

The Deanery Church of England High School and Sixth Form College

Address: Frog Lane, Wigan, Lancashire, WN1 1HQ

Unique reference number (URN): 106534

Inspection report: 9 June 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 and wellbeing programme is the jewel in its crown. Leaders have embedded a highly impactful 'Reach' curriculum. It is thoughtfully customised to pupils and the local surroundings. This means pupils develop morally and spiritually as they move through school from Year 7 to Year 13. This results in pupils demonstrating a deep understanding of how to be respectful citizens in society. They display this in their interactions with others.

Leaders have crafted bespoke pastoral support systems to catch any pupils who may experience barriers to their wellbeing. This means pupils have the guidance and help to get back on track if they need it. Staff seek impactful external specialist advice in a timely manner to enhance the school's offer, for instance counsellors and charitable organisations.

Pupils say they know they have opportunities to cultivate their chosen interests. Staff provide a wide range of clubs, activities and trips. This includes sporting clubs, performing arts clubs and a palaeontology club. These are adapted to meet the desires of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders meticulously check this offer is fully inclusive and make astute changes where needed.

Many pupils go above and beyond to support local charities. This includes helping with local food banks. Pupils who are able, participate in charity runs. They fully understand the importance of helping others.

The careers offer complements the 'Reach' curriculum. Information about potential pathways after school life is skilfully woven through the academic curriculum. Students in Year 12 complete personalised work experience placements in their chosen field. This means they have meaningful encounters prior to leaving sixth form. Leaders have plans to extend this to Year 10 from next year.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Leaders have taken effective action to improve how well pupils achieve. They diligently monitor how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. Typically, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attain results in line with national examination outcomes at the end of key stage 4 and 5. More recently, disadvantaged pupils have attained above the national average for their peers at the end of key stage 4.

Leaders successfully identify where pupils have gaps in reading, writing and number skills. They provide targeted help for these pupils. This means they can access the wider curriculum and achieve well.

Generally, pupils go on to appropriate education, training or employment when they leave school at the end of Year 11 or Year 13. This is because they are suitably prepared to take their place in society.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Generally, pupils attend school in line with their peers nationally. Leaders have systems in place to provide timely help for any pupils who may struggle to attend regularly. In many cases, this is successful. As a result, for some groups of pupils the rate of attendance is improving. Leaders have plans to make sure this is true for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders have embedded clear and precise routines. This means staff have high expectations for how pupils should behave. As a result, pupils show respect and tolerance to classmates, staff and visitors. They enjoy jovial relationships during their time in school, including during social times. In turn, classrooms are real havens of calm where pupils can give full focus to their learning. Pupils display dedication to their work. They know they can be themselves in school without fear of discrimination or bullying. This is not tolerated. Staff deal with any incidents of unkindness quickly.

Leaders and skilled staff provide tailored solutions for pupils who may otherwise find it difficult to meet the high expectations. Typically, these are effective.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

In recent years, leaders have made effective changes to the curriculum. This is demonstrated in the improvements leaders have made at key stage 3. As a result, the curriculum is now well sequenced and suitably ambitious across all year groups and subjects. Leaders have mechanisms in place to evaluate the quality of teaching. This means they provide timely, targeted and effective professional development for teachers to improve their practice.

Typically, teachers choose appropriate learning activities to help pupils to understand complex concepts. This means that pupils deepen their understanding of the subjects they study over time. Leaders have implemented suitable assessment strategies. Teachers regularly check what pupils know in lessons. They use the information they have available about pupils to help them succeed. Teachers know their pupils very well. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils appreciate the help they receive.

Leaders have embedded impactful programmes to support pupils who may find learning hard. This is the case for pupils who need help to develop their reading, writing or number skills.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have embedded processes to make sure that pupils who may need extra help are identified. Staff know these pupils well. They provide a range of bespoke strategies.

Generally, these are effective and eradicate barriers to learning or wellbeing for pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders use pupil premium funding to provide layers of support for disadvantaged pupils. In many cases, this is highly effective. For example, recent additional help is beginning to result in stronger attainment for disadvantaged pupils in their national examinations. This is also the case for the work they produce in lessons. Leaders plan to extend these strategies to other pupils who may face barriers.

Leaders provide the right help at the right time for pupils known, or previously known, to social care. They work cohesively with the local authority and other external agencies to make sure that these pupils thrive in school.

