

New Life Christian Academy

New Life Church, Bridlington Avenue, Hull, HU2 0DU

Inspection dates	24–26 June 2014	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Achievement is good because pupils progress well from a range of different starting points, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Staff carefully track and monitor pupils' progress. Data shows that standards reached are often better than those expected nationally.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, as evidenced by the good levels of progress in their books.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; at times it is outstanding. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent levels of attendance. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's strong leadership has brought about continuous improvement, as evidenced by the increased attendance of pupils and their good achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work set for younger pupils does not always match their needs accurately and guidance given by teachers sometimes leaves them unclear about what they are to learn.
- Effective systems are not fully in place for leaders to check systematically on the quality of teaching.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed seven lessons and parts of lessons, and carried out a joint observation with the headteacher. The inspector and the headteacher looked at work in pupils' books from across the school.
- Meetings and informal discussions were held with a range of people including pupils, the headteacher, two members of the governing body, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector took into account the views of 10 parents and carers who completed questionnaires provided by the school.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The New Life Christian Academy is a day school registered for up to 40 boys and girls between the ages of four and 19.
- The school forms part of the New Life Church near to the centre of Hull.
- Currently there are 14 pupils on roll aged between five and 12 years.
- The school provides a Christian-focused education which 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'. It follows the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum alongside the National Curriculum.
- Pupils are currently taught in two mixed age classes with children from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 4 in one class and Year 5 to Year 7 in a second class.
- Four pupils have English as an additional language.
- None of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school was inspected previously in May 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of younger pupils and improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - work set accurately meets the needs of all pupils
 - pupils are given clear guidance on what it is they need to learn.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by improving systems currently in place in order to increase the amount of time available to the headteacher to check the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Achievement of pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement is good. The majority make good and sometimes outstanding progress in English and mathematics from a range of starting points. As a result, standards reached by most pupils are in line with or above those expected nationally.
- After joining the school, pupils settle quickly in to the well-ordered routines in place in each classroom. Supported by skilled staff and volunteers, they go on to make good and sometimes better progress across subjects as evidenced by the work seen in books.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel the Christian ethos promoted throughout helps them to focus on their work and make good gains academically as well as socially and emotionally. A comment made by one pupil reflects the views of others well: 'I really enjoy coming to school now and always work really hard to achieve my ACE goals.'
- By the end of their time in Reception, children all achieve or exceed the learning goals and this prepares them well for Year 1.
- More-able pupils are effectively challenged. They make good and sometimes outstanding progress, exceeding national standards in English and mathematics.
- During their time in school, pupils develop a love of reading, encouraged by the carefully stocked school library. Comments such as: 'I love reading so much my mum says I am a book worm', further evidence pupils' love of reading both at school and in their leisure time at home.
- Staff are skilled at delivering the support needed to ensure those who have English as an additional language and those who are in danger of falling behind make good progress in English and mathematics.
- At times, younger pupils make slightly less progress than older pupils. This is because work set for them does not always match their needs as closely as that set for older pupils. In addition, it is not always made clear to younger pupils exactly what it is they need to learn.

Quality of teaching

Good

- Teaching is good. Teachers and trained volunteers work closely as a team and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The majority of work set challenges and interests all groups, including the most able.
- This level of effective learning was evident when pupils were using role-play to develop their understanding of characters within a story. They enthusiastically undertook the roles within the story of William Tell. They showed very mature attitudes and empathy when asked to explain the emotions they felt their characters were feeling at different times during the narrative.
- Basic skills in literacy, including reading and mathematics are taught well. As a result, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in these areas of learning.
- Staff regularly check pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding through the use of questions which encourage them to think hard. This increases pupils' confidence in their own abilities and enables them to tackle even more demanding work, increasing their achievement over their time in school.
- Pupils are proud of their work. Displays of both past and present work enhance the learning environment and remind pupils of their good levels of achievement.
- Pupils are offered a wide range of subject areas including French and Spanish. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are offered a good range of activities which promote learning through play in all subjects. As a result, they make good progress.
- In all subjects staff diligently mark pupils' work using words of praise and encouragement coupled with good levels of advice and feedback on how to improve their work. This

contributes to pupils' good levels of progress overall.

