

Kirkstall Valley Primary School

Address: Argie Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS4 2QZ

Unique reference number (URN): 107887

Inspection report: 3 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

As a consequence of the high-quality curriculums being taught effectively, pupils make demonstrable and significant progress. Pupils develop a secure understanding of their learning. This understanding is evident in pupils' discussions about their learning across all subjects. Pupils' skills and knowledge become increasingly embedded over time. Teachers swiftly identify and close gaps in important knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics. This means that pupils' barriers to learning are removed quickly.

Over time, many pupils achieve highly from what are usually low starting points. This means that published data for key stage 2 are typically above national figures. Disadvantaged pupils achieve more highly than disadvantaged pupils nationally by the end of Year 6. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, regardless of their levels of need.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have crafted a highly inclusive culture within the school. All pupils benefit from this strong culture. The impact of the school's work for pupils who speak little or no English when they arrive at the school is particularly notable. The school's high-quality pastoral support allows pupils to thrive. All pupils are welcome. Through targeted staff training, the school's support for pupils helps them to achieve well over time. The school works effectively with external agencies. Partnerships with parents and carers are positive.

A forensic approach to monitoring ensures that pupils' needs are swiftly identified. Staff ensure that effective support is in place to meet these needs. This includes support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are otherwise disadvantaged. Well-trained staff ensure that provision is adapted to meet pupils' changing needs over time. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have accurate oversight and understanding of the impact of the school's work.

The school's pupil premium funding has a notable impact on the achievement of pupils who are disadvantaged. Over time, these pupils achieve more highly than disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

There is a high-quality offer for pupils' wider development. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is well sequenced and progressively demanding. It is carefully matched to the school's context. It takes into account the high levels of diversity, disadvantage and other vulnerabilities that exist within the school. Leaders ensure there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests through a range of extra-curricular opportunities. For example, some pupils play in the Kirkstall community band. Leadership opportunities for pupils are numerous. Young interpreters take pride in the work they do to support those who are less confident in speaking English, for example. The high-quality personal development programme is an entitlement for all, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils develop a well-embedded sense of respect, appreciation and tolerance. Instances of derogatory language are extremely rare. This means that pupils feel comfortable to develop their own characters within the school community. Pupils have a keen sense of morality and equality. This is strengthened through meaningful curriculum links to other subjects, such as history. Visitors to school further enhance these links. For example, older pupils explored the impact and ethics of the Holocaust after a visiting speaker came to the school. Pupils gain an appropriate insight into the impact of prejudice and injustice. Pupils' understanding of spirituality is appropriate. The personal development programme supports and nurtures all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Pupils embed their knowledge and understanding of people's differences and British values. This is regularly reinforced by both pupils and staff in assemblies and other lessons.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is highly positive. The impact of the school's behaviour curriculum is clear. The school's core rules of 'safe, ready, respectful' are clear to see. Many pupils display exemplary manners and attitudes towards others. Pupils have commendable attitudes to their learning.

Pupils develop a deep respect and appreciation for differences in others. Discrimination and poor behaviour are rare. The school's commitment to compassion is clear in the conduct of both pupils and staff. Pupils who might struggle with their emotions from time to time get the support they need.

Over time, pupils' attendance has been low. Persistent absence has been high. Leaders resolutely tackle this in partnership with parents and carers. They seek to understand the root causes of absence. Leaders strive to remove any barriers to attendance. As a result of their work, pupils' attendance has improved notably. Persistent absence is decreasing. Both are now in line with national figures as a result of leaders' work. This means that more pupils are now in school. More pupils therefore benefit from the school's academic offer and strong pastoral support. Leaders remain focused to further continue this improvement, so that their high ambitions are realised.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a high-quality, ambitious curriculum in school. This is well sequenced for each subject. Through a robust and forensic approach to quality assurance, leaders take effective action to ensure that these curriculums are further refined and improved over time.

Staff are ambitious for all pupils to gain the knowledge and skills they need. The teaching of important knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics is effective. Pupils who need additional support catch up quickly. Pupils get the opportunity to develop their understanding of different subjects. For example, pupils clearly articulate their understanding of minims in music. Others make distinct links between their learning of history and their understanding

of discrimination over time. The school's work to promote pupils' oracy skills is a significant strength.

Staff with secure subject knowledge teach the curriculum with confidence and understanding. They make adaptations to the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some instances, staff's decisions about the work that pupils should complete are not as well considered as they could be. This means that the tasks given to pupils do not allow them to consistently produce the high-quality work of which they are capable.

