

Summarised inspection findings

St Oswald's Secondary School

Glasgow City Council

16 May 2023

Key contextual information

St Oswald's Secondary School is a Roman Catholic denominational school situated in Castlemilk, Glasgow. The school is a specialist provision for young people with additional support needs from across the south side of Glasgow City Council. The school roll is 57. The Glasgow City Council Area Inclusion Group places young people at the school. The school shares a campus with St Margaret Mary's Secondary School. In February 2020, the headteacher of St Margaret Mary's Secondary School was also appointed headteacher of St Oswald's Secondary School. In August 2020, the education authority appointed a shared leadership team. The head of school for St Oswald's Secondary School is also a deputy headteacher in St Margaret Mary's Secondary School. The head of school is supported by a deputy headteacher and two principal teachers.

In February 2022, 61% per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals. In March 2023, this figure was 89%.

In September 2021, 42% per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland. In March 2023, this figure was 67%.

In September 2021, the school reported that 100% per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average and exclusions are generally below the national average.

School name	St Oswald's Secondary School
Council:	Glasgow City Council
SEED number:	8442843

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Senior leaders provide very effective, visible leadership across the school. They are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all learners. The school is led with warmth and enthusiasm, which helps to encourage and motivate all learners.
- The school has a shared vision, values and aims based on comprehensive consultation with the school community. The school vision of 'together we will flourish' is displayed prominently throughout the school. The school has a strong commitment to the Catholic faith, which the vision, values and aims reflect. These shared values are evident across the school and are developed through lessons and assemblies. The majority of young people can explain what the values mean to them, and how they feel safe, nurtured and valued within the school.
- Staff have a strong understanding of the social and cultural context of the school. They provide a nurturing, caring environment across the school, supporting young people effectively to engage in their learning. Staff know young people well and are extremely responsive to their needs.
- Most parents are very supportive of the senior leadership team. The majority of parents appreciate recent improvements in communication. Almost all parents agree that their child likes being at school and that their child is safe and treated with dignity and respect. Almost all parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems and feel the staff are responsive in their approach.
- Senior leaders have made concerted efforts recently to reinstate a Parent Council which disbanded during periods of COVID-19 school closures. There are plans in place with enthusiastic volunteers to increase parent's involvement in all aspects of the school. When constituted, senior leaders should encourage Parent Council members to play a key role in discussing and agreeing improvement priorities including the use of Pupil Equity Funding.
- The complexity and range of young people's needs has widened in recent years. Supported by senior leaders, staff across the school have adapted well to new challenges associated with the changing demographic. Staff access a wide range of professional learning. This includes classes in British Sign Language (BSL) and sessions devised by an educational psychologist on brain development, attachment and nurture training. Young people using mobility aids benefit from recent physical adaptations to the school environment, which contribute to a more inclusive setting. The addition of medical and physiotherapy facilities on the ground floor have improved young people's access to these vital services. The appointment of two additional health workers and more support staff has helped to streamline intimate care processes for young people. Young people's care is carried out by staff with a high degree of dignity and respect.

