

Northumberland Church of England Academy

Academy Road, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 9FZ

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Good |
| 16 to 19 study programmes | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions have not secured consistently good teaching and learning across key stages. Practice in the secondary phase is too variable.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance has had limited success. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is too high.
- Senior leaders have not developed truly successful strategies for joint working across phases and areas of responsibility. Sustained measures of identifying, sharing and building upon good practices and expertise are not embedded.
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils has a disruptive influence on other pupils' learning.
- Pupils in key stage 4 do not make consistently good progress across subjects. Weaknesses in literacy inhibit pupils' development.
- The most able pupils, particularly those in the secondary phase, do not reach the standards of which they are capable. The expectations of some teaching staff remain too low.
- Pupils who require additional support for special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make variable progress in literacy.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's inclusive and distinctively Christian ethos has a positive effect on pupils' spiritual, personal and social development.
- Staff work well with other agencies. They ensure that pupils and families benefit from additional services and external expertise.
- The personal, social and emotional needs of pupils who have physical, moderate, severe or complex SEN and/or disabilities are met effectively in The Centre.
- Strong leadership in primary and the early years provision has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics, especially, have risen sharply.
- Children, including two-year-olds, in early years now make strong progress from their starting points. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Students' outcomes on vocational courses in the sixth form are good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - tackling weaknesses in teaching and learning in secondary provision, and key stage 4 in particular, with a sharper focus and renewed vigour
 - developing a more strategic, whole-school approach to improving teaching and learning across campuses, especially with regard to literacy
 - clarifying and embedding leadership and management responsibilities so that a joined-up approach to school improvement is more tangible and actively enabled
 - identifying the barriers to improving pupils' attendance and tackling these more meticulously and effectively
 - eradicating the small amount of unacceptable behaviour that persists.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in secondary provision, by:
 - sharing and embedding those good practices that exist in the early years and primary phase, The Centre and in pockets of leadership, across phases and remits, in a clear and constructive manner
 - raising the expectations of secondary-phase staff with regard to what pupils are capable of doing and achieving
 - making sure that the quality of pupils' literacy skills, particularly across secondary subjects, is reliably good or better
 - offering sufficiently demanding tasks and challenge to the most able pupils
 - tailoring teaching and learning in reading and writing for those pupils who require support for SEN and/or disabilities with better precision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders' and managers' actions have not secured teaching and learning that are consistently good. Pupils' progress and outcomes, particularly in key stage 4, are too variable.
- The executive director and senior leaders do not have clear strategies in place to drive improvement in a holistic, school-wide sense. Good practices that exist, in leadership and teaching, are not identified and shared in a deliberate, sustainable manner. This means, for example, that the principal director of The Centre and recently appointed special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) for secondary and primary phases do not systematically pool their expertise for the benefit of pupils across campuses. Secondary-phase colleagues are not building effectively upon improvements driven by the principal directors for the primary phase and early years. This lack of joined-up thinking is inhibiting the school's rate of improvement.
- Leaders and managers have not secured good rates of attendance among pupils. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school, particularly in the secondary phase, remains significantly higher than the national average. Poor attendance has a detrimental effect on some pupils' progress and achievement.
- Senior leaders have not been fully effective in supporting staff and equipping them with the skills needed to eradicate poor behaviour. A small minority of pupils continue to present unacceptable or challenging behaviour and at times disrupt the learning of others. A small proportion of staff, pupils and parents share concerns about some pupils' behaviour.
- Several leaders new to post are already demonstrating considerable skill and diligence in driving improvement in their area of responsibility. The recently appointed principal director for the secondary phase, assessment leaders, pupil premium leaders and SENCOs, among others, have identified and begun addressing the correct priorities. It is, however, too soon to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts in terms of raising pupils' outcomes and improving teaching.
- SENCOs are new to post. They have identified a clear approach to improving outcomes for pupils who require additional support in their learning due to SEN and/or disabilities. They pay careful attention to the use of additional funding for pupils and are beginning to check frequently to ensure that it has the desired effect on pupils' outcomes. It is too soon to see whether their considerable efforts will bear fruit.
- Leaders make appropriate use of the catch-up funding for literacy and numeracy to support eligible Year 7 pupils. This has a positive impact on pupils' skills development. Progress information from 2016/17 is reported on the school's website. The spending plan for this academic year, however, is not included on the website.
- The principal director of primary provision and the principal director of early years have tackled areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection successfully. They support and challenge primary heads of campus effectively. As a result of leaders' combined efforts, standards in primary provision and early years have improved significantly since the previous inspection.

