

Penwortham Primary School

Address: Crookings Lane, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 0HU

Unique reference number (URN): 119157

Inspection report: 6 May 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have focused on improving pupils' rates of attendance. The impact of this work is clear. Leaders provide timely and focused support for pupils when their attendance begins to fall. Most pupils now attend school regularly and on time. This enables them to access all that the school has to offer. It also helps pupils to develop secure friendships and positive relationships with staff. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend well compared to similar pupils nationally. This helps them to cope with the routines and expectations of school life more effectively.

Rates of suspensions are low. Leaders make effective use of temporary part-time timetables when this is needed.

Most pupils behave well during lessons and at breaktimes. They typically display positive attitudes to learning and cooperate with staff. Leaders provide support for pupils who sometimes struggle to remain regulated. However, this is not as effective as it could be. Some pupils with the most complex additional needs are not sufficiently engaged with their learning at times.

Incidents of unpleasantness, including name-calling, are rare. Leaders deal with allegations of bullying and incidents of derogatory language thoroughly. Pupils involved in these receive the support that they need.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have successfully developed the curriculum in the early years since the previous inspection. They have secure oversight of how this is being delivered. Leaders know how well children develop their knowledge while they access the provision. Children develop positive relationships with staff and each other. They focus on their learning. This helps most children to achieve well.

Staff get to know children's individual strengths and needs as they settle in the Nursery Year. Staff are well trained. They understand and provide the support that children need at different stages of their development. This helps children to feel welcome and well cared for at school. Staff provide effective support for developing children's language and social development. Leaders help parents to understand how they can support their children's learning, including practising reading at home. Parents and carers regularly attend reading cafes and other workshops at school which helps to develop their confidence in this.

Children begin to learn how to use phonics to read words in the Reception Year. They are keen to apply this knowledge when reading familiar books independently. Children also develop secure knowledge across other areas of learning. They are well prepared for their transition to Year 1.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school. They are also aware where further improvement is needed. Leaders take appropriate action to address these. They make effective use of external support to drive further improvements forward. Pupils' best interests are at the heart of leaders' decision-making. For example, leaders have addressed issues identified at the time of the last inspection. They have also focused on improving the attendance and behaviour of pupils. The success of this work is clear. They provide suitable support and resources for teachers. Leaders are currently focused on meeting the increasing complexity of need at the school. However, they do not check carefully enough that agreed strategies for this are used consistently well. Moreover, leaders do not make sure that resources and approaches result in pupils being engaged in their learning. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not achieve as well as they could as a result.

Governors have a secure understanding of their statutory duties. They carry these out diligently. For example, they make sure that staff receive regular support and professional development to help them manage their workload.

Leaders forge positive relationships with parents and carers. They listen to and deal with concerns raised by parents with sensitivity and understanding. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for parents to understand how to help their children experience success at school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's personal development programme is effective. Pupils learn useful information. For example, they know how to stay safe and develop positive and healthy relationships with others. Pupils are well prepared for puberty and have an age-appropriate understanding of consent. Pupils understand how to use technology safely. They know who to speak to if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable about interactions with others.

Leaders have made careful decisions about the experiences that they provide for pupils. They make sure that all pupils access visitors, clubs and trips on offer. Leaders provide additional support when needed to enable disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to participate fully. Leaders make sure that pupils learn about the fundamental British values. For example, pupils learn about the importance of democratic processes when selecting members of the many leadership groups at the school.

Pupils understand the need for rules to make life more pleasant for everyone. They helped to design the school's values of 'aspire, belong, care, discover' in collaboration with leaders. Most pupils demonstrate these in the positive way that they embrace each aspect of the school day.

Leaders support pupils to develop their understanding of the differences that people may have. This helps pupils prepare to live in a modern and diverse British society when they are older. Some pupils' knowledge of faiths and cultures other than their own is superficial. However, pupils are typically respectful towards staff and other pupils. Most understand that