- Over recent years, senior leaders have implemented a number of changes to develop the curriculum and improve learning and teaching approaches. The inclusion of teachers with specialised training to work with young people in the BGE has strengthened the quality of provision in S1-S3. Most young people are accessing high quality education which is tailored well to their learning needs. Senior leaders should now continue to focus on strengthening further high quality personalised learning approaches across the school
- In partnership with the school community, senior leaders have established priorities for school improvement. Through self-evaluation, senior leaders have identified areas to improve the quality of learning for young people attending the school. Together with meetings with school council, they are identifying effectively which areas they need to focus on. In particular, senior leaders have identified accurately the need for all teachers to set activities consistently at the right level. Improvements in this area are helping the school to continue to meet its priority of raising achievement for all young people.
- Senior leaders have introduced interesting opportunities for staff to lead areas of change across the school. In particular, staff are very supportive of the school improvement priority to improve young people's health and wellbeing. Almost all teaching staff and support for learning workers have key roles in leading and implementing school initiatives. Support for learning staff and a small group of health workers have led on the implementation of postural movement plans, supported by the school's physiotherapy partners. The renewed emphasis on safe care is making a positive difference to the health and wellbeing of learners with complex health needs. Willing staff and school partners lead on other initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of young people. Staff provide activities before school and during lunch times, such as dance clubs, football matches, Gaelic football and breakfast clubs. Young people are increasing their confidence, health and fitness, and building important social and sporting skills. Senior leaders should encourage staff across the school to take a more active role in leading on all areas for improvement.
- School staff encourage young people to take on leadership roles and participate in a variety of activities. For example, the pupil council meets monthly with the senior leadership team. This allows a few young people to represent their peers and have an influence in decisions, such as the design of the school's new garden and outdoor learning space. Young people in the enterprise group use their design, planning and technical skills to make money and invest further in future enterprise activities. The school should now track young people's leadership achievements. This will help ensure that all learners have an opportunity to influence decision making and be more actively involved in the leadership of change.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Staff have established a positive culture based on St Oswald's agreed values. Young people benefit from caring relationships with staff. Adults help young people to move around the school in a calm and respectful manner. Interactions between staff and young people are consistently positive and support a culture of inclusivity, respect and kindness.
- All school staff support young people with complex needs well to access a full range of learning and social activities. The majority of staff use a variety of approaches including sign, touch and gesture to communicate effectively with young people. In most classes, staff are highly skilled when communicating with young people. Their well-judged use of waiting, silence and encouragement allows young people time to express themselves in a range of ways.
- Young people and staff use communication aids well during lessons. These include assistive technology such as switches, and tablets with specialist software. Teachers and support for learning staff participate in a range of appropriate professional learning. Relevant communication skills training for staff is devised by the school's educational psychologist, National Health Service (NHS) Scotland and Call Scotland. Staff deliver sessions for young people on emotional literacy. These support young people very well to understand their feelings and emotions when they find situations difficult. Young people are learning valuable skills to manage their feelings and they are better able to self-regulate when distressed. As a result, young people feel supported, valued and included in their learning.
- Staff introduced eating and drinking plans and individual healthcare plans (IHP) for all identified young people who require them. Relevant staff use these plans effectively to meet young people's needs. This includes support for learning workers who provide high quality support for young people at breaks, lunchtimes and during lessons. Staff have devised and implemented high quality risk assessments for young people who may pose a risk to themselves or others at times of distress. Senior leaders balance young people and staff's safety well and ensure that children's rights are at the heart of their planning. As a result, young people, who may not otherwise be able to access education, are included and achieving well in school.
- Most young people are eager participants in learning. Staff provide a range of very effective supports to meet young people's needs. These include one-to-one personal care from dedicated health workers and time with skilled support for learning staff when young people need individual assistance in communicating. Teachers set appropriate learning activities, which most young people enjoy. The majority of young people enjoy activities that are well matched to their needs, abilities and interests. The school has focused on improving differentiation, pace and challenge over recent years and this continues to feature in the school improvement plan. In most classes, teachers encourage young people at different stages of learning to work together in enjoyable and appropriately demanding lessons. In a few lessons,

teachers set work which is too easy. As a result, a few young people spend too much time off task, awaiting instructions. In these lessons, teachers need to provide sufficiently engaging and purposeful learning activities including more opportunities for young people to work independently through tasks.

