

St Wilfrid's RC College

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

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders and governors are unstinting in their determination that all pupils will achieve their potential. No stone is left unturned.
- Supported by the Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust, the executive headteacher took swift and decisive action to strengthen leadership where it was required.
- The morale of staff is high. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, underpinned by a challenging curriculum. Staff inspire pupils to succeed by embodying the school's maxim 'excellence through faith, learning and support' in their everyday work.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the vast majority of subjects is high. Pupils have pride in the quality of their work.
- Provisional outcomes information for 2017/18 indicates that progress across the majority of GCSE subjects is well above the national average.
- Provisional outcomes information indicates that the progress of disadvantaged pupils across most subjects is higher than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils are highly courteous and polite towards staff and visitors. Behaviour is excellent.
- The quality of the school's work to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is a strength.
- The quality of provision in the sixth form is strong. Leaders have ensured that the requirements of the government's study programmes are fully met. Careers guidance is particularly effective.
- Outcomes in GCSE mathematics in 2017/18 have improved rapidly since the previous year. The progress made by current pupils in mathematics is now much stronger but does not match the excellent progress they make in other core subjects.
- Rates of attendance and persistent absence are better than the national averages. However, leaders acknowledge that there are further improvements to be made for disadvantaged pupils.
- Although reducing rapidly, the rate of fixed-term exclusion is above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' progress in mathematics continues to improve, so that it matches the excellent progress made in other subjects.
- Continue to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Further reduce fixed-term exclusions, particularly for those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Under the principled and incisive leadership of the executive headteacher, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. There is a shared understanding among staff that pupils are entitled to be challenged and supported in reaching their potential.
- Supported by the members and directors of the Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust ('the trust'), the executive headteacher took swift and decisive action after a dip in GCSE performance in 2016/17 to address the necessary areas for improvement. As a result, outcomes in 2017/18 rose sharply across all subjects.
- Leaders at all levels have a precise and detailed understanding of the priorities facing the school, and how to address them. A thread of being held to account for how pupils are progressing runs through the school. As a consequence of this honest and probing analysis of pupils' progress, leaders are not complacent.
- Leaders place a high value on good-quality continuing professional development. As a result, subject leaders make effective use of the school's quality assurance processes in identifying those pupils who might be falling behind and taking action to help them catch up. Teachers are convincing in their explanations of leaders' commitment to teachers' professional development. Consequently, the effectiveness of teachers' planning is resulting in improved outcomes for pupils from different starting points.
- The additional funding for the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up and special educational needs is used effectively. As a result of leaders' targeted use of the funding, disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress than other pupils nationally. Pupils in Year 7 who need support with their reading have improved their ability to read. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are also making gains in their learning.
- There is a broad and balanced curriculum in place which enables pupils to access a wide range of experiences and activities which contribute to their development as young people. The curriculum is determinedly ambitious and challenging. A higher proportion than the national average enter the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects; the progress of these pupils is well above the national average.
- A wider curriculum is in place, providing pupils with the opportunity to participate in a number of additional activities such as sport and music. Pupils are taught the features and qualities of British values through an extensive personal, social, health and economics programme, including learning about other faiths and cultures. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the role of the school council in working with leaders to bring about changes.

Governance of the school

- The chair of the governing body, the trust members, directors and other governors have high expectations. They are challenging in their demands of leaders at all levels. As a result of this restless pursuit of success, there is no complacency among the governors.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas which

require further work. They share the executive headteacher's and head of school's determination that all pupils will do as well as they should.

- Governors make sure that they hold leaders to account for the performance of pupils so that complacency does not take hold. They ensure that both senior and middle leaders are required to present reports of actions and impact to the governing body. Governors follow up these reports with appropriately challenging questions. This enables governors to spot emerging areas for attention quickly and to challenge leaders about what is being done.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, supported by governors, ensure that the necessary arrangements for the safer recruitment of staff are fit for purpose.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture at the school. As one member of staff said, 'Safeguarding is our business.'
- Teaching and non-teaching staff have a strong understanding of the risks posed to pupils as the result of abuse, radicalisation and the online environment. They are well trained in the danger signs to look out for and know what to do should they become worried.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements for the small number of pupils attending alternative educational provision are in place. This is complemented by regular checks on pupils' progress as well as their attendance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across subjects and year groups is typically high. Teachers have aspirational expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, learning is characterised by the curiosity and engagement of pupils in an environment in which they can thrive. Pupils take pleasure in learning.
- Teachers set tasks which meet the needs of pupils from their different starting points. Consequently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is strong. Similarly, teachers' planning takes into account the needs of the least and the most able pupils, ensuring that they are able to tackle work which is right for them. As a result, pupils acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding effectively.
- Teachers' use of questioning is a strength across the curriculum. In history, for example, the use of probing questioning means that pupils respond with a deep level of understanding. In modern foreign languages, teachers' questions enable pupils to extend their grasp of challenging and complex subject knowledge.
- The high quality of pupils' oral responses to teachers' questions supports pupils in their written responses to tasks. Typically, pupils' written work is characterised by strong standards of literacy. In science, for example, the accurate use of scientific vocabulary and scientific principles is widespread.

