

Holy Trinity Church of England Academy (South Shields)

Address: Brockley Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 0TS

Unique reference number (URN): 141160

Inspection report: 9 September 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders promote the importance of high attendance. They carefully track individual pupils' attendance and are quick to step in to bring about improvements where necessary. Leaders sustain positive attendance through these highly effective actions. High proportions of disadvantaged pupils attend this school. Their attendance has been well above average over time and fewer are absent for extended periods of time than is nationally the case. Leaders work extensively with parents, carers and pupils to remove any barriers that prevent pupils from attending school.

Leaders ensure that pupils behave consistently well in school and during social times. Pupils' behaviour in the lunch hall is impressive. They sit quietly, chatting with friends and enjoying their dinner. They also show good table manners. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils focus on their learning and respond well to staff. Learning is rarely disrupted by others. Pupils learn to manage their social, emotional and mental health needs. This equips them to self-regulate their behaviour. Staff are skilled at adjusting their methods for supporting the behaviour of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Significant incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Bullying, though uncommon, is dealt with effectively.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children make a positive start in the early years setting. They quickly settle into established routines and start to develop independence. Children take care of their environment and show respect for the carefully chosen resources. They play well together and take turns sharing their ideas. Staff create warm and nurturing relationships. They know the children well. Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents appreciate opportunities to become involved in their children's learning.

Leaders are knowledgeable and ambitious about what children can achieve and how they can achieve it. Across the early years provision, leaders deliver a challenging and engaging curriculum. This helps children to develop knowledge of stories, rhymes and vocabulary. Leaders have prioritised supporting children's communication and language development. Staff provide many opportunities for children to repeat key words, speak in sentences and extend their ideas. Children enjoy interacting with staff. As a result, children develop language quickly. Children who need additional help with their speech, language and communication receive timely support.

Leaders ensure that children are exposed to early phonics and mathematics as soon as they join school. Children in Reception receive precise phonics teaching. Children have many opportunities to develop their writing and mathematical understanding. Children are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have planned a clear and well-considered personal development and wellbeing programme designed to meet the needs of all pupils. They have adapted the plan for personal, social, health and economic education to ensure that it is tailored to local and national contexts. For example, leaders teach pupils to understand the negative impact of too much screen time and how to swim safely in the sea.

Pupils benefit from opportunities that widen their experiences. These include visits to the theatre, local museums and residentials where pupils particularly enjoyed kayaking. Pupils actively engage with a wide range of after-school clubs. They recall fondly taking part in the cheerleading, tag rugby and the art club.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are developing a secure understanding of fundamental British values and protected characteristics. They explain the importance of rules for a harmonious society and appreciate the rights to choose that people in the UK enjoy. Pupils consistently demonstrate tolerance, respect and understanding towards others. Leaders have introduced a diverse range of books and literature. This helps pupils to develop an appreciation of different cultures, beliefs and life experiences.

Pupils learn how to maintain good mental health and wellbeing. They understand the importance of regular exercise, adequate sleep, positive thinking and spending time outdoors, in order to promote a healthy lifestyle. Pupils know how to stay safe online and recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Through a range of leadership opportunities, pupils are encouraged to develop confidence and responsibility. They embrace these roles enthusiastically, enjoying opportunities, such as serving as playground leaders. This enables them to help younger pupils learn to play cooperatively and positively together.

Leaders are aspirational for pupils' futures and actively promote a wide range of career opportunities. This helps pupils to develop ambition, broaden their horizons and understand the possibilities available to them in later life.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. This ensures that they are ready for the next stage of their education. Most pupils learn to read and write fluently. This enables them to access the wider curriculum. Across subjects, pupils remember the important knowledge that they need to prepare them for future learning. For example, older pupils confidently recall their historical knowledge about the Tudors, Romans and Vikings. They describe how the census helps them learn about people's lives in the past.

Over time, pupils typically achieve in line with national averages in the end of Year 6 tests. They also achieve in line with the national averages in the Year 1 phonics screening tests

and the Year 4 multiplication check. When reading outcomes declined at the end of Year 6, leaders made appropriate changes to the teaching of reading to secure improvement.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum. It is sequenced to ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills over time. Leaders ensure that staff receive the appropriate resources and professional development needed to improve their subject knowledge.

Staff teach early reading well by closely following the school's phonics programme. Pupils learn the sounds that they need to read words accurately. They practise reading these words using books that match the sounds that they have been taught. Staff focus on teaching the basics of writing, such as handwriting and spelling. This starts in the early years where staff plan activities to help children with their pencil grip and letter formation. However, this is not consistently maintained across key stage 1. Leaders have begun to take action to address this with staff. Leaders have also improved the mathematics curriculum. Pupils practise number facts frequently and have plenty of opportunities to apply and explain their mathematical thinking.

Staff carefully check what pupils learn and remember. They use this information to make necessary changes to their teaching.

