

# St Wilfrid's RC College

Temple Park Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 0PH

**Inspection dates** 4–5 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Students receive an outstanding education that prepares them extremely well for their future.
- Most groups of students make consistently outstanding progress and leave with attainment that is well above that found nationally.
- There is a relentless focus on raising achievement for all students in the school and this is proving very successful.
- Much of the teaching is outstanding and is never less than good, partly as a result of the sharing of exemplary practice across the school. Teachers have expert subject knowledge and use this well to help students to learn rapidly.
- Students' work is marked regularly and thoroughly, successfully advising them how to improve and further develop their understanding of their work.
- Teachers have high expectations, setting challenging tasks that stretch students' thinking and deepen their understanding. In response, students also have high expectations of their teachers, demonstrating a mutually beneficial working partnership.
- Students are extremely safe within school and their behaviour is outstanding. Their attitude to learning is excellent.
- The school places great emphasis on further accelerating students' progress, including of the most able, so that attainment continues to rise.
- All staff are very caring about the students at the school and students respond to this by returning this value to their staff.
- Attendance has improved significantly. Applications to join the school have increased due to the belief within the community that this school has rapidly improved attainment, teaching and the support for students.
- Students and staff are extremely proud of their school. This is illustrated by comments such as, 'This school is a fantastic place to work', from a member of staff and, 'Most teachers are the best of the best', from a student.
- Parents and students value the school very highly and believe that the staff will do the very best for them.
- The school recognises that the rigorous analysis of progress and provision at Key Stage 4 is not mirrored equally in Key Stage 3.
- Governors and senior leaders set themselves very high standards. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are robust and promote further rapid improvement in achievement.
- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders are vigorous in their continuous drive to improve the quality of teaching in the school further. This is enhancing provision and is continuing to drive standards even higher.
- The school supports the development of leaders at all levels to ensure that any possible underperformance is tackled swiftly.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 lessons, including four that were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Formal discussions were held with the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders, newly qualified and recently qualified teachers, three groups of students, the School Improvement Partner and two representatives of the local authority.
- Scrutiny of students' work was carried out during lesson observations and additionally as a separate exercise to identify the current progress of students and also trends over time.
- Inspectors listened to Year 7 pupils who participate in the reading support programme as part of the school's approach to improve the standards of literacy across the subjects.
- A range of supporting documents was scrutinised. These related to student progress over time, safeguarding and child protection procedures, governing body minutes and the school's own view of more recent achievement, teaching and future improvement.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons, at break time and in the school canteen at lunchtime. They also scrutinised the school's policies and procedures to ensure that all students are included in everything the school has to offer.
- The inspectors took account of 105 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, one letter from a parent and 50 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Colin Scott, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Barbara Waugh	Additional Inspector
Lynne Horton	Additional Inspector
Christine Kennedy	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average secondary school. Most students are White British with a small proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- Students come from a wide area with some bussed in from outlying wards. The school is part of the Hexham and Newcastle Diocese and sits within the Deanery of St Aidan and St Gregory.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school holds mathematics and computing specialist status to support its provision and curriculum.
- The school currently holds the Investors in People award and the Sport Leaders Award Programme status.
- The school currently does not make use of alternative provision for students and has its own internal exclusion unit to support good behaviour and attitudes.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to raise attainment even higher, especially for the most able students, by:
  - continuing the practice for skilled staff to share their expertise with their colleagues
  - ensuring that the rigorous analysis of student progress and provision at Key Stage 4 is mirrored equally for students at Key Stage 3 in school improvement planning
  - maintaining the support for the development of leaders at all levels to monitor and track the progress of students and performance of staff within their areas of responsibility so that any underperformance continues to be tackled swiftly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Students make outstanding progress and reach high standards. Students enter Year 7 with attainment that is generally above average. By the end of Year 11, their attainment is significantly above the national average.
- GCSE English results demonstrate that early entry was appropriate. Those who were entered early made outstanding progress in 2013.
- The school's own data indicate clearly that progress in all subjects is set to rise even further this year. Inspection evidence, including work scrutiny and lesson observations agrees with the school's own monitoring of students' progress. It is apparent that attainment is continuing to rise.
- Although standards in science fell in 2012, there was a sharp rise in 2013 and attainment in this subject was above average. Inspection evidence indicates that this improvement has been sustained this year.
- Achievement in English and mathematics demonstrates that students make impressive gains during their time at the school, with levels of progress and attainment being high compared to those normally found nationally. Progress in these subjects has risen rapidly and inspectors have found that current progress matches the trends already seen.
- Although standards in modern languages and geography were below average in 2013, the school has been quick to put strategies in place to address the issue. Inspection evidence supports the school's own view that progress in these subjects is now rising rapidly.
- Most groups of students in all subjects make outstanding progress throughout the school. This includes students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs. A small number of the most able students did not make higher than expected progress in 2013 and the school has already begun to target all of the most able in order to promote even more progress for those students. This demonstrates that procedures for ensuring equality of opportunities for all groups of students to make progress are well established.
- The specialism of mathematics and computing is being used well to support whole-school improvement. For example, the school has established a computer science course earlier than required by the National Curriculum because staff recognise the benefits of introducing this subject, believing it supports the logic and critical thinking skills of students across the school, thus promoting their learning and progress overall.
- Students who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium achieve almost as well as their peers and better than typically found nationally. Trends over time indicate that the gap between the performance of this group of students and others is continuing to narrow, with progress measures indicating that their attainment is significantly higher than found nationally.
- Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding is being appropriately used for the targeted support and monitoring of the progress of students for whom the funding is intended. For example, some funding has been used to pay for extra staffing to support a reading programme out of lessons.
- The school prepares students extremely well for their future. Their literacy, communication and numeracy skills are very well developed.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Much of the teaching is outstanding and during the inspection it was never less than good. Teachers know their students exceptionally well and plan lessons which take into account their prior learning as well as their current performance. Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive focused support to ensure they learn and progress well.
- Teachers have very high expectations of their students. They challenge them to strive for the