- Almost all teachers make good use of a range of digital technologies to aid young people's learning. The school provides each young person with a tablet computer which they can take home. Most teachers encourage young people to make good use of assistive technology such as touch and eye movement controls and text and speech generators. Teachers have recently created a dedicated, high quality music technology space. The majority of young people are achieving notable success here and a few are creating their own compositions to accompany film. This is one of the many resources young people share with their peers in St Margaret Mary's Secondary School. This is a good example of young people benefiting from collaborative work across schools.
- Staff ably facilitate joint working across St Oswald's and St Margaret Mary's, such as young people's participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and work towards the Rights Respecting Schools award. The work with their wider peer group is helping young people grow in confidence and improve their social skills. A few young people and parents would welcome further opportunities for St Oswald's pupils to participate in more learning activities across school settings.
- Almost all young people enjoy trips in the community and visits to sporting and leisure venues. Staff have created a substantial outdoor learning, play, horticulture and therapy space in the school grounds. Young people use this area as a quiet reflection space and for learning about environmental sustainability. Staff and young people designed the outdoor classroom to enable learners to practise their faith through conserving nature. The theme "caring for our common home" is evident and is firmly rooted in the school's faith and values.
- Almost all staff show a deep understanding of young people's needs. They identify and meet young people's support requirements in a way that takes account of young people's abilities, strengths and preferences. All young people have a Wellbeing Plan that contains at least one target. These targets are relevant and useful in gauging young people's progress in areas such as communication and emotional regulation. Senior leaders recognise the need to include more specific learning targets, across all subject areas, in young people's plans.
- Senior leaders are continuing to improve approaches to assessment and moderation in the senior phase to maximise outcomes for young people. Collaboration with colleagues across the school, and with St Margaret Mary's, is improving staff confidence in accurately assessing young people's attainment and progress. Teachers participate in useful, regular meetings with relevant colleagues across the education authority. These meetings enable teachers to moderate and review assessments and to have high quality discussions about whether young people's work accurately reflects teacher's judgement.
- The school has recently introduced an effective new system to track young people's progress across the BGE. Teachers selected twelve aspects of the curriculum to focus on. They assess progress and submit sound judgments about whether a young person is present, engaging, progressing, consolidating or achieving a level. In a few subject areas, this is expanded to include skills-based tracking within a level. Most teachers are providing clear and accurate statements about what young people are able to do. Senior staff are developing this work to ensure all teachers provide high-quality plans for young people's next steps in learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff have developed learning pathways for each of the curriculum areas in the school. These include health and wellbeing, expressive arts, languages, mathematics, religious and moral studies, sciences, social studies and technology. Pathways include courses and topics in the BGE, the senior phase and also wider achievement. Helpfully, teachers have also developed 'jigsaws' which show the intended learning in each area of the curriculum, along with "I can" statements. Parents note that the school has responded positively to their requests for timetable changes. However, greater flexibility could be built into the curriculum based on Curriculum for Excellence design principles.
- Learning pathways for young people attending college courses are occasionally interrupted. This can be due to the young person attending fewer periods of particular subjects, resulting in only being able to achieve unit awards rather than full courses. Although the school is continuing to extend and improve attainment in the senior phase, staff are aware that the curriculum could be more ambitious and challenging for young people.
- The first priority in the current school improvement plan is to ensure that the curriculum has a strong focus on developing the skills that young people need in the world of work. This needs to be a consistent feature of learning activities from S1 onwards. At present this is not the case, although there are appropriate vocational courses available to young people in the senior phase. There is also further work to do to ensure that young people have equitable access to consistently high quality learning experiences across the curriculum. School leaders and teaching staff should make certain that they design the curriculum in St Oswald's to meet the needs of all young people. This will assist young people as they prepare for life beyond compulsory education.
- All teachers provide timetabled opportunities for young people to choose activities in interesting and enjoyable wider achievement lessons. These include computing, music and tabletop role playing games. Teachers set interesting activities in these sessions, which allow young people to learn across a range of curricular areas. Staff encourage young people well to learn through play, collaboration and sharing. These lessons promote literacy, numeracy and social skills in a context of young people's choosing.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents report that their children are happy at school. Parents feel listened to by staff and know that they can take any issues to a member of the senior management team. This includes any problems which may occur in relation to the day to day running of the school or specialist facilities required to meet the needs of young people. When necessary, parents have been able to discuss changes in young people's subject choices with school leaders. They find the school to be open, understanding and flexible.
- Parents are happy with communication from the school and feel that this is a particular strength. The school contacts parents in a range of ways including phone calls, texts, letters, social media posts and through the school app. Parents believe they are unlikely to miss an important message.
- The Parent Council is about to be relaunched. Parents look forward to engaging with senior leaders in relation to some of their main issues.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All staff across the school have the wellbeing of the young people at the heart of their practice. Young people experience care and education in a dignified, respectful and calm way. Senior leaders and staff share the wellbeing needs of all young people effectively and with young people's best interests in mind. The school's approach to wellbeing underpins young people's ability to achieve success in their learning. Senior leaders communicate and reinforce school policies relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion very well. This is done through staff training, everyday conversations and a positive school culture. As a result, young people feel safe and have the confidence to tell an adult if they feel scared or threatened. Young people express their feelings freely and are confident that they will be listened to and their opinions valued.
- A variety of measures implemented by senior leaders are making the campus a safer place for young people and staff. The physical environment has been adapted well to cater for the needs of young people at the school. Recently, in response to changing school needs, senior leaders negotiated and funded environmental adaptations to increase young people's accessibility. The lowered kerbs, installation of hoists, physiotherapy room and area for dignified personal care are improving inclusion for all young people. Young people are achieving more in lessons because they spend less time journeying around the school. While most young people have additional health needs, the school supports very high standards of physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Staff have made a considerable effort to allow all young people to learn BSL. BSL lessons are very popular with almost all staff and young people. A few young people are progressing extremely well in learning this language. Almost all young people are using BSL during the school day with basic competency. Teachers and support staff are also able to undertake a qualification in BSL and there is a positive culture of using sign throughout the school. This is helping the majority of young people and staff gain important life skills. It is also helping them communicate better with hearing impaired young people within and beyond the school. Young people are rightly proud of their achievements in BSL.
- Staff have a very good understanding of their responsibilities from Getting it Right for Every Child. All young people have Wellbeing Assessment Plans (WAPs) in place which identify their communication needs and how to best support their learning. For example, a section in young people's plans identifies practical strategies for teachers to use. These strategies might include young people's preferences for font sizes and the proximity teachers need to be when talking to young people. This is resulting in almost all young people being more included and active in their learning.