Staff have a secure understanding of the additional needs that some pupils have. They use this information to make appropriate adaptations to the curriculum. This helps these pupils to learn alongside their classmates.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders are committed to creating an inclusive school. All pupils, whatever barriers they face, are supported to succeed in their learning and develop important life skills. Leaders identify pupils' individual needs as early as possible. In the early years, assessment procedures are used on entry to identify children who need additional support with speech, language and communication skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs precisely assessed. Plans to support pupils with SEND and those known to children's social care are well thought out. Where required, leaders seek specialist advice to enhance the support they provide. Leaders regularly review pupils' individual plans and make timely, appropriate adjustments. These changes ensure that plans continue to strengthen pupils' learning and/or emotional development. Parents and carers are involved in the process, and their views are considered.

Staff receive training that helps them understand the needs of pupils who face barriers to their learning. They adapt lessons to help pupils make progress from their starting points. However, leaders need to ensure that staff refine these adaptations further.

Leaders use the funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils to support them effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well compared to national averages.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have high aspirations for the pupils who attend Holy Trinity. They understand the challenges that many pupils may face and are committed to providing the best education they can to support pupils to be successful throughout their lives.

Leaders and those responsible for governance understand the school's context well. They have accurately identified its strengths and priorities for improvement. Significant actions have been taken in areas of the school's work that leaders identified as needing improvement. Leaders carefully monitor curriculum implementation, including pupils' achievement across subjects. However, some actions, such as those taken to improve pupils' handwriting and pencil grip, are yet to impact fully. Leaders have effective systems for analysing attendance and pupils' progress. Systems for strategic oversight of safeguarding, behaviour and the support for vulnerable pupils need further refinement.

Staff professional development is linked to the school's improvement priorities. Staff appreciate the support they have received through evidence-informed professional development. This has helped their effectiveness at teaching some subjects in the curriculum and meeting pupils' needs.

Governors know their roles and uphold their statutory responsibilities. They are knowledgeable about the school's work. They generally know what is working well and what needs further improvement. Governors support and challenge leaders so that the school continues to improve. They make appropriate checks on how leaders manage staff's workload and support their wellbeing.

Leaders foster warm relationships with parents and carers. As a result, parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and appreciate all that the staff do to help their children thrive.

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

Pupils are treasured and known by all the staff at Holy Trinity Church of England Academy. Pupils' all-round education is a priority for all staff. Pupils behave well, feel safe and are able to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Pupils value their time at school and embrace the many opportunities planned for them. They particularly enjoy residential visits and the rewards they receive for high attendance. Pupils demonstrate a love of knowledge and are excited about the subjects they learn. Aspects of the curriculum particularly inspire them. For example, pupils recall the opportunity they had to build houses out of 'wattle and daub' and explore Roman life through a visit to a local Roman fort. As a result of the rich curriculum and the strong sense of belonging, pupils attend well. They also know why it is important to be in school each day. Pupils take pride in their work and show high levels of engagement in lessons.

The youngest children get off to a flying start. They settle quickly and establish good routines. Children enjoy singing and playing together in an inspiring environment. The early years curriculum consistently supports children to develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be ready for Year 1. Children learn quickly and develop a broad vocabulary, supported by staff who model language well. As pupils progress through the school, they become increasingly confident and articulate. They happily share their ideas, aspirations and learning. Over time, they feel their views for improving the school are valued and considered seriously. Pupils take on a variety of leadership roles. They particularly enjoy supporting teachers with younger pupils at playtimes.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs carefully assessed and met. Tailored support enables them to make progress in their learning.

Next steps

- Leaders should further embed the new curriculum, the teaching of handwriting and approaches to assessment, so all pupils can build on their prior knowledge and quickly close any gaps in their learning.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should further develop their strategic analysis of the impact of their actions on areas, such as inclusion, behaviour and safeguarding incidents, so that they are better placed to take appropriate and timely action to address emerging issues.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of trustees is Andrea Gedling.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

This inspection took place on Wednesday 9 and Thursday 10 September 2026.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, other leaders, the school's improvement partner, the chair of trustees and other trustees. Inspectors also spoke with staff, pupils, parents, and carers during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The last Section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2023.

The school currently makes use of a resourced provision that specialises in speech, language and communication needs.

Lead inspector:

Nicky White, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Hannah Millett, His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Hassack, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 9 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

228

Close to 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: 268

School capacity

210

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

65.33%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

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

0.88%

Below 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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

22.81%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

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	74%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	60%	Above

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	80%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	66%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	86%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

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	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	72%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	85%	71%	Above

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	85%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	79%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	73%	Above

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	69%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	58%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	69%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	44%	Above

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	76%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	63%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	60%	Above

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	75%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	71%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	58%	Above

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	83%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	79%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	83%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	59%	Above

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	69%	68%	2 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	69%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	69%	67%	2 pp
2022/23 (final)	82%	66%	15 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	76%	80%	-4 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	81%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	80%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	82%	78%	4 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	75%	78%	-3 pp
2024/25 (final)	71%	78%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	72%	78%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	82%	77%	4 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	83%	80%	3 pp
2024/25 (final)	79%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	79%	3 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	86%	79%	7 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 (3 term)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.8%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.2%	5.9%	Close to average

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 (3 term)	12.2%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	11.2%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.0%	16.2%	Close to average

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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