

New Life Christian Academy

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

New Life Christian Academy is a Christian primary day school situated just north of Kingston-upon-Hull city centre and forms part of the New Life Christian Centre. The school is registered to admit 40 pupils aged from four to 11 years. There are currently nine pupils on roll, aged between five and 10 years. Two of these children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class in the mornings and they learn with older pupils in the afternoons. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There are currently four pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school opened in September 2010. Following a pre-registration visit on 29 July 2010, this is the first inspection of the school.

The school follows the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum. The programme consists of traditional Biblical values, seeking academic excellence, with diagnostic testing, individualised instruction, mastery-based learning and reasoning skills. In the afternoons pupils are taught a range of National Curriculum subjects. The school aims to provide 'an education that meets the needs of each individual child spiritually, academically, emotionally and physically' and 'to prepare children to live successfully in the world, whilst living by integrity and loving Jesus'.

Evaluation of the school

The New Life Christian Academy is successful in meeting its aims and provides a good quality of education for all pupils, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils are happy and say they enjoy coming to school. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their behaviour are outstanding. Pupils make good progress because of the good quality teaching and assessment and good curriculum they receive. The promotion of pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The school meets all of the regulations.

Quality of education

The school provides a good curriculum in school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The curriculum provides a full range of opportunities to enable pupils to learn

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

effectively and make good progress. This is achieved through a successful combination of the ACE curriculum and an enhanced programme of additional subjects based on National Curriculum programmes of study. Each morning, older pupils work individually through their Packets of Accelerated Christian Education (PACEs) and take responsibility for their own learning by setting their individual learning goals. They are aware of their rates of progress in each area. Younger children also work through their PACEs and, in addition, participate in a range of adult-led activities and those which they choose for themselves. In the afternoon sessions, all pupils work together and the emphasis is on National Curriculum subjects and a more practical approach to learning. Pupils participate in religious education, science, history, geography, art, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), music, physical education (PE) and also Spanish lessons.

Practical activities enable pupils to apply their skills learned through the ACE work to their learning in other subjects and there is evidence of cross-curricular activities such as gathering data and using bar charts in science lessons. Teachers plan the afternoon lessons from detailed schemes of work and these are planned to ensure progression and continuity in learning for pupils. A number of volunteers assist in classrooms and they bring their expertise in different areas to enhance the curriculum for pupils. Pupils benefit from visits, for example, to museums and from visitors to the school, such as a paramedic. The school has a very effective scheme of work for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) which helps pupils to develop their outstanding personal skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively to make similar progress to their peers through the school's Christian ethos and the way in which every child is treated as an individual. Pupils who are more able also have work matched to their specific needs.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good throughout the school including in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. The ACE curriculum materials enable all pupils to set their own rate of learning. Pupils are involved in self-testing and this enables them to understand how well they are making progress. This regular testing requires pupils to fully understand the subject content before moving on to their next PACE. Most pupils make good progress in the ACE curriculum. They receive effective support from teaching staff and volunteers if they face any difficulties. Pupils have very warm relationships with staff, have positive attitudes to learning and are self-motivated. The 'offices' (individual work spaces) are well organised, kept tidy and pupils are familiar with the routines that enable lessons to run smoothly. In the afternoon sessions, teachers display good subject knowledge and make activities fun and exciting for pupils. Pupils participated with great enthusiasm, for example, during a music lesson when they developed their sense of rhythm based on a well-known television programme theme tune. Work is generally matched closely to each pupil's individual needs and older pupils relish the opportunity to support younger pupils. However, pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are not as good as

they could be and there are limited opportunities to write at length. In some lessons, there is an over-reliance on worksheets.

Rigorous assessment systems are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and an effective tracking system shows how much progress pupils have made since they started in September 2010. Pupils have individual targets, for example, for writing and they understand what they have to do to achieve them. Marking identifies what pupils have done well and also identifies areas that could be improved. Pupils are given opportunities to assess their own work and that of their classmates.

Pupils make good progress in lessons and have made good progress from their starting points in September 2010 as shown in their work and the school's own data because of the good quality teaching and curriculum they receive.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding including the personal development of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' enjoyment in school is reflected in their high attendance and outstanding behaviour. They have very positive attitudes towards learning and say they enjoy all the activities on offer. There is a strong emphasis on spiritual and moral development which is embedded in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils work and play very well together and benefit from a family ethos where older pupils help the younger ones. Pupils engage confidently with familiar and unfamiliar adults and are able to share their views and aspirations for themselves and their school. They are proud of their achievements and respond extremely well to the highly effective systems of rewards available. Pupils are very knowledgeable about Christianity and the Bible and show their great thoughtfulness towards others when discussing passages from the Bible. Prayer plays an important part in school life and pupils pray regularly throughout the day. The school promotes strong religious teaching based on the Christian Bible but also challenges pupils to consider the most appropriate choices for themselves, for example, when they discussed whether they could trust in God. Pupils consider moral issues and dilemmas and learn about other faiths and cultures in their PACE studies.

