

Ladybridge Community Primary School

Address: Broadford Road, Deane, Bolton, Lancashire, BL3 4NB

Unique reference number (URN): 105169

Inspection report: 31 March 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 ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school's personal development programme is extensive. Leaders have carefully shaped this to match the school's context. Through planned opportunities to revisit learning, pupils deepen their understanding. The relationships and health education curriculum helps pupils to develop a detailed understanding of important content, such as positive relationships and how to recognise risks when accessing online material.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are highly respectful towards others and consistently act with integrity. Pupils learn how to sensitively give their opinions in a considered way. Pupils are clear that the school's values to be ready, respectful and responsible are underpinned by British values. This is woven seamlessly through pupils' daily life at school. Pupils have a mature understanding of issues related to equalities, beyond what might be expected for their age. They recognise the impact that discrimination of any form can have on people. They are adamant that in this school, everyone is welcome and everyone matters. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are very well prepared for their life beyond school.

Pupils are immensely proud of the leadership roles they hold. They have a deep understanding of the impact they have in school and beyond. Through their roles as 'community influencers' pupils lead sporting events with local nurseries, support the local food bank, and visit the care home. Pupils are influential in the school's move to digital voting processes to promote positive environmental changes.

The personal development programme includes guest speakers and visits that enrich pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations. For example, pupils attend a 'determination festival' and are inspired by meeting talented, successful adults who have overcome significant challenges. Pupils learn about history and culture through visits to museums. Leaders make deliberate decisions about which experiences will benefit individual pupils. They ensure that all pupils have opportunities to participate in these experiences.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), typically achieve well. Pupils quickly learn the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. They develop fluency in handwriting and arithmetic skills. This is reflected in national tests, where overall results are in line with national averages. Disadvantaged pupils achieve particularly well at the end of key stage 2 compared to disadvantaged pupils nationally.

In subjects beyond English and mathematics, pupils build on their learning steadily in each year group and secure a broad body of knowledge. They generally have a secure understanding of what has been taught and can remember this over time. Pupils, including

those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, progress well through the curriculum and are typically well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have high expectations of attendance. In recent years, the school has faced challenges in ensuring that pupils attend as regularly as they should. Leaders have placed a sharp focus on improving rates of attendance. They have made changes to policies and have developed robust processes for identifying patterns in absences. Leaders engage with parents and other agencies, including the local authority, to tackle barriers to attendance. This has resulted in a reduction in pupils who are persistently absent and overall attendance that is now broadly in line with the national average. Leaders recognise that this improvement needs to be sustained over time to secure consistently high attendance.

Leaders have created an environment that is serene and highly purposeful. At all times during the school day, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils work incredibly hard in lessons and treat others with high levels of respect. They model the school's values consistently. Leaders provide highly effective support to pupils who find it challenging to manage their emotions. This enables these pupils to remain focused in lessons. Leaders ensure that the school is an inclusive place where diversity is celebrated, and any form of bullying or discrimination is swiftly tackled.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Pupils learn an engaging and broad curriculum. The curriculum includes a focus on teaching pupils the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have carefully considered the order that pupils should learn new concepts. This ensures that, at each stage, pupils have the prior knowledge they need to access new learning. Leaders have developed robust processes to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. They quickly identify if pupils are struggling, and provide extra support to help them keep up.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum develops pupils' language and communication skills. Staff carefully extend pupils' vocabulary through modelling. They adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff provide resources that help pupils to focus and to apply their learning in a practical context.

Leaders provide effective support to help teachers develop the quality of their practice. This means that teachers generally deliver the curriculum well. Leaders check the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. They use this information to inform decisions about how to further strengthen the curriculum.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start to their schooling in the Reception class. Prior to children joining, leaders gather information about their starting points. They speak to parents and carers as well as staff from the nursery settings children have attended. Leaders use this

information to ensure that the curriculum meets children's needs and builds on what they know and can do.

Staff have created an environment that ignites children's curiosity and enables them to apply their knowledge through well-considered activities. They use their interactions with children to build on their learning. Staff develop children's communication skills through engaging them in purposeful conversations and skilfully extend their vocabulary.

