

St Wilfrid's Academy, Doncaster

St Wilfrid's Road, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 6AH

Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the school opened, directors and leaders have not ensured that key stage 3 and 4 pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and other curriculum subjects.
- Leaders and directors do not have a fully accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. They give too little consideration to the impact of their actions on the school's performance.
- Pupils' progress targets set from baselines on admission, and leaders' reliance on tests, mean leaders do not have a clear enough view of the overall progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have not kept a close check on the impact of new initiatives to ensure that they make a positive difference to pupils' learning and well-being. This has limited the impact of these initiatives on the outcomes pupils achieve.
- Leaders have not ensured that plans are detailed enough to support pupils whose behaviour challenges staff. Records of some incidents do not provide sufficient information to help leaders improve the way they support individual pupils.
- Teaching does not consistently move individual pupils' learning on, or challenge the most able to learn well. The guidance some teachers give is focused on the conduct of pupils, rather than on their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders relaunched many elements of the school's work in September 2016. This is making a positive difference to pupils who are responding well to the school's higher expectations.
- Primary-aged pupils are taught well. As a result, they make strong gains in reading, writing and mathematics.
- New leaders for English and mathematics have quickly grasped what more needs to be done to improve teaching, learning and assessments in their subjects.
- Personal learning advocates (PLAs) make a substantial contribution to pupils' good progress in their personal development, safety and welfare. This includes the ongoing support provided to help pupils sustain their next placement when they leave the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management so that key stage 3 and 4 pupils in all year groups make good progress in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects, by ensuring that leaders:
 - consider the progress seen in pupils' books and work, as well as test results, when they evaluate how well teaching enables pupils to learn
 - use the information gathered from pupils' books and work to guide teachers on how to improve their practice
 - use key stage 2 assessment information, including Year 6 tests, to set their expectations for the pupils' progress, alongside the assessments done when pupils are admitted
 - keep a close eye on the difference that new programmes and approaches have on the progress pupils make and make amendments swiftly if necessary
 - develop a more rigorous approach to understanding why some pupils behave as they do and use this information to plan how to support pupils
 - make sure that all records of incidents contain sufficiently detailed information to inform plans to support the pupils concerned.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching in key stages 3 and 4, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently demand pupils reach the leaders' high expectations for their work
 - work is planned which provides sufficient challenge to move pupils on in their learning, particularly the most able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The first two years of this school's life were marred by weak direction from the trust. Since the start of this academic year, new leaders and directors have put in place expectations and systems that are beginning to bear fruit. However, the pace of improvement is not fast enough, because leaders are not systematic in the way they check the impact of the different aspects of the school's work. As a result, they are too slow to amend their plans to ensure that all pupils make rapid gains in their learning.
- Leaders have an optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. They do not routinely consider pupils' results from national tests at the end of key stage 2 when setting targets for pupils' progress, including for the most able pupils. Leaders focus almost entirely on pupils' progress from the assessments made when they are admitted to the school. Consequently, leaders do not fully understand if pupils make the gains in learning they should do as a result of the specialist provision the school is commissioned to provide.
- Leaders have developed a systematic approach to checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, some of their records indicate that the progress pupils make is not fully considered when leaders evaluate the effectiveness of teaching over time. This, and leaders' over-reliance on test results, contribute to leaders' overly positive view of teaching in the school.
- Over the last 12 months, leaders have introduced new approaches to several areas of the school's work. Increased expectations, captured in the 'PRIDE' (pride, respect, impeccable conduct, determination and engage) ethos statement, have made a substantial difference to most pupils' attitudes to learning because they bring clarity about what pupils should do throughout the school day. However, other initiatives, for example to improve reading and a programme to support some pupils' social and emotional needs, have not been as effective. Leaders' monitoring has not been thorough enough because they check that activities are happening rather than evaluate the difference these make. Leaders have missed the opportunity to intervene early when the programmes have not been as beneficial as expected.
- Leaders and teachers speak highly of the benefits of the trust's support for their work. They cite the support from subject network meetings and leadership training as particularly beneficial. However, the impact of this support is not fully translated into teaching which is effective enough to secure good outcomes for all pupils.
- New leaders for English and mathematics, who joined the school in February and April this year, understand that the variability in assessment and teaching needs to be addressed. They have focused on securing the best possible outcomes for current Year 11 pupils. As a result, planned work with other year groups has not been embedded and, therefore, has not had a sustained impact at the time of the inspection.
- Leaders have ensured that an appropriate range of subjects meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils. These include vocational options delivered by a range of off-site training providers. Leaders ensure that each pupil's programme results in a well-rounded mix of English, mathematics and other subjects. The established topic-based approach in key stage 2 and a recently introduced similar approach in key stage 3 are

proving successful in re-engaging pupils in learning.