- The wellbeing indicators are highlighted throughout the school. Staff use these well to identify and record young people's targets within their WAPs. All staff are aware of these plans, which are accessible and updated regularly. Teachers use these plans effectively to support young people to achieve their targets'. Young people are improving their health through meeting their personalised targets. Senior leaders have identified the need to include and integrate learning targets in all young people's WAPs, making them more specific and measurable.
- Where appropriate, young people have coordinated support plans (CSPs). All young people's targets are reviewed regularly. Senior leaders ensure progress meetings involve young people, parents and all relevant partners, and are within expected timescales. Senior leaders and partners consistently review if a CSP is needed for any young people who are care experienced. The school has effective processes for following legislative guidelines.
- The school is in the process of obtaining the bronze Rights Respecting Schools award. This is in conjunction with the co-located St Margaret Mary's school. Young people are 'rights ambassadors' and are learning to understand the concept of their own and others' rights. The work towards the award is integral in developing young people's understanding of the wellbeing indicators and children's rights.
- The school has devised very effective transition programmes for young people entering at S1. Senior leaders visit primary schools to meet learners and collaborate closely with staff and professionals to identify young people's support needs. Staff recognise that positive, nurturing relationships are central to learning and wellbeing. Before starting S1, young people get to know key staff who they can approach if they feel worried or have any questions. This nurturing approach helps young people feel more secure and able to cope better with any perceived challenges they face when moving into secondary school. This is reducing the anxiety of young people and helping them settle into their new settings well.
- Young people at the senior phase benefit from very effective support when leaving the school. School staff accompany leavers to visit their new destinations and help young people secure funding for individual learning accounts (ILAs). Young people receive assistance from staff to choose additional courses to attend. These additional courses enhance young people's skills and broaden their range of experiences. Leavers experience valuable further learning and are included in confidence building social groups.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Based on school data, overall, young people are making good progress in literacy and numeracy.

Literacy

- Young people are making good progress in literacy.
- In the BGE, most young people are developing their reading skills well. Most young people are reading texts independently, whilst where necessary, a few are read to by support staff. Most young people are taken to the well-stocked library in the school. All young people have a library card and can borrow books at any time. Most young people enjoy access to a diverse range of books. There is capacity for staff to make greater use of the library facility and further promote borrowing. Young people access and make good use of tablet computers in class, which results in young people who have difficulty accessing small text being able to enjoy reading in a more accessible format. At second and third levels, the majority of young people are able to complete cloze exercises. Most young people in the senior phase at National 3 can read for information. At National 4, most young people answer close reading questions with varying amounts of support.
- Almost all young people in the BGE are developing their writing by learning about and using adjectives to improve their descriptions. Most young people at first level can write in sentences. Most young people at second level are able to produce pieces of extended writing, with support. Overall, however, there is too much dependence on commercially produced worksheets during writing activities. Teachers need to find alternative interesting ways to engage young people in learning.
- Most young people in the BGE are able to contribute to question-and-answer sessions in class. Most young people respect each other's contributions to discussions and will apologise if they hurt someone else's feelings. They generally show care for each other.

Numeracy

- Most young people are making good progress with their numeracy skills.

Number, money and measure

- Across levels in the BGE, young people are able to recognise numbers and sequences, and identify what number comes next. Most young people are able to use number lines well to add and subtract figures. Young people can perform a range of money related tasks including grouping coins, working out cost, change and how much is left from simple

transactions. Young people are measuring and estimating the weight of objects in mathematics and using these skills effectively in home economics learning activities. A few young people need more challenge, using practical strategies, to improve the pace of their learning.

Shape, position and movement

- In the BGE young people identify shapes, patterns and sequences of shape. Young people are learning to use simple directions such as left and right. Young people at first level identify right angles and recognise the features of two-dimensional shapes. In the senior phase most young people calculate the area of regular three-dimensional objects and the volume of a cuboid. Most senior phase pupils use measures in real-life contexts by stating and using simple formulae expressed in words and symbols and apply basic scale factors. Teachers need to support learners to use these skills in classes across the curriculum to consolidate this learning.