Leaders ensure that a love of reading is promoted in the early years. Staff read stories aloud to children. Children also access a range of books that they enjoy exploring independently. Children progress well through the school's phonics programme. They rapidly gain the knowledge and skills they need to read and write words and sentences. Staff make careful checks on how well children are learning. They ensure that any gaps are closed quickly through targeted support. This helps children make positive progress from their starting points and ensures they are well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff know pupils well. They engage with pre-school settings and with parents and carers so that they quickly get to know the needs of children before they start school. Many pupils join the school at later points. Leaders gather information from pupils' previous schools to ensure that their needs are understood and met from the outset. Staff are vigilant in checking on the wellbeing of pupils who face challenges in their lives. They consider pupils' views gathered through these 'check ins' when making decisions about further support.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to support pupils with their learning and wider development. They work in partnership with specialist professionals to ensure that support for pupils is appropriate. Leaders ensure that staff develop the skills they need to provide effective help to pupils who find learning difficult. Staff make adaptations to their teaching to ensure that lessons are accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, at times, the targets and linked support strategies for pupils with SEND are broad. They do not make clear precisely what leaders intend pupils to achieve and specifically how strategies will be implemented. This makes it difficult for leaders and staff to ensure that strategies are consistently effective in closing pupils' developmental gaps quickly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear, ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. They consistently act in the best interests of pupils when striving towards this vision. Leaders understand the school's context and the needs of its pupils. They have an accurate insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders take effective action to strengthen the aspects of the school that they have identified as priorities. They are committed to ensuring that the school is a place where all pupils flourish.

Governors are knowledgeable about their role and meet their statutory duties. They have an acute understanding of the school's strengths and current priorities. Governors have developed 'check and challenge' processes to hold the school to account for all aspects of

its work. They carefully use these processes to check that leaders' actions are having the intended impact. Governors are vigilant at checking that the school's funding has a positive impact on pupils. This includes additional funding to support pupils who experience challenging circumstances in their lives.

Leaders are proactive in working collaboratively with other schools and the local authority to strengthen expertise across the staff team. Staff, including those at an early stage of their career, improve their practice by accessing a wealth of targeted professional development opportunities. Leaders and governors regularly check on staff's wellbeing. They consider staff workload when introducing new initiatives. Staff feel valued by leaders. They appreciate the supportive ethos, which they say permeates across the school.

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

Pupils are immensely proud to be members of this inclusive school community. They are keen to learn and take great care with their work. Pupils consistently maintain focus in lessons. They behave extremely well throughout the school day and contribute to the school's calm, purposeful ethos. Pupils develop trusting, respectful relationships with their friends and with staff. Bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly by leaders. Pupils understand and independently live out the school's values. They cherish the opportunities they have to support each other. For example, through their roles as 'wellbeing champions', pupils help others to 'blow their worries away'. Pupils feel safe at school. They know that staff will listen to them and take their concerns seriously.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' achievement, including pupils who find learning difficult. Staff adapt teaching in lessons to reduce the barriers to learning faced by some pupils. Pupils, including those who join the school at later points, progress well in their learning. They develop a broad knowledge base and are typically well prepared for secondary school at the end of key stage 2. Leaders recognise the impact that missing school has on pupils' achievement, both academically and personally. They have taken effective action to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence, which is now broadly in line with the national average.

Pupils benefit from taking part in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities that develop their interests and talents. This includes nutrition club, debating club and crochet. Pupils also participate in external sporting events such as curling, archery, cricket and football. These opportunities enable pupils to access experiences and learn skills that they may not otherwise encounter. Leaders ensure that all pupils are able to take part in these activities. Participation in clubs is high, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are clear that 'everybody gets their time to shine in this school'.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen the precision of support for pupils who face barriers to their learning so that strategies are closely aligned to individual needs and targets.
 - Leaders should ensure that recent improvements in attendance, including reductions in persistent absence, are sustained so that attendance remains high over time.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mrs Nicola Burgess. Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Following our updated inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs. Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector also met with governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:
The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mr Colin Watson

Lead inspector:

Liz Dayton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sarah Gower-Jones, Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Barraclough, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 31 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

369

Above 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: 272

School capacity

390

Above 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)

20.87%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

3.79%

Close to 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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

3.52%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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	67%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	68%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	60%	Close to average

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 (revised)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average

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	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	71%	Close to average

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	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	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	68%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	92%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	69%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	53%	44%	Close to average

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	75%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	92%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	60%	Close to average

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	68%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	92%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	69%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	53%	58%	Close to average

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	82%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	68%	59%	Close to average

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	68%	68%	1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	92%	69%	22 pp
2023/24 (final)	69%	67%	2 pp
2022/23 (final)	53%	66%	-14 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	75%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	92%	81%	11 pp
2023/24 (final)	77%	80%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	78%	-15 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	68%	78%	-10 pp
2024/25 (revised)	92%	78%	13 pp
2023/24 (final)	69%	78%	-8 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	53%	77%	-25 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	82%	80%	2 pp
2024/25 (revised)	100%	81%	19 pp
2023/24 (final)	85%	79%	5 pp
2022/23 (final)	68%	79%	-11 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 (2 term)	6.0%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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 (2 term)	17.5%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	20.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	18.6%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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