

St William's Catholic Primary School

Ince Green Lane, Ince-in-Makerfield, Ince, Wigan, Lancashire WN2 2DG

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders place pupils at the heart of all their decisions. They provide very strong support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils are safe and flourish personally, socially and emotionally.
- Leadership is strong. They know the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve further. They have taken effective action to reverse the dip in pupils' achievement.
- The 2018 provisional key stage 2 results, alongside the progress of current pupils, clearly show that the school has recovered from the weaker outcomes of the past.
- Teaching is good. Creative activities and effective use of good-quality resources help pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Governors make a positive contribution to the school's continued success. They ensure that leaders use additional funding well.
- Opportunities for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are rich and intertwined through the curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. They enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are strong. They demonstrate resilience and respect. They work cooperatively during learning.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They show respect to each other and to adults. They are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. They have many opportunities to learn about interesting topics.
- During their time in the exciting and stimulating early-years environment children make good progress. The proportion of children that reach a good level of development is below average but improving over time.
- The transition from early years to key stage 1 does not help pupils to benefit well enough their strong foundations. This is especially true for writing.
- Pupils make good progress in writing throughout the school. However, due to their low starting points, the proportion of pupils working at the school's age-related expectations is lower in writing than it is for reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' rates of attendance at school are in line with the national average. However, the proportion of pupils that are regularly absent from school has increased steadily over the last three years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further pupils' achievement in writing across all year groups, including in the early years, by:
 - embedding the new approaches to the development of writing
 - strengthening transition from early years to Year 1.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils that are frequently absent from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Pupils are at the heart of all that leaders and staff do at this warm, welcoming and successful school. Leaders' aspirations for pupils' academic success are matched by their determination to develop pupils' emotional and social skills. Those pupils who are more vulnerable or need a little extra help receive excellent support from a caring and nurturing staff team. As a result, barriers to learning are reduced and pupils leave St William's as well-rounded youngsters who are ready to take their place in modern Britain.
- School leaders are dedicated and enthusiastic. They have created a culture of high expectations across the school. Leaders know the school well, understand the strengths and the weaknesses of the school and plan appropriately for its continued improvement.
- Following the previous inspection, pupils' progress and attainment remained strong until 2016. At this point pupils' progress faltered. Leaders acted quickly by reviewing the curriculum. Their careful planning has led to the development of a curriculum that is exciting and challenging. Pupils now systematically build their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects.
- Pupils experience a curriculum that provides depth and breadth across the full range of subjects. As a result, they gain the subject skills and knowledge that they need to make a successful start in the next stage of their education. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of enhancement opportunities to deepen their learning and broaden their experiences. For example, while pupils studied the Great Fire of London the fire brigade visited the school.
- Subject leaders have a clear understanding of the rationale for the curriculum and their role in ensuring its successful implementation. Senior leaders have ensured that there are clear and well-understood procedures in place to support the role of subject leaders. This means that those subject leaders who are new to their post are able to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Subject leaders are well equipped to check the quality of teaching in their subject area and to provide subject-specific guidance to their colleagues when necessary.
- Leaders use a range of activities to ensure that there are effective checks on teaching. This, coupled with high-quality training and support for teachers, is maintaining the consistently good quality of teaching across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Teachers ensure that there are opportunities for its development throughout the curriculum. Pupils treat all those around them with respect and demonstrate empathy. They understand that people are different and they value these differences. For example, they have looked at Thanksgiving in America and then compared it to the traditions in Britain and China. This has helped pupils to appreciate the similarities and the differences in the celebrations and customs across the three countries.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the use of the pupil premium funding. They clearly identify barriers to learning and match actions to pupils' needs. As a result, current

disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with other pupils in school.

