

Inspection of St Wilfrid's Academy, Doncaster

St Wilfrid's Road, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 6AH

Inspection dates: 4–5 December 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is rightly proud of their school. For all pupils, the school is a second chance. They feel safe, valued and respected. As one pupil said, 'The school fully gets you.'

Leaders have got high expectations of every pupil. It does not matter to leaders why pupils have been placed in the school. All that matters to them is making sure that pupils get the best possible education while they are there. Leaders have put together a curriculum that is designed to support pupils in doing well.

Pupils behave well for the very large majority of time. This has not happened by accident. It has come about because pupils follow a curriculum which is suited to their needs. They have lots of support around them from adults who have the skills to help. Staff speak calmly and respectfully to pupils. Because this is modelled well by staff, pupils' speech and behaviour towards staff and one another is usually good. Pupils do not think that bullying is a problem. They say that staff are very good at sorting it out if it starts to happen.

This is not a one-size-fits-all school. Leaders go the extra mile to make sure that pupils get the education and support they need, whatever that is.

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

Leaders have thought very carefully about the curriculum they provide for pupils. They have had to. This is because the school caters for pupils who arrive at different times, stay for different lengths of time and are from numerous 'mainstream' schools. This means that leaders cannot be sure what the pupils have learned before. Often, their education has been disrupted by low attendance and high exclusion. Yet leaders have made sure that the curriculum overcomes such challenges. Teachers know their subject material.

Leaders have put a big focus on reading. For example, they have invested in a reading scheme to help pupils enjoy reading. They have created an attractive, well-stocked library. Pupils use computer reading programmes to help them. These approaches are helping pupils improve their reading. Very occasionally, the materials pupils are reading are not quite as well matched to their reading ability as they could be. Leaders have already identified this as an area for further training.

Pupils behave well. Inspectors saw very little behaviour that was not good. The staff who made their views known to inspectors reported that behaviour is good the very large majority of the time. Staff work tirelessly to keep pupils focused on what they are doing, to get them back on track. Pupils told inspectors that they value 'The Wellbeing Room' and the support of the 'Pupil Learning Advocates' in helping them to manage their behaviour. As a result, compared with when at their mainstream schools, the use of exclusion has fallen markedly. Leaders have been effective in improving the attendance of pupils as well. However, for those pupils who attend the

school for longer periods of time, this could improve further.

There is an impressive range of opportunities to support pupils in their personal development. Leaders have put in place an 'enrichment' curriculum. This includes visits to theatres, art galleries, restaurants and an overnight residential stay. Pupils' needs are also met in other ways, such as art therapy and animal therapy. Leaders have set up links with the Royal Horticultural Society to give pupils opportunities to learn through gardening. Leaders work closely with a local university to provide high-quality careers advice and guidance. Pupils' understanding of the world outside school is well supported by the personal development curriculum. Pupils understand, for instance, the risks of the internet and its connection with terrorism.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are effective in meeting pupils' needs. This has supported pupils making successful moves back to their mainstream schools or other schools. It has helped them move on to worthwhile training/education courses at the end of Year 11.

The school is very well led. Leaders believe that their pupils are entitled to a good education. They believe that their pupils are worth the effort. Leaders do not settle for the second-rate. The things that leaders have put in place are for the benefit of the pupils, not the school. The trust has provided important support. Governors are equally determined that pupils will get the best deal out of their time at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that they carry out the necessary checks on adults who work in the school. They record any safeguarding concerns carefully. They put the necessary help in place for any pupils who need it. Leaders work closely with other professionals as part of keeping their pupils safe.

Leaders also make careful checks on the safeguarding arrangements at the various providers of alternative education who they work with. Members of staff make frequent visits to these alternative providers to keep an eye on how pupils are doing and to make sure that they are safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- So that the right support can be put in place, leaders are diligent in assessing the gaps in knowledge of all pupils, regardless of the anticipated length of the placement. They use several assessment tools to establish this picture. However, there is a risk that the precise phonics needs of pupils are lost somewhere in the wealth of information generated by the assessments. This applies to primary and secondary phase pupils. As a result, although pupils are supported in discovering an enjoyment of reading, where phonics intervention is required, the matching of

activities and books to phonics needs is not as sharp as it needs to be. Leaders should ensure that the intended phonics training and purchasing of phonics-scheme materials are completed as a priority.

- Leaders have done much to improve the attendance of pupils, especially those who stay in the school for an extended period. While attendance for these pupils has improved, it is still generally at the national figure for persistent absence. Leaders should continue to focus on further improving pupils' attendance.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	141141
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10110603
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Hodsman
Principal	Joanne Pittard
Website	www.stwilfridsacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 June 2017

Information about this school

- The school makes use of several providers of alternative education: Enhancement Training and Developing Futures; Ignition Training; Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust; OpenCast CIC Ltd; Cirque Skills Pathway CIC; Dearne Valley Personal Development Centre; Engage Training.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met the principal and other senior staff. An inspector spoke with a representative of Doncaster local authority, with which the school has a formal arrangement for the placement of pupils.
- We met the deputy chief executive officer of Delta multi-academy trust, to which the school belongs. We also met the chair of the academy advisory board (AAB), which has delegated authority from the trust's board of directors.
- As part of this inspection, we carried out detailed reviews, known as 'deep dives', in English, mathematics, science and art. Each 'deep dive' consisted of: a meeting with the subject leader to get an overview of the curriculum planning and how it works in practice; a visit to several lessons in different year groups, accompanied

by a leader; a meeting with some of the teachers whose lessons were visited; a discussion with some of the pupils from the lessons visited and a scrutiny of the workbooks of some of the pupils from the lessons visited.

- We met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding. We considered the records of behaviour and attendance. We sampled case files to check on how leaders identify and support pupils who need help. We looked at the processes for vetting staff who work at the school. An inspector checked the safeguarding arrangements for pupils who attend the alternative providers used by the school. We visited one of the alternative providers and spoke to pupils while there.
- We spoke with pupils in groups and individually. We did this as part of our meetings in lessons and around the school site.

Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Suzette Garland-Grimes

Ofsted Inspector

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