very highest standards. Students also have high aspirations for themselves. Students ensure their teachers are constantly challenged to set them work which stretches them further so that they can get even better results. Teachers respond to this, for example by offering extra support lessons after school which are well attended and which promote the working ethos of the school very well.

- Lessons display high levels of support for spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning and are very inclusive. For example, in a very successful religious education lesson, students were confident in sharing their own values and beliefs even if it did not match the school's own ethos. This led to an extremely thorough and deep discussion by them about culture and faith whereby students were able to deepen their understanding of wider communities and cultures across the local area, nationally and globally.
- Students speak highly of the skills of their teachers. One student remarked that most of their teachers 'were the best of the best' and inspectors agree that the quality of teaching in the school is high. Parents also support this view with 90% of those who responded to Parent View acknowledging their children are taught well.
- Where students make good or better progress, teachers constantly challenge students appropriately, ask them questions which stretch their understanding and adapt the lesson frequently in order to keep students interested and excited in their learning.
- The school has established successful routines for marking and assessment which inform students accurately about how to improve and to celebrate the successes already made. Concepts used include 'perfecting our work' (POW) and 'correcting our work' (COW) and the students speak very highly of these approaches. They say that these routines have greatly helped them to improve their standards and that they appreciate this type of support.
- Despite the successes already made by teachers in accelerating students' progress and attainment, they continue their aspiration for their own development and for the continued success of their students. This is supported by their keenness to participate in professional development opportunities, for example via regular departmental and inter-departmental discussions and training, so that they are even better placed to be more successful teachers. Another example of this passion is one teacher who has volunteered for direct support to improve their teaching.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The procedures in place to check the credentials of staff are meticulous and the pastoral structures of the school support the well-being of students most positively.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. The relationships between students and between students and staff are exemplary. Students are courteous, confident and respectful young learners who respect each other and the staff. They respond instantly to advice given.
- The school has an obvious caring atmosphere and a family feel. The way in which staff and students speak to each other, and display care for each other, are impressive. For example, one parent who wrote a letter to the inspection team commented, 'The staff have been caring to myself and my son, and sent well-wishing cards and a 'missing you' DVD when he was absent from school undergoing a medical diagnosis. This support should not go unnoticed.'
- Students are skilled in recognising how to stay safe in and around school, in practical lessons and when using new technologies. They say that they are very safe and this view is overwhelmingly supported by parents who responded to Parent View. Ninety-six per cent believe that their child feels safe in school.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to their work and their teachers support their learning extremely well, resulting in standards that are rising rapidly.
- Students say that they have many opportunities to take part in activities in and out of school. The school supports community and charitable projects well with many examples, including musical concerts and working in charity shops. There are also opportunities for students to

participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and to run community football teams.