- In addition, strong standards of literacy and oracy enable pupils to write longer and more complex responses to tasks. This is evident not only in English, but in subjects across the curriculum, such as religious education.
- Leaders have taken action to ensure that teaching assistants are effective in the support they provide to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, with the result that these pupils make good progress. The quality of the support for these pupils is an important factor in the creation of aspirational learning environments, where pupils from all starting points can thrive.
- The quality of mathematics teaching is typically not quite as strong as in other subjects. However, leaders have acted to bring mathematics teaching rapidly up to the same standard as elsewhere. While leaders recognise that there is more to do, the improvements are clear.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to engage in, especially in sport and music. Pupils speak positively about 'active lunchtimes' and the opportunities to attend homework clubs and quiet study rooms. Leaders ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are as fully involved as their peers in the wider curriculum.
- The school council plays an important role in the life of the school and, through its democratic processes and conscious promotion of equal opportunities, teaches pupils about fundamental British values. As a result of its work, for example, the topic of 'body image' has been incorporated into the personal development scheme of work.
- Leaders have placed high importance on the participation of pupils in developing their awareness of the wider world beyond school. There is significant opportunity to be involved in charity work, for instance through Young Minds, CAFOD and Operation Christmas Child. The school has set up its own charitable work following the terrorist attack at the Manchester Arena, which had a profound and direct impact on the school.
- A carefully planned and delivered curriculum further supports pupils in their personal development. Through focused teaching on topics such as personal finance, healthy living, tolerance and mental health, pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils understand about keeping themselves safe online, because leaders have implemented a programme of assemblies and tutorials which educate pupils about this subject. This has been reinforced by visiting speakers and education drama groups.
- A small number of pupils are educated at off-site alternative provision. Leaders make sure that pupils' attendance, personal development and progress are monitored and reported to leaders back in school. There is regular communication between the alternative providers and school. Home visits are carried out as required as further support for these pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- During the inspection, the standard of pupils' behaviour in lessons was never less than impeccable. Conduct around the school was equally impressive, with calm and orderly movement a matter of routine. Pupils respect the school environment: inspectors saw no graffiti and virtually no litter.
- Pupils conduct themselves towards staff and visitors with good manners and courtesy. The strength of relationships between staff and pupils is a significant reason why the standard of learning across the school is so high. The quality of relationships allied with effective planning means that pupils are resilient in their learning. Consequently, they are confident in making mistakes and taking risks in their learning so that they can improve.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare in school. The majority said that when it happens, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. A small number thought that bullying was not always sorted out as effectively or quickly as they would like. Almost all pupils said that they feel safe in school, although a few pupils are frustrated with what they see as overcrowded toilets at lunchtime. They value the work leaders do to keep them safe, especially around e-safety.
- Rates of attendance are above the national average. Leaders have taken action to improve the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, with the result that attendance for this group of pupils is better than the national average. Leaders have also acted to improve the rate of pupils who are persistently absent from school. Here too, they have reduced the persistent absence of pupils to below the national average, markedly so for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, there is work still to be done in improving the attendance and reducing the persistent absence of some disadvantaged pupils.
- The rate of fixed-term exclusions is reducing but remains above the national average. Leaders take an uncompromising stand on ensuring that pupils adhere to the school's code of conduct. However, the proportion of pupils excluded for two or more repeat occasions is below the national average. Leaders have significantly reduced the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are excluded, which is now below the national average. There is more to do, however, to reduce the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities being excluded.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- After a dip in overall performance at the end of key stage 4 in 2017, provisional outcomes information suggests that for 2017/18 this has been redressed. The provisional information indicates that, overall, pupils' progress is well above the national average.
- Provisional outcomes information also indicates that pupils' progress in English and in the EBacc group of subjects of science, history, geography and modern foreign languages, progress is above the national average. In other GCSE subjects, provisional outcomes suggest that pupils' progress is significantly above the national average.

