

St Wilfrid's CofE Aided Primary School

Northenden

Patterdale Road, Northenden, Manchester M22 4NR

Inspection dates

5–6 March 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is well led and managed. Leaders have a clear vision for the school and high aspirations for its pupils. Through a rigorous programme of improvement, leaders have succeeded in raising standards in the school.
- The leaders and staff work very effectively as a team. Staff enjoy working at the school and are proud to do so.
- The governors know the school well. They hold the leaders closely to account, while also giving them the right level of support.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. They are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of circumstances.
- The views of parents and carers are mixed. Most of them are positive about the school. However, a sizeable minority would not recommend the school to others. This indicates that parents are not sufficiently well informed about the good work being done here.
- The school is making good progress in revising its curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of exciting activities both within and outside the classroom. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their work carefully. They make good use of resources and encourage pupils to develop good learning methods. However, they do not use questions as well as they might to check pupils' understanding and to help them develop their ideas further.
- Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress. They enjoy reading, can write well and develop a good understanding of mathematics. However, they do not have enough opportunities to use these skills when studying other subjects.
- Pupils behave well in and outside the classroom. They relate well to each other, to staff and to visitors. They are articulate, polite and confident and show concern for others.
- Early years provision is well led. Children make good progress during their time in early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematics skills to a greater range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of teachers' questioning, so that they check on pupils' understanding, help pupils to identify and correct misunderstandings and encourage pupils to develop their ideas further.
- Work with parents to ensure that they are fully informed about, understand and support the good work being done by the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have a clear vision for the school, high aspirations for the pupils and ambitious targets for improvement. These are set out in a carefully constructed development plan which is based on a rigorous and objective analysis of the school's performance. There are clear timescales for checking how quickly the school is progressing towards its goals. As a result, leaders have a precise understanding of where they have been successful and where further work needs to be done.
- Leaders at all levels work very effectively as a team. Over the last two years, the main focus has been on developing English and mathematics and improving the quality of teaching and learning in these areas. This has not been an easy task, but leaders have not hesitated to make difficult decisions, where necessary, for the benefit of the pupils.
- Now the emphasis is on raising standards in the other subjects and on developing the leadership of those areas. This is part of a fundamental review of the whole curriculum. Leaders take full advantage of the opportunities for sharing good practice across the academy trust. At the same time, they are keen to ensure that the curriculum meets the specific needs and circumstances of the pupils at St Wilfrid's. The middle leaders who spoke to the inspectors were very enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to work and share ideas with colleagues in the trust and other schools locally.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school has close links with the local church, and pupils attend and lead services there. They learn about the major world religions and reflect on faiths and values that are different from their own. They are also encouraged to appreciate the beauty of the world and to work to maintain it. One result of this is the pupil-led initiative to recycle paper and batteries. The school has a clear set of principles to ensure that pupils develop an understanding of what is right and wrong. Pupils are aware of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. They learn about the dangers of substance and alcohol misuse and how to keep themselves safe from harm. Through involvement in such activities as Black History Month and a football tournament that focuses on tackling racism in sport, they learn about the importance of equality and inclusion. Pupils have a range of opportunities to contribute to the leadership of the school through, for example, the eco council, the school council and the school parliament. As a result, they also gain first-hand experience of democratic processes. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the local community. For example, they recently took responsibility for clearing and restoring a local woodland area that had fallen into neglect. They also gain an understanding of the world community through links with schools in Spain and Kenya and their involvement in the international school award project.
- Leaders place considerable emphasis on raising pupils' aspirations and extending their horizons. Therefore, pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their experiences and understanding. These include participating in residential courses, visiting art galleries, museums and libraries, attending and taking part in musical concerts and researching local history. Pupils also have the chance to meet a range of inspirational role models. They were very enthusiastic about a recent visit from a successful boxer who was born locally.