Leaders make use of impactful alternative provision for a handful of pupils. They continue to provide support for these pupils and their families and regularly review the effectiveness of placements. This helps them feel they belong to the school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including governors, have a clear picture of where things are working well and areas of future focus. They work closely with staff in school to make changes. These alterations to systems and processes often lead to sustained long-term improvements. This is particularly true for improvements to the personal development offer, the sixth form and curriculum and teaching. That said, some of the actions leaders have taken are recent. This means they have not had time to bring about the same positive outcomes. For example, work to improve the rates of attendance for all pupils is at an earlier stage.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They carry out a range of focused visits and share their expertise with leaders. Leaders benefit from the support and challenge governors provide.

Staff are very proud to be part of The Deanery team. They value the help they receive to improve their practice. Staff know that leaders prioritise their workload and wellbeing when they make decisions. The effective professional development programme is tailored to meet the needs of pupils and the staff, in line with school priorities.

Parents appreciate the educational experience staff provide. They value the wide range of opportunities available for their child/ren. Leaders provide numerous chances throughout the year to liaise with parents and the wider community. For instance, pupils work alongside local charities and churches. This helps pupils to build confidence and develop a deeper understanding of local challenges.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have taken appropriate steps to improve the programmes of study in the sixth form. As a result, the curriculum now meets students' individual needs and ambitions. This increasingly supports students on their journey to adulthood.

Teachers in the sixth form are experts in their subject. Teachers regularly check what students know. As a result, they know students very well. Typically, they make effective adjustments in the classroom to help students achieve their potential. Students appreciate this care and personalisation of their learning.

Students typically achieve well, reflecting their starting points and the pathways that they follow. This includes disadvantaged students, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who may otherwise encounter difficulties with their learning. This is because of the enhanced support that they receive.

Leaders have crafted highly supportive pastoral systems in the sixth form and offer a range of wider opportunities for students. For example, many students deliver form-time sessions and assemblies to younger pupils. They act as role models and ambassadors. Younger pupils value this. As a result, most students go on to suitable training, education or employment when they leave school.

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

Pupils enjoy their time in school. They live by the school mantra to 'work hard, be kind, make a difference'. They link this seamlessly with the Christian values and ethos. Pupils play their part in ensuring school is a safe haven for everyone. They know they are safe and know how to keep themselves and others safe in the wider community. This includes the understanding pupils demonstrate to stay healthy, both physically and mentally.

Pupils behave with maturity and a quiet confidence that they can be themselves at this school. They make sure that their peers can focus on their learning in quiet and purposeful classrooms. At social times, pupils treat each other with respect and tolerance in abundance. Generally, pupils and students achieve well, increasingly so. They benefit from effective teaching. This includes pupils who may find learning difficult. Pupils have warm and caring relationships with staff. Bullying and unkindness are not tolerated here. Any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Staff know pupils very well. They use their knowledge of pupils to give them the help they need to strive to meet their potential. Indeed, the school's 'Flourish Award' encourages pupils to do so. Many pupils achieve this.

Pupils benefit from the expansive opportunities to develop their skills beyond the classroom. For instance, there are programmes to help older pupils to enhance their leadership skills by supporting younger pupils. Younger pupils say they see older pupils and students as role models. Pupils can develop their talents and interests here, and most do. For example, the Year 7 rugby league team recently played at Wembley Stadium. Many pupils complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This helps them to become well-rounded young people ready to take their place in society.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine the processes in place to evaluate the impact of their actions. They should use this information to continue to drive improvements across all areas of the school.
 - Leaders should sharpen the systems that they have in place to improve attendance to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend school more often.
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About this inspection

The school is overseen by a board of governors, chaired by Angela Finch.

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, including the chair, and representatives from the local authority and the diocese during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Liverpool. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in December 2021.

The school makes use of 3 registered and one unregistered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Martin Wood

Lead inspector:

Helen Fowler, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Michael Gun-Why, Ofsted Inspector

Katie Sharp, Ofsted Inspector

Matt Symes, Ofsted Inspector

Tom Priddle, 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,372

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,389

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

30.58%

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: 28.9%

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

2.55%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12.17%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	40.2%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.0%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.9%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	45.7	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44.0	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.8	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.31	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.44	-0.03	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	35.5%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	14.3%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	14.5%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	41.0	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	30.6	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.4	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.10	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.11	-0.57	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	35.5%	53.1%	-17.7 pp
2023/24 (final)	14.3%	53.1%	-38.8 pp
2022/23 (final)	14.5%	52.4%	-38.0 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	41.0	50.4	-9.4
2023/24 (final)	30.6	50.0	-19.4
2022/23 (final)	32.4	50.3	-17.9

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.10	0.16	-1.26
2022/23 (final)	-1.11	0.17	-1.27

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	95%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	91%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	94%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	27.21	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.75	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	25.08	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below

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)	8.8%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.6%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.8%	9.0%	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)	24.4%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	25.9%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	24.9%	26.5%	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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