

# Inspection of NCEA James Knott CofE Primary School

Norham Road, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 0LF

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|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 1 and 2 October 2024                                               |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The headteacher of this school is Caroline Mullen. This school is part of Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Alan Hardie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Brearley.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This school has strong community links. It embodies its Christian vision to nurture pupils and to 'let their light shine'.

The school has high expectations for pupils. These begin in the two-year-old provision. The curriculum from the early years to Year 6 is ambitious and meets the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well.

The school has clear behaviour expectations for its pupils. The school teaches pupils to behave using three rules: be ready, be respectful, be safe. Pupils behave well. For some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), additional strategies such as the use of a calm space successfully supports transitions throughout the day.

Relationships are positive and respectful between staff and pupils. Pupils play cooperatively at playtime, using the large field for team games. They are safe. The school provides pupils with information to keep themselves safe in the local area, for instance about railway safety.

The school engages pupils in lessons about careers. It uses this platform to challenge gender inequality. The school makes links between its curriculum and potential future careers. For example, on a recent museum visit, pupils learned about becoming an archaeologist.

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

The trust has helped the school to define its curriculum. This curriculum identifies what pupils should learn by the end of each academic year. Pupils encounter this knowledge in small steps. This builds pupils' knowledge gradually, encouraging them to think deeply and make links. The curriculum uses a question to structure pupils learning. For example, in Year 5 pupils consider 'How did the kingdom of England come to be?'.

In the core subjects of mathematics, English and science, the school uses thorough systems to check the knowledge that pupils have retained at the end of each year. However, this is less developed in some other subjects. This means that the school does not have the same depth of knowledge around pupil achievement in these subjects.

The school prioritises children's communication skills. Some children join the school with limited language. Starting in the two-year-old provision, the school immerses children in stories, songs, poetry and rhymes. In the nursery, adults build the range of useful words that children recognise and use. The school provides effective support for children with SEND who have speech and language difficulties.

Pupils, in early years and key stage 1, learn phonics daily. Pupils read books that contain the sounds that they know. They show resilience and determination when reading unfamiliar words. Pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme are supported well. This is successfully supporting these pupils to retain and apply their

phonics knowledge. As a result, the school's phonic screening check outcomes for Year 1 pupils are typically above national expectation.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use it purposefully to support pupils with their learning, including pupils with SEND. Teachers ensure that pupils access tasks that draw on their prior knowledge. The school is working to ensure that pupils make sustained improvements in arithmetic so that more pupils achieve the expected standard in mathematics at the end of key stage 2.

There is a whole-school approach to teaching about healthy relationships. This builds gradually from the Nursery Year. Pupils spoke maturely about how their body changes as they grow older.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities, such as learning a musical instrument and participating in trust-wide sporting events. Pupils in key stage 2 learn Mandarin and French. This enriches pupils' cultural knowledge and helps them to understand cultural similarities and differences.

The trust supports the school's leadership effectively. This includes leadership of the curriculum. However, at times, there are limited opportunities for the school to monitor how well some subjects are being taught.

The local governing body are knowledgeable and proactive in their support and challenge of the school. Governors recognise the strong relationships between staff, pupils and their families. Governors have a clear understanding of the strength and next steps for the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's systems for checking how well some subjects are taught are not fully developed. This hampers the school's ability to reflect on the quality of teaching and how to continually improve these subjects. The school should ensure that the delivery of curriculum in these subjects is monitored effectively.
- The system for assessing pupils' understanding across some subjects is in the process of being refined. In these subjects, assessment does not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge well enough. The school should ensure that their assessment procedures identify any gaps so that they can be addressed.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

|                                            |                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 148763                                                                     |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Northumberland                                                             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10323144                                                                   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                    |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter                                                          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11                                                                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                      |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 213                                                                        |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees                                                          |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | John Brearley                                                              |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                    | Alan Hardie                                                                |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Caroline Mullen                                                            |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.jamesknott.ncea.org.uk">www.jamesknott.ncea.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 23 August 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                  |

## Information about this school

- This school opened in September 2021 following the de-amalgamation of the predecessor academy, NCEA Bishop's Primary School.
- The inspection in August 2021 was for pre-registration.
- The school is part of Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not yet had its first section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has nursery provision for two-and-three-year-old children. The two-year-old provision opened in April 2024.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders from the school and the trust, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also met with representatives of the local governing body, the CEO of the trust, some trustees, an external school improvement partner and a representative of the diocese of Newcastle.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Horn

Ofsted Inspector

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