- Impartial and effective careers advice and guidance are embedded across key stages 3 and 4. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, get the support they need to move on to positive post-16 options. The additional funding for these pupils is effectively spent. A key priority for the trust has been to ensure that all pupils sustain places in further education or employment with education. Current indications are that this will be achieved for the overwhelming majority of pupils this year.

Governance of the school

- The appointment of new leaders in senior positions within Delta Academies Trust during 2016, and subsequent changes in directors, have led to more appropriate challenge to the governance of this school. Directors are responsible for ensuring that the head of academy and other staff are held to account for the effectiveness of their work. However, directors share leaders' slightly inaccurate view of the school's work and, therefore, they have not challenged leaders thoroughly.
- The trust has provided support for mathematics and English due to the absence of leaders for these key subjects. This support has had more influence on pupils' progress in English than in mathematics.
- The education advisory board (EAB) is responsible for challenging and supporting leaders about the standards achieved by pupils and the use of specific funding. The chair of the board has worked to ensure that members have a good range of skills and knowledge to contribute to the school's governance. As with other aspects of the school's work, developments over this year have not been sufficiently embedded to have the full impact required.
- The EAB ensures that specific funding is spent appropriately. This includes, for example, the pupil premium grant, the English and mathematics catch-up grant, the physical education (PE) and sport premium, and funding relating to pupils' education, health and care plans. As a result, pupils who are disadvantaged make similar progress and attend in line with all other pupils in the school.
- EAB members have increased their direct monitoring of the school's work. For example, a member's review of the use of alternative provision resulted in some appropriate recommendations. The member has also checked whether the recommendations had been followed and had the intended impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all staff working in the school have been recruited and checked appropriately before they are employed. Leaders also make sure that staff are trained, that training is refreshed through regular updates and that staff use their knowledge to report any concerns about pupils' welfare or safety. This includes those at risk of radicalisation and child sexual exploitation.
- Following very recent training, the new leader for child protection realised the school's record-keeping was not as robust as it could be. Regular supervision of staff supporting pupils who needed help and protection was also not fully in place. Leaders are taking

swift and effective action to address these areas for development.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching in key stages 3 and 4 is not effective enough to ensure that pupils learn consistently well. This is because some teachers do not plan work that is closely matched to each pupil's next steps in every subject. As a result, some pupils complete work that is too easy and does not improve their knowledge or skills. Some pupils do not get the help they need to correct misconceptions or fill gaps in what they know and understand.
- Leaders have established a system of assessment based on standard tests that are checked across the schools in the trust. However, inspectors saw too many examples of pupils' work that did not match the school's assessment information. The day-to-day work in pupils' books shows that some have not consolidated their knowledge, for example in the use of upper case letters. These pupils are therefore, overall, unlikely to be working at the level indicated in leaders' records.
- Leaders introduced a requirement of literacy or numeracy activities at the start of each lesson. All pupils follow the same task in each class. For some pupils, the work is too easy and it does not inspire them to think deeply. As a result, some lessons do not inspire pupils to learn. Compliance, rather than eagerness to learn, becomes the pattern in some lessons that, in turn, slows learning.
- Leaders have introduced a reading programme designed to help pupils who struggle to read at a level appropriate to their age. Initial results from this programme do not indicate that pupils make rapid gains and catch up. Leaders acknowledge this and are reviewing the implementation of the programme.
- Most teachers plan well for, and implement, pupils' individual plans to support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. However, some staff do not consistently apply leaders' expectations for learning or the school's general rules. For some pupils, this lack of consistency slows their learning. Some teachers give a disproportionate amount of attention to pupils' attitudes to learning at the expense of giving them guidance about what they need to know and understand.
- The use of PLAs is effective in most lessons across the school and at alternative provision. They provide consistent support for pupils' personal development and the help they need over time to improve their attitudes to learning.
- Teaching in key stage 2 is stronger. Work is more closely matched to pupils' needs and presented in ways that engage and enthuse them to learn. Teachers' questioning and guidance challenges and supports pupils in a way that helps them make good progress.
- Some teaching in key stages 3 and 4 leads to stronger progress. Some teachers pinpoint individual pupils' misconceptions and give effective guidance to help them understand. The work in some pupils' books confirms that when tasks represent an engaging challenge, pitched at the right level, pupils respond by working well. They avoid the temptation to deface their work or be careless about their presentation.
- In key stages 3 and 4, teachers consistently challenge the use of derogatory and prejudicial language. They do so in a way that does not antagonise or alienate pupils, but helps them to develop greater empathy and respect for other people.