- The majority of work planned for pupils is well organised, and teachers have good subject knowledge in a wide range of subjects including, for example, music theory. Teachers make good use of available resources to promote pupils' good progress.
- Occasionally the work planned, particularly for younger pupils, does not meet the needs of the pupils for whom it was intended. As a result pupils, become confused about what is expected and their learning slows.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. The vast majority, in line with the school's Christian ethos, show polite and very caring attitudes to each other both inside and outside the classroom.
- Pupils display good attitudes to learning and settle quickly in lessons. The vast majority, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, listen attentively and carry out tasks with confidence. They enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities.
- Very occasionally, behaviour dips when pupils are not clearly directed and are unsure what to do next. When this happens, staff respond promptly, and ensure that pupils are made aware of the consequences of their choices and actions. A calm atmosphere is quickly restored and learning is rarely interrupted.
- Pupils are keen and eager to talk to visitors. All expressed how much they enjoyed coming to school. While being knowledgeable about the different forms bullying can take, all were adamant that no incidents took place in school because, as one pupil explained: 'We are like a family.'
- Pupils are justifiably proud of their current high levels of attendance. A comment made by one pupil expressed this well: 'School is such a fun place to come to it makes you want to come every day.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Systems in place are robust and clear. Pupils have a good understanding of the consequences of any lapses in behaviour. They agree with staff, parents and carers that incidents of bad behaviour are rare. This was also confirmed by school records.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A range of different visitors and visits out of the classroom ensure that pupils gain a good understanding of and respect for their own and other cultures, as well as a good sense of the difference between right and wrong.

Leadership and management

Good

- The leadership and management of the school are good, as evidenced by the good levels of pupils' achievement, good quality of teaching and good behaviour.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the future which she has effectively shared with staff and volunteers, bringing together a cohesive team. She knows the school's strengths and how to bring about further improvement. As a result, in partnership with the school's governors, she is bringing about change at a fast pace.
- Planning for different areas of learning is good. Clear links between different subjects enable pupils to apply their skills and knowledge effectively. Physical education is taught regularly and pupils access a good range of facilities improving their physical wellbeing.
- Visitors to school and trips outside the classroom bring learning to life, enabling pupils to access a diverse range of experiences. A recent camping trip undertaken by older pupils at an outdoor pursuits centre was described as 'brilliant' and the experience of using the large on-site swing was described by one pupil as: 'The most amazing thing I have ever done'.
- Pupils' understanding of right from wrong and their good levels of spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development are promoted well through the school's effective behaviour policy and personal, social and health education.

- The governors and proprietors have good levels of knowledge and understanding which informs their focus on improvement. Their high expectations of staff and pupils are central to the school's continuous improvement. They offer effective and knowledgeable levels of support and challenge to the headteacher, and hold her to account for how well the school is doing. They manage financial resources efficiently and ensure the school is well resourced.
- Health and safety arrangements are effectively checked and the proprietors ensure that safeguarding statutory requirements are fully met. The school's accommodation effectively supports pupils' learning.
- The information for parents and carers, together with the complaints procedure, meets requirements.
- Systems in place to monitor staff performance are robust and target setting links closely to the school's continuous improvement. Effective procedures are in place to make checks on staff and set targets to bring about further improvement. As a result, teaching is of good quality.
- Staff and volunteers feel the training opportunities that the school provides for them improve the quality of their work and link closely with plans in place to bring about future improvement.
- However, because of a heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher lacks time to undertake some duties. For example, although teaching observations are undertaken, further opportunity to support and train staff is not always possible. As a result, actions to improve the quality of teaching further are not undertaken as fast as they could be which slows improvement overall.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	136207
Inspection number	447242
DfE registration number	810/6005

This inspection was carried out 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.

Type of school	Christian day
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	New Life Church, Hull
Chair	Stewart McKinlay
Headteacher	Joanne Bickerton
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,400
Telephone number	01482 219670
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	joanne@newlifehull.org

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