- Pupils with SEND progress well, as is evident from a range of assessment data provided by the school. Leaders use funding effectively to provide good-quality support to address the needs of these pupils. Provision is led by an appropriately qualified and experienced coordinator. Pupils' needs are identified quickly, and appropriate support is put in place for them. This support is regularly assessed to ensure that it is having the intended impact. Where it is not, alternative approaches are found.
- The school makes good use of the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Before introducing any strategy to help these pupils, leaders ensure that it has been thoroughly researched and tested for its effectiveness. The work in books shows that the most able of these pupils are progressing as well as others in the school. However, overall, there is a continuing gap between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and that of their fellow pupils.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sport funding effectively to extend the expertise of staff and to increase the range of opportunities for pupils. The school has achieved a national silver award for its work in this area and is now aiming for a gold award. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of sports clubs. The school also organises whole-day events to introduce pupils to activities such as fencing, which they might not otherwise encounter. Care is taken to ensure that disadvantaged pupils take a full part in this programme.
- All the staff who completed the online survey said that they enjoy working at the school and are proud to do so. They feel valued, supported, respected and motivated. They say that the school is well led and managed. The teachers who met with a member of the inspection team said that they valued the professional development opportunities provided for them and the way that the staff work as a team. They accepted that the school is on a journey of improvement. However, they were confident of success and said that 'there is no glass ceiling to what we can do.'
- Pupils hold the school in high regard. They say that they enjoy school, are given work that challenges them, are helped to do their best and are supported well. Almost all would recommend it to others.
- The views of parents are more mixed. All the parents who met the inspectors were very positive and complimentary about the school and the staff. Of the parents who completed the school's own surveys, almost all were positive about it and said that they would recommend the school to others. However, a sizeable minority who completed Parent View would not recommend the school. This suggests that despite the good work that the school is doing, parents are not sufficiently well informed about it.

Governance of the school

- The governors have a very clear understanding of their roles. They hold the leaders closely to account, while also providing the right level of support. They have a detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school, gained from frequent contact with staff and pupils. They also receive regular reports from senior and middle leaders on the progress made in specific subjects and on particular projects.
- The governors have high aspirations for the pupils and ensure that the finance is made available to provide them with varied and wider-ranging experiences within and outside the classroom.

- The responsibilities of directors, members and governors are clearly defined and understood. There is a clear focus on ensuring that the school benefits from being a member of the academy trust, while also being able to maintain and develop its unique character.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has rigorous systems to check on the suitability of adults to work with children. Every visitor to the school is carefully vetted. The site is secure, and access to the buildings is very carefully controlled.
- The staff and governors have all received up-to-date training on safeguarding. The staff interviewed by the inspectors have a firm understanding of how to identify possible signs of abuse or neglect and what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child.
- All the parents who spoke to the inspectors, and the staff who completed the online questionnaire, are confident that pupils are safe at the school.
- All the pupils who met with the lead inspector said that they feel safe in school and on the way to and from school. They know which staff to contact if they have any worries or concerns and know that they will receive any help and advice that they need. Through regular lessons, days devoted to specific themes and visits from outside agencies, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a variety of circumstances, including when using the internet or social media. They all learn to swim, so that they can keep themselves safe in and near water. They also know how to keep themselves safe near roads and railways. These positive views echoed those of the pupils who responded to the online questionnaire.
- The school works closely and effectively with a wide range of agencies to provide appropriate support for pupils and families who need additional help. Pupils say that the school encourages them to look after their physical, emotional and mental health. The school's records show that pupils with SEND and the most vulnerable pupils are carefully monitored and supported to ensure their safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The teachers and teaching assistants benefit from a rigorous programme of professional development, the impact of which is clearly reflected in their practice. They plan their work carefully to ensure that pupils consolidate and build on what they have already learned. They encourage the pupils to use technical vocabulary consistently and accurately. In English, for example, pupils can identify and explain the difference between the present perfect and the past perfect tense. In mathematics, they can explain the meaning of 'equivalent'.
- The teachers have a firm command of the subjects that they are teaching. This is especially the case where English and mathematics are concerned. However, with the support of subject leaders, staff are also developing their confidence in other areas of the curriculum.

