

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

Old Fold Road, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE10 0DJ

Inspection date:

11 March 2025

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Claire Johnson. This school is part of Bishop Wilkinson 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), Nick Hurn OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Gannon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are inquisitive, polite and eager to please. They enjoy school and the varied opportunities the school provides. Pupils have a keen sense of equality and fairness. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds thrive in a highly inclusive environment. Diversity is embraced throughout the school. Pupils exemplify the school's commitment to 'celebrating each unique child' through their highly positive attitudes and empathy for one another.

High expectations for all abound at St Wilfrid's. Pupils take pride in their work and their achievements. Work in books is of a high standard. Pupils enjoy engaging lessons. They eloquently demonstrate their knowledge to visitors. Published outcomes for 2024 do not accurately reflect the quality of the school's current education provision. A small proportion of older pupils have missed out on the curriculum improvements and have some gaps in their learning.

Pupils show high levels of respect to all. In their own words, 'We are all equal. We treat people how we want to be treated.' As a result, behaviour is very positive across school. On rare occasions where it is not, well-trained staff deal with this sensitively and effectively. Pupils are safe.

Parent responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey were low in numbers, but positive. The school ensures they include parents and carers in many activities to celebrate the work and achievements of their children.

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

From children's starting points in early years, a sharp focus on communication, language and early reading has notable impact. Children develop a love of reading through exposure to high-quality texts. Highly trained staff identify and address any gaps in phonics knowledge swiftly. Children develop a secure base of phonics knowledge. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Children enjoy numerous opportunities to develop within the wider curriculum. They develop important foundational knowledge of number. They use numbers with confidence. They also respond to different stories, talking about how different parts of the stories make them feel.

Older children become fluent and confident readers. This is crucial to their ability to learn the engaging and exciting curriculums that have been developed in school. The oldest pupils in school analyse texts with understanding. They make informed predictions as to what might happen based on what they have read. Pupils use their prior learning effectively to identify where Keswick is on a map. They identify other features of a map, including valleys, with precision. Other pupils talk about the nutritional content of food with understanding. Older pupils use key vocabulary such as 'metamorphosis' and 'embryo' accurately when talking about their learning.

The school has robust systems for the identification of pupils' needs. The support for pupils with SEND is effective. It enables pupils to learn the curriculum alongside their peers. As a result, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language generally achieve well.

Nevertheless, a legacy exists due to historical weaknesses in the curriculum. This means the most recent published outcomes reflect this issue with historical weaknesses in the teaching of the curriculum for some older pupils. This has limited their achievements at times.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is rarely an issue. The school has rigorous processes to check on absence. Pupils' conduct in and around school is of a high standard. Their focus in lessons is tangible. Pupils are pleasant and articulate members of the school community.

The school's approach to pupils' wider development is a significant strength of the school. No opportunity is missed to promote pupils' understanding and appreciation of difference. A well-planned series of educational visits and visitors to school help pupils develop their understanding of different aspects of spiritual awareness, for example. These experiences encompass a range of other faiths and beliefs. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the wider community beyond the school. For example, pupil leaders organise a collection of food items for a local homeless charity. They then travel on the metro to help volunteers serve a Christmas meal to homeless people. The school has begun a 'young

interpreters' initiative to help with the integration of pupils who arrive in school from different countries. Many of these pupils may speak limited English on arrival.

Although the senior leaders in school are still relatively new to their roles, they have identified swiftly areas for improvement. Alongside the trust, the school has taken effective action to make these improvements. This has ensured that the school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection. The members of the small local governing committee understand their roles. They offer supportive challenge to the school. The school has a resolute focus on staff workload and well-being. Staff feel valued. Their morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some pupils, the teaching and impact of the curriculum have been inconsistent at times. This means that some pupils have not achieved as well as they could. The school should ensure that the rapid improvements that have been made to the teaching of the curriculum enable those pupils with gaps in their learning to catch up quickly.

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 February 2018.

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	149054
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10346814
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	158
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Gannon
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Claire Johnson
Website	www.stwilfridsgateshead.bwcet.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy on 1 May 2022, joining the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. When its predecessor school, St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has undergone a significant change in staffing since the predecessor school's last inspection. The headteacher was appointed on an interim basis in November 2023. The head of school was appointed on an interim basis in January 2024. These posts were made permanent in September 2024.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- A breakfast club operates on site under the management of the school.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last such inspection was in March 2023.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the head of school, other school staff, the chair of the local governing committee, the diocesan director of education, the vice chair of the trust board and the trust senior director of performance and standards.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to some pupils from Year 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online staff questionnaire and spoke to some staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Richard Beadnall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lynn George

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025