

Ambergate Primary School

Address: Toadmoor Lane, Ambergate, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 2GN

Unique reference number (URN): 112786

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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak positively about their experiences. This is reflected in their high levels of attendance. Pupils understand the importance of being in school and are keen to take part in the opportunities available to them. Leaders have established clear expectations and effective systems to promote good attendance. They identify any concerns early and work closely with families to address barriers, providing appropriate support when needed. As a result, attendance is strong and improving further for the small number of pupils who require additional support.

Behaviour is calm and positive across the school. Pupils understand expectations and follow routines consistently in lessons and at social times. They show respectful attitudes towards staff and each other and are eager to learn. Low-level disruption is rare, and pupils settle quickly to their work.

The school's inclusive approach ensures that pupils who need additional support are helped to manage their behaviour successfully. Staff know pupils well and adapt their approaches when necessary. This creates a consistent and supportive environment where pupils feel valued and able to succeed.

Pupils say that bullying is uncommon. They are confident that staff will act quickly if issues arise. When concerns do occur, these are addressed effectively so that pupils feel safe and supported.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusion is a strength of the school. Leaders and staff have established a highly inclusive culture in which pupils are known well and their needs are identified quickly and accurately. Disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who face other barriers receive timely and appropriate support. High expectations are clear for all pupils.

Leaders use a well-embedded graduated approach. Assessment information, professional dialogue and external advice are used effectively to plan and adapt provision. Strategies are tailored carefully to individual pupils and reviewed often. Staff are well trained and implement a range of adaptations confidently. These strategies are used consistently to reduce barriers and enable pupils to access learning alongside their peers.

Leaders monitor the progress of vulnerable pupils closely. They use a range of information, including assessment, behaviour and attendance, to identify emerging needs and respond swiftly. Interventions lead to improvements in engagement, behaviour and independence over time. Leaders evaluate the impact of their work and refine approaches when needed to ensure continued improvement.

There is strong collaboration with parents and external professionals. Leaders work effectively to secure support and ensure that provision is well coordinated. this approach

has a sustained and positive impact on pupils' experiences and outcomes. As a result, pupils feel included, supported and able to succeed.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a secure understanding of the school's context and the needs of its pupils. This informs their work and ensures that decisions are focused on securing positive experiences and outcomes for all pupils. Leaders evaluate the school's work accurately and take timely, appropriate action to address priorities. This is evident in the considered response to areas such as spelling, mathematics and inclusion.

There is a well-established culture of professional learning. Leaders engage effectively with external partners and networks to inform their work and strengthen practice across the school. Staff benefit from this approach and speak positively about the support and development they receive. This contributes to a cohesive and collaborative staff team that is committed to improving outcomes for pupils.

Governance is effective and increasingly well informed. Governors draw on a range of information, including visits, discussions and reports from leaders, to understand the school's work. They provide appropriate challenge and support, ensuring that key priorities, including those related to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, remain a focus.

Leaders place a high priority on inclusion and wellbeing. They ensure that systems and processes support both pupils and staff effectively. This creates a positive and stable environment in which pupils and staff can thrive.

Leadership is outward looking and reflective. Leaders use partnerships well to develop their own practice and contribute to wider improvement. Their work has helped to establish a stable and supportive school, with capacity to sustain further improvement.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have designed a well-considered personal development programme that reflects the school's context and the needs of its pupils. This is particularly evident in the deliberate focus on helping pupils understand difference and diversity within a predominantly white British community. As a result, pupils develop a clear appreciation of equality and inclusion. They understand that everyone should be treated with kindness and respect and apply this consistently in their day-to-day interactions.

Pupils speak confidently about their learning beyond the academic curriculum. They talk with pride about different religions, cultures and protected characteristics, and can explain why these are important. The school's inclusive ethos is reflected in pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are clear about how to support others and are proactive in making sure that everyone feels included. This contributes significantly to the positive, respectful culture that is evident across the school.

The personal development programme is planned carefully and enriched through a wide range of experiences. Pupils benefit from trips, outdoor learning and experiences that reflect local risks, such as rail and water safety. These opportunities help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and apply this knowledge in real-life situations. Pupils show enthusiasm for these experiences and engage fully with them.

There are well-developed opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and leadership. Many pupils contribute to school life through clubs, activities and pupil-led initiatives. They take pride in their achievements. Leaders track participation carefully to ensure that all pupils, including those who may need additional support, are included.

Pupils develop confidence, resilience and independence over time through a wide range of opportunities, including residential trips. They are thoughtful and reflective, and show respect for others. They are well prepared to contribute positively to their community and to move on successfully to the next stage of their education.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils develop their knowledge and skills steadily as they move through the school. They build on what they have learned previously and are increasingly able to apply this to new learning. In lessons and across their work, pupils show growing confidence and are able to talk about what they know and remember. Recent improvements to the curriculum, particularly in areas such as writing and spelling, are beginning to support this progress.

Leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. They identify where pupils need additional support and respond with appropriate and timely interventions. These are matched carefully to pupils' needs and reviewed often to ensure that they remain suitable and are having a positive impact.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who require additional support, progress well from their starting points. Staff support these pupils effectively so that these pupils can access learning and develop their independence. Over time, pupils become more confident in their learning and are able to participate alongside their peers.

Across the school, pupils make suitable progress through the curriculum and develop the knowledge and skills they need for their next stage of education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school's curriculum reflects leaders' clear understanding of the needs of the pupils and the context of mixed-age classes. It is broad, carefully organised and designed so that pupils build their knowledge over time. Leaders have identified appropriate priorities, including strengthening spelling, handwriting and number fluency, and have taken considered action to improve these areas.

Teaching across the school is typically effective. Teachers present information clearly, use questioning to check pupils' understanding and adapt teaching when misconceptions arise. In lessons, pupils are generally engaged. They benefit from opportunities to discuss their learning and apply what they know. Assessment is used appropriately to identify gaps and support pupils' next steps.

Staff have a secure understanding of pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teacher use adaptations appropriately to support pupils' access to learning, and additional adults are deployed effectively to promote pupils' independence over time.

Sometimes, staff do not model foundational skills precisely enough, particularly in basic skills such as handwriting. This means that some pupils do not learn and practise these skills as often as they could. Leaders have identified this as a priority and have introduced strategies to improve consistency. These strategies are appropriate and are having a positive impact.

Early years

Expected standard 

The early years provision provides a positive and secure start to children's education. Children settle quickly into routines and develop confidence and independence. They engage well with activities and show curiosity in their learning, both inside and outdoors. Relationships between staff and children are warm and supportive, helping children to feel safe and ready to learn.

The curriculum is designed thoughtfully to support children across all areas of learning. Leaders have considered how learning in the early years connects to later stages, particularly in phonics and mathematics. Staff understand children's starting points and plan appropriate next steps. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported well to access learning through tailored strategies and careful adult support.

Teaching helps children explore and develop key skills. Staff model language and guide learning effectively in focused activities, particularly in early reading and number. Children respond positively and begin to apply what they have learned.

There is some variation in how consistently staff deepen children's thinking during interactions. Leaders have identified this and are taking appropriate steps to strengthen practice further.

Children are developing the knowledge and independence they need for the next stage of learning, and the provision is well placed to improve further.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak warmly about their experiences. They form strong relationships with staff and each other. Younger pupils confidently talk about what they have

learned and make links across subjects. Older pupils are equally positive and describe their teachers as supportive. Pupils know that staff will listen to them and help if they have concerns.

Pupils feel safe and secure. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including in the local area and online, and they know who to go to for help. Pupils trust staff to deal with any worries quickly and effectively.

Behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils follow routines well and show positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate on their work, demonstrate resilience and take pride in what they achieve. Pupils support each other well, including those with additional needs. Bullying is rare. Pupils understand what it is and are confident that staff deal with issues quickly.

The school is highly inclusive. Pupils understand that people are different and should be treated with kindness and respect. They are proud of this and can explain how they would include others. They learn about different religions and cultures and show respect for diversity. This helps pupils feel like they belong and it contributes strongly to their positive experience of school.

Pupils enjoy their learning and take part actively in lessons. They respond well to questioning and develop independence. Most pupils build knowledge and skills securely over time, although some are less secure in applying aspects of their learning consistently.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom. They enjoy trips, outdoor learning and clubs, and many take on leadership roles. These opportunities contribute strongly to their confidence and personal development.

Overall, pupils achieve well from their starting points and are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff model foundation skills consistently and accurately, so that pupils learn, practise and apply these skills effectively.

About this inspection

The chair of the governing body is Sarah Bailey.

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following the renewed inspection framework, inspections are led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors gathered evidence about the quality of education, behaviour and attendance, personal development, and leadership and governance. They spoke with leaders, staff and

those responsible for governance, and considered a range of documents, including information about pupils’ achievement and attendance, and the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Inspectors reviewed published information about the school, including previous inspection findings and national data, and took account of responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View.

The information about the pupils on roll reflects the latest information held by the Department for Education at the time of the inspection. There were 81 pupils on roll on 10 June 2026.

Headteacher: Carly Howell

Lead inspector:

Nyree Parker, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Joanne Ward, 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

85

Well below 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

86

Well 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)

8.24%

Well below 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

4.71%

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

15.29%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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	56%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	36%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	69%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	60%	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	71%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	75%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	73%	Below

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	74%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	82%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	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)	45%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	69%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	S	46%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	S	62%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	S	59%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	S	60%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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	S	68%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	S	80%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	S	78%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	S	80%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	2.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	5.9%	Below

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)	1.4%	13.0%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.0%	16.2%	Below

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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