- The teaching assistants are closely involved in planning learning and they use their time well in the classrooms. As well as supporting specific pupils, they use their initiative to identify others who might need additional help. The close and effective working relationship between teachers and teaching assistants is a considerable benefit to pupils.
- Staff make good use of a range of appropriate resources to support learning. They also provide guidance on how pupils can improve their own learning. For example, in English, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their writing against specific criteria and then to edit and extend it. In mathematics, pupils learn how to check the accuracy of their calculations for themselves.
- Pupils relate well to each other and to staff, and behaviour is generally good. Occasionally, pupils lose concentration, talk to each other or forget to wait their turn to answer a question. This slows their learning.
- When asking questions, teachers often rely on answers volunteered by the pupils. Therefore, they cannot assess how well pupils who are less forthcoming are learning. They also make insufficient use of supplementary questions to probe the depth of pupils' understanding, to help them identify and correct their misconceptions or to extend their thinking further. This is an area for improvement for the school.
- The school has placed considerable emphasis on improving its assessment processes. It has invested in a system for checking regularly on pupils' progress, and all staff have been trained to use this. The assessments made by teachers are carefully monitored within school, by colleagues from other schools in the academy trust and by staff from other schools locally. As a result, the school is confident that the assessments are accurate and the pupils are receiving the right level of support and challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The pupils are articulate and present their ideas in well-formed sentences. Even the youngest children are confident in using technical terminology. For example, in phonics, they were able to use terms such as 'digraphs' accurately and to identify them in words. Older pupils presented well-reasoned assessments of the difficulties of satisfying everyone's tastes when cooking for a large number of people.
- The pupils who met with the lead inspector knew how to conduct themselves in a meeting. They listened carefully to each other, even when they did not necessarily agree with the views being expressed. They asked their own questions as well as answering those posed by the inspector and were eager to engage in the conversation. In classrooms, they are happy to express their opinions when asked to do so and respond readily to teachers' questions.
- The pupils are keen to contribute to the life of the school and their community and are able to empathise with others. This is clear from their charitable activities and from a recent project where they were asked to imagine what it is like to be a refugee.

- Almost all the pupils who responded to the online questionnaire said that the school encourages them to look after their physical, emotional and mental health. The pupils who met with the inspector were very enthusiastic about the wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities available to them.
- Pupils also said that they are encouraged to be independent and take on responsibilities. In addition, they are encouraged to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in the playground and when moving around the school. Without prompting, even the youngest stand back or hold the door open when they meet someone coming towards them.
- The school has a clear system for managing behaviour, which the pupils understand. In their responses to the online questionnaire and in talking to the lead inspector, pupils said that bullying does happen at the school but is dealt with effectively.
- In classrooms, behaviour is generally good, although some pupils do occasionally lose concentration, usually when an activity has gone on too long. The level of noise in the dining hall is high and prevents the pupils from conducting the calm conversations of which they are clearly capable.
- Levels of attendance are good and continue to improve, as a result of the targets set for each group within the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders and staff have worked very hard to raise standards. For the last two years, standards in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 have been above average. The proportions of seven- and 11-year-old pupils reaching the expected levels in the national tests have been broadly in line with national averages, although there has been some variability between subjects.
- Pupils' progress is good. In 2018, it was average in reading, above average in mathematics and significantly above average in writing.
- The school's assessment information shows that these improvements are being maintained. Pupils currently in Years 1, 2 and 6 are performing at least as well as their counterparts at this time last year. The work examined during the inspection supports the school's judgements.
- The work in books shows that pupils of all abilities, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress. In their writing, younger pupils show increasing accuracy in the use of grammar and punctuation and in the use of more extensive vocabulary. There is also a marked improvement in the standard of their handwriting. Older pupils show increasing confidence in the use of complicated sentence constructions, vivid imagery and turns of phrase which arrest the reader's attention. Writing in subjects other than English is more limited and does not reflect the standards which the pupils are capable

of producing. However, in history, the most able pupils showed an impressive ability to research, record and develop their views on the causes and consequences of the Second World War.

- In mathematics, pupils show clear progress in their understanding of numbers and the relationships between them. They develop an increasing ability to identify a variety of ways to solve a problem and to explain why they have adopted a particular approach. The opportunities to apply this mathematical ability in other subjects are, however, rather limited.
- Leaders have put a specific focus on raising standards of reading in the school. As part of this process, they established a new library. This is well stocked with a wide range of interesting books and is run by a qualified librarian. The pupils clearly enjoy using the library and borrowing books from it. Staff have also received additional training to develop their skills in teaching pupils to read. These approaches are clearly having a positive effect. The pupils who read to inspectors said that they enjoy reading and do so regularly at home as well as at school. They are developing a taste for particular types of books and specific authors. They are able to explain the plot of a story and suggest how it might develop. The most able read accurately, confidently and expressively. Most pupils are developing a firm command of phonics, although some of the less able pupils sometimes have difficulty in applying these skills to deciphering unfamiliar or more complicated words. Pupils enjoy being read to by adults. During the inspection, a group of Nursery children sat enthralled as the librarian read to them, using her considerable skills as a storyteller to bring the book to life.
- From a range of assessment data, it is clear that pupils with SEND make good progress from their individual starting points. This is helped by the timely and focused support they receive from staff and the appropriate range of resources available to them.

Early years provision

Good

- Early years provision is well led by an experienced practitioner who has recently taken on this responsibility. She has a clear vision for the development of this aspect of the school and has established a wide-ranging programme of professional development for her colleagues. The teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support children and teachers. They are closely involved in planning and make a crucial contribution, for example to teaching phonics and managing the outdoor provision.
- On entry to the early years, children are broadly at the levels expected for their age. During their time in the early years, they make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Children who need additional help are identified early and given timely support to aid their progress. For the last two years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been above the national average.
- The leader is an experienced early years moderator. Her assessments have, in turn, been moderated by members of the academy trust and staff from a group of local schools. Therefore, the staff are confident that their assessments are accurate. This was borne out by the work examined during the inspection.
- The school values the contribution of parents in supporting their children's learning. There are numerous opportunities for the exchange of information between the home

and the school, including electronic feedback. The learning journeys which parents and the school build up together provide a valuable means of tracing each child's progress. Further opportunities for exchange of information are provided by the daily meet-and-greet sessions.

- The staff have close contact with the other nurseries which send children to the school. Prior to these children's entry into Reception, their families receive welcome packs and visits from the staff. This ensures that the children are well known to staff before they arrive and any additional support that may be necessary can be planned in advance.
- Early years staff have also established good working relationships with their colleagues in key stage 1. At present, they are working together to ensure that children are able to build on what they already know and that expectations are consistently high.
- There is a consistency in the teaching approaches adopted by staff in the early years. An impressive element is the way that staff use timely comments and questions to focus and develop children's observations and perceptions, to extend their learning further.
- The early years area is attractive and well resourced. The recent, additional investment in outdoor equipment has extended the possibilities for creative and imaginative play. The children take full advantage of these opportunities.
- Children's nurture and welfare needs are well met. Parents told the inspector that their children enjoy coming to school and are safe there. The site is secure, and access to it is carefully controlled.

School details

Unique reference number	142936
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10087794

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Rev Andrew Bradley
Headteacher	Mrs Helena Miller
Telephone number	0161 998 3663
Website	www.st-wilfridscofe.manchester.sch.uk/
Email address	h.miller@st-wilfridscofe.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEND is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The school forms part of the St James and Emmanuel Academy Trust Ltd.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in all year groups. Some of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school’s self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, assessment information, attendance information and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, other members of staff, the chair of the academy trust, the chair, vice-chair and other members of the governing body, the director of education for Manchester diocese, a representative of the local authority, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and examined pupils’ work in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors evaluated 111 responses to Parent View, 40 responses to the online staff survey and 26 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. They also examined the responses to two questionnaires for parents organised by the school. In addition, the lead inspector spoke to two parents by telephone.

Inspection team

Aelwyn Pugh, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Clare Nash	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector

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