

Churchill Community College

Churchill Street, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear NE28 7TN

Unique reference number (URN): 108641

Monitoring inspection report:

9 June 2026

At the most recent graded inspection, in January 2024, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

The school has not acted quickly enough to address the decline in standards since the previous inspection. This means that much of the action that the school has taken is new and its impact is not evident. The school's actions must address the root cause of underperformance and ensure that school improvement plans address the entrenched weaknesses across the school.

Aspects of the school's curriculum lack ambition. Until very recently, the curriculum has not ensured that pupils are challenged to learn a deep body of knowledge across all curriculum subjects. This contributes to too few pupils achieving the qualifications that they are capable of and that are needed to successfully progress to an appropriate next stage of education, training or employment. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum across all subjects is ambitious for all pupils.

Over time, teaching has contributed weakly to the progress that pupils make. Teachers do not check consistently that pupils have understood what they have been taught before they move on. Existing strategies to address gaps in pupil knowledge have been unsuccessful. The school needs to ensure that teachers are well trained and supported to implement strategies that will help pupils to know and remember more of the curriculum.

Pupils at the early stages of reading do not receive the support they need to address the gaps they have in their phonics knowledge. As a result, these pupils do not improve their reading quickly enough. The school should ensure that pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge receive appropriate support that addresses these gaps and supports them to become fluent and confident readers.

Some support plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) include strategies that are not closely matched to pupils' individual needs. This means that the support some pupils receive to access the curriculum is not as effective as it could be. The school should ensure that strategies in support plans for pupils with SEND are closely matched to pupils' needs.

Some pupils, including those with SEND or some disadvantaged pupils, are absent from school on a persistent basis. These pupils miss too much learning, and they have gaps in their knowledge. The school should ensure that it analyses attendance trends and acts quickly to secure improved levels of attendance across the school.

The implementation of the 'learning for life' curriculum is inconsistent. Although new curriculum plans are in place, teaching strategies do not ensure that pupils have a strong understanding of what they are taught. This means that some pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school needs to ensure that teaching helps pupils to remember the important curriculum content that they are taught.

Governors' oversight of the school is weak. They are not providing leaders with enough support and challenge. The improvements they have enacted have been implemented too slowly. Governors must ensure that they have relevant training to gain the skills and knowledge they require to support and challenge school leaders rigorously to bring about change.

Leaders and governors are taking effective action to improve the school but continued work is needed to remove the special measures designation.

The school may appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any further monitoring inspection we carry out.

During the monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Inclusion
- Curriculum and teaching
- Achievement
- Personal development and wellbeing

Leadership and governance

With increased support from the North East Learning Trust (NELT) and a sharp focus on key priorities, leaders have accelerated the pace of improvement at Churchill Community College. NELT has increased the leadership capacity within the school to strengthen expectations and develop senior and middle leaders further.

Leaders from across different areas of the school work more effectively together and share a clear understanding of the school's priorities. Leaders have implemented an appropriate programme of professional learning that aligns closely with their priorities. Subject leaders benefit from working in curriculum networks with colleagues across NELT. This work is beginning to improve the consistency of the curriculum and teaching. Pupils' achievement

is starting to improve. Attendance rates have increased markedly, and pupils' behaviour has also improved.

The school continues to face challenges arising from significant structural issues with the building. However, leaders have worked successfully and with tenacity to secure a completely new school building. The process for the school to join NELT formally as a member of the multi-academy trust is underway.

The interim executive board (IEB) governs the school effectively. Its members bring a wide range of skills and experience. Leaders evaluate the school's work rigorously and provide the IEB with regular, accurate information about the school's progress. In turn, the IEB offers a high level of professional challenge. The IEB knows the school well.

Leaders recognise that further work is required to eradicate inconsistencies and ensure that standards are consistently high across all aspects of the school's work. Their improvement plans are detailed and sharply focused. Most staff and representatives from the local authority recognise the positive impact of the trust's work and consider the school to be well led. Many parents and carers also appreciate the improvements that leaders have made. Leaders acknowledge that they need to do more to build confidence among some stakeholders during this period of transition.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a clear priority for leaders. Leaders work closely together to identify and address the barriers that some pupils face. This includes pupils known to children's social care and young carers. Leaders review pupils' needs regularly and use this information to provide appropriate support. They have strengthened the systems used to identify, assess and review the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers receive detailed and clear information about pupils with SEND. Leaders recognise that there remains some variation in how effectively teachers adapt the curriculum and their teaching to enable pupils with SEND to access learning consistently and achieve well.

Leaders continue to provide staff with appropriate training to increase their expertise and understanding of pupils' needs. For example, staff have received training on trauma-informed practice. This is being used well to help some vulnerable pupils feel safe and ready to learn. Leaders have strengthened their work with other professionals to ensure that pupils' needs are understood and met.