- Leaders use the additional funding for sport and primary physical education well. Pupils understand the benefits of physical fitness and endeavour in developing healthy bodies and minds.
- Differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others continue to reduce across subjects and year groups. This is due, in no small part, to recently appointed pupil premium leaders who target and evaluate the pupil premium funding meticulously. Where pockets of difference persist, leaders have appropriate and detailed improvement plans in place.
- Leaders want all pupils to succeed. They are passionate about preparing pupils well for later life and developing successful adults of the future. Leaders see a rich curriculum as central to this vision and therefore devise opportunities and design courses and activities carefully to meet the needs and interests of pupils. A myriad of after-school clubs and exciting trips entices pupils and broadens their horizons.
- Leaders and governors have established a warm, welcoming ethos in this distinctively Christian environment. The school's central 'light' values of love, inclusivity, goodness, hope and truth are its guiding principles. Leaders weave pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively across the school day. Leaders' endeavours in this area of their work are tangible and noteworthy strengths.
- Leaders have established strong links with external agencies and alternative providers. They make sure that good and regular communication brings forth the correct support for individual pupils and/or families.
- Representatives of the Diocese of Newcastle and Durham, support, challenge and guide leaders well. Frequent visits to school mean that the diocese has a true and accurate picture of the school's performance.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a well-developed understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are committed to driving improvement in the school and know precisely where strengths and weaknesses lie. This is because governors are uncompromising in their challenge to leaders. They probe information presented to them and challenge leaders, robustly, to ensure that they have a secure understanding of the school's effectiveness in the national arena. Governors are in no doubt, for example, that provision in key stage 4 needs to improve rapidly.
- Governors visit school regularly, attending events and meeting with leaders at all levels. They see for themselves the nature and effectiveness of the provision, developing thereby a good awareness of day-to-day practice. Governors know through such first-hand experience what it feels like to be a pupil here.
- Governors are committed to improving their skills and knowledge further. They are active in seeking development opportunities to ensure that they have an up-to-date understanding of educational matters, such as safeguarding and national directives.
- Governors bring a wide-ranging and useful set of skills to the table. Skills are now used judiciously to monitor the work of leaders. Several governors, although highly skilled, are new to the governing body and so have had a limited effect on raising pupils' achievement in their area of responsibility.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders' work to protect and care for pupils is a strength of the school. The culture of tolerance and respect aids effective partnership working with external agencies and families. This enhances pupils' personal safety and well-being.
- Pupils are well versed in the manner in which information technology and online practices may help and/or hinder them. The benefits and drawbacks of social media, for example, are explored thoroughly. Pupils therefore understand how to keep themselves safe online and how to seek advice or help if they have concerns.
- Leaders make sure that all adults have regular updates on the protection of pupils. Staff therefore know how to spot signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm or neglect. Staff know how and with whom their concerns should be raised.
- Adults are mindful of the potential risks that some pupils living in modern Britain may face. They are appropriately trained and vigilant in terms of protecting pupils from sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders and staff working in The Centre with the most vulnerable pupils who have severe, moderate and/or complex SEN and/or disabilities have appropriately enhanced safeguarding and child protection training where required. This contributes to pupils' good health, safe-keeping and well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across key stages. Strengths in The Centre, early years and primary provision are not replicated across the secondary phase. Pupils' progress, therefore, is too variable.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the secondary phase varies across subjects and classes. Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve are too low. Not all teachers use assessment effectively to make sure that learning tasks match pupils' needs and abilities closely. Staff do not promote pupils' literacy skills consistently well across the curriculum. These weaknesses in teaching inhibit some pupils' progress. Specifically, pupils in key stage 4 do not make the progress that should be expected of them across subjects.
- Leaders and staff across primary campuses and secondary provision do not always manage the learning needs of pupils who require additional support for their learning effectively. Tasks are not modified in a fitting manner, or support falls short of developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding appropriately. Pupils who require support for their SEN and/or disabilities therefore make variable progress in reading and writing in particular.
- Not all teachers, particularly in the secondary phase, plan tasks that challenge and stretch the most able pupils suitably. The most able pupils make stronger progress when learning tasks really test their skills of reasoning and problem solving, engage them and make them think more deeply about their learning. Such effective practices are not yet embedded.

