

St Bede's Catholic College

URN: 137627 | Inspected: 06 January 2026

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

At the end of key stage 4, pupils achieve consistently well across the curriculum, as shown in external outcomes. They are very well prepared for their next stages, with many choosing to go on to study at the school's sixth form. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from other disadvantaged groups, also gain above average outcomes. Students at the end of key stage 5 have achieved less well, but recent published outcomes demonstrate that this is improving. Although pupils achieve well in national examinations, at times, the work that some pupils produce in lessons is not of a consistently high quality. Some staff do not always uphold the highest expectations in the work that they accept from pupils, in terms of presentation and content. Therefore, some pupils do not produce the best work that they are capable of. This means that their overall achievement is not as strong as it could be.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have carefully considered what pupils will learn across different subjects and phases. The content is ordered logically so most pupils build their knowledge and skills successfully over time. Since the previous inspection, the key stage 3 mathematics curriculum has been strengthened. This has supported pupils' progress in this subject. Leaders ensure that staff are subject experts. They have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. Leaders provide training in areas that need further development, such as how to check pupils' understanding and use this to inform pupils' future learning. However, less effective practice in this area of teaching persists. Where this is the case, some pupils have gaps in their learning, which are not always addressed. At times, this leads to pupils not achieving as highly as they could in the work that they produce. Teachers know their pupils and any additional needs or barriers to learning they may have. Generally, they adapt their teaching appropriately to support these pupils well. The school has prioritised support for pupils who have not yet secured strong foundations in reading. They receive effective in class support for their learning, as well as any interventions they need outside of the classroom to secure their understanding.

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Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have responded quickly to a significant increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify any new or changing needs swiftly and put appropriate support in place. Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of this and make changes as required. Staff benefit from training on how to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND in the classroom. Typically, staff implement this well, so pupils are successful in their learning. The school has positive relationships with families, professionals and external agencies, for example with the Virtual School. This collaborative work supports pupils' wellbeing. Leaders, including governors, carefully monitor the use of pupil premium funding. They identify barriers that these pupils may face and take steps to remove or reduce these. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well compared to other disadvantaged pupils nationally. The school has identified that staff would benefit from further guidance on supporting these pupils effectively in the classroom. This work is in the earlier stages of development. The school use alternative provision for a small number of pupils. Leaders ensure that settings are safe and that they provide an appropriate curriculum related to the needs of individual pupils.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders know their school well. They have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement

. Governors understand and meet their statutory duties. They have high expectations of school leaders and hold them to account. However, they also act as advocates for the school and provide support to the headteacher and wider leadership team. Leaders take decisions that are in the best interests of pupils. They recognise that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils may need a slightly different approach to enable them to be successful. They keep these pupils at the front of their mind when making significant decisions about school improvement. Leaders ensure that staff have access to an evidence informed professional learning programme. This is focused on identified areas for school improvement within classroom practice. However, leaders do not review the impact of this closely enough to ensure that highly effective teaching is sustained across all areas of the school. Early career teachers are well supported. They speak highly of their experience of working at the school. Leaders take positive action to reduce staff workload. They ensure that staff feel valued and that their wellbeing is prioritised. Staff appreciate this and enjoy working at the school. Many staff have worked at the school for a long time.

Post 16 provision Expected standard The sixth form has grown significantly since the previous inspection. It has been through a period of change, with leaders identifying that improvements were needed to improve students' outcomes. They have taken action quickly and decisively. For example, subject teaching time has increased, and tutors now take on more responsibility for tracking the academic progress of their tutees. Students follow appropriate study programmes that meet the needs and interests of their cohort. Staff know students well and

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generally provide effective support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the most recent published outcomes show that students now achieve close to the national average. Students in the sixth form benefit from an extensive programme that supports their personal development. They have many opportunities to broaden their talents and interests. For example, in knitting, public speaking and volunteer work. They participate in an enrichment week, which allows them to work with employers on an enterprise focus. Students receive high-quality careers information, education, advice and guidance to successfully move on to the next stage of education. For example, 90% of students chose to move on to university and were successful in securing their place. They are well prepared for adulthood in modern Britain.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