Leaders understand the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. Since the previous monitoring inspection, they have strengthened support for reading and ensured that pupils in key stage 4 receive appropriate academic support and mentoring. This work is beginning to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to remove financial barriers and increase disadvantaged pupils' participation in the school's wider offer. This enables more pupils to benefit from the increasing number of opportunities that support their social and cultural development.

Curriculum and teaching

Leaders continue to embed the ambitious curriculum introduced by NELT. Drawing on approaches common across NELT schools, they have established clear expectations for teaching that are beginning to improve the consistency of pupils' experiences of learning. For example, lessons now routinely begin with retrieval activities that pupils find helpful and that support them in recalling prior learning. Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their new learning through independent tasks, and expectations for participation in lessons have increased.

Recent training for teachers has focused on how to identify gaps in knowledge, check pupils' understanding and adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs. While there is some effective teaching across the school, leaders recognise that inconsistencies remain. The school has adopted the trust's quality assurance processes to identify these quickly and to provide appropriate support where needed.

Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have further developed support for pupils who need to secure the foundations in reading. Capacity to deliver this support has increased, enabling more pupils, including those in key stage 4, to access targeted intervention. Additional support is now in place to improve pupils' reading fluency. Leaders have also introduced support for pupils with gaps in their basic mathematical knowledge. Although this is at an early stage of implementation, its initial impact is positive. Leaders recognise that some pupils also need support with foundational writing skills, including handwriting and accuracy.

Focused training is helping to improve staff expertise in supporting pupils with SEND. While inconsistencies remain, staff have a better understanding of strategies to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. Pupils with education, health and care plans generally receive appropriate support.

Achievement

Pupils' achievement is beginning to improve. For example, in 2025, the proportion of pupils achieving grade 4 and above in GCSE English and mathematics at the end of Year 11 was close to the national average. In these subjects, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is beginning to narrow. In examinations at the end of key stage 5, students make progress in line with the national average. Year 11 pupils and sixth-form students are beginning to secure increasingly ambitious destinations. Leaders recognise that variation in attainment across subjects and phases remains.

Pupils who access additional support for reading are beginning to catch up with their peers. This support focuses on developing pupils' phonics knowledge, reading fluency and accuracy and is delivered by an increased team of trained staff. Targeted work to help a

small group of pupils secure their understanding of number has begun and is showing early signs of positive impact. Leaders intend to expand this support further. Leaders recognise that their work to strengthen pupils' foundational writing skills is at an earlier stage of development. This is reflected in the variable quality and accuracy of pupils' writing across the curriculum.

As teaching and support continue to improve, pupils with SEND are beginning to make better progress. For example, pupils' work shows that they are increasingly able to produce sustained pieces of work independently over time.

Personal development and wellbeing

Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have taken appropriate action to improve pupils' personal development and wellbeing by introducing a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Younger pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the offer, which includes sport, performing arts, curriculum enrichment such as in science and technology, and the opportunity to work towards an additional qualification in the arts. Leaders have deliberately scheduled many of these activities during the school day to ensure that all pupils can participate, including young carers with additional responsibilities at home. The offer of these activities is contributing to improvements in pupils' behaviour at social times. Leaders recognise the need to monitor participation more rigorously and to increase engagement further so that more pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from the school's wider offer.

The recently introduced house system is having a positive impact, particularly on younger pupils. House competitions and rewards motivate pupils and encourage greater engagement in school life. Leaders have developed a programme of activities to broaden pupils' cultural awareness, including visits to local landmarks and places of cultural interest. Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have further developed the careers programme. A careers fair has increased pupils' awareness of the pathways and opportunities available to them, and pupils in key stage 3 have benefited from some work experience.

Younger pupils are particularly positive about the 'World Ready' curriculum. Through this curriculum, alongside assemblies and visiting speakers, pupils learn about topics such as substance misuse, healthy relationships and equality. Leaders recognise the need to strengthen the way they check pupils' understanding of this curriculum so that they can identify and address gaps in knowledge. They also recognise the need to improve the consistency of teaching within the 'World Ready' curriculum so that pupils' experiences are consistently positive.

About this inspection

The inspectors carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded inspection that took place in January 2024.

The school's previous inspection, in January 2024, and the first and second monitoring inspections, in January 2025 and October 2025, were carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection and subsequent monitoring inspections have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders, governors and the local authority to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Dan McKeating

His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector

Martin Featherstone

Ofsted Inspector

About this school

School capacity	1060
Number of pupils on roll	922
Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable)	No
Type of specialist provision (if applicable)	Not applicable

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