- Strengths are evident in the quality of teaching and learning in The Centre. Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of pupils' individual, and often complex, needs. Staff here use assessment information and their in-depth knowledge of each pupil carefully to ensure that learning tasks support and challenge pupils appropriately. Most pupils who have moderate, complex or severe SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching and learning in the primary phase have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers use assessment information more effectively to plan appropriate tasks and learning opportunities for pupils. They explain new concepts carefully and address misconceptions in a timely manner. Staff across primary campuses now use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and to promote a depth of learning, in reading and mathematics particularly.
- Teaching and learning in early years are good. Teachers use a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading skills. Staff articulate sounds carefully and insist that children do too. This strength is contributing to good progress and outcomes for children in early years and pupils in key stage 1 in terms of reading.
- Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Teachers have a clear understanding of individual students' interests and capabilities. Consequently, work and learning opportunities are targeted appropriately and students make good progress, especially on vocational courses.
- Teachers set homework in accordance with school policies. Homework, for the most part, is welcomed by parents and appropriate to pupils' learning needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The large majority of parents agree that their children are protected, happy and well cared for. One parent's view encapsulated the view of several: 'I feel happy knowing my child is safe and well looked after at school... if I do have any concerns, they are dealt with appropriately.'
- The personal, social, emotional and spiritual development of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. Staff understand the complex needs of a significant proportion of pupils, including those in The Centre, well. School leaders work with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met in a sensitive and constructive manner. This means that most pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good or better progress in these areas of their development.
- Across the primary provision, heads of campus have established warm and enabling environments. Staff support pupils to treat others with a positive regard as they work cooperatively with each other within and across campuses. This builds tolerance and develops respectful attitudes. Primary-phase pupils take great pride in managing a wide range of school duties and demonstrate responsible approaches to learning and their work. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Year 6 pupils, for example, display a zest for transferring to the secondary-phase campus.

- Staff support the small proportion of pupils who attend the local authority's alternative provision appropriately. Good systems of communication enable staff to make sure that pupils are safe and well cared for, and receiving the additional support that they need. The welfare of this group of pupils is high on leaders' and teachers' agendas.
- Pupils are appreciative of the wealth of extra-curricular opportunities available across campuses. Pupils learn from and enjoy excursions within local, British and more global communities. Wide-ranging after-school clubs and experiences also broaden pupils' horizons and are beginning to raise aspirations more consistently. The many sporting opportunities on offer promote skills of stamina, teamwork, physical fitness and healthy options. Pupils' self-confidence and knowledge and understanding of the world they inhabit are effectively developed.
- Most secondary-phase pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and work. They are respectful of their teachers, known adults and visitors. Pupils conduct themselves well in and around the campus, responding promptly and politely to requests from staff. At times, however, particularly where teaching is not as strong as it should be, pupils' attitudes deteriorate. Occasionally, this gets in the way of their or other's learning.
- The combined cadet force continues to work with and support pupils in their skills development. Cadets typically foster skills of loyalty, courage, discipline and integrity in their mentoring of secondary-phase pupils.
- Pupils across campuses talk knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe online. They are well acquainted with the benefits and potential pitfalls of information technology and social media. Consequently, they are well prepared to navigate this aspect of life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Mostly, pupils behave well in and out of lessons, moving sensibly around campuses. A small but significant minority of pupils, however, do not demonstrate consistently good behaviour and attitudes to learning. This is especially the case where teachers are transitional or learning tasks fail to capture pupils' interests. A small proportion of staff, pupils and parents agree that sometimes pupils' behaviour is less than good and pupils' learning at times is disrupted.
- Too many pupils are regularly absent from school. Overall rates of attendance, in both primary and secondary years, are below national comparatives. Persistent absence in the secondary phase has risen over time and is above the national average. Leaders have taken several actions to tackle issues of poor attendance, but these have not led to the desired improvements. Not all pupils, therefore, currently benefit in their learning and progress from regular attendance.
- Pupils who attend off-site provision make secure progress in their academic, personal, social and emotional development. Good collaboration and joint working between providers ensure that pupils' behavioural needs are met effectively.
- The school's Christian values promote tolerance and acceptance and these are usually borne out in daily practices. Staff and pupils, for the most part, have warm, mutually respectful relationships across the school's campuses. Lively, friendly interactions are

evident. Polite, courteous exchanges are commonplace.

- Pupils are proud to wear the school's uniform, from Nursery up to the end of key stage 4. Many pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school and have 'lots of friends here'. One parent's comment captured the views of others: 'It is a great pleasure to see them go to school each day with a spring in their step.'
- The proportion of pupils excluded either permanently or for a fixed term is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. Pupils in key stage 4, in particular, do not make good progress across subjects. Key stage 4 outcomes in 2016 and 2017 were well below the national averages. This is because teaching, learning and assessment, in the secondary years specifically, are not consistently good.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stage 4 have remained significantly below national averages over time. Inspectors found, however, that current pupils are making better progress across subjects. This is especially evident in key stage 3. Recent improvements in pupils' progress and outcomes are due to carefully targeted support and increased challenge for teachers, put in place by recently appointed leaders. Outcomes in the secondary phase overall, however, require improvement.
- The most able pupils do not make consistently good progress from their above-average starting points to achieve the standards of which they are capable. This is especially the case in the secondary years, where some teachers' expectations remain too low.
- Pupils who require additional support because of their SEN and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress from their different starting points. Progress for this group of pupils in reading and writing, particularly, is inconsistent.
- Overall progress made by disadvantaged pupils throughout the school is at least as good as that of their peers. This does not always enable disadvantaged pupils to catch up with others nationally, however, due to their lower starting points.
- The large majority of primary-phase pupils are now making good or better progress in their learning, particularly in reading and mathematics. From starting points that are below those typical for their age, pupils catch up with others nationally to reach standards in line with, or better than, national averages. This is due to improvements in teaching and learning. In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards and greater depths of learning in reading and mathematics was slightly above national averages. Work in books and current rates of progress demonstrate that these improved outcomes are being maintained.
- Children in early years make good progress from their below-typical starting points. The proportion of Reception children leaving early years with a good level of development has risen significantly over time. Outcomes are now slightly above the national average. This denotes good progress for early years children.
- Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in their acquisition of phonics knowledge and skills. Pupils' outcomes over time are consistently in line with, or better than, the national average. In 2017, for example, 83% of pupils reached the expected standard

in the phonics check. This means that most pupils are well prepared for the reading demands of the Year 2 curriculum.

- Students in the sixth form make good progress. Outcomes for the vocational element are above the national averages. Progress in GCSE mathematics and English re-sits, in 2016, was above the national average. School information and inspection evidence show that current students are making similarly good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. Leaders focus on the correct priorities in their work with staff, parents and children, and in drawing up improvement plans. Leaders know precisely where strengths and weaker areas of practice lie; they identify and tackle these with diligence across campuses, including in The Centre.
- A large majority of children enter the early years with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Particular barriers to learning for children are weaknesses in speech, language and communication skills. Owing to strengths in leadership, improved teaching and learning and carefully targeted support, however, most children since the previous inspection have made good or better progress from their starting points.
- Two-year-olds make good progress from the outset. Children's welfare needs are met effectively. Adults treat this youngest group of children with care, kindness and dignity. They focus specifically on the prime areas of learning in the early years curriculum to ignite children's curiosity and build their capacity to form productive relationships. Staff also work well with the two-year-olds' parents, forging strong links between home and school.
- Staff in the early years across campuses now have a firmer focus on developing children's basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This increased effort and challenge have contributed successfully to the heightened proportion of children making good progress against the early learning goals. In 2016 and again in 2017, 73% of children reached a good level of development. This demonstrates a significant rise in children's outcomes since the previous inspection to slightly above the national average.
- Leaders have used the additional funding for disadvantaged children in early years effectively. Additional support, in the form of speech and language expertise and/or extra time with adults, is providing challenge and support where needs are identified. Gaps between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged children and those of others, therefore, continue to reduce.
- Current cohorts of children in early years across campuses are also making good or better progress. Teaching staff have had access to good-quality training and regular joint-working opportunities to share good practice. Adults' assessments are accurate. They make careful use of the wide range of good-quality indoor and outdoor resources to enhance children's learning. The large majority of children, therefore, are well prepared to meet the demands of the next stage in their learning.
- Children are safe and behaviour is generally good. Positive relationships with staff mean that children listen respectfully to adults and follow instructions promptly. This results in a happy, constructive learning ethos and orderly environment.

