pupils know what makes a positive contributor to society. They can also share inspiring examples. School pupils help tackle loneliness. For example, they invite older community members to school for soup and sandwiches. This initiative is now in feeder primary schools. Younger children visit the school. They bring older community members with them. Members of this community group described it as 'life-changing'.

The school teaches its pupils about fundamental British values. This shows how it turns knowledge into real action and impact. Tolerance, respect and care for the environment have motivated the school to take action. The school council, student voice and clubs have made changes. These changes have helped the school, for example by requesting and working with leaders to create a new toilet block in the school. The pupils at St Wilfrid's are eager to make positive changes in society.

Pupils can join a variety of extra-curricular activities. These help them develop their skills and interests. These activities include sports and debating clubs. They also feature the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and different music opportunities. Many pupils assume leadership positions, including school council members and group leaders. These positions help foster qualities like confidence and teamwork. The school has various residential trips. These include trips to the Lake District and France.

Pupils in Year 10 and the sixth form take part in work experience opportunities. Local employers and educational institutions connect with the school for the annual careers fair. This preparation ensures that pupils are well informed and well prepared for their next steps. The vast majority move on to high-quality destinations.

Leaders adjust the personal development programme for pupils with additional needs. This ensures pupils have access to the content at a level that suits their needs and age.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Over time, pupils know and remember more of the subjects they study. Staff support pupils at school by providing after-school classes and homework clubs. This helps to reinforce their learning and develop firm foundations in their reading, writing and mathematics knowledge and skills. At the end of key stage 4, pupils perform in national exams at levels that match the national averages. This includes disadvantaged pupils.

Teachers help sixth-form students achieve well in their subjects. They build on what students already know. This helps students gain the knowledge and study habits needed for success in post-16 courses. Sixth-form leaders work hard to support students if they start the sixth form. They help students finish their courses, even when things get tough. This shows how the school's success is tightly linked to its pastoral support.

Pupils gain readiness for the next step by acquiring qualifications and life skills. Career advice is effective. Pupils have a clear sense of direction for their own futures.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

The school's actions to promote regular attendance are working. Most pupils go to school regularly and have kept this habit for a while. The school has high attendance targets for pupils.

Staff carefully check who has missed school and follow up with pupils swiftly. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or facing personal challenges. The school engages with families and collaborates with outside agencies. Together, they tackle issues early on. The school gives practical help. It provides a check-in point and equipment if needed. This helps pupils get ready to learn. When a pupil's attendance falls, leaders speak with parents. They outline clear steps to improve and check progress regularly.

Clear expectations and the 'St Wilfrid's Way' support positive pupil behaviour in the classroom and around the school. There is a positive focus on learning in lessons. Social times are relaxed, calm and enjoyable for pupils. Staff and pupils understand why positive behaviour is an essential life skill. Pupils know how self-control, following rules and being positive will help them later. They believe these traits will lead to better opportunities and relationships.

The school uses suspensions appropriately. Recently, the number of suspensions used for all pupil groups has reduced. This is especially true for pupils with SEND.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Subject curriculums are thoughtfully designed. They build knowledge step by step. This improves pupils' understanding over time in all subjects. Each lesson sequence considers what has come before and what follows. Consequently, pupils secure their reading, writing and mathematics knowledge. This helps prepare pupils who leave school at ages 16 and 18 for further study or work.

Leaders at all levels know their subject areas well. Teachers have a deep understanding and passion for their subjects. In some areas, pupils represent the school in national competitions, such as mathematics and physical education.

When used effectively, checks on pupils' learning provide teachers with important information. This helps them design lessons. In science and design technology, for example, teachers first check for pupils' misconceptions. Then, they give feedback to individuals,

small groups and the whole class. This corrects pupils' misunderstandings and prevents them from repeating mistakes. Teachers quickly identify gaps in pupils' knowledge in some subjects, for example in mathematics, English and reading. They support pupils who need help to keep up with their peers. Reading is a top priority in the school. Effective strategies aid pupils who are just starting to learn to read. However, teachers' checks on what pupils know and can do, and how this information is used, vary. This limits pupils' ability to secure new knowledge.

The school has systems to support disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to children's social care, which involves sharing information with staff. However, the application of this information varies.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff place inclusion at the centre of their work. All pupils are made to feel welcome. The school aims to help pupils become confident, caring and resilient young adults. This is to spark a desire to learn and do their best during lessons and at social times.

The school fosters kindness and embraces differences. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils in care, receive additional support to access their learning and wellbeing. Leaders use extra funding to provide extra layers of support to pupils. For example, frequent check-ins with pupils to ensure that they are getting the right support between staff, external professionals and pupils are highly valued. They help to build pupils' self-belief and confidence. Pupils benefit from these moments throughout the day.

Staff are provided with useful details about how to support individual pupils with additional needs. When staff use the information to adapt their teaching, pupils achieve well. However, this is not universal.

Pupils are valued and feel a sense of belonging at St Wilfrid's. Whether they access their learning in the resource base or alternative provision, they remain part of the St Wilfrid's family. This means that pupils receive the same level of care and support.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

School leaders understand the organisation and its priorities. They use evidence from their checks, feedback and pupil achievement data to guide their decisions. They focus on improving education quality. They also ensure pupils get the support they need to succeed. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those known or previously known to children's social care and/or those who face other barriers to learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders regularly review teaching methods, curriculum design and school systems. They accurately identify the school's strengths and areas needing improvement.

