

Middleton St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Address: Moor Flatts Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS10 3SW

Unique reference number (URN): 108002

Inspection report: 2 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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Everyone is focused on making sure pupils come to school every day. Pupils' attendance is high. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have other potential barriers to their learning has improved markedly. Leaders take swift and effective action to improve pupils' attendance. Leaders and staff know families very well. This helps them to anticipate emerging attendance issues and to take effective action to avert them. Consequently, pupils, including vulnerable pupils, come to school regularly. Whenever pupils have been absent, staff check in on them and welcome them back to school warmly.

A positive culture of high expectations for pupils' behaviour is evident everywhere in the school. Pupils expect the highest standards of behaviour from each other. Leaders keep very detailed information about minor behaviour incidents. They act swiftly to stop any bullying behaviours before they become an issue. Leaders also keep abreast of any emerging online issues outside school. They provide pupils with effective support should these occur.

Pupils conduct themselves very well. These excellent attitudes start from the moment that they set foot in the school each day. They enjoy coming together as a whole school in collective worship, and enter and leave the hall impeccably. They work well in groups and are sensible in their active play outside.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils' starting points are very varied. Many pupils experience disadvantage or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils join the school later in key stage 2 than usual. Others have English as an additional language. Pupils typically achieve well from these varied starting points. However, their gains are not fully reflected in information from the key stage 2 national tests for some pupils. Nonetheless, pupils generally learn the knowledge and skills that they need, especially in reading, mathematics and the wider curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well from their starting points in these subjects too.

Sometimes, pupils' handwriting holds back their overall achievement in writing. Weaknesses in their handwriting prevents them from writing as fluently as they should. This is evident in attainment in writing in the key stage 2 national assessments, which has been low historically. However, leaders have made improvements to the curriculum and to the teaching of handwriting. These improvements are having an impact, and handwriting is improving. Pupils' spelling has also improved and pupils are starting to write more adventurous sentences.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders continue to refine and improve the curriculum. Each subject is well planned. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to return to previously taught content so that they remember it. Leaders have ensured that pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Pupils confidently demonstrate what they know and can do. On some occasions, pupils do not use basic skills correctly, such as number formation, when recording their work in different subjects.

Leaders and staff have carefully considered the needs of different pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers make suitable changes to ensure that these pupils are able to learn successfully. Teachers regularly work directly with pupils who need the most support.

Reading is taught to a high standard. Teachers model how to read tricky words and sentences. Pupils read a wide range of books and enjoy reading about new concepts, such as periods of history or different religions.

Pupils get the chance to practise the basic skills that they need in English and mathematics. Teachers check that pupils know their number facts or spellings. Pupils are less confident with some elements of their writing. Leaders have recognised this. There is a new handwriting curriculum that teachers are using skilfully to support pupils to improve.

Early years

Expected standard 

All leaders are focused on the fundamental importance of the early years. Leaders and governors have invested in the learning environment, resources and staffing to ensure that children have a high-quality experience that helps them to learn and develop well. The curriculum places a high priority on children's physical development and their personal, social and emotional development. Children learn how to use their environment with care and purpose. There are clear routines for children to follow. They concentrate well and focus on what they are doing for long periods.

Staff know children well. They support children to learn how to resolve differences with each other in appropriate ways. Staff promote children's language and communication, especially for children whose speech and language are at an earlier stage of development. They generally develop a knowledge of sounds in reading and also an enjoyment of stories and books.

Leaders have identified that some children begin Year 1 with gaps in their mathematics and literacy knowledge. This is because, sometimes, children do not have enough opportunities to practise using these skills as much as they could. Leaders have made improvements to ensure that staff provide the support and practice in mathematics and literacy that these children need. This is having a positive impact on children's achievement and on their readiness for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained and quick to identify pupils who have any barriers to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that pupils who need additional support receive it promptly, and that this support is effective. Leaders ensure that pupils and their parents and carers are consulted when forming any plans for extra support. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well understood.

Staff provide high-quality pastoral support to any pupils who are known to social care. This supports them to attend well and enjoy their time at school. Staff build strong relationships with the pupils. This contributes to the school's effective, comprehensive approach to obtaining help for pupils and families if they need it.

Leaders make careful use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, to address barriers to learning and wellbeing for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders ensure that staff fully understand the teaching strategies to use to remove these barriers so that pupils can learn successfully. Leaders monitor how successful these strategies are by looking at pupils' work and by asking the pupils themselves. This helps leaders to make further refinements if they are needed. Governors challenge leaders to ensure the funding is used well.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a very clear vision for the school. Staff understand and share this vision, and feel supported and enthusiastic to enact it. Leaders know where the school needs to improve further. This accurate insight helps them to identify clear priorities and to act with speed to address them successfully. For instance, reading and behaviour are now strengths of the school as a result of the improvements that leaders have made.