- Historical differences in the quality of children’s learning journals are much reduced. This means that staff and parents share a clearer picture of the extent and depth of children’s achievements and progress towards the early learning goals.
- Strengths in teaching and learning in Nursery, particularly, are built upon well in Reception to maximise opportunities for children’s development. At times, some children’s progress in writing is slower than in other areas of learning, but staff and leaders are tackling the right issues appropriately. Recent improvements in writing, especially for boys, can be seen in both Reception and Nursery.
- Recognised as a strength in the previous inspection, children in The Centre continue to make good or better progress from their starting points because of the honed skills of staff. Effective liaison with external experts, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and other healthcare professionals, ensures that children’s needs are met successfully.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form is strong. Leaders have a firm grasp of the quality of teaching and learning and understand precisely where strengths and weaker areas of practice lie. They use strengths identified to build capacity. Swift and decisive action to address any underperformance is taken where needs arise. Overall, provision in the sixth form is good.
- Leaders recently undertook a thorough review of the sixth-form curriculum. They have put in place a pathway model that is better suited to meeting the needs of students. The rationale for the curriculum is clear, convincing and appropriate.
- Leaders and staff support students effectively in selecting programmes of study that are best suited to students’ needs and abilities. Such careful scrutiny and consideration of each individual’s pathway place students firmly at the heart of the sixth form’s work and are central to its processes.
- Students are proud of their school. They are appreciative of the personalised pathways and experiences they are offered. Students speak highly of the support they receive from their teachers. They enjoy a wide range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills, such as mentoring and offering support to younger pupils. Consequently, students display consistently positive and conscientious approaches towards their learning. They demonstrate respectful and tolerant attitudes towards others.
- Requirements for the 16 to 19 programmes of study are met. A wide and varied enrichment programme enhances students’ experiences. Careers fairs, university visits, apprenticeship talks and life-skills programmes contribute successfully to students being well prepared for their next steps in learning and life beyond school.
- All Year 12 students experience a work placement. This helps to prepare them for the world of work. Students talk with enthusiasm about their positive experiences.
- A large proportion of sixth-form students complete the extended project qualification. Many achieve the top grades. This helps students to develop their independent learning skills and prepares them well for university study and beyond.

- Provision for careers guidance, advice and information is a strength of the sixth form. Links with local businesses and universities, as well as regular sessions with the careers adviser, ensure that students feel well informed and supported. Most, therefore, are well prepared for their next steps.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress in re-sit GCSEs in mathematics and English. In 2016, the progress that students made was above that of similar pupils nationally.
- Students' progress in the vocational element is above the national average, improving again in 2017. A higher proportion of students are entered for vocational courses compared with academic courses. High aspirations and strengths in teaching and learning are securing particularly good outcomes for students on vocational courses.
- Students do not perform as well on academic courses in comparison with vocational courses. Weaknesses in literacy continue to pose barriers for students. However, since the previous inspection, the proportion of students achieving grades A*–B has improved. As a result, a higher proportion of students are now going on to university. Leaders are fully aware of the differences in students' vocational and academic outcomes and have clearly defined strategies in place to address this.
- Although attendance is good over time in the sixth form, there has been a dip in attendance this academic year. Leaders understand the need to keep a close eye on this area of their responsibility and have developed clear plans to address issues that they have correctly identified. Improvements are already evident.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 135886 |
| Local authority | Northumberland |
| Inspection number | 10036574 |

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

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| Type of school | All-through |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 2,561 |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 119 |
| Appropriate authority | The board of trustees |
| Chair | John Brearley |
| Executive director | Andrew Day |
| Telephone number | 01670 816111 |
| Website | www.ncea.org.uk |
| Email address | andrew.day@ncea.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 29–30 September 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about Year 7 catch-up funding on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Northumberland Church of England Academy is an 'all-through' school, based on six campuses in Ashington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Lynemouth.
- The school is much larger than similar schools of its type. It comprises five primary campuses for pupils aged three to 11, three of which also accommodate two-year-olds, and a secondary campus for learners from age 11, which includes a sixth form for 16–

19-year-olds and a centre for pupils aged two to 19 that accommodates up to 100 pupils who have profound and/or multiple learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties.

- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups or for whom English is an additional language compared with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils with a statement of SEN or an education, health and care plan, and those who are supported for their SEN and/or disabilities, are well above the national average.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards for secondary schools, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 4.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards for primary schools, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 2.
- A very small number of pupils attend the local authority's alternative provision at Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited each campus to observe teaching, learning and assessment across subjects and year groups. Several observations were conducted in partnership with the school's senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the executive director, senior and middle leaders, teaching staff, governors (including the chair of the governing body), and the director of education for the Diocese of Newcastle and Durham.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation and information, including policy documentation, minutes of governing body meetings, improvement plans, self-evaluation statements, and monitoring, performance management and assessment information. Inspectors also scrutinised behaviour, attendance and safety logs.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally in lessons and at breaktimes across key stages and formally to groups of pupils at each campus. Inspectors listened to pupils read and reviewed a range of pupils' work across subjects and year groups. No pupils responded to Ofsted's survey.
- The responses of 167 members of staff to Ofsted's questionnaire were considered. Inspectors also spoke with staff formally and informally across both days of the inspection.
- Parents' views were considered via the 68 responses to Ofsted's free-text service and the 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day across campuses.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
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