- The same progress information indicates that disadvantaged pupils' overall progress is above the national average for other pupils. In English, disadvantaged pupils' progress is well above the national average for other pupils. In the EBacc subjects for disadvantaged pupils, progress is indicated as close to the national average for other pupils. In other GCSE subjects, disadvantaged pupils' progress is indicated as significantly above the national average for other pupils.
- The progress of pupils currently in the school is strong. Across year groups and between subjects, pupils make good progress as the result of highly effective teaching. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged make strong gains in their learning.
- Similarly, teachers' effective planning enables pupils from different starting points, including the least and the most able, to progress rapidly.
- Outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 4 in 2017 lagged behind the other GCSE subjects. Pupils' progress in mathematics by the end of the 2018 academic year had improved markedly, including that of disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders are taking determined action to maintain this rapid improvement to further strengthen outcomes in this area.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education or training. As the result of effective careers guidance and preparation throughout the school, the proportion of pupils progressing to an appropriately challenging destination at the end of Year 11 is above the national average.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Leaders have established a culture of high expectations in the sixth form. They use rigorous systems to drive improvement by keeping a very close eye on how well students are doing. They intervene with alacrity when necessary to get students back on track.
- The quality of teaching is high. As the result of teachers' aspirations of what students can achieve, students are independent and resilient learners. Across a variety of subjects, they are encouraged and enabled to use their curiosity as enquiring learners to make strong progress.
- As a consequence of effective teaching, students' attainment improved at the end of 2017/18 compared with the previous year. The attainment of students at the highest grades has improved in each of the last three years and is now above the national average. In 2016/17, the progress of disadvantaged students was significantly above the national average and in the top 10% of schools nationally.
- According to the school's assessment information, the progress of the most able students, who form a significant proportion of the cohort, is set to be well above the national average in 2018. Following targeted support and challenge in a number of subjects in 2016/17, attainment and progress in these subjects improved in 2017/18.
- Students are very well supported in the careers guidance they receive, both before commencing courses and during their time in the sixth form. In recent years, the large majority of students progressed to higher education, employment or training.

- Retention figures for students completing their main A-level programme of study are above the most recently available national averages for 2016/17. To further enable students to make a successful transition into sixth-form study, leaders have introduced a 'bridging course' for 2018/19. There is strong support for the small number of students who leave the sixth form during the year. Leaders work closely with an external careers advisory service to ensure that these students are carefully guided onto appropriate college or training courses.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements of the government's study programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds are fully met. Students undertake a bespoke period of work experience during Year 12, built on extensive links with the local employment sector. Students with specific career ambitions, such as medicine, undertake additional weekly work experience in the healthcare sector. Students' programmes of study consist of the appropriate balance between examination-based courses and an extensive enrichment programme. This includes preparation for applying to university, charity activities, mentoring younger pupils in school, and training as mental health mentors.
- Very few students commence sixth-form courses without a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and/or mathematics. Of the most recent cohort in 2017/18, the proportion of students who achieved a grade 4 in mathematics was similar to the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	142601
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10048415

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive/
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,207
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	160
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr P Melia
Headteacher	Mr B Tapping
Telephone number	01914 569 121
Website	www.st-wilfrids.org
Email address	admin@st-wilfrids.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust ('the trust'). At present it is the only school in the trust. It converted to academy status in February 2016. The structure of the trust consists of members, who delegate responsibility for the strategic direction of the trust to its directors. The directors are responsible for the governance of the school through a local board of governors.
- The executive headteacher of the school is the chief executive officer of the trust and is the executive headteacher of two other schools. At present, the school provides

staffing support to these two schools, amounting to nine teachers.

- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average. The proportion of pupils in receipt of support for their SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below the national average.
- The school works with two providers of alternative education, the Beacon of Light School and Tyne Metropolitan College.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a wide range of lessons across the curriculum and year groups and including the sixth form. On occasions, they were joined by school leaders. During lesson visits, inspectors looked at pupils' and students' work. Inspectors talked with pupils and students during lesson visits about their learning.
- A work scrutiny was conducted jointly with the subject leader of a core subject.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school. Inspectors also met with other senior leaders, a group of middle leaders, a group of teachers at different career points and a group of non-teachers.
- The lead inspector met members of the governing body, a representative of the diocese and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and students formally and in conversations around the school, including at social times.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with one of the providers of alternative education.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised, including: the school's self-evaluation and development plan, information relating to attendance and behaviour, minutes of governors' meetings, pupils' progress information; and documentation relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements.
- Inspectors took into account the 100 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Bernard Clark	Ofsted Inspector
John Downs	Ofsted Inspector
Bernard Senior	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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