

Whytrig Community Middle School

Address: Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval, Whitley Bay, NE25 0BP

Unique reference number (URN): 122335

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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders actively promote high attendance and pupils attend school well. Leaders work with families to remove barriers to attendance for pupils. Leaders provide tailored support for pupils when needed. For example, pupils receive skilled pastoral support to ease their anxieties, develop their confidence and support their emotional resilience. These approaches are largely successful. Where some pupils have high levels of absence, the school works purposefully with external agencies and families to strengthen pupils' attendance. Over time, attendance is close to or above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes. Warm relationships between staff and pupils contribute to a calm and purposeful atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Disruptive behaviour in lessons is rare. Staff deal with any poor behaviour fairly and consistently. Incidents of bullying or discrimination are rare and are swiftly addressed by staff. Pupils understand leaders' expectations for their behaviour. They are respectful of others and appreciate diversity. Where some pupils struggle to manage their emotions and behaviour, the school makes reasonable adjustments and provides very effective support.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify pupils' individual needs and barriers to learning accurately and effectively. Leaders have an in-depth understanding of the school's context. They provide appropriate training for staff to give skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders work with parents and carers, and external professionals to provide the right support to help these pupils access the curriculum and enjoy school life.

Leaders check carefully the impact of support and personalised teaching for pupils with additional needs. When changes are necessary, leaders help staff to adapt their approaches in a timely way. Leaders ensure that there is high-quality support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. For example, pupils benefit from individual and small-group counselling. They learn strategies to manage and understand their emotions. The school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND provides well-considered care and teaching for pupils who need more specific support. Leaders work effectively with the local authority to meet pupils' needs through the use of suitable alternative provision when necessary.

Leaders use additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive appropriate support. They ensure that these pupils, and pupils with SEND, learn alongside their peers, make progress from their starting points and fully access the school's enrichment opportunities.

Leaders provide a broad and well-structured personal development programme that supports pupils' wider development and wellbeing effectively. Pupils benefit from age-appropriate relationships and health education. Equality and inclusion are promoted throughout the curriculum. Pupils show respect and tolerance towards others. High-quality pastoral care helps pupils to manage their worries, express their feelings and be ready to learn. Pupils' mental and physical welfare is a high priority. For example, pupils benefit from a sensory room that helps them to feel calm. A wide range of sports facilities support pupils to be physically active.

Pupils develop important life skills. They participate in activities that enhance their learning and equip them well for life beyond school. For example, pupils learn fundamental British values and appreciate diversity, different cultures and beliefs. They enjoy engaging in weekly 'talk time' discussions and debates. These are often linked to national and international issues. From Year 5, pupils are informed about potential further education and career options. Careers fairs and links with local businesses and further education providers help pupils to make informed choices.

Pupils are proud to belong to the school community. They learn leadership skills through positions of responsibility. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils learn about relevant local concerns, such as county lines and knife crime through a series of talks from external speakers. Leaders design trips to enrich learning and broaden pupils' experiences, including cultural events, theatrical performances and visits to museums. Older pupils extend their horizons by travelling abroad. Younger pupils enjoy residential outdoor adventure experiences. These help all pupils to become confident, resilient and increasingly independent. Leaders track closely pupils' participation in clubs and activities. They ensure that all pupils can take advantage of the range of opportunities on offer.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

As a middle school, the school has limited time to influence pupils' outcomes in national tests at the end of key stage 2. However, inconsistent teaching and checks on learning have led to uneven progress across the curriculum. Published outcomes over the last 2 years show that many pupils have left key stage 2 with attainment below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders' introduction of daily arithmetic and phonics support is beginning to strengthen pupils' fluency. Improvements in curriculum and teaching are starting to raise outcomes in reading and writing. However, achievement in mathematics remains too uneven.

Pupils generally build important knowledge and skills, and leaders provide suitable targeted teaching activities to help pupils with gaps in their knowledge catch up by Year 8. However,

the progress pupils make through the curriculum remains variable. Leaders are bringing about improvement, but their actions have yet to show sustained impact.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders provide a broad and ambitious curriculum, but weaknesses in teaching reduce how well pupils learn across subjects. Teachers follow the planned curriculum, yet leaders do not maintain secure oversight of its quality or impact. This results in inconsistent delivery and uneven learning. For example, teachers do not consistently use their checks on pupils' learning to identify and address gaps across different subjects. This prevents some pupils from securing important knowledge. Weaknesses in teachers' modelling and explanations sometimes hinder pupils' progress.

Leaders recognise the importance of securing high-quality teaching across the school. They are establishing more precise checks on the quality of the curriculum and have begun to act to improve curriculum and teaching. Leaders' actions are appropriate and are starting to show increasingly positive impact in writing and early reading. Improvements in mathematics are emerging but remain at an early stage. In some subjects, such as music, science and English, there is secure and more effective teaching.

