

# Inspection of St Wulstan's and St Edmund's Catholic Academy

Poulton Road, Fleetwood, Lancashire FY7 7JY

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Inspection dates:	17 and 18 June 2025
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Solloway. This school is part of The Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Helen O'Neill, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Elizabeth Kelly.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and enjoy being part of this lively and caring school community. They appreciate their teachers and their friends. Staff support pupils well, including if they have any worries or concerns. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The school has raised its expectations for pupils' achievement. For the most part, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. However, due to some weaknesses in how the curriculum is designed and delivered, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils are courteous towards others. They know that the differences between themselves and others should be respected. Generally, pupils behave well during lessons and throughout the school. Lessons are typically calm and purposeful. This is particularly the case in the early years, where children learn and play well alongside their peers.

The school provides pupils with opportunities to join in with exciting activities that develop their wider experiences. For example, pupils benefit from residential visits and trips to museums, parks and a local library. They spoke fondly about the many sports clubs and tournaments on offer. Pupils participate in frequent exercise outdoors. They join their parents and carers at a 'pasta club', where they prepare healthy meals to enjoy at home.

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

The school has worked productively with the trust and the local governing body to improve the quality of education. This has helped to remedy previous weaknesses in the curriculum. Nonetheless, these changes have not been swift enough to significantly improve pupils' achievement.

Many subject curriculums have been implemented recently. They are suitably designed to help pupils gain the knowledge that they need to be successful. However, pupils have gaps in their learning as a result of the previous deficiencies in the curriculum. Teachers introduce new learning before they have identified these gaps in pupils' understanding. As such, the misunderstandings that pupils have in their learning, including in their written work, remain unchecked and are not addressed swiftly enough. This makes it difficult for pupils to build successfully on what they should know and remember.

The school provides training for staff to develop their subject expertise. This helps staff to choose suitable learning activities for pupils. However, the school is not consistently effective in evaluating how successfully staff implement the curriculum. This limits the school in understanding which aspects of the curriculum are working well and what can be improved.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs early. It works well with parents and external professionals. This enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be included in school life and to follow the curriculum alongside their peers. Nevertheless, the support that these pupils receive in their learning is not as effective as it

should be.

The school has prioritised reading. Books are selected to reflect the diversity of modern Britain. Pupils visit the school's library and help to choose new books. They are rewarded for reading at home, such as by receiving book prizes.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start to their education. They enjoy many stories and songs. Staff interact well with children to develop their communication and language skills. Children delight in learning. They grow their independence and curiosity.

Children learn phonics right from the start of the Reception Year. They read from books that match their phonics knowledge. Staff provide support for pupils when needed. The phonics programme has recently been introduced and some of its implementation is not fully effective. This means that pupils are not as prepared for key stage 2 as well as they could be.

Pupils are well mannered. The school has improved pupils' punctuality and regular levels of attendance. The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Pupils relish being recognised as role models for their peers, including as lunchtime helpers, buddies, house captains and school councillors. Pupils collect donations for a local foodbank. They learn how to be safe in the local area and online.

Those responsible for governance are proud to contribute to the school. However, they have not been swift enough in their support and challenge to secure sustained improvement in pupils' achievement.

Staff are appreciative of the support that they receive in school and beyond, including the time given to fulfil their roles. Parents are positive about the school and commended staff for their work.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The trust and the local governing body have not been prompt enough to address pupils' underachievement, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Consequently, over time, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. The trust and the local governing body should ensure that they further bolster the support and challenge provided to the school, to ensure that pupils' achievement improves.
- In several subjects, where curriculums are in development or have been recently established, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. These shortfalls have not been addressed before teachers move on to new learning, which makes it difficult for pupils

to build successfully on what they already know. The school should ensure that staff identify and address pupils' misunderstandings and gaps in knowledge promptly, to help pupils to develop a secure body of knowledge.

- The school is not consistently effective in evaluating the delivery and impact of the curriculum. This reduces its ability to determine what is working well and where further improvements are needed to support pupils' learning. This includes for pupils with SEND. The school should ensure that it carefully checks how well the curriculum is implemented and supports staff to enable pupils to learn as well as they should.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149263
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378040
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Elizabeth Kelly
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Helen O'Neill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Solloway
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-wulstans.lancs.sch.uk">www.st-wulstans.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- St Wulstan's and St Edmund's Catholic Academy converted to become an academy in September 2022. When its predecessor school, St Wulstan's and St Edmund's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be requires improvement overall.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2024.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- This Roman Catholic school is in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in February 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place within the next two years.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body and of the academy trust, including the CEO and the chair of the trust. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school, including at breakfast, playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of local governing body meetings and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

## Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Hunt

Ofsted Inspector

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