

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Address: Shieldfield Green, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE2 1XA

Unique reference number (URN): 108493

Inspection report: 10 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ **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.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils, pupils known to social care and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils' individual needs are identified quickly and, when necessary, after a settling-in period. Leaders develop, deliver and rigorously review bespoke packages of support. They work in partnership with a high number of external professionals and agencies to ensure pupils' individual needs are very well met.

Staff are highly trained in assessing and meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt the curriculum to ensure the help pupils receive matches their carefully crafted support plans. Parents and carers are involved fully in regular reviews of their children's progress and provision. Leaders use additional funding wisely and impactfully to provide additional staff support, targeted teaching activities, subsidised educational visits and extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged pupils.

The school develops speaking and listening, communication and language skills extremely well for all pupils, especially for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Leaders go the extra mile to support pupils and families known to social care. The help they provide supports pupils emotionally and academically. All pupils are fully included at this haven of education.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal, social and health education curriculum is highly effective for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

Many pupils arrive from other parts of the world in the middle of the school year. They quickly become steeped in fundamental British values and British culture. This learning is supported effectively by well-chosen texts linked to the school's values, which include respect, forgiveness and perseverance.

The curriculum is enriched by the school's cooperative work with a wide range of external agencies. These agencies reinforce key messages on issues, such as racism, staying safe from both on- and offline abuse, knife crime and first aid. Themed weeks deepen pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, managing money and the world of work. Pupils gain first-hand experience of each other's culture, faith and heritage through educational visits to places of worship in the locality. Parents and carers share information about their own cultures and faiths, such as Ethiopian Christianity, willingly and appropriately in school.

Pupils' characters are developed deeply throughout their time at the school. Their aspirations, knowledge and skills are raised through curriculum-based workshops at local universities, theatres and museums. Pupils enthusiastically fulfil leadership roles, such as when leading assemblies, buddying younger pupils and serving on the pupil panel. Relationships and health education is very effective. Pupils show genuine kindness and empathy towards others. They speak with knowledge and confidence about respecting

everyone equally in their highly diverse community. Pupils' mantra is, 'We are all different here, but we all get along together.'

The school goes above and beyond to care, guide and nurture its pupils. Leaders are successful in their aim for pupils to be confident, caring, active citizens, equipped with the knowledge, values and personal qualities needed to thrive and contribute positively to society.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 6 are rising year-on-year in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, these were close to or above the national average last year. In writing, outcomes are improving steadily. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well, matching the performance of disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is bolstered by their deep knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables. Pupils' results in the Year 4 multiplication tables check are significantly above average every year.

The school's highly mobile population, and the early stage of English language acquisition for many pupils impact on outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Over time, not enough pupils achieve the expected standard. However, by the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve the expected standard in reading.

Pupils' books show that, typically, they progress well through the wider curriculum. Overall, pupils are well prepared for secondary school by the time they leave.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils' attendance is improving as a result of leaders' actions. Overall, it is currently close to the national average. The attendance of some groups of pupils, for example refugees, is well above the national average. A very small number of pupils have higher levels of absence. Leaders' innovative approaches have been successful in addressing the reasons for these and driving improvements. Too many pupils are late for school in the morning. These pupils miss some very important messages and learning at the beginning of the school day.

Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high from the early years to Year 6. Pupils respond exceedingly well to the school's clear routines, rewards and sanctions. Rewards and consequences are understood by pupils, but staff also focus on praise and on teaching pupils why positive choices matter. Incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying or discrimination, are very rare. Pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning in lessons. They behave well during the less structured times of the school day too. Lunch in the dining hall, for example, is a sociable occasion for friends to sit, eat and talk together. Pupils respect each other and staff. Visitors are greeted warmly.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum, from early years to Year 6, is sequenced well. Individual subject curriculums include the small steps needed for progress, key questions, important vocabulary and the end points pupils should achieve. All subject areas are brought alive by educational visits, visitors and content that is linked to pupils' cultures and heritage.

Typically, lessons are purposeful. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They check pupils' understanding, identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and adjust their teaching accordingly. Subject-specific vocabulary is taught clearly, such as 'numerator, denominator' and 'improper fraction' in mathematics. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other barriers to learning receive carefully adapted provision that removes these barriers.

Leaders maintain oversight of the quality of education. They have implemented new approaches to teaching writing and speaking skills to improve pupils' outcomes further. Reading is at the heart of the curriculum and leaders have ensured all staff are trained to deliver a new phonics programme. On occasion, early readers in key stages 1 and 2 read books that do not allow them to practise the sounds they have learned. When this happens, pupils' phonics progress slows. In mathematics, pupils are taught well to have immediate recall of number facts, including multiplication tables facts.

