St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust
Suite 21-26B
Imperial House
79-81 Hornby Street
Bury
BL9 5BN

Frequently Asked Questions

Why has St Cuthbert's been placed in Special Measures?

Ofsted found serious weaknesses in a number of areas of the school's work and concluded that improvements are needed urgently.

We know this will be disappointing and upsetting for many families. We accept the findings of the report and are focused on making the improvements that pupils deserve.

What does 'Special Measures' mean?

Special Measures is the most serious judgement Ofsted can give to a school.

It means inspectors found significant weaknesses and do not believe the school is currently providing the standard of education that pupils should receive. It also means the school will receive additional support and closer monitoring as improvements are made.

St Cuthbert's will remain open. Ofsted will return regularly to review progress and the school will receive support through the Department for Education's improvement arrangements.

Will my child be safe at school?

We understand why many parents and carers are asking this question.

Inspectors found that the school's safeguarding procedures were in place and being followed. However, they also found that not all pupils and staff consistently felt as safe, supported and listened to as they should.

We fully accept those findings. Every child should feel safe, valued and confident that concerns will be taken seriously. Improving this is our highest priority and work is already underway to strengthen the school's culture and ensure that concerns are identified and acted upon quickly.

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What does this mean for my child's education?

The report makes clear that not all pupils have been receiving the quality of education they should expect.

Improving teaching, behaviour, attendance and pupil outcomes is now the school's central focus. The new leadership team is working to address the issues identified by Ofsted and to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to succeed.

Some improvements will happen quickly. Others will take longer. We are committed to making lasting changes rather than short-term fixes.

What will change for pupils day-to-day?

Pupils will continue to attend school as normal.

Over time, families are likely to notice changes to routines, behaviour expectations, attendance processes and the support available for learning. These changes are intended to create a calmer, safer and more positive environment where pupils can focus on learning.

What is being done to improve the school?

Work to address the findings of the report has already started.

This includes strengthening leadership capacity, improving behaviour and attendance, raising expectations in classrooms, supporting staff and ensuring that pupils receive the education and support they need to achieve well.

The school will be supported by the Trust and external partners and progress will be reviewed regularly. An overview of the improvement plan will be provided during the parental engagement sessions on 23 and 25 November.

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Why wasn't this identified sooner?

We understand why some parents will ask this.

The report highlights issues that should have been addressed more effectively and more quickly. While changes had already begun before the inspection, Ofsted's findings show that they were not sufficient and that greater urgency was needed.

Our focus now is on learning from the report, being honest about where improvements are needed and ensuring that the right actions are taken.

Does the Trust accept responsibility?

Yes.

As the organisation responsible for overseeing the school, we accept our responsibility for ensuring that pupils receive a safe, high-quality education.

The report identifies areas where improvements are needed, and we are committed to providing the support, challenge and oversight required to secure those improvements.

How long will improvement take?

There is no quick fix.

Some changes can be made immediately, while others will take time to become fully embedded and show results. We know families want to see progress as quickly as possible, but lasting improvement requires consistent effort over time.

We will be open about the progress being made and the challenges that remain.

What happens next with Ofsted?

Ofsted will carry out monitoring visits to assess the progress being made.

Inspectors will review whether the actions being taken are leading to improvement and whether pupils are benefiting from those changes. Reports from these visits will be published and shared with families.

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Will exam results be affected?

We recognise that this will be a concern, particularly for families with children in examination year groups.

Pupils will continue to receive support and preparation for exams, and staff will remain focused on helping them achieve the best outcomes possible. The improvements being made are intended to strengthen pupils' experience in school and improve outcomes over time.

My child is happy at St Cuthbert's and is doing well. Does this report mean their experience isn't valid?

No.

Every child's experience of school is different. Many pupils enjoy school, work hard and achieve success at St Cuthbert's.

The report looks at the overall effectiveness of the school and whether all pupils are receiving the quality of education and support they should. It is possible for individual pupils to have positive experiences while the school still has significant weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Should I move my child to another school?

This is a decision that only families can make.

St Cuthbert's remains open and is committed to improving. We encourage parents and carers to read the report, ask questions, attend information events and make the decision they believe is right for their child.

What would you say to parents who feel angry or let down?

We understand why some parents feel this way.

Families place enormous trust in schools, and the report shows that there are areas where St Cuthbert's has fallen short of what pupils and parents should be able to expect.

We know that confidence will not be rebuilt through words alone. It will be rebuilt by listening, being open about our progress and delivering the improvements that pupils deserve.

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How will parents be kept informed?

We know families will want regular updates and opportunities to ask questions.

The school and Trust will provide updates through newsletters, the school website, parent meetings and other communications. We are committed to being open about both the progress being made and the work that still lies ahead.