

St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Murphy Crescent, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 6QH

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

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

- The headteacher leads the school with determination, skill and a clear moral purpose.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable about the school. They hold leaders effectively to account.
- Middle leaders are strong. Working with senior leaders and, increasingly, governors, they are driving up standards in teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and well deployed. They contribute significantly to pupils' academic success and well-being.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff receive appropriate, up-to-date training. This ensures that they have the skills to keep pupils safe.
- Children in early years make good progress. They develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Reading is a strength. Leaders have put in place imaginative approaches to reading and its assessment across the school.
- Teaching is good. However, staff do not consistently offer enough opportunities to develop pupils' skills as writers across the whole curriculum.
- Pupils are very well behaved. They have positive attitudes to learning. Relationships among pupils and between adults and pupils are respectful, kindly and open. Pupils enjoy learning and coming to school.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school. They say that they are very pleased with the care and attention their children receive.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They learn how to manage potential risks to their safety and well-being.
- Outcomes, particularly in key stage 2, have improved significantly because of increasingly high expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective additional support. They achieve well from their different starting points.
- Overall, pupils' attendance is similar to the national average. However, there is still a small minority of pupils who are persistently absent.
- When staff expectations are not consistently high, pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress that they should.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve outcomes for pupils by:
 - providing greater challenge for all pupils, including the most able, so that they make even stronger progress across all subjects
 - providing pupils in every class with a wide, varied and challenging diet of writing opportunities from a range of subjects that develop their skills and confidence as accurate writers, knowledgeable and skilled in the full range of subjects
 - increasing opportunities, particularly for the most able pupils, to write at length in a range of subjects beyond English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- This school is very well led. The headteacher leads the school with skill, quiet determination and a sense of moral purpose. She knows the community that the school serves very well. She is determined that every pupil will make the progress that they should and that no child is left behind. She works diligently to remove any barriers pupils and their families may have to academic success and personal well-being.
- The headteacher, effectively supported by her team, the diocese and the local authority, has guided the school well through times of significant change and improvement. She has introduced thorough and detailed systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and its effect on pupils' learning and personal success. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are now good.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and acknowledge the very positive effect that the staff have on their children's learning and well-being. Those who made their views known say that their children are well looked after and make good progress.
- There is a strong Christian ethos at St Wilfrid's. Respect and tolerance are core features of school life. School leaders ensure that pupils are taught to value the diversity which they experience each day in school. Pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs. They also learn about democracy and are provided with regular opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas with staff and school leaders. This contributes greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Middle leaders are a strength of the school. Middle leaders are carefully trained and well supported by senior staff and governors. They play an important role in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They visit classes regularly and use the evaluation of what they see to stimulate discussion among staff and inform precise training so that the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve. They are also, increasingly, engaging with other local schools to share good practice and assure the accuracy of their judgements.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils by removing, as far as is possible, barriers to their learning and well-being. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make generally strong progress, often better than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Special educational needs funding is used well to support pupils with SEND. This aspect of the school's work is well led. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), working with the headteacher, ensures that additional support is deployed effectively to meet pupils' needs. She works closely with staff, making regular checks to review the effect of this support, adjusting where necessary. Links with parents are strong. As a result, pupils with SEND make good progress from their individual starting points.
- School leaders make good use of the additional funding for sport and physical education. Sports coaches work alongside staff to provide additional expertise within

lessons. The funding has also been used to widen the breadth of sports available to pupils. For example, pupils have access to a wide range of physical activities, such as dance and taekwondo, both during and after school.

- Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum that helps them to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in most subjects. It also contributes to their physical, mental and personal well-being. However, leaders are aware that there is still more to be done to extend and deepen the curriculum beyond English, mathematics and science, so that pupils consistently, across the school, develop the knowledge and skills associated with other subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors provide good levels of support and challenge to school leaders. They have an accurate and realistic view of the school and understand the school's priorities for improvement.
- The headteacher provides governors with high-quality, detailed information about how well the school is doing. However, governors do not rely on this alone to make their judgements. Governors visit the school regularly to gain a first-hand view of the school's work. As a result, they know how teaching has improved and the effect that this has had on pupils' progress and attainment. Along with the headteacher, governors help to ensure that staff have access to appropriate support and training.
- Governors make the necessary checks to ensure that any additional funding that the school receives is spent effectively. They ask searching questions of the headteacher to ensure that the strategies employed, for example to support disadvantaged pupils, are effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The policies and procedures for checking the suitability of visitors and staff recruitment are fit for purpose and secure. Leaders check staff's suitability to work with children appropriately.
- Leaders maintain a culture in the school where staff show a clear understanding of their responsibilities and of the processes that keep pupils safe. As a result, staff promptly identify, and appropriately support, potentially vulnerable pupils. They also tenaciously engage with outside agencies to ensure that pupils get the support they need.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to stay safe, for example in class time and through assemblies and regular visits from outside speakers. Pupils told the inspectors that they regularly learn about how to stay safe online and when out and about in the community.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they have staff they can go to if they have any concerns. They are confident that adults would listen to their concerns and take prompt and appropriate action. Pupils are appreciative of the way adults at the school take care of them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge and they know their pupils well. They plan learning which builds on what pupils already know and understand. Using the school's systems, they monitor pupils' progress carefully. As a result, those at risk of falling behind are given additional support quickly. Detailed use of assessment, including that of pupils with SEND, ensures that learning is typically well matched to pupils' needs.
- Staff, both teachers and teaching assistants, use questioning effectively. This helps ensure that pupils develop and deepen their learning. For example, in a Reception class philosophy session, the teacher asked children whether it would be good if dinosaurs were still around and had not become extinct. While they mulled this over, she reminded them that she would be asking them why they thought as they did. This focus on the questions 'why' and 'how', rather than the more mundane 'what', was a positive feature that inspectors saw in the majority of lessons.
- Relationships across the school among pupils and between adults and pupils are relaxed and respectful. As a result, the classroom environment for learning is effective. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They want to do well, and because teachers' expectations are generally high, they do so. The classrooms are attractive, uncluttered places to learn in. Pupils have ready access to materials such as rulers, pens and dictionaries to support their learning. The classroom walls have helpful prompts to support learning on them.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve the quality of mathematics teaching. In mathematics, number and calculation skills are taught well across the school. This helps pupils develop their tenacity and skill in solving increasingly complex problems. The pace of learning is generally crisp. Teachers use focused assessment to move pupils on appropriately to the next steps in their work. Pupils report that they like and enjoy mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed. They are well trained and involved fully in the planning for and assessment of pupils. They have access to the same professional development opportunities as teachers. They appreciate and welcome this. Their work in supporting pupils with particular needs is careful, informed and rooted in high expectations.
- Phonics is taught well. Children from early years onwards make good progress in their reading because of the skilled and imaginatively structured support they receive from staff. Across the school, pupils have many opportunities to read high-quality books and texts. Pupils welcome this. There are daily reading sessions and many opportunities to share and explore the ways in which writers create their effects on their readers.
- Reading is a strength. Pupils have access to a wide range of books. They said that they enjoy reading high-quality texts together in class. Pupils were particularly keen to share with inspectors how much they enjoyed exploring how authors create effects in their readers. This growing awareness of the skills of professional writers is having a positive effect on pupils' own writing as they realise the links between 'real' writers and themselves.

- Parents receive regular updates from the school about how well their children are doing. As well as the regular written reports, staff are readily available if parents wish to talk about a particular issue.
- Staff follow the school's feedback procedures, and pupils are given time to respond positively to staff. They use staff's useful comments to develop and deepen their skills so that they do better next time. As a result, they make generally good and assured progress.
- Staff set homework in line with the school's policy. The half-termly learning projects give pupils opportunities to extend their learning and deepen their knowledge. The school provides lunchtime learning log sessions to support those pupils who may not have sufficient opportunities to work at home.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed effectively across the school. Teachers plan a range of contexts for writing, and the quality of handwriting, sentence structure and vocabulary is typically of a good standard. However, most-able pupils have too few opportunities to extend and deepen their writing skills in subjects other than English. In science and geography, for example, there are not enough opportunities for most-able pupils to develop their subject-specific writing skills.
- Most-able pupils make, generally, rapid progress. However, their progress is less certain when staff expectations are not consistently of the highest order and these pupils, along with their peers, are not given opportunities to explore and deepen their learning through more open-ended activities.
- While teaching is generally good, pupils' books and other inspection evidence show that opportunities are missed to develop and extend pupils' learning and the detail and accuracy of their writing, especially in subjects beyond English and mathematics. Also, when the pace of learning slows, pupils can lack focus and become inattentive.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite, kind and aware of the needs of others. They relate well to each other and to staff. They spoke with real enthusiasm about how much they enjoy school and how well the staff care for them. They know that staff at the school would be there for them if they ever had a problem.
- The school fosters very strong links with pupils' families. The vast majority of parents, when asked, said that they are very satisfied with the service the school offers families. They commented positively about the availability of staff, particularly in early years and key stage 1. They said that the school is very good at keeping them informed.
- Staff at the school work diligently to support families which from time to time face circumstances that do or could negatively affect the well-being and progress of their children. They assist families in their dealings with outside agencies and ensure, as far as they can, that no child misses out on learning and other positive opportunities at school because of challenges outside school.