- Leaders' records and inspection evidence indicate that teaching is effective at the alternative providers used by the school. Pupils were keen to show inspectors their practical work and to talk about their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are admitted to the school after periods of disruption to their learning. Staff work with skill and sensitivity to ensure that pupils sign up successfully to the school's ethos summarised by the acronym 'PRIDE'. As a result, most pupils' attitudes to learning and general conduct improve.
- PLAs, assigned to each pupil, have a key role in pupils' good personal development. Pupils know there is always someone to go to if they are worried or concerned. PLAs are effective in ensuring that parents get regular information about their child's progress or any difficulties they encounter. Crucially, PLAs keep track of pupils and support them if needed as they move on to their next step in education, whether that is to another school or post-16 provider. Regular 'spotlight' meetings, including PLAs, ensure that all staff have the necessary information about individual pupils to ensure their safety and well-being.
- The enrichment and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes in key stages 2 and 3 offer a wide range of activities that fully support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Trips, for example to a wildlife park and the London Eye, engage pupils' imagination and motivate them to learn. Similarly, charity events in school and support for national programmes, for example dementia-friend training, broaden pupils' understanding of other people's experiences of life and prepares pupils to be good citizens.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are safe in school and when attending alternative provision. Pupils have a range of opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe in PSHE lessons and through topics in key stages 2 and 3. Swimming lessons and other sporting activities in key stage 2 encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes to adopting healthy and active lifestyles.
- Leaders and members of the EAB are diligent in their checks about pupils' safety and welfare when pupils attend alternative provision. Records indicate that incidents are followed up appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Around school, overall, pupils conduct themselves calmly and are respectful to other people. Incidents when pupils are less calm are dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff reminding pupils of the school's ethos of 'PRIDE'.
- In lessons where work is planned to match the individual needs of the pupils, they engage in learning. In key stage 2, particularly, pupils show a keenness to learn and real pride in what they have achieved.
- Pupils who experience more complex challenges in their social and emotional

development receive effective support. However, leaders do not always ensure that sufficient details are recorded about incidents. This hampers leaders' ability to understand fully why pupils respond in the way they do. Similarly, some plans to support pupils' social and emotional needs do not contain sufficient information to give staff solid guidance about the best approach to take, for example when restraining a pupil.

- Overall attendance is well below that in most other schools. Most pupils are admitted to the school following periods of disruption to their schooling, either through lack of engagement or through poor attendance. However, the majority of pupils make significant gains in their attendance, on average an increase over 23%. There is also a reduction in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Leaders are not complacent and know they need to continue to improve the attendance of all pupils in all year groups.
- Leaders have ensured that robust systems are in place and used well, so they know pupils are attending alternative provision as planned.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, two thirds of Year 11 pupils achieved five A* to G grade GCSEs, including English, mathematics and science. All pupils achieved at least one GCSE at grade G or above.
- For current pupils across key stages 3 and 4, work in pupils' books reviewed by inspectors, both during detailed scrutiny of individual pupils' work and in sets of books during visits to lessons, did not match some of the school's assessment information. Overall, the work seen did not demonstrate that pupils are making consistently strong progress from their different starting points. However, pupils' work confirms secondary-aged pupils make better progress in English than in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress from baseline assessments of their English and mathematical skills when they are admitted to the school show most pupils make the progress leaders expect or, sometimes, better progress. However, the work in pupils' books does not confirm the accuracy of this assessment information. Pupils' progress from their key stage 2 test results is not strong. Very few pupils make the rapid progress needed to catch up for the time they have lost through absence, exclusion or disengagement.
- Overall, the secondary-aged most-able pupils, including the disadvantaged most-able do not make good gains in their knowledge and understanding over a range of subjects. This is because the work they are given does not challenge them enough to move on from what they can already do.
- Overall, pupils who have education, health and care plans make similar progress to other pupils in the school, as do pupils who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders' information about the progress of pupils who struggle with reading skills indicates that just over a quarter made gains in their reading skills as a result of the reading programme.
- Pupils in key stage 2 make much stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics than pupils in other key stages. This is confirmed by the work in their books as well as the school's assessment information. The topic-based curriculum,