- The primary school physical education and sport premium is used effectively to encourage pupils to participate in sport and to promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils particularly enjoy the range of exercise equipment that has been purchased for the playground.
- The additional funding for pupils with SEND is used effectively. There is a wide range of provision to support learning, but also to meet pupils' social and emotional needs so that barriers to success are removed. This means these pupils are happy and safe and thoroughly enjoy their time at school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to their role and very proud of the school. They understand the importance of their role in holding leaders to account for pupils' academic, social and emotional outcomes. They draw on the wide range of experience that they bring to the role and the training that they have received from the local authority and the diocese to ensure that they have the skills necessary to fulfil their responsibilities. They know the strengths of the school and are aware of the current areas for development. As a result, governors are well placed to offer leaders effective support and challenge them.
- Governors enjoy visiting the school to see for themselves how well pupils are learning. They relish participating in school events and explained how much they were looking forward to the build-up to Christmas.
- Governors ensure that the additional funding that is received by the school is used effectively to support pupils' academic success and to promote healthy lifestyles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding around the school and all staff are vigilant in their care of the pupils that attend St William's. Leaders' robust checking processes ensure that only adults that are safe to work with pupils are employed by the school. All staff receive annual safeguarding training as well as frequent updates.
- Leaders know their pupils and their families well. The strong positive relationships that they have built with pupils' families help them to provide early support. They ensure that referrals to other agencies are made promptly. They are relentless in pursuing help for their vulnerable pupils when it is needed.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in the school and can talk to any adult if they have a problem. Parents and carers told inspectors that they feel that their children are happy and safe in the school. They said that they feel that their children are well looked after by staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is strong in the school. The introduction of the new curriculum has enabled teachers to be imaginative and creative in their teaching. A range of trips and workshops supplements the work in the classroom. These extra-curricular activities help to bring pupils' learning to life. Their experiences outside the classroom help them to deepen their understanding of the work that they complete in school. Consequently, pupils are very engaged and excited by their learning. As one pupil said, 'There are just so many things to know.' Pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that engage pupils. They use effective questioning to tease out their understanding and help them to remember previous learning. For example, when pupils were learning about semi-colons, the teacher's effective questioning helped them to list the pronouns that they already knew. As a result, they were able to use these together with the semi-colon in extended sentences.
- Pupils enjoy the problem-solving activities that they engage in during their mathematics learning. Teachers encourage them to talk through their thinking as they try to work out answers. Their collaborative skills and resilience were used to great effect in these lessons.
- Teachers encourage pupils to find things out for themselves through the use of the internet and the school's well-stocked library. This is reflected in the purposeful and considered homework tasks which enable them to deepen their understanding of the topics that they learn about in school.
- Teachers use assessment information well to shape their teaching so that they meet the needs of different groups of pupils. They follow the school's systematic teaching approaches and support the implementation of the new curriculum wholeheartedly. Consequently, pupils can effectively build on their prior learning as they move through the school.
- Transition from key stage 1 to key stage 2 is strong. Pupils move seamlessly from one stage in their education to the next without any loss of progress. However, transition from Reception to Year 1 is not as effective in maintaining the strong progress that children make in early years. Over time, Year 1 books show that pupils' learning does not capitalise on children's starting points or ensure strong enough progress to close gaps left over from early years.
- The teaching of phonics is well organised and effective. Consequently the outcomes from the 2018 Year 1 phonics screening check are above the national average.
- Teachers foster very positive relationships with the pupils in their care. This leads to warm and safe classrooms, where pupils are prepared to learn from their mistakes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils like coming to school and enjoy learning. They are confident and attentive learners who listen carefully to their teachers and fully engage with activities. They are cooperative and resilient but can also work independently using their well-developed research skills to find out answers for themselves.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school because they know that adults care for them and will help them if they need it. They know about road safety, stranger danger and keeping themselves safe online. Pupils also know about the importance of a good diet and exercise to stay healthy. Older pupils talked about being self-aware so that they take note of risks to their well-being inside and outside of school.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development are woven through the curriculum. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. They respect the beliefs and values of others and they visit different places of worship. For example, they visited a synagogue when learning about Judaism. Pupils understand that some people are different because of their religion, colour or sexuality and that discrimination is wrong. They elect pupils to the school council and learn about the dangers to the planet from the eco-council.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour around the school and in the playground is good. Pupils play well together and wait for their turn when playing on the equipment. They talk politely to each other and to adults. They are welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils' overall attendance is in line with national averages. There are no groups of pupils for whom attendance is particularly low. However, the proportion of pupils that are frequently absent from school is high and has been increasing for the last three years. Leaders are aware of this and have put actions in place to improve attendance for these pupils. For the current year there has been an improvement but there is no evidence that this improvement will be sustained.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 faltered in 2016 and 2017. In response to this dip in their progress and attainment, leaders introduced a new curriculum to promote success in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Because of the changes to the curriculum pupils are making much better progress in a range of subjects. Evidence from their work and the unvalidated national assessment information for 2018 show that there has been a marked improvement in their attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is particularly true for reading and mathematics.
- From low starting points, pupils make at least good progress across reading, writing and mathematics during their time at St William's. As a result, most pupils are working at the expected standard by the end of key stage 1. However, by the end of key stage 2 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is higher than the national average in reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, despite the similarities in pupils' progress across all three subjects, their attainment in writing lags behind that in

reading and mathematics.