Early years

Expected standard 

The early years provision at Kirkstall Valley Primary School is vibrant and welcoming. Classrooms are alive with chatter, songs and stories. An effective focus on young children's communication and language skills is evident. This gives children the vocabulary that they need to make sense of the world around them. For example, children talk excitedly about the features of aquatic creatures, noting 'tentacles' on a jellyfish or 'fins' on a shark. Staff model language and vocabulary effectively. Interactions between staff and children are purposeful and of high quality.

Children's love of stories is clear. They retell parts of their favourite stories to others. They are well prepared to read through a systematic and well-implemented phonics programme. The partnership between home and school is crucial to this. The school fosters highly positive relationships with parents and carers.

The work that the school does to support pupils with any additional needs is notable and has demonstrable impact. This contributes to the highly inclusive nature of the whole school. From what are typically low or very low starting points, children in early years generally make positive progress. By the time they leave Reception, children are typically well prepared for key stage 1.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Over time, leaders identify and prioritise key actions for school improvement. They ensure the consistent implementation of these actions. Leaders have an accurate appreciation of the school's strengths. They also understand where there are areas that can be further refined, such as elements of teaching and pupils' attendance.

Staff training, workload and wellbeing are of utmost importance at Kirkstall Valley Primary School. Early career teachers are well supported. Staff are motivated and proud to work at this school.

Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The governing board has a wide and varied skillset. They astutely use these skills to fulfil their statutory obligations. Governors are well informed. They ensure that they hold leaders to account, offering appropriate challenge and support. Within the varied and complex backgrounds of

pupils at the school, leaders at all levels ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of all groups of pupils.

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

Kirkstall Valley Primary School lives up to its motto of being 'a small school with a big heart'. Pupils get many opportunities to thrive and achieve. They are proud of the various roles and responsibilities they have. For example, oracy leaders present assembly content with confidence and pride. Older pupils act as reading buddies for younger pupils, helping them to practise and secure their emerging reading skills. These roles make a significant difference to day-to-day school life. Pupils gain a distinct sense of belonging to this warm, welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils of all backgrounds and ethnicities play and learn in harmony. Positive relationships abound. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The school's high expectations for behaviour and attitudes are clear. Staff and pupils consistently model these high expectations. A palpable sense of care and nurture is evident across all aspects of the school's work. The caring and friendly environment enables pupils to be happy, safe and secure. Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes to their learning. Lessons proceed without disruption. Behaviour across school is highly positive. Pupils are polite, respectful and enthusiastic members of the Kirkstall Valley family. Instances of bullying are rare. They are investigated and dealt with effectively. Pupils' attendance has been low over time. As a result of the school creating an environment where pupils want to be, attendance is improving.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They talk with understanding about their learning. Staff strive to identify and remove barriers to learning for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those eligible for the government's pupil premium funding and those who speak English as an additional language. This means that pupils get every opportunity to progress and achieve well. Pupils at Kirkstall Valley Primary School are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers carefully consider what to teach and the tasks that pupils are given, so that pupils get the opportunities they need to produce work of a consistently high quality and achieve as highly as they are able.
- Leaders should ensure that attendance in school continues to improve so that more pupils benefit from the school's high-quality curriculum offer.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Colleen Jackson.

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 and other school staff, the leader of learning at the off-site inclusion base, representatives of the board of governors and a representative of the local authority.

Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, visited a sample of lessons and looked at pupils' work across a number of curriculum subjects.

Inspectors also spoke with some parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The school now manages an off-site inclusion base called the TRUST Primary Support Centre. At the time of inspection, this inclusion base had 11 pupils from different schools across the north-west of Leeds. None of Kirkstall Valley Primary School's pupils were attending this inclusion base at the time of the inspection.

An inspector visited the off-site inclusion base with the headteacher of the school.

Headteacher: Philip Robertson

Lead inspector:

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

John Davie, Ofsted Inspector

Janet Keefe, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

229

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: 272

School capacity

240

Close to 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)

44.39%

Well above 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

0.87%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.34%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	79%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	43%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	57%	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	72%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	64%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	70%	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	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	54%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	61%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	73%	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 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	53%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	30%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	66%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	63%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	60%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	58%	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	58%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	30%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	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	63%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	60%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	53%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (revised)	69%	69%	0 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	66%	-16 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	66%	80%	-14 pp
2024/25 (revised)	75%	81%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	80%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	78%	-20 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	58%	78%	-20 pp
2024/25 (revised)	75%	78%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	78%	-48 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	77%	-19 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	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	75%	81%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	79%	-19 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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)	6.6%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.9%	5.9%	Above

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)	22.2%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	17.9%	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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