based on different books and a range of enrichment activities, captures pupils' imagination. Staff build productive relationships skilfully with pupils that help pupils to overcome their emotional barriers to learning and so they flourish and learn well.

- In July 2016, the vast majority of Year 11 pupils left school with a positive destination secured in either further education or an apprenticeship. Critically, almost all these pupils have retained their places successfully over the year. The ongoing support of PLAs, alongside effective impartial advice and guidance, have been key to this success.
- Similarly, a good proportion of pupils from key stages 2 and 3 return to their referring school successfully, another mainstream school or a more specialist setting. The support from PLAs for pupils and their families makes a positive contribution to this successful outcome.

School details

Unique reference number	141141
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10031947

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

Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair of board of directors	Steven Hodsman
Chair of education advisory board	Lesley Bailey
Head of academy	Jo Gilbert
Telephone number	01302 562540
Website	www.stwilfridsacademy.org.uk
Email address	GilbertJ@stwilfridsacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish. The school's funding agreement does not specify information to be published on its website.
- This was the first inspection of the school. St Wilfrid's Academy opened in September 2014 as a free school alternative provision sponsored by School Partnerships Trust Academies (SPTA). The trust changed its name to Delta Academies Trust in September 2016.
- Delta Academies Trust board of directors retain responsibility for the governance of the school. The trust delegates some responsibility to the school's education advisory board (EAB) which is chaired by a director of the trust.
- The head of academy joined the school in April 2016 and the vice-principal moved to his current substantive post in April 2017. Middle leaders, who were promoted

internally, took up the newly created posts as assistant principals in April 2017. The English leader joined the school in February 2017 and the mathematics leader joined in April 2017.

- The school makes provision for pupils who are at risk of exclusion or who have been permanently excluded from mainstream primary and secondary schools within Delta Academies Trust and other schools in Doncaster and one other local authority. Pupils are admitted to the school at any point during the school year.
- In February 2016, the key stage 2 provision in the school moved into new accommodation on the same site.
- Key stage 2 and 3 pupils stay for short periods, either full-time or as part of a full-time placement combining their referring school and St Wilfrid's. These pupils are dual-registered. The pupils return to either their referring school, another mainstream school, pupil referral unit or special school.
- The majority of key stage 4 pupils remain at the school until the end of Year 11. The majority of these pupils attend other alternative provision for part of the week. The school uses the following alternative provision: Engage Training and Development; DVPDC; Doncaster GTA; Doncaster Culture and Leisure services; Enhancement Training; Ignition Training and Oracle Training.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are White British boys. All of the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils need support for their social, emotional and mental health needs. An above average proportion of pupils have education, health and care plans. A very small number of pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds and, similarly, a very small number speak English as an additional language.
- A majority of pupils are disadvantaged, including an above average proportion of children looked after.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a range of lessons, some with assistant principals, covering all year groups and a range of subjects. During lesson visits, inspectors spoke with pupils, listened as they read their work and reviewed their workbooks and folders.
- An inspector visited one alternative provision attended by the pupils, with the vice-principal. She also reviewed the school's monitoring records for all the alternative providers used.
- Meetings were held with a group of primary pupils and a group of secondary pupils. Pupils were observed as they arrived at school in the morning and left after lunch, at lunchtime and breaktime. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with teachers, leaders for English and mathematics and senior leaders to discuss all aspects of their work. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of Delta Academies Trust, representatives of the board of directors of the trust and with the chair and one other member of the education advisory board.
- Too few parents responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, for inspectors to consider their views. Inspectors did speak to one parent collecting her child from school, considered one email received and the views of the 10 parents who responded to the school's recent survey.
- The views of 23 staff who responded to the online staff survey were also considered.

Inspection team

Susan Hayter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tricia Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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