Early years

Expected standard 

The early years curriculum places a strong focus on communication and interaction. Staff model speaking in whole sentences slowly and clearly. They give children time to think and to answer. Teaching is planned carefully to match each child's unique starting point and to support progress.

Early reading, writing and mathematics are prioritised. Children progress well through the school's new phonics scheme. They enjoy listening to, and taking part in, stories, rhymes and songs. Staff provide plentiful opportunities for children to improve their fine motor skills, ready for writing. Staff support children to hold mark-making implements well and most children in the Reception Year use a pencil correctly. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to practise forming letters and numbers in tasks led by staff and during play-based activities.

There are respectful relationships between staff, children and their families. Children, including those who have just joined and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, feel safe and secure. Children behave well in the early years. They stay engaged in their learning for extended periods of time. Staff know children well, identify their needs quickly and provide daily targeted support to help children keep up or catch up. Most children are ready for Year 1 by the end of Reception.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a deep understanding of the school's context. They use this to educate and care for pupils well. Leaders are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas that

require further development. They set priorities appropriately and take actions that support progress towards these.

Leaders give staff training high priority. For example, all staff are trained to deliver newly developed speaking skills and writing projects effectively. Leaders, including governors, consider the workload and wellbeing of staff before new initiatives are implemented.

Governors know the school thoroughly. They meet their statutory duties, including overseeing the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding systems. Governors provide support and challenge to leaders on their work towards the school's strategic goals. In some instances, for example on pupils' punctuality, this challenge is not sufficiently robust.

Leaders, including governors, ensure the school's finances are used wisely. They have a secure knowledge of the impact of additional funding. For example, leaders use their checks on pupils' progress to assess exactly how well groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language, benefit from individual initiatives.

Leaders understand their responsibility to act in pupils' best interests and support staff wellbeing. They ensure that staff, pupils and their families are included respectfully and fairly in all aspects of school life.

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

This small, inner-city school extends a warm and caring welcome to all pupils and their families. The school provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils can learn and succeed. Pupils enjoy school life, behave extremely well and love to learn. Overall, they attend well. Recent improvements to the curriculum and teaching are supporting pupils to achieve increasingly well. At breaktimes, the school's playground resounds with the 29 different languages spoken by its pupils. Many pupils arrive with little or no English and leave Year 6 with a high degree of proficiency. Barriers to learning, such as language and communication, are very effectively addressed so that all pupils benefit fully from the school's offer.

Pupils' individual differences are acknowledged, respected and celebrated. Pupils learn from each other and from each other's heritage. The school's book stock has been carefully chosen to address issues that pupils may meet, or may have already met, locally, nationally or internationally. This helps to prepare pupils well for life beyond school. The curriculum is enhanced greatly by educational visits. Pupils meet poets and authors at local theatres. They explore Victorian tunnels used as air-raid shelters during the Second World War. Pupils learn about computing at a university, sing at the cathedral and visit places of worship, such as mosques and gurdwaras, to strengthen their knowledge of world religions. Pupils become steeped in the culture of the local area.

Relationships are developed well. Pupils are highly respectful towards each other, and instances of poor behaviour, or bullying, are very rare. Leaders and staff support pupils and their families skilfully. Many pupils arrive and leave in the middle of the school year. They

thrive because of the individual and bespoke support they receive. Pupils' academic and social needs are met well and they develop a sense of belonging.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the new phonics programme is fully embedded and effectively delivered, so that pupils learn to read as quickly and accurately as possible.
 - Leaders should continue to strengthen their attendance systems and procedures to ensure pupils' punctuality improves.
 - Leaders should ensure that children in the early years have sufficient opportunities to practise the basic knowledge and skills needed to form letters and numbers correctly.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jane McFadyen.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector spoke with the school's achievement partner, the diocesan director of education, the local authority's head of school effectiveness and governors, including the chair of governors during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in March 2023.

The school serves a very diverse community. A much higher proportion of pupils join and leave the school at times other than the start and end of the school year than is seen nationally. Many of these pupils arrive from other countries.

Headteacher: Sandra Furno

Lead inspector:

Belita Scott, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspector:

Gemma Jeynes, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

135

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

176

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

59.20%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.70%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

27.41%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	49%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	35%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	76%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	47%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	65%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	62%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	59%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	82%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	53%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	39%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	57%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	31%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	27%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	53%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	71%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	36%	60%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	57%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	79%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	62%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45%	59%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	39%	68%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	69%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	31%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	27%	66%	-39 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	80%	-34 pp
2022/23 (final)	36%	78%	-42 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	53%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	78%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	78%	-31 pp
2022/23 (final)	55%	77%	-23 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	79%	81%	-2 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	79%	-18 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	45%	79%	-34 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	7.3%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.5%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	23.8%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	18.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	23.1%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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