- Pupils wear their uniform with pride. They take very good care of the school and of each other. There is no litter. There are many attractive and informative displays, both in and out of the classroom, that help pupils understand and celebrate their place in the school, the community and the wider world.
- Because of the school's effective and carefully targeted actions, pupils have a very good understanding of the forms that bullying can take and what to do to combat it if it were to occur. Pupils say that they feel safe and are safe because of the way the school supports them.
- Pupils are very aware of the strengths that variety and difference bring to society, both at school and in the wider community. Pupils develop high levels of empathy and understanding of each other because of the detailed and imaginative way the school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The school actively promotes a healthy lifestyle. Meal choices are healthy, including those provided at the daily pre-school breakfast club. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet. A group of Year 3 pupils took real pleasure in describing to an inspector the various elements that make up a healthy diet. They used a helpful display in the dining hall to help them illustrate the points they made.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is good. They reported that the school's systems to support and reward positive behaviour are effective and enjoyable. They make a difference. As a result, disruption to learning is rare, and when it does occur, it is generally dealt with swiftly and consistently by staff.
- Because of leaders' unremitting efforts, pupils' overall attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average. The attendance of the minority of pupils who are persistently absent is also improving and close to the national average. Records show that the school's work to improve rates of attendance are effective. Pupils are very clear about why it is important to attend school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress is good because good and improving teaching is having a positive effect on current pupils' outcomes. This teaching takes careful note of the precise needs of pupils. This is because the headteacher, working with all staff, including middle leaders, has introduced more detailed and regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. This has enabled staff to use the information they gather to be more focused and successful in their teaching.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the required standard for the phonics screening check is increasing year on year. Results for 2018's Year 1 pupils show a further improvement. Pupils who took the phonics check again in Year 2 all met the required standard. A proportion of the pupils taking these tests were new to English when they entered the school.