- Disadvantaged pupils also make good progress over time. They make the same progress as other pupils nationally and achieve similar standards in reading, writing and mathematics. There is very little difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils currently in the school. In some year groups this group makes stronger progress than others. Although the progress of disadvantaged pupils is strong, a smaller proportion of them reach the higher standard at key stage 2 than found nationally.
- Well-organised provision ensures that pupils with SEND have their needs identified swiftly and appropriate support put in place. Consequently, published data shows that pupils with SEND make good progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are below those typically associated with their age. Many children have considerable gaps in their personal, social and emotional development as well as in their reading and writing skills. Good-quality provision in the early years enables children to make good progress, especially in their personal development and communication skills. However, despite these considerable gains, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception, while improving over time, remains below the national average.
- Children attain very well against some of the early learning goals, for example in their physical development and almost all of the personal, social and emotional aspects of learning. In this respect they are very well prepared for Year 1 as they develop positive attitudes to learning and good levels of independence. They are equally well prepared to manage their own behaviour effectively. However, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is much lower by the end of their time in Nursery and Reception. This is particularly true for writing, which has lagged behind early reading and mathematics for a period of time. For example, almost half of the current Year 1 children did not have the writing skills and knowledge to make a swift start when they entered key stage 1.
- The leadership of early years is strong and effective. Due to clear identification of children's weaker gains in writing, considerable changes have been made to early years. Early reading and writing feature prominently in the Nursery and Reception classrooms. While these changes are having a positive impact on the progress of current Nursery and Reception children, it is too early to evaluate the long-term benefits of this work.
- Early years is a well-organised, well-resourced and highly purposeful learning environment that matches children's needs and interests. The outdoor provision is particularly noteworthy. Many children choose to work outdoors because there is so much to do and so much to play with. Adults' expert planning for this area ensures that children are stimulated, curious and engrossed in their learning.
- Adults work well together to ensure that systematic approaches across Nursery and Reception provide a smooth transition between the classes. As a result, children settle

extremely well as soon as they move from the Nursery to Reception.

- Parents are encouraged to play a part in their children's learning. Children's learning journals are shared with parents through the school's online resource so that parents can carry on children's learning at home. Leaders provide relevant workshops and learning sessions for parents so that they know the best ways to help their children read and write.
- Adults foster strong and warm relationships with children, which contributes to the safe and welcoming learning environment. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and independence. They are good role models and promote children's respect for each other, for adults and for their environment well. Timely interventions from adults and well-directed questions help to move children's learning forward.
- Children exhibit positive attitudes to learning. They are attentive and enthusiastic. They show pride in their classroom and consideration to others. They are cooperative, curious and willing to persevere. They behave well and follow routines. They are kept safe and the welfare requirements are met.
- Nursery and Reception children thoroughly enjoy being in early years, which is a hive of purposeful activity throughout the day.

School details

Unique reference number	106497
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10045162

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne McArdle
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Emily Ellis
Telephone number	01942 235782
Website	www.saintwilliams.wigan.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@admin.saintwilliams.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of girls is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much larger than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is much larger than national for both SEND support and those who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is situated in an area of high deprivation.
- Pupils enter St William's with prior attainment that is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook several visits to classrooms to observe teaching. Some of these were conducted jointly with school leaders.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders, pupils, parents, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the archdiocese.
- Inspectors looked at documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plans, information about attendance and behaviour and the school's safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 read.
- Inspectors spoke with parents in the playground before school. Inspectors took account of the five responses to Parent View, Ofsted's parental questionnaire, and of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Erica Sharman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Olsson

Her Majesty's 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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