

Inspection of a good school: Central Walker Church of England Primary School

Lancefield Avenue, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE6 2NP

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Outcome

Central Walker Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive at school in the morning happy and are pleased to be there. They enjoy their visits out of school to places like the theatre or on residential and camping trips. Pupils like the way teachers bring lessons to life. This was certainly the case during science week. Year 6 pupils dissected a sheep's heart. Year 5 pupils designed a protective case for a raw egg, testing it by dropping it onto the ground. Pupils say that their teachers show them respect and kindness. In return, pupils show kindness and respect to their teachers. Pupils know that teachers will help anyone who is lonely or sad.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They told me about special badges needed to get through the locked doors in school and how visitors wear badges with their photograph on. Pupils understand how they can stay safe online. Although they say that arguments and falling out can happen in school, teachers always resolve any problem. Pupils also say that bullying is very rare, and behaviour in school is good. They are correct.

Pupils appreciate the range of sports on offer, including the daily mile around the playground. They like the inter-school sports competitions, the rota for lunchtime sports and the many after-school clubs. All staff have high expectations for every pupil's all-round development, including academically.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils are at the very heart of all the school does. They have every opportunity to succeed. Leaders are unwavering in their work to make sure that the quality of education pupils receive improves further. Teachers say that they have good support and can ask for more time to prepare lessons and bring improvements to their assigned curriculum role if it is needed. This encourages a strong team spirit in the school where teachers support each other. The school receives effective support from the trust. There are regular opportunities to work with other trust schools to share good ideas and learn from each other. This accelerates the school's rate of improvement.

In subjects such as science, mathematics and English, pupils learn important ideas in the right order. This makes sure that learning builds on what pupils already know. It helps them gain the knowledge and skills they need to achieve well. In mathematics and English, teachers plan lessons in a way that helps pupils retain new learning. This is because pupils can understand how their learning links together. In other subjects, some pupils find it hard to remember important ideas and key knowledge. This is because lessons are not planned and sequenced well. Plans are already in place to develop the curriculum so that all subjects are equally strong.

Leaders are clear about the importance of reading across the school. Improvement plans ensure that reading features heavily. All staff receive effective, high-quality professional development and support. This helps them to be effective teachers of reading. Leaders promote a love of reading. Teachers read stories to pupils every day in every class. Reading areas in classrooms are inviting. The library is well stocked, and librarians organise and sign out books regularly. Repetition and practice are the building blocks of phonics teaching in the school. The reading books pupils take home match the sounds they know. Teachers make sure that pupils keep up with the pace of phonics teaching. Pupils receive extra support if teachers think they might be falling behind. Children in pre-school and Nursery love listening to stories. Some children in Reception can blend sounds to read real words and nonsense words. Children are quickly learning to read.

All pupils receive extra support and help with their work when it is needed. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils with SEND have full access to all subjects in the curriculum. Extra support sessions are effective. No time is lost from other important lessons. Staff make sure that pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils have the chance to visit many places of interest linked to topic work, covering history and geography. Pupils speak proudly about helping the school run smoothly. They try to fulfil important roles in school with responsibility. This can be as a school councillor, playground buddy or a worship leader. Pupils are proud of their school and community. Pupils know about British values such as democracy and tolerance. They often learn about people of other faiths and cultures.

Pupils' behaviour in the school is consistently good. In the early years, children develop independence and enthusiasm for learning. Children in pre-school are busy, curious and starting to develop good listening skills. Pupils move around the school calmly, including when using the stairs. Lunchtime and breakfast club are enjoyable and sociable times for pupils. Breaktimes are fun. Pupils play games together and get the chance to 'let off steam'. Pupils' positive attitudes help with learning in lessons.

Leaders have introduced a range of strategies that are aimed at improving pupils' attendance. As well as the range of rewards and incentives for good attendance, the parent support adviser completes various work with families and pupils. The school works hard to make sure that low attendance is not a safeguarding risk for pupils. Nevertheless, pupils' rates of attendance do not yet show marked improvement or match those found nationally.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has commissioned external support to ensure that safeguarding systems and policies are watertight. The school's pastoral team works hard to support a growing number of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. The designated safeguarding governor regularly checks leaders' work relating to safeguarding. Staff receive annual refresher training, so they know how to keep all pupils safe. Regular updates make sure that staff know how to spot risks for pupils. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not enough pupils attend school regularly. Over time, rates of attendance have been too low and below average. This means some pupils are missing key learning, which leads to gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders must make sure that new attendance strategies have a positive effect so that pupils' rates of attendance improve quickly and the proportion of persistent absence declines.
- In some subjects, key ideas and concepts are carefully organised so that pupils' learning builds progressively. This is especially the case in science, as well as in English and mathematics. Other subjects are not yet as well planned. This is because lessons do not always build on what pupils know. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is equally strong and that pupils receive regular and deliberate opportunities to help them remember important knowledge and key skills for longer.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Central Walker Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, to be good, on 27–28 March 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144270
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10121770
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Claire Leith
Headteacher	Mrs Dawn Day and Mrs Faye Kerr (Job share)
Website	www.centralwalkerce.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized primary school. It joined Newcastle East Mixed Multi Academy Trust in 2017.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is over three times the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteachers, assistant headteachers, senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of staff, including the parent support adviser and the pastoral leader.
- I met with a group of governors, including the chair and vice chair of the governing body. I also met the chief executive officer of Newcastle East Mixed Academy Trust and a representative from the Church of England diocese.

- I took account of the 16 responses from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. I looked at the 12 free-text comments from parents as part of that questionnaire. I also considered the 18 responses from staff to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes. I visited the school's breakfast club, very well attended by over 100 pupils. I gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- I considered a wide range of documentation, including subject plans and safeguarding documents. I also looked at information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- I undertook deep dives into reading, mathematics and science. This involved a meeting with subject leaders, visits to a sample of lessons in these subjects and listening to pupils read. The deep dives also included scrutiny of pupils' books and other kinds of work produced by pupils who were part of the classes I visited. In addition, I had discussions with teachers and a group of pupils from the lessons observed.

Inspection team

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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