

School inspection report

Date: 20 to 22 February 2024

St Winefride's School

St Winefride's School

Belmont

Shrewsbury

Shropshire

SY1 1TE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. The school leaders and trustees actively promote pupils' wellbeing by creating a caring, unified and happy environment. Pupils grow and flourish in an inclusive Christian setting that encourages service, love and respect for one another, in line with the founder's vision that was set over 155 years ago.
2. The broad curriculum is enriched by regular visits to the local area and specialist teaching in a number of subjects, including dance, gymnastics, art and music. Pupils are happy, as they work together in a supportive and unified community. They display maturity and high levels of self-esteem because leaders make them feel valued and trusted.
3. Teachers know the pupils extremely well. Carefully planned teaching and learning typically captures pupils' imagination and fosters creativity. Pupils have strong study skills. They consistently make good progress from their starting points, especially in mathematics and reading. Children in the early years are confident in their speaking and listening skills. They show care and tolerance for one another.
4. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in education. Older pupils readily take on positions of responsibility that they conduct diligently. The Year 6 Virtues Ambassadors are proud of the work that they do. They actively promote the school's ethos throughout the day and particularly enjoy preparing assemblies about other faiths to deliver to the whole school. The school council members are instrumental in introducing new initiatives. For example, the contemplative garden, where pupils can go at playtimes to care for the plants, feed the birds or to just enjoy being quiet.
5. Leaders and managers promote pupils' emotional and spiritual wellbeing through the regular opportunities to pray, reflect and sing together. Although the school is based on a Catholic foundation, children of other religions and Christian denominations are warmly welcomed. Their beliefs are duly celebrated. The diverse group of pupils are proud of their own cultural traditions. They display great tolerance and respect for one another.
6. Staff prepare pupils for their next steps in education well. Older pupils are supported with their entrance exams and through discussions about transition to senior school.
7. There is a robust safeguarding culture at the school with regards to risk assessment and staff recruitment, and pupils' wellbeing is largely prioritised. However, systems to record and track any incidents of misbehaviour and bullying are not wholly effective in enabling leaders to identify trends and patterns so that appropriate action can be taken.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

- Leaders should ensure that systems to record and track any incidents of misbehaviour and occasional bullying are effective so that trends and patterns can be seen and appropriate action taken.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Trustees have a clear vision for the school. They are effective in their oversight of school leaders' work, including to safeguard pupils and actively promote their wellbeing. Trustees actively promote the aims and ethos of the school.
9. The trustees check that leaders, including in the early years, have the relevant skills and knowledge to fulfil their duties effectively. They are fastidious in holding leaders to account so that the Standards are met consistently. Trustees have a detailed understanding of leaders' work through regular visits to the school and thorough checking of documents and policies. They have a wealth of experience in a broad range of professions, which they use to guide leaders in continuing to improve the school.
10. Leaders have reinvigorated the school values of care, kindness and respect by adding a fourth value unity. This focus on unity has enhanced pupils' understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect for one another. Where cases of low-level misbehaviour, or occasional bullying occur, leaders do not log and track information effectively to inform improvements. Leaders have introduced a new electronic tracking system to help to address this.
11. Highly effective assessment and tracking systems are in place for monitoring pupils' progress in academic subjects. This means that teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well-supported in their learning by caring adults. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are written and updated by class teachers so that they can assess progress and development throughout the year. There is a detailed accessibility plan that outlines arrangements for the inclusion of pupils with SEND. Clear lesson planning protocols ensure activities do not discriminate, and the school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
12. Established links with external agencies mean that concerns are followed up quickly. Leaders have a strategic and proactive approach to managing situational risk, and they have conducted extensive work with the local authority with regards to road safety and keeping children safe from harm in the local area both before and after school.
13. Parents have access to all relevant information. The policies on the website are detailed and updated regularly with trustee oversight. Further policies are available to parents on request. Reports to parents are detailed and give a clear overview of pupils' progress. Complaints are dealt with swiftly and in line with the school's appropriate policy and procedures.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

14. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

15. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. They make good progress and achieve well, especially in mathematics, English and science. Trustees provide oversight and challenge to continue to improve academic standards in the school. Pupils enjoy the cross-curricular approach to their learning, where they explore common themes and are encouraged to carry out their own research projects.
16. In the early years, children learn in a nurturing environment where lessons are tailored to their individual needs. Staff know the individual children's development stages well and they ensure that an adaptive and flexible approach is used to meet them. For example, pupils vote on the themes for their learning each week. Staff then adapt the environment to enable children to create and think critically. Children have daily access to the outdoor areas where they play and explore. They enjoy being the playground litter picking monitors as they perform their duties with care and enthusiasm.
17. Teachers use assessment information effectively to adapt their planning and schemes of work. For example, a recent check identified an area of weakness in writing skills, compared with those in mathematics and reading. The findings resulted in changes to the scheme. Follow-up training for staff focused on improving skills in this area. The training has made a difference to the quality of pupils' writing.
18. Well-planned lessons and a genuine understanding of pupils' needs allow pupils who have SEND to maximise their potential. They are well supported and are proud of the progress they make.
19. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use this well to plan learning, which engages pupils' interest and helps them to remember the content they are taught. In Year 5 music, pupils remember their previous learning as they use notation to conduct the rest of the class during an orchestral piece by Mozart. Well-structured questions in lessons allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding and to deepen their learning.
20. Fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance are actively promoted. The values are well taught and understood. Pupils develop their knowledge of British values through a variety of subjects. They mix happily together across all year groups during playtimes. The access to a contemplative garden and several play areas is appreciated.
21. Pupils, including in the early years, benefit from a co-curricular programme which enables them to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding. They are well supported to develop their independence and collaborative skills, such as turn taking and sharing. The school offers a broad range of clubs and offsite trips that meet a range of needs and interests. Detailed risk assessments are in place to ensure that pupils are safe.
22. Pupils are proud of their sporting achievements in cross country, football and other inter-school competitions, in which both male and female pupils are successful.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

23. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

24. Leaders promote pupils' physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing through the effective support of a dedicated team of staff. As a result, pupils build trusting relationships with their teachers. This is reflected in their confidence and articulate responses, both in class and when speaking to visitors. Risks to pupils' welfare are appropriately assessed and carefully mitigated through the processes in place for trips and events.
25. Pupils embody the school's aims and values through their positive relationships and an advanced appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. A strong culture of respect and mutual trust underpins the school community.
26. The school's curriculum policy is implemented effectively, including in promoting tolerance towards other people, different cultures and religions. Pupils have opportunities to lead on a topic and share their own experiences, adding to the development of respect within the community.
27. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons and relationships education (RSE) help pupils of all ages, including children in the early years, to understand how to safeguard their own and others' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing. The RSE programme covers important aspects such as respectful relationships and consent. Themes are revisited in an age-appropriate way as pupils move through different year groups.
28. Pupils enjoy a broad range of physical education lessons, inter-school sports fixtures, after-school clubs, and a significant number of co-curricular activities. As a result, they appreciate the benefits of regular exercise and build their independence and teamwork skills. In the early years, children learn how to stay physically healthy, including oral hygiene in the early years and healthy food choices for packed lunches.
29. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and this is reflected in the mainly positive endorsements by teachers and parents. However, leaders have identified the need to have a more robust approach when misbehaviour or occasional bullying occurs. The revisions to the behaviour policy are in their infancy. The changes aim to improve the consistency of teachers' approach to applying rewards and sanctions.
30. Pupils have an innate sense of right and wrong. They are keen to implement the school rules. Most pupils understand what bullying is. When it occurs, it is generally addressed effectively.
31. Pupils feel safe and secure on the school site. The premises are well maintained. Continuing to improve the playground is prioritised in the facilities development programme. Leaders act to provide a consistently safe physical environment for pupils.
32. Any risks associated with the site, or onsite activities, are appropriately identified and mitigated, as are risks that might occur during off-site provision. Pupils and children in the early years are well supervised on the school premises and when learning in other locations.

33. The school's admission and attendance registers are properly kept. Pupils' attendance is closely monitored. The premises are well maintained and all health and safety measures are implemented rigorously.
34. Suitable medical facilities are available for pupils when they are injured or unwell. First aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by appropriately trained staff. Parents are contacted immediately if a child is hurt, but particularly when a head injury has been sustained.
35. Health and safety practices are implemented effectively. Record-keeping is systematic. Precautions are taken to reduce the risk from fire. The safety of the building is annually checked by fire services, as are the resources required in case of a fire. Leaders have established close working relationship with the police and fire safety forces.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

36. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

37. Pupils demonstrate pride in their school community. They relish any opportunity to contribute to it through helping their teachers or visitors to the school. They show great care and kindness towards their peers and look after younger children. Older pupils can explain with confidence why it is crucial to treat one another with respect in a diverse society. In lessons and during periods of free time, they generously give each other encouragement and praise.
38. The pupils' awareness of the values that underpin British society is developed through the PSHE curriculum and assembly programme. They learn to respect others' views and acknowledge that people may have beliefs that are different from their own. Pupils appreciate the value of giving back to society. They are aware of how their actions impact on others. Pupils show empathy by thinking about how the homeless should be treated. They are keen to help those less fortunate than themselves. The school ethos and values are embedded in the daily routine.
39. In the early years, children interact well with adults and their peers. They involve others in their games, are happy to share resources, and have an enthusiastic approach to learning. The skills they develop prepare them well to be more independent as they transition to their next stage within the school.
40. Pupils participate in fundraising events and choose the causes they wish to support. For instance, organising cake sales for the nearby hospice and local hospital. Pupils understand the importance of raising funds for charitable causes. They are keen to support local food banks and to give rather than receive at Advent.
41. Pupils have a common understanding of the importance of money and its function in society. Their spiritual understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life foster an ethos of care for their belongings and the property of others. Pupils are very conscious of the society in which they live. They appreciate virtues like kindness and empathy. Respect and tolerance are evident in pupils' conduct around the school. They are thoughtful when they speak about British values and their own school virtues.
42. Pupils understand the principles of service and the importance of helping others. They learn the value of democracy through the election of the school council. Representatives are elected from all year groups. Councillors take on their responsibilities with maturity and a sense of pride. Pupils in Year 6 participate in a variety of duties, for example, setting up the hall for assemblies and looking after the younger pupils at the end of the day.
43. Pupils take pride in looking after their local surroundings. They are aware of environmental issues and how they can make a positive difference in the global community. Pupils participate in caring for their school environment and undertake activities such as gardening and feeding the birds.
44. Pupils of all ages are well prepared for the next stages in their education. The oldest pupils demonstrate maturity and an advanced sense of social responsibility, as shown in their concern for the homeless and those less fortunate than themselves.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

46. Effective arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils and there is a culture of care that permeates the school.
47. The trustees and senior leaders maintain a thorough oversight of all aspects of safeguarding. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy safeguarding leads (DDSLs) have appropriate and contemporary DSL training. The safeguarding team, including the DSL and deputy DSL, are well known to staff and pupils alike. Safeguarding concerns are recorded, reported and addressed in a timely and effective manner.
48. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures. A thorough programme of new staff induction and training ensures that pupils are protected from harm. Staff respond swiftly to concerns raised by pupils. They understand how to react to difficult cases, such as child-on-child abuse, and potential radicalisation and extremism.
49. Low-level concerns are taken seriously. Staff know what to do if they arise. The school's safeguarding policy is detailed. It includes the regulatory standards and the most recent guidance, the contact details of the local safeguarding team and how to contact partnerships and agencies to safeguard pupils.
50. The twice daily registration identifies any pupils who are missing. Absences are followed up quickly by the office and duty team. Leaders refer concerns appropriately to local agencies when additional support is required.
51. Pupils feel safe and secure in the school surroundings. They are supervised effectively at all times. If pupils have any concerns or worries, they are confident that there is always an adult to confide in.
52. Safer recruitment checks are completed for staff, volunteers and trustees. A meticulous record of pre-employment checks is maintained. This is overseen by the trustee responsible for safeguarding.
53. Pupils know how to stay safe online. Leaders ensure suitable internet filtering and monitoring systems are in place. These are reviewed regularly. Concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately if the filtering system flags up any concerns.
54. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

School details

School	St Winefride's School
Department for Education number	893/6012
Registered charity number	1037597
Address	St Winefride's School Belmont Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 1TE
Phone number	01743369883
Email address	reception@stwinefridesircs.co.uk
Website	www.stwinefrides.com
Proprietor	St Winefride's School Trust S'Bury
Chair	Mr Patrick Strong
Headteacher	Mr Richard Goody
Age range	3 – 11
Number of pupils	107
Date of previous inspection	1 to 3 October 2019

Information about the school

55. St Winefride's School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between three and eleven years. It was founded in 1868 by the Sisters of Mercy and is located next to a Sisters of Mercy convent, to which it is closely linked. The school became a charitable trust in 1993 and is governed by a board of trustees. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new chair of trustees have been appointed.
56. There are 16 children in the early years comprised of one kindergarten and one Reception class.
57. The school has identified eight pupils who have SEND. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
58. A very small proportion of pupils have EAL.
59. The school states its aims are to encourage its pupils to reach their potential through an education which emphasises kindness and mutual respect within a Christian context. It seeks to foster an awareness of the needs and religious beliefs of others, in order to enable pupils to become responsible citizens and assets to the community. This is achieved through their school values of kindness, care, mutual respect and unity.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

20 to 22 February 2024

60. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

61. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

62. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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