

Inspection of St Wilfrid's Catholic Junior and Infant School

Shawsdale Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 8LY

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school is Lucy Husted. This school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the Catholic senior executive leader (CSEL), Peter Davis, and overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Paul Bentley. There is also an executive headteacher, Helen Milligan, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Wilfrid's is a school where warmth, care, respect and learning all go hand in hand. Pupils show consideration for each other. The school's cultural diversity forms the backdrop to pupils' learning about a range of faiths and ways of life. These weave together so that pupils see each other as equal, and united in rights and values. An array of over 30 languages spoken by pupils adds to the richness of the school's ethos. Everyone comes together with understanding, working in partnership to help pupils who are new to learning English access the curriculum and succeed in their learning.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Many recent changes are now ensuring that pupils meet these expectations by working hard and following the rules. Pupils feel safe and settled and enjoy their learning. This includes the many pupils who join at different times of the year. A steadily increasing number of pupils are coming to school regularly and on time.

Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of service to others. They enjoy voting to choose which charities to support. Mini missions, the 'Children's Charter' and participating in trust-wide events further support pupils' wider development. The school listens to the voice of pupils, and they feel heard.

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

St Wilfrid's is a diverse and supportive school to learn in. There has been an unsettled period over some time as leadership changed. However, trustees, governors and school leaders have worked tirelessly together to make the right, effective decisions. These are having a positive impact on attendance, behaviour and pupils' learning.

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well. Pupils' outcomes in national tests have been below the expected standards. However, the work pupils are doing in school now shows a different picture. Revitalised and strong leadership, the revised curriculum and pastoral care are all part of this improvement. Many more pupils, across year groups, are working at the level they should be. For pupils who have gaps in their learning, clear processes are in place. These are helping them to catch up because the school is prioritising the key teaching they need.

The new leadership team has got to grips with the many factors at play in this school. The diversity, the pupil movement and the wider challenges that families face in everyday life all meet at the school door. From then on in, the school provides a guiding hand, gentle but firm, to pupils and their families to 'love, care, share and respect'.

This starts with helping families to respect and value education and ensure their child attends school regularly. The school works tenaciously and successfully to minimise barriers that have previously stopped pupils from coming to school.

The determination, empathy and sustained energy accompanied by direct, targeted actions that all in the school bring to this are impressive and effective. These things are steadily making a difference in a positive way.

Pupils enjoy their learning. This enjoyment is nurtured from Nursery upwards. Children in the early years show confidence, interest and concentration in all they do. Taking turns, talking about what they are doing and testing out ideas are seen across Nursery and Reception. The carefully thought-out activities and environment help these youngest children to gain a secure start in their learning across all areas. An increasing number are ready for what comes next in Year 1. The school ensures targeted support is in place for those who need it as they move up. This is working well.

The school recognised that all pupils were not achieving well enough previously. Bold decisions to review and refine several subjects across the curriculum are working well. The staff team, including several early career teachers, values 'the powerhouse of team spirit and support'. It is helping them to deliver the revised curriculum successfully. The school has also strengthened its identification of, and provision for, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These revisions, added to the strengthened pastoral care, have improved behaviour for learning. Pupils, including those with SEND, are reaching improved outcomes in their learning.

Most subjects now set out what pupils will learn and when in small steps. Where this is the case, pupils' work and discussions show that they are working at the right standard and remembering their learning. In a few subjects, the learning moves quickly from one thing to the next, and pupils are less secure in their learning. On occasion, the tasks and activities do not link closely enough to the intended learning. Pupils have fun, but do not fully learn what they should.

The school has rightly prioritised improving reading. The strong focus on phonics has paid dividends. Staff are skilled. They know just the right moment to support, challenge or extend understanding. Rigorous checks are swift to spot pupils who need extra help, and effective extra help is what they get. Whether it is daily, twice daily or within lessons, nothing is left to chance. Many more pupils are secure in this essential basic skill. Older pupils enjoy learning about the author of the month. Their 'chilled times' reading on beanbags in the library are special to them.

A sense of hope shines through St Wilfrid's. Pupils learn that they can give hope to others through their actions. They have a distinct understanding of the many different roles and responsibilities of people who help them, both from within and outside of school. This gives them hope for their future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school has not ensured that the approach for the selection of tasks given to pupils in lessons is always the most appropriate for the intended outcome. As a result, pupils' learning is not consistently secured or extended. The school should ensure that staff expand their understanding of the range of pedagogical choices open to them and know which to use and when, so that pupils can successfully expand their knowledge in all subjects.
- Teaching, in a few subjects, moves quickly from one aspect to another and does not enable pupils to remember important curriculum content as well as they do in other areas. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not develop a greater depth of understanding. The school should ensure that teachers are supported in understanding the small steps of learning that build through a unit of work and monitor that these small steps are taught effectively and consistently.

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

Unique reference number	148083
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294694
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Bentley
Headteacher	Helen Milligan
Website	www.stwilfrd.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company.
- St Wilfrid's Catholic Junior and Infant School converted to become an academy in April 2021. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has a Roman Catholic character and is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The most recent inspection of the school's religious character, the section 48 inspection, took place in September 2023.
- The school has nursery provision for three-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also considered English, science and geography.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local academy board, including the chair, alongside the chair of the trust. They also met with representatives of the trust board and of Birmingham Diocese.
- The lead inspector met with the CSEL, the multi academy company's director of school improvement and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and around the school. Inspectors looked at behaviour and bullying records and leaders' analysis of these. Inspectors also reviewed records concerning pupils' attendance at school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the views of staff, pupils and parents, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stuart Grimes

Ofsted Inspector

Darren Bishop

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