Those in charge of governance have a wide range of experience and knowledge. This helps them challenge and support leaders effectively. They look at data on attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and academic progress. Governors use this information to ask probing questions, ensuring that leaders stay focused on achieving positive outcomes for all pupils.

Staff's professional development is well considered and reflects current educational priorities. Training opportunities help teachers at various career stages. They refine classroom practices and improve support for pupils' wellbeing.

Leaders promote a culture built on respect, collaboration and high expectations. They pay close attention to staff workload and morale. This helps create a positive working environment. This leadership approach creates a safe and inclusive school community. This supports both academic and personal growth for pupils.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

The sixth form offers a tailored learning experience for its small group of students. The staff are subject experts. They adapt their teaching to help students be successful. This is especially true for those needing extra help. Teachers ask thoughtful questions and give focused feedback. This helps students better understand and address any misconceptions.

Students understand what teachers expect of them. They set goals to stay focused and achieve the best results. The learning environment fosters respect, independence and personal responsibility. The flexible curriculum matches students' interests and future goals. The school is proud to say that all leavers from 2025 secured places in higher education or jobs. Student attainment typically aligns with national standards.

Leaders closely watch teaching practices. They work hard to ensure consistency of provision and standards across subjects. Improvements have been made to ensure that their checks track student performance and progress with greater clarity.

Students value the range of subject and personal development options offered. These include enrichment activities, mentoring and support for future education or careers. This support boosts personal growth and wellbeing, a key aspect of the service. The sixth form helps students get ready for the future. It combines academic challenges with good support and practical advice.

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

This school supports pupils to be successful. Pupils arrive eager to learn and find staff committed to their achievement. This fosters a belief among pupils that they can make a positive impact on the world. The school has effective systems that support those who need help, creating a genuine sense of safety and care that enhances pupils' wellbeing. Bullying is rare, but staff respond with urgency when it occurs.

Lessons in both the main school and sixth form have a calm and positive atmosphere. Pupils share ideas and show curiosity for their learning. For example, they design personalised cushions in design and technology and use past experiences to improve their work. They enjoy a wide range of subjects. Sixth-form students show hard work and dedication to their studies. Their respectful and courteous behaviour creates a supportive learning environment. It also sets a good example for younger pupils.

The school is inclusive. It has a resource provision that supports some of its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils in the provision join lessons and interact with their peers when this is suitable. Staff understand individual pupils' needs. They help to remove barriers to learning for pupils. Most pupils achieve well in the Year 11 and 13 national examinations. However, sometimes, teacher checks on what pupils know and can do are not accurate. This means that, at times, learning activities are not matched to pupils' needs or abilities. Progress through the curriculum slows.

The school draws its Year 7 intake from 50 primary schools. Leaders understand that building strong relationships with families is crucial as pupils begin their journey at the school. They also place a strong emphasis on enhancing communication with parents, ensuring it remains a consistent focus over time.

Most pupils attend regularly. They have opportunities to take part in fun extra-curricular activities, such as community groups, sports clubs and exciting trips to Europe. Many pupils have important firsts, such as their first trip away or visit to the seaside.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff consistently implement checks on pupils' learning to help identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding to effectively inform future lesson design and teaching.
 - Leaders should further develop their oversight of inclusion, ensuring that support is carefully reviewed and adjusted to consistently improve pupils' experiences and outcomes.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently apply their expert knowledge of both subjects and of what pupils know and can do so that pupils' achievement from their starting points continues to improve across the curriculum.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Bishop Konstant Catholic 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 (CEO), Lesley Fitton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Julie Noble.

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 held discussions with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the acting CEO, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the director of schools and colleges at the diocese, members of the academy council and the

chair of the trust board. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 April 2024.

The school uses 4 alternative provisions.

The school includes a specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with speech, language and communication needs and autism.

Headteacher: Dr Philip Dore

Lead inspector:

Richard Jones, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Harkireet Sohel, Ofsted Inspector

Steve Shaw, Ofsted Inspector

Lyndsey Reed, His Majesty's Inspector

Michael Wardle, His Majesty's Inspector

Tristan Keates, 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 10 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,481

Well 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: 1,067

School capacity

1,800

Well 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

22.57%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

4.59%

Above 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12.90%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	49.6%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	49.3%	45.9%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	44.3%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	46.7	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.7	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	47.0	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.01	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.04	-0.03	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	28.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	20.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	13.9%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	35.8	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.4	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.1	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.79	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.70	-0.57	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	28.6%	53.1%	-24.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	20.0%	53.1%	-33.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	13.9%	52.4%	-38.5 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	35.8	50.4	-14.7
2023/24 (final)	32.4	50.0	-17.6
2022/23 (final)	31.1	50.3	-19.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.79	0.16	-0.96
2022/23 (final)	-0.70	0.17	-0.87

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	93%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	93%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	94%	Above

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	31.13	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	31.78	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	28.64	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average

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)	7.6%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.1%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.6%	9.0%	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)	21.4%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	25.5%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	22.5%	26.5%	Close to average

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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