Information handling

- Young people working at pre-early level are sorting and categorising objects with support. In the BGE most young people are able to identify first, next, between and after in a sequence. Young people working at first level are able to order days of the week and months of the year. A few young people are able to interpret data and present statistics with graphs and charts using spreadsheets. A few senior phase pupils can interpret bus timetables to plan a journey.

Attainment over time

- Most young people at both BGE and senior phase have attained well over time, taking into account their additional support needs and barriers to learning. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, most learners continued to progress very well during periods of remote learning, including at the senior phase. A few learners' attainment is impacted negatively by their barriers to learning, notably their level of engagement in learning activities. Senior leaders are also aware that attendance at college is not always accredited. They are working towards ensuring that all young people gain recognition for their achievements in the college setting.
- In the BGE, young people are making good progress, which teachers capture at an individual level. However, this is not yet being collated or analysed to ensure equity of opportunity for young people across the school. At the senior phase, most young people are attaining successfully a good range of National Qualifications and wider awards. Most young people attain unit awards at National 2, National 3 and National 4 with a few attaining at National 5. A few young people attain course awards. Almost all young people attain numeracy and literacy qualifications. The school can demonstrate that it is raising attainment over time at the senior phase with learners gaining increasing numbers of awards, often at higher levels, over the past three years. In the BGE, most young people's attainment is improving in a wide range of curriculum areas including information and communication technologies, art, religious education and home economics.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people are achieving well in a range of different ways in school. This includes a minority of young people participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the Caritas Award. Through their work on these awards, young people are developing teamwork, improving their confidence and becoming more responsible citizens. Commendably, there is close working between young people from St Oswald's and from St Margaret Mary's when working towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This is giving young people wider social experiences and improving their communication skills. The school also offers the Adult

Learning and Transition Group Award as an option for young people in S6. This is a Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Level 1 award, which helps young people prepare to be more independent in adulthood. The school offers the award at bronze and silver levels as an accredited way for young people to understand and plan for their future. Most young people in the senior phase are working towards either the bronze or the silver award.

- The school runs 'Wellbeing Wednesday' during the final period of Wednesday afternoon. Young people are able to choose from a range of special interest topics and activities, including role-playing games and coding. Through participating in these activities, young people are developing literacy and numeracy skills in real-life contexts, within a safe environment. These skills include mental arithmetic, two-dimensional navigation, decision-making, negotiation and teamwork.
- The pupil council meets regularly and each class group has a representative to speak on their behalf. Recent topics discussed have included attending local and authority-wide pupil voice events, children's rights, vaping and promoting the 'Sign of the Week'. Young people have also had an influence on St Oswald's lunch timings. Young people on the pupil council gather the views of their classmates and are developing their leadership, discussion and teamworking skills.
- Senior leaders hold spreadsheets of learners' experiences and update these for senior phase young people. These detail wider achievement experiences which young people have participated in, including school trips, performances and special events. As part of the current school improvement plan, staff are reviewing their monitoring and tracking systems. The school should ensure that this includes consideration of learners' achievements. These are currently listed in individual pupil files but cannot be collated or analysed easily to ensure equity of opportunity for young people.

Equity for all learners

- Most staff have a very good understanding of the additional support needs, barriers to learning and socio-economic backgrounds of young people at the school. They are aware of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and free school meal entitlement (FME) status of learners. Senior leaders can discuss how the overall profile of the school has changed over time. Staff aim to provide targeted and equitable support to help to address any challenges faced by young people. The school ensures that young people can access partner agencies to help them overcome any barriers they face. Partners help young people and their families to tackle health inequalities and social difficulties which may be due to economic circumstances. Staff work with parents and partners to ensure there is no cost for attending any clubs, events or trips. There is also a well-attended breakfast club which runs on a daily basis.
- Due to its locality, the school has a significant allocation of monies from the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). Much of this has been used to employ a drama therapist to work with young people to help them develop strategies and skills to manage their emotions. Parents have noticed a positive difference in their children as a result of being involved with this project. Young people have also observed that they are now able to cope better with challenging situations. Senior leaders should continue to monitor how well their PEF initiatives are improving outcomes for learners facing the most challenging economic circumstances. Families at the school have access to a financial inclusion support officer to help them access funding and any benefits they are entitled to.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.