Governors are highly knowledgeable and skilled. They understand their roles very clearly and carry them out effectively. Governors balance their provision of support and challenge to leaders extremely well. They visit the school and ask pertinent questions. They recognise when there is something not quite working. They insist on rapid action to put it right and check with leaders that it is happening. This work helps leaders in the school to keep on track with their current priorities.

The school has developed productive relationships with parents and carers. Parents speak positively about the school's work and about how well the school communicates with them. Parents feel that there is someone to talk and listen to them whenever they need it. Moreover, leaders act as effective advocates for families. Leaders know what is happening in the community and offer support and guidance when it is helpful. This is appreciated by families.

Staff feel that leaders support them well. New teachers receive the training and encouragement that they need. Staff feel that their work is valued and that they are given the time needed to do it.

Leaders have carefully considered what knowledge pupils need to prepare them for future life. They have drawn on this to create a vision for pupils' personal development, which takes account of pupils' own views. Pupils appreciate the high-quality environment and resources that leaders and governors have provided for them in school.

Leaders have ensured that there is a wide offer of enrichment to support pupils' personal development. Pupils regularly go on trips, such as to museums. They enjoy listening to visitors who help bring pupils' curriculum knowledge to life. Pupils visit a range of places of worship. This deepens their respect for others in the community and shapes their own spiritual thoughts and beliefs. Leaders make sure that all pupils benefit from these experiences and activities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that there are no financial barriers preventing any pupils from accessing them.

Leaders are focused on pupils being successful in life. For example, they have invested in additional swimming lessons. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities and clubs on offer, including learning to play ukuleles or cooking healthy meals in the school's food technology kitchen. Leaders ensure that all pupils are able to access clubs and activities, including pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged.

Pupils have a clear understanding of the values of the school and of fundamental British values. They show these values in their actions by being kind and respectful to each other. They learn about democracy and then put it into practice by giving everyone a voice. Pupils also learn important lessons about forming healthy relationships and resisting ones that may be harmful.

Pupils have a deep and detailed knowledge of how to stay safe online. They know about the risks that online activity can pose. Importantly, they feel comfortable telling staff in school if they are worried about something.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly and nurturing school. They feel safe and know that they are important. Pupils receive a warm welcome at the start of the day. They develop very positive relationships with staff. Pupils get started with their early bird activities willingly and enthusiastically. They want to be in school and they attend well.

Pupils enjoy being involved in decisions that the school makes. They are truly listened to. For example, some did not like the old toilets, so leaders and governors made sure that they replaced them. Pupils regularly come up with new ideas for how the school can help them to be happy and successful. They commit to the school's Christian ethos and the motto of 'believe, belong, achieve'. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging because they feel noticed and heard.

Pupils behave extremely well and are keen to learn. They move around school using St. Mary's walking. The school feels calm and inviting. Pupils are confident to ask for help,

either in their work or if something is troubling them. Pupils recognise that sometimes other pupils can be silly, but staff are on hand to sort it out when it does happen. Bullying is incredibly rare and pupils say that unkind behaviour is sorted before getting to that stage.

Pupils enjoy learning a wide range of subjects and having experiences matched to them. They develop knowledge and skills in a variety of areas, including art, religious education, history and mathematics. Any pupils who find something difficult are given effective support that will help them improve. This supports all pupils, and particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged. This starts right from the moment that children join the early years.

Next steps

- Leaders should embed the new handwriting curriculum across the school and ensure that pupils are forming letters accurately.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils record their work to a high standard across all subjects, paying attention to handwriting and number formation where relevant.
 - Leaders should ensure that, in the early years, staff consistently provide children with teaching that helps them to develop secure mathematical, reading and writing knowledge, and opportunities to practise applying this knowledge so that any gaps in their knowledge are addressed and children are fully prepared for Year 1.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Liz Singleton.

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, the deputy and assistant headteachers, governors, a representative from the Diocese of Leeds, a representative from Leeds local authority and a range of staff during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Leeds. Its last section 48 inspection was on 11 March 2024.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Naomi Wood

Lead inspector:

Matthew Knox, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jenni Machin, Ofsted Inspector

Sam O'Brien, Ofsted Inspector

Karen Smith, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

419

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

498

Well 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)

44.27%

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

0.72%

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

23.39%

Well above 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	50%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	49%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	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 (final)	69%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	59%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	71%	Below

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	65%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	59%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	66%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

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	43%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	41%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	44%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42%	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	69%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	72%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	54%	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	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	55%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46%	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	56%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	52%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	54%	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	43%	68%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	41%	69%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	67%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	42%	66%	-24 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	69%	80%	-11 pp
2024/25 (final)	72%	81%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	78%	80%	-2 pp
2022/23 (final)	54%	78%	-24 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	53%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	55%	78%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	78%	-21 pp
2022/23 (final)	46%	77%	-31 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	56%	80%	-23 pp
2024/25 (final)	52%	81%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	79%	-17 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	54%	79%	-25 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)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.7%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.5%	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)	16.8%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	21.5%	16.2%	Above

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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