Teachers make effective arrangements for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers typically use resources, targeted support and adapted teaching to meet these pupils' needs appropriately. Despite this, overall, teaching does not consistently enable all pupils to learn as well as they could.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders provide a wide range of professional development for staff, including subject-specific training and external qualifications. However, this is not sufficiently targeted to address the inconsistencies in teaching across the school. Recent changes to leaders' checks on the curriculum and teaching aim to strengthen the link between quality assurance and staff development.

Curriculum leaders have some understanding of strengths and weaknesses within their subjects, but senior leaders have not provided the guidance needed for thorough checks or effective follow up. In some subjects, leaders have not established robust processes to secure consistently high-quality teaching across the school.

Leaders work effectively with external partners. They act in the best interests of vulnerable pupils. Wider school improvement work has been hindered by significant operational pressures, including the move to a new building and changes in senior leadership. As a result, leaders have not focused sharply enough on improving teaching or raising achievement. New leadership and governance arrangements are beginning to address this, but these are at an early stage.

Governors understand their role and responsibilities. They fulfil key duties, for example overseeing safeguarding procedures and contributing to the school's overall vision. Governors recognise that previous systems did not allow them to evaluate leaders' actions

effectively. They are strengthening their strategic oversight and challenge, but these improvements need more time to embed.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the consideration leaders give to their wellbeing and workload. Most parents and carers have a positive view of the school.

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

This is an inclusive school, where pupils attend well. Pupils who face barriers to learning and wellbeing are identified quickly and their barriers understood. Staff know pupils well. They provide skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. This support helps pupils manage their social, emotional and mental health needs and access learning successfully. Leaders have carefully designed spaces within the school to support pupils' sensory and emotional needs. Pupils benefit from being on the same site as the school's partner high school. This supports their wellbeing when the time comes to move into Year 9.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Warm, positive relationships between staff and pupils create a calm and purposeful atmosphere, where pupils engage in learning and disruption is rare. Staff do not tolerate bullying or discriminatory behaviour. Pupils feel safe. They understand the behaviour system and the school's expectations of being 'ready, respectful and safe'. Staff nurture pupils and reinforce these expectations through routines, assemblies and during tutor time.

Pupils' achievement in reading and writing is improving. However, too many pupils do not learn as well as they should, or make suitable progress through the curriculum, particularly in mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching varies across the school. The improvements leaders have made have not been implemented well enough to help all pupils achieve more highly across different subjects.

A wide range of clubs and enrichment activities are accessible to all. These include chess, performing arts, library club and sports. Trips, visitors and other experiences enrich pupils' learning. Links with other schools, local businesses and universities raise pupils' aspirations and broaden their understanding of possible future careers. Pupils learn responsibility through leadership roles, such as prefects and sports leaders. They are well prepared for life after school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers receive appropriately targeted training and support to teach the curriculum consistently well across all subjects.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information accurately and with consistency to check pupils' understanding and address gaps in their knowledge effectively.

- Leaders should ensure that consistently effective teaching leads to more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, making positive progress through the curriculum and achieving well.
 - Leaders should ensure that their checks on the quality of curriculum and teaching are precise enough to secure sustained improvements.
 - Leaders and governors should ensure that governors' strategic oversight is strengthened and supports rapid improvements to curriculum, teaching and pupils' achievement.
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About this inspection

The chairs of the governing body is Rebecca Bray.

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 interim executive headteacher, the head of school, school and federation business managers, the assistant headteachers and curriculum leaders during the inspection. They also spoke with members of the governing body, the head of school improvement for the local authority, the virtual headteacher for North Tyneside local authority and leaders of an alternative provision run by the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is part of the Seaton Valley federation of schools.

The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. It relocated to new, purpose-built premises in September 2025. It is located on the same site and shares facilities with Seaton Valley High School. The interim headteacher was appointed in January 2026. The chair and vice chair of governors took up their roles in October 2025.

The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have an education, health and care plan. This is overseen by the local authority.

Interim executive headteacher: Alan Rogers

Lead inspector:

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Kate Morris, Ofsted Inspector

Katherine Snowden, 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**

327

Well 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: 1,067

School capacity

360

Well 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

35.17%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

6.73%

Well above 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.74%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

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	51%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	49%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	51%	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	67%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	69%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	66%	73%	Close to average

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	72%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	76%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	66%	71%	Close to average

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	63%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	60%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	32%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	32%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	36%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	26%	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	51%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	61%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	41%	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	56%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	58%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	48%	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	45%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	39%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	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	32%	68%	-36 pp
2024/25 (revised)	32%	69%	-37 pp
2023/24 (final)	36%	67%	-31 pp
2022/23 (final)	26%	66%	-40 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	51%	80%	-29 pp
2024/25 (revised)	61%	81%	-20 pp
2023/24 (final)	48%	80%	-31 pp
2022/23 (final)	41%	78%	-38 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	56%	78%	-22 pp
2024/25 (revised)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	78%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	48%	77%	-29 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	45%	80%	-35 pp
2024/25 (revised)	39%	81%	-42 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	79%	-28 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	44%	79%	-35 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)	7.1%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.4%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	9.0%	Below

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)	18.6%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	20.4%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	16.9%	26.5%	Below

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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