- Provisional results of 2018's end of key stage 1 tests, moderated by the local authority, show continued improvement compared with previous years, especially in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading and writing was better than that of their peers. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving at a greater depth of understanding was not as high as for their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Over the last three years, end of key stage 2 test outcomes have been more variable, with 2018's down on 2017. This was particularly the case in mathematics. The school has moved promptly and effectively to address these. Outcomes for pupils in key stage 2 currently in the school are good.
- Inspectors examined a large sample of pupils' work from a wide range of subjects from across all years. Evidence from this scrutiny of books shows that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are making good and better progress. The school's own, moderated, information about progress of those currently in the school supports this.
- Outcomes in mathematics, particularly in key stage 2, are particularly strong, with pupils addressing a wide range of mathematical tasks with growing confidence and skill. Teachers cover a wide range of topics, including problem solving, in detail. Expectations are high. Pupils respond with high levels of engagement, accuracy and skill.
- Similarly, in English, there is clear evidence from the books scrutinised that pupils are writing at length with increasing confidence in a wide range of genres. Books are, generally, very well presented. Pupils take pride in their work. They can talk engagingly about their progress and pleasure in words and their manipulation to create effects on the reader.
- Reading is a strength of the school. There are daily opportunities to read in school. Reading at home is carefully supported and recorded. Regular reading is encouraged through termly awards for reading leaders. There are rewards for those who have read a million words. These incentives are part of a whole-school reading strategy.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress because of the staff's very detailed knowledge of their needs and teaching which breaks down tasks into manageable steps. The leader for this area of the school's work has worked closely and effectively with staff to ensure that they use the information they have on each of these pupils to carefully target their teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress from their starting points. Because of leaders' actions, all staff are very aware of the needs and barriers to learning for the disadvantaged pupils in their care, and teaching is carefully focused on supporting them.
- Pupils are very well prepared for next steps in their learning. Year 6 pupils showed an eagerness and a real engagement with, and pleasure in, knowledge. They are confident and aware of the needs of others. Inspectors heard Year 6 pupils reflecting thoughtfully on their expectations of secondary school and their hopes and aspirations for the future. When questioned, pupils said that they feel well prepared for their next steps because of the actions of the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of early years is strong. The leader has an accurate view of the strengths and challenges facing the provision. For example, she is very clear that encouraging boys to speak in detail about what they are doing so that they develop their oral skills is a priority.
- Most children enter Nursery and Reception with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. Through high expectations and strong teaching, they make good progress. Their speaking and listening skills develop quickly. Adults model language effectively and question well. They help children to develop their spoken language, widen their vocabulary and grow in confidence.
- Links with outside agencies are strong. Staff promptly seek advice from external professionals to support children with particular needs. They are then tenacious in ensuring that, as far as possible, children and families receive the support they need and deserve.
- Because of the improvements at the school, children make good progress in early years. The proportion attaining a good level of development is increasing year on year. Outcomes for summer 2018 suggest another increase in the percentage of children reaching a good level of development.
- Children say that they feel safe. Staff carefully monitor children and they know what to do if they have any concerns about a child's safety. Staff receive good-quality training in all aspects of keeping children safe, including child protection and paediatric first aid.
- Relationships between children and adults are strong. The children behave well. Because of this, children are happy and develop positive attitudes to learning. They gain in confidence and independence. Children were very keen to tell inspectors all about their learning and the exciting things they had been doing.
- Teaching is effective. In a Nursery session, for example, the teacher effectively introduced and maintained a discussion about whether there were such things as girls' and boys' toys. Using deft questioning and the toys themselves, she quickly got the children talking and ultimately deciding that all toys suit both boys and girls.
- Phonics is taught effectively and systematically in early years. This is having a positive effect on reading and on the quality of writing. Inspectors saw examples of children taking real delight in the formation of well-presented, simple sentences.
- Assessment of children's progress and next steps is very regular and thorough. All staff in early years contribute to this and the developing picture of progress for each child. Parents are very appreciative of the regular updates and communications they receive from staff about how well their child is doing. They also welcome the regular opportunities they have to come into school to see their children enjoying learning during, for example, festival craft days.
- The environment, both inside and out, is generally attractive and stimulating. It supports children's learning and development because it stimulates their imaginations and encourages them to explore and find out. The outside area, however, is cramped.

School details

Unique reference number	114262
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10054374

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Wake
Headteacher	Joanne Sands
Telephone number	01388 603451
Website	www.st-wilfrids.durham.sch.uk
Email address	stwilfrids@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	March 2018

Information about this school

- St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School is a school with a religious designation. The school was judged to be good at its last section 48 inspection. This inspection took place in March 2016.
- St Wilfrid's is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. It grew from 210 pupils in 2017 to 226 in 2018.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- The school offers a breakfast club and a range of other sessions before school. The school also offers a wide range of clubs and activities after school.

- The school offers a 20-place nursery with morning only, afternoon only and all-day sessions.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes across the school. Some of these lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 5 read. They also talked with pupils across the school about their experience of reading, both in and out of school.
- An inspector observed a key stage 2 act of worship.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the SENCo, the early years leader, middle leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector spoke with an officer of the Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle on the telephone. He also met with an officer of Durham local authority. The lead inspector also met with the local parish priest, who is also a governor.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including that related to safeguarding, achievement, the quality of teaching, governance, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and conduct at breaks and lunchtimes. They spoke informally with pupils about their experience and attitudes to school during these times. Inspectors also spoke more formally with pupils from Years 3 and 6 about school and the range of opportunities it offered them to explore and enjoy learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide sample of pupils' work from the current and last academic year from all year groups and in a wide range of subjects.
- Inspectors considered the 11 responses to an Ofsted survey of staff and the 15 responses to an Ofsted survey of pupils' views. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day to seek their opinions of the school's work and care for their children. They also reviewed the 15 responses to Parent View. The lead inspector also reviewed responses from 15 parents via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Mark Evans, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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