The school is a diverse and welcoming community. Pupils thrive here. They are happy and attend regularly. Students in the sixth form, who join from other secondary schools, are warmly welcomed into life at St Bede's. Pupils enjoy positive, mutually respectful relationships with their peers and staff. Bullying is not tolerated in this school. Pupils show respect and demonstrate the school values of 'work hard, be kind, and do the right thing'. They feel safe and are confident to talk to staff about any worries they have. Pupils embrace opportunities to improve school life, for example, through their work to be an ecologically friendly school. Many pupils participate in the school's wider enrichment offer. This includes learning to play an instrument, representing the school at a sport, or rehearsing for school shows, such as the upcoming 'Sound of Music'. Pupils are proud to participate in the school's annual cultural week. This event helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain as they learn different languages and try foods from other cultures. The school is rightly proud of the consistently high national outcomes that pupils achieve at key stage 4. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing also achieve well. Achievement at key stage 5 is improving and was in line with the national average last year. Pupils enjoy learning and are highly motivated to be successful in their studies. Pupils are well prepared for their next stages in education, employment or training. However, at times, the teaching that pupils and students in the sixth form receive across the curriculum varies in quality. Consequently, some pupils' work does not always meet the high standards expected by leaders.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to strengthen the quality of provision at post 16, so that the improvements in academic outcomes are embedded over time.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently check pupils' understanding well, so that highly effective teaching is embedded across subjects and year groups.
- Leaders should more closely review the impact of the school's professional development programme, so that strategies to support teaching and learning are embedded in practice.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils in the main school, and students in the sixth form, are extremely well prepared for life outside of school.

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They are resilient and independent. Through the wider curriculum, pupils learn to respect others' values, understand right and wrong and engage thoughtfully with ethical issues. Leaders ensure that they are sensitive to the school's religious context while ensuring pupils receive the education that they need to make informed decisions. Pupils are knowledgeable about fundamental British values, while embracing being part of a rich and diverse community. Pupils are confident to manage potential risks online, or within the communities in which they live. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive and exciting programme of enrichment. Leaders make reasonable adjustments so that all pupils can participate in this broad range of opportunities. For example, they organised an in-school demonstration of equipment and how to put up a tent to reassure pupils with little or no camping experience that they could participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's award. There has been a notable increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils participating in extra-curricular activities. This develops their resilience, confidence and independence. The school provides an effective careers programme. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn about their options for education. For example, pupils attend an annual careers fair, Year 11 pupils participate in mock interviews led by local employers and Year 10 pupils take part in work experience. They find out about different pathways because the school invites in a range of providers to provide pupils with information, for example, about apprenticeships. This means that pupils are successful at moving on to appropriate future destinations.

Leaders ensure that pastoral support is effective. Therefore, pupils who need additional help receive personalised guidance and feedback. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders have put in place a range of successful strategies to improve attendance. This includes effective partnership with parents and carers in supporting their child to attend regularly. The attendance of pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other disadvantaged pupils, is above that of national averages, and continues to improve. Additionally, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has significantly reduced. Leaders have created a culture that breeds positive, respectful behaviour at the school. Pupils continuously choose to do the right thing, and this is contagious. Bullying is never tolerated, and pupils are confident to report any concerns to a member of staff. The school is an inclusive and tolerant community. Any use of derogatory language is quickly challenged, often by the pupils themselves, and is rarely repeated. Pupils enjoy disruption free learning in lessons. Staff appreciate a level of flexibility within the school's behaviour policy. This allows them to treat pupils as individuals, and consider any adaptations needed for pupils with SEND, if any reminders about expectations are required. At social times, pupils self-regulate and engage in positive activities with their peers.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

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<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/st-bedes-catholic-college-bristol>