

Inspection of a good school: St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy

Duckworth Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 2JR

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

Outcome

St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, enjoy attending St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy. They told inspectors that they feel happy and safe here. Staff take the time to get to know pupils well and they care about pupils' well-being.

Pupils and students are respectful of people's differences. Everyone feels that they fit in, and they make friends easily. Pupils and students behave very well in class and around the school site. They enjoy one another's company and are considerate of others at social times. Staff resolve any bullying incidents quickly and effectively.

Leaders, including governors, have high expectations for all pupils' and students' achievement. Leaders are determined that pupils and students will overcome any social disadvantage or other barriers to their academic success. Pupils and students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy success at this school. They achieve well.

Pupils and students feel that they are listened to and trusted by staff. This includes pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision).

Pupils and students benefit greatly from the many responsibilities that leaders provide. These include librarian roles, house ambassador and captain positions, and prefect posts. Pupils wear the badges that they are awarded for their responsibilities with pride. Students in the sixth form are keen to organise and lead activities for younger pupils, such as sporting events and the debating society.

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

Leaders, including governors, ensure that pupils and students benefit from a high-quality education. Senior leaders have designed a suitably ambitious curriculum for pupils, including students in the sixth form. For example, a high proportion of pupils in key stage

4 follow the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. Students in the sixth form benefit from a wide range of academic and applied courses. Pupils and students move on to ambitious next steps.

Leaders have designed subject curriculums well. They are clear about the important knowledge that pupils and students should learn. Leaders have organised the curriculum carefully so that pupils and students can remember and build on what they already know securely. This helps pupils and students to successfully deepen their understanding of concepts over time.

Teachers typically use their subject expertise to deliver curriculums with confidence. In most subjects, staff make regular checks to see whether pupils and students understand earlier learning clearly enough. Mostly, staff are adept at identifying when pupils' knowledge is less secure. For example, these staff do not introduce new knowledge until pupils' prior learning is secure. However, in one or two subjects, staff move pupils on to new learning before they are ready.

During lessons, there is a calm and studious atmosphere. Pupils' and students' strong, positive attitudes to learning mean that they can learn without disruption.

Leaders ensure that staff are equipped well to identify the additional needs of pupils and students with SEND accurately. Leaders ensure that staff know how to support these pupils and students to succeed. This includes pupils in the specially resourced provision. Pupils and students with SEND learn the same essential subject knowledge as others. They progress well through the curriculum as a result.

Leaders systematically identify pupils who find reading more difficult. Staff provide the support that these pupils need to catch up quickly and become confident and fluent readers. Many pupils and students value and enjoy reading. For example, these pupils use the school library regularly to borrow books and read for pleasure. However, some older pupils do not read as often as they should. This prevents these pupils from broadening and enriching their vocabulary.

Pupils and students benefit from the programme of enrichment activities that they experience. For example, they set up and take part in community projects. Pupils and students are well prepared to succeed in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that pupils and students learn about relevant and important issues, such as looking after their sexual health and the dangers of sexual harassment. Pupils and students also receive high-quality, independent careers advice and guidance. For instance, students in the sixth form were full of praise about how well prepared they feel to apply for university courses and apprenticeships.

Governors hold leaders to account effectively for the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff said that they appreciate the way that leaders will listen to them. Leaders are considerate of the workload and well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training. This ensures that staff are kept up to date with information about the dangers that pupils and students may face.

Staff remain alert to the signs that indicate that pupils or students may be at risk of harm. They report any safeguarding concerns in a timely way. These concerns are acted upon promptly by leaders. Leaders ensure that pupils and students, and their families, swiftly get the help that they need.

Pupils and students learn about potential risks to their safety, and how to spot and avoid these risks. Pupils and students know how to seek help when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, some teachers do not ensure that pupils' earlier knowledge is secure before moving on to new content. This means that some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, teachers check that pupils' prior learning is secure before introducing new knowledge.
- Some older pupils do not read as regularly as they should. This means that these pupils miss out on opportunities to broaden and expand their vocabulary. Leaders should ensure that staff promote the importance of reading and that pupils have sufficient opportunities to read a range of literature.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2013.

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](#)' 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	136900
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10256182
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,511
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Rintoul
Headteacher	Victoria Michael
Website	www.saintwilfrids.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an Anglican school and is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2016.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at two registered providers.
- The school includes a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. Seven pupils with a designated hearing impaired special educational need attend this provision.
- The headteacher took up their post in September 2022.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and subject leaders. The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Blackburn and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils and students safe. Inspectors also asked pupils and students how they learn to keep themselves safe and what they do if they have any concerns.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and students from all year groups and considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils and students.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, French, geography and mathematics. In these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Dympna Woods	Ofsted Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	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 2023