- Students speak highly of the extra-curricular support they are given in various after-school clubs and study-support lessons. Bullying is extremely rare and the school has excellent systems in place to deal immediately with any incidents should they occur. Systems in place to track incidents are thorough and clearly allow the school to identify any developing trends of poor behaviour.
- Exclusions over time have been higher than typically found as historic issues have been tackled and new behaviour management systems introduced. They have now fallen and remain below average. There is a direct link between the rising attainment of students and their much-improved behaviour, owing to the success of the consistent approach to behaviour management.
- Attendance is now above average, persistent absence is below average and students are keen to arrive at lessons punctually. This demonstrates strongly that the school is correct in its view that students now enjoy school; this was confirmed by students themselves during discussions.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- In the highly successful pursuit of continued and rapid improvement, the headteacher, with the support of governors and senior leaders, has been able to secure sustained improvement. There are rigorous checks on teaching and learning across the school, consistent approaches to behaviour management, and distributed, highly successful leadership across all levels of the school.
- Despite being relatively new in post, the headteacher has swiftly transformed leadership across the school and has also transmitted his passion and vision to all staff. The new leadership structures support learning, progress and attainment exceptionally well. Already this has resulted in improved standards across the school.
- Support for newly qualified and recently qualified teachers is very strong. They speak highly of this support. Already some are delivering lessons which result in outstanding progress for students after only a short time in the profession due to the opportunities afforded them at the school to develop their skills.
- Staff feel supported by their leaders and were overwhelmingly positive about them in their responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.
- Gaps between the standards reached by different groups of students are narrow and closing over time due to the excellent equality of opportunity provided for all groups of students thus ensuring they make outstanding progress.
- The curriculum is very well-matched to students' needs and aspirations. They already talk about their future opportunities and are confident that the courses available to them for GCSE are appropriate. They say that when they leave school they will have the necessary skills to enable them to continue in education or training.
- Although the vast majority of groups of students make excellent progress, the school has correctly identified a small number of the most able who could make even more progress. It has already started an impressive programme of support targeting the 50 most able students called 'Students Targeted A grade Results' (STAR). This programme offers individualised mentoring using high-quality teachers to give direct intervention and support. This is coupled with the involvement of local universities. The school believes this will give further aspiration to these students to do their very best and attend prestigious universities.
- The school's procedures for checking the progress of individuals and groups of students and the performance of teachers are rigorous. The senior leadership team has a very thorough knowledge of the quality of the teaching workforce and has implemented a strong programme of training to develop teachers' skills further.
- The school receives support for its improvement from South Tyneside local authority and from an external School Improvement Partner. The headteacher and governors believe that this support has been crucial to verify the school's view of its own performance and has provided effective challenge to enable the school to improve progress and attainment rapidly.

- The school has concentrated on progress and areas for improvement in Key Stage 4 more rigorously than in Key Stage 3, in order to affect a rapid improvement in standards at GCSE. It says it is now working to ensure that its procedures are as diligent for both key stages in the future so that the successes are as impressive throughout the whole school. However, inspection evidence supports the view that progress in Key Stage 3 is outstanding and is a direct result of whole-school improvements in teaching.
- Leaders have developed strong systems to monitor and tackle all forms of discrimination and bullying and these have resulted in students who are happy and confident and parents who believe the school deals with any concerns they may have.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements and child protection procedures are exemplary. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure students are safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very strong and systematically pursues excellence. It was instrumental in securing the necessary changes to leadership that have transformed the school to its current levels of success.
  - Governors are passionate about their school, are aspirational and have high expectations of all. They have undergone training to understand clearly the data relating to students' achievement. This ensures that they have the skills to hold the school rigorously to account for the performance of leaders, students and staff.
  - Governors ensure that the training and the performance of teachers are well managed so that salaries and promotion reflect performance in relation to student progress. They have a keen understanding of how the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding is spent to bring about positive outcomes for students.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108736
<b>Local authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	430596

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	826
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Patrick Melia
<b>Headteacher</b>	Thomas Brendan Tapping
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 456 9121
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 454 5070
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-wilfrids.org

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