

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Saint Winefride's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Shepshed, Leicestershire

Britannia Street, Shepshed, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 9AE

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 April 2025

Outcome

Saint Winefride's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Shepshed, Leicestershire has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Catherine Murphy. This school is part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic multi-academy trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Neil Lockyer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Noon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy their learning at Saint Winefride's. The school is highly ambitious for all pupils to succeed. Pupils live up to these high expectations fully. Children in the early years make a strong start to their education. Pupils typically achieve well in national tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. They leave school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' behaviour, and their attitudes to learning, are excellent. The atmosphere in lessons, and at other times, is very calm and purposeful. Pupils uphold the school's five key values with pride. They are polite and respectful to each other and to adults. Positive relationships enable pupils to flourish.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They value the kindness and care provided by the trusted adults around them. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's work.

The school promotes pupils' broader personal development very well. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and go on educational visits.

These rich experiences enable pupils to gain valuable skills and broaden their understanding of the world beyond their immediate locality.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to refine and improve its curriculum. The broad and ambitious curriculum sets out the key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn, from the early years to Year 6. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and accurately. Pupils with SEND receive skilled support which enables them to access the curriculum and achieve well.

The school prioritises reading and a love of reading is encouraged widely. Pupils recognise and appreciate this saying, for example, 'books are everywhere'. There is a well-considered, systematic approach to teaching early reading and phonics. This begins straight away in the early years, where there is a sharp focus on early reading and language development. Well-trained staff provide extra teaching for any who need to catch up quickly. Consequently, pupils develop very well as fluent and confident readers.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They often give clear instructions that enable pupils to understand their learning and apply what they already know to new concepts. This is particularly strong in mathematics and English. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 4 handle decimals and fractions with confidence. They can explain their reasoning as they work through tasks that challenge their mathematical skills. Staff regularly check pupils' understanding in those subjects, to ensure that any gaps and misconceptions are quickly addressed. However, in a few other subjects, some pupils are less secure in their understanding of the key ideas. At times, they struggle to recall their previous learning. This inconsistency is also reflected in some of the work that pupils produce. As a result, the important knowledge and skills in those areas are not as deeply embedded as they are elsewhere.

The school has very high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attendance. The sharp focus on attendance has resulted in a significant reduction in rates of absence in recent years, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. This typically involves working supportively with parents and carers and external agencies. Overall and persistent absences are very low when compared with local and national rates.

The school is deeply committed to providing an exceptional range of opportunities for promoting pupils' wider development. The aim is to ensure that pupils become respectful young citizens. Pupils proudly take on many leadership roles which are available to all pupils. These include being 'recycling team leaders' or 'chaplaincy leaders'. Pupils' cultural development is promoted thoughtfully. For example, pupils visit live theatre and concerts. The specialist music teaching enables all classes to access a rich, ambitious curriculum. The personal development curriculum is being enhanced through the recent introduction of a bespoke programme to promote pupils' understanding of equalities. As a result, pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy, both physically and mentally.

Leadership and governance are strong, ensuring that the school has maintained its high standards. Staff speak warmly of the support and care that they receive for their workload and well-being. The whole team is united in the desire to put pupils' best interests at the heart of the school's work.

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 areas, the impact of the curriculum is not consistently strong in all foundation subjects and in all year groups. This means that some pupils struggle to remember long term the content that they have been taught, and the work in some pupils' books does not reflect a depth of knowledge, high expectations and pride in their work. The school should ensure that staff are equipped to check and make sure that pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills which enable them to achieve consistently well in all areas of the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2016.

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	138299
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10379572
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	171
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Noon
CEO of the trust	Neil Lockyer
Executive headteacher	Catherine Murphy
Website	www.winefrides-rc.leics.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and two other schools in the multi-academy trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and other senior and curriculum leaders. The inspector met with the chair and some other members of the local governing body. The inspector held discussions with representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspector observed behaviour in lessons and at other times of the day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025