Pupils have developed a very good understanding of other cultures, religions and beliefs through the celebration of different festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali and the way in which they support others, for example, through fundraising for a charity in Columbia. Pupils take great pride in their contribution to the school community through taking on responsibilities such as monitors and making decisions on how to improve the school. They participate in opportunities for fundraising to help those less fortunate than themselves. There is a strong focus on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and, together with pupils' strong interpersonal skills and ability to manage their own learning time effectively, this prepares them very well for the next stage of their education and their future lives.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good throughout the school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school website and school prospectus provide detailed policies, procedures and guidance on the school routines which are accessible to parents, carers, volunteers and pupils. The school has taken rigorous action to ensure that all safeguarding guidance is implemented effectively to keep pupils safe. All staff and a governor have attended child protection training recently and the headteacher, as the designated officer, has attended enhanced training. The headteacher and members of the governing body have also completed safer recruitment training and procedures are carried out appropriately. There is an appropriate fire risk policy in place and fire drills and checks on fire equipment and alarms are carried out regularly. All staff have undergone basic first aid training and two members of staff and a governor have attended enhanced training including paediatric first aid training. The school meets the requirements in respect of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Pupils say they feel safe and know that they can always speak to a member of staff if they have a worry or concern. They have also suggested using a 'concern' box and they know they will receive the help they need. They say that there are no incidents of bullying but are sure that they would be dealt with effectively if they did occur. Pupils are very aware of how to use the internet and ICT safely. They have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles. They choose healthy snacks at break times and packed lunches are nutritious and healthy. They enjoy opportunities for regular exercise, particularly through physical education lessons and fun lunchtime activity sessions.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has established suitable procedures for ensuring that, prior to taking up their responsibilities, all teaching staff, volunteers, proprietors and governors are checked for their suitability to work with children. All required checks, including enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks, have been completed for those in regular contact with pupils and these are kept, as required, in a single central record which meets requirements.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school buildings consist of three classroom areas, a hall, kitchen and office areas and there is an attractive garden and secure playground area for pupils to use outdoors. The school buildings are attractive and well-maintained and classrooms are of an appropriate size for the number of pupils. The school manages the available space well, enabling pupils to learn effectively.

Provision of information

The provision of information for parents and carers is comprehensive and detailed. There is an attractive website, parents' handbook and school prospectus containing

all the required information, particularly in respect of the ethos of the school and the curriculum it provides. It makes clear the arrangements for admission, including the provision of orientation days for parents, carers and children and gives information about the range of school policies available. Parents and carers are informed of their children's progress through termly parents' evenings and written reports.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's procedures for handling complaints meet all requirements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Outcomes are good for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in their learning from their starting points and outstanding progress in their personal development because of the good provision in place. Children are very eager to work at their PACEs, manage their time effectively and work very well independently. They participate with great enthusiasm in the wide variety of activities provided for them including those led by adults and those they are able to choose for themselves. They cooperate very well with one another in lessons and during playtimes and their behaviour is exemplary.

The school makes good provision for children's learning. The learning environment indoors is stimulating and staff ensure that there are constant changes of activity to engage and motivate children. However, opportunities for learning outdoors are more limited as the outdoor area is shared with the rest of the school so there is not full access to this area throughout the day. There are, however, opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills through physical activities. The quality of teaching and assessment is good and the curriculum is planned effectively to ensure that the individual needs of children are met. Children particularly benefit from the many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through role play and circle times. They are able to express their views with confidence. Staff know children well and have detailed knowledge of each child's development. Assessment records are thorough and detailed with evidence of children's achievements and what their next steps in learning are. Leadership and management are good. The day-to-day organisation is effective and ensures that all children's needs are met. Welfare arrangements meet requirements and children understand how to stay safe and healthy.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work
- ensure that there are more opportunities for pupils to write at length
- ensure that the quality of provision for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage matches that found indoors.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	√			
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Christian primary day		
Date school opened	September 2010		
Age range of pupils	4-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 4	Girls: 5	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,160		
Address of school	New Life Christian Centre Bridlington Avenue Hull HU2 0DU		
Telephone number	01482 219670		
Email address	joanne@newlifelifehull.org		
Headteacher	Joanne Bickerton		
Proprietor	New Life Church (Hull)		