



# St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School Bishop Auckland

URN: 148915

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle

31–01 February 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

## What the school does well

- St Wilfrid's is an authentic representation of the mission of the Church, with Christ at the centre and the child at the heart of everything they do.
- The quality of relationships and the high level of pastoral care is a real strength of the community.
- Assessment of religious education incorporates the evidence in pupils' books in addition to their verbal responses enabling teachers to accurately plan next steps in learning.
- Leaders demonstrate a faithful witness to the importance of prayer and provide the pupils with a rich spiritual environment in which to flourish.

- Well-chosen pieces of scripture are embedded into the whole school cycle of prayer, allowing for a real depth of understanding enabling children to understand the message or teaching and relate it to their own lives.

### What the school needs to improve

- Embed adaptive teaching and deeper thinking opportunities to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential.
- Provide opportunities for all staff to increase confidence in leading prayerful opportunities which capture Catholic tradition whilst still allowing for individual creativity.
- To identify creative ways to develop prayer and liturgy to further engage parents.

## Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

### Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

#### Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

1

Pupils at St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School are confident in expressing their relationship with God and talk about, 'knowing that God is always by our side'. They are happy and confident learners and demonstrate exemplary behaviour both within lessons and throughout all other elements of school life. Pupils show a deep respect for human dignity, making reference to being a school family and being proud to come to St Wilfrid's School. 'Everyone is our friend in St Wilfrid's'. Pupils embrace the responsibility and opportunity to care for and help others. They articulately describe the numerous ways in which they reach out to care for others and the projects linked to the Green Team which focus on care for our common home; they see this as an integral part of life at St Wilfrid's. Pupils talk enthusiastically about supporting the local foodbank; raising money for Cafod and cancer charities; singing in the local care home, and the many projects linked to caring for the environment, from recycling to saving energy. Pupils clearly understand that there are many others who are not as fortunate as themselves and want to make a difference to them. They talk about being involved in making decisions regarding how collections are spent, for example the Cafod 'Just One Card' project. The school mission statement, 'A school family, growing together in love, friendship and faith', is fully embraced and lived within St Wilfrid's. This is evidenced through the quality of relationships and strong culture of welcome. There is a very strong sense of community, promoted and understood by all adults involved within the life of the school. This deep understanding enables the pupils to embrace the key messages of Catholic social teaching. Furthermore, there are high levels of pastoral care at all levels. One staff member stated, 'Our children know that they are loved by God and by all the staff in school'. Staff show genuine care for each other and the

pupils and families with whom they work. Leaders are very aware of the challenges faced by many of their families and strive to ensure that all pupils, regardless of need or background are able to access a wider curriculum. For example, funding is sought from external sources to enable access for all pupils. Parents value St Wilfrid's School and the work that it does. One parent stated, 'I am very confident that school is helping my child to be a good Catholic and a good person, who knows helping others is at the heart of our beliefs'. The school is fully compliant with both Diocesan and statutory requirements for teaching RSHE. Leaders and governors fully embrace and promote the Church's mission. They are genuine in their passion and intent to ensure that St Wilfrid's is a Christ centred school. The chair of governors spoke proudly of the mission statement being a shared statement that was jointly created by staff, pupils and governors leading it to be fully embraced by everyone. She spoke of staff going 'above and beyond to care for the pupils and their families', specifically evident in the quality of the relationships fostered by all to the rich opportunities offered throughout the life of the school. Governors are active members of the school community and contribute to the flourishing partnership with the local parish. The school is led by an inspirational headteacher who has empowered the staff and pupils to confidently embrace their mission. The Trust, governors and school leaders work in partnership to monitor and evaluate the Catholic life and mission and see it as an integral part of ongoing school improvement.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

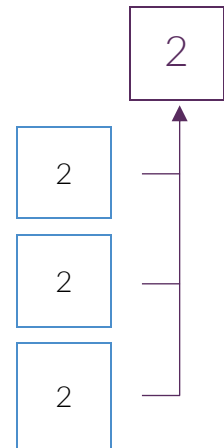
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**Provision**

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Pupils talk confidently about enjoying religious education (RE) lessons. They refer to lessons being fun and talk about their lessons being presented in a variety of ways. Within lessons, pupils throughout the school display good levels of engagement and are actively involved in their learning, producing work of good quality. Pupils are developing their knowledge, and confident use of religious vocabulary and demonstrate that they are making good progress over time. Presentation in books is of a good standard and there is evidence of individuality and creativity. Pupils are confident within lessons and are able to talk about the impact of religious education upon their lives, 'We learn that we are all different but all special'. They demonstrate a knowledge of scripture and what they can learn from it, 'sharing stories from the Bible gives us a little lesson for our lives' and reminding them that, 'God is always with them'. Pupils have an understanding of what they have done well and the introduction of school policy to highlight achievement allows the pupils to identify success. Further development and embedding of this system, along with the use of pink highlighting to identify areas which need reviewing or an additional response, will further support pupils in articulating their strengths and areas for development. Pupil attainment in RE is consistent with the other core subjects and is in line with the expected outcomes at the end of each key stage.

Religious education lessons are planned sequentially and follow the guidance provided in the Come and See resource. They are delivered confidently and pitched appropriately throughout the school. The curriculum reflects the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* and pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and understand how to deliver age-appropriate, engaging lessons. Knowledge is presented in a variety of ways, using a variety of resources. Teaching

and learning opportunities are created and adapted for all children to succeed. One member of staff stated, 'It has been noted frequently by parents, staff members and visitors that children often give answers and offer reflections in RE which are mature for their age'. Upper Key Stage 2 books show some evidence of thinking further as challenge activities enable pupils to show a deeper understanding. The embedding of this level of challenge and deeper response to learning activities in lower key stage 2 and, where appropriate, in key stage 1 will add further depth to the adaptive teaching and learning for the higher ability pupils. Feedback and marking shows evidence of the whole school policy linked to highlighting work in green where pupils show understanding of learning outcomes.

The subject leader has a strong understanding of her subject and has a clear vision as to how to make further developments. She described the links between RE lessons and St Wilfrid's prayer and liturgy programme and how they work together in partnership. The whole school programme for prayer and liturgy, focuses on a specific piece of scripture each week. This is strengthening pupils' knowledge and understanding within their RE lessons. As a result of focused monitoring and evaluation, leaders have an understanding of the achievements and progress of all pupils. This enables them to make decisions about further developments within the subject. Governors are involved in the monitoring process and key information with regard to curriculum delivery and development is shared with them all. There is evidence of high-quality support for new staff, with the nursery teacher describing a bespoke package of support which she had received through the induction process.

## Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

### Collective worship key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

Pupils throughout school engage fully with the prayer and liturgy opportunities provided within St Wilfrid's community. Pupils show reverence and respect when partaking, sharing or leading prayer gatherings and are attentive in their response to prayer. They are active participants in a wide variety of forms of prayer from joyful singing to periods of silence. They have a thorough knowledge and understanding of a variety of ways of praying. Additionally, they listen to scripture and use the mediums of music and artwork to facilitate reflection on the word. They are provided with age-appropriate opportunities to demonstrate involvement and leadership. This was evident from the youngest children, in Early Years Foundation Stage, choosing items to add to their prayer focus through to upper Key Stage 2 pupils, who show confidence in taking the lead in this ministry. This demonstrates that pupil leadership is progressive and a natural part of the prayer life at St Wilfrid's. Key Stage 2 pupils also showed skills in presenting and leading prayerful experiences for their peers. This demonstrates their excellent knowledge of the elements of gathering, listening to the word, reflecting and going forth with a mission. Moreover, they could talk about how prayer is an important part of caring for others.

There is evidence of a broad variety of collective worship opportunities from formal structured gatherings such as school Mass through to informal opportunities such as the prayer stop and independent use of the prayer room at lunchtimes. Leaders work in close partnership with the parish and the school lead a family Mass in church each month, which is very well attended by the school community. Prayer is approached creatively by leaders using a variety of media which incorporate Catholic traditions encouraging the pupils to do the same when planning their own prayer times. Staff would benefit from using this model when planning for prayer. Parents talk about how school seeks to involve them in prayer

and how well informed they are in relation to these opportunities through ClassDojo. There is a creative use of the school environment, both indoor and outdoor, with the creation of dedicated prayer spaces which can be accessed during adult-led worship and in spontaneous self-initiated prayer times.

The headteacher leads and models prayer and liturgy with an authentic approach. Her own personal commitment, passion and drive in promoting the mission of the Church is palpable and evident in all conversations and interactions. St Wilfrid's community is the face of the Church for many of the families, and leaders take this responsibility very seriously. Leaders have planned the pattern of prayer and liturgy carefully to focus on the key elements of the liturgical year, whilst also focusing on developing pupils' understanding of Bible stories. There is a carefully planned overview each term highlighting which piece of scripture will be the focus for the week throughout school. In class liturgies, either staff-led with the younger children or pupil-led with the older pupils, prayer is focused on this piece of scripture providing a common shared understanding. Prayer and liturgy experiences are valued and are prioritised as part of current school improvement. They are well resourced, both through physical resources and in relation to professional development. All leaders, including governors, are involved in monitoring and evaluating prayer and liturgy and show a thorough understanding of the current provision. Whilst provision and outcomes are high, leaders remain ambitious to identify ways to develop this part of school life, specifically by looking for creative ways to further engage parents.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148915
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8403462
Full postal address of the school	St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Murphy Crescent, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6QH
School phone number	01388603451
Headteacher	Joanne Sands
Chair of Local Governing Body	Ann Wake
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-wilfrids.durham.sch.uk">www.st-wilfrids.durham.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Leigh-anne Young  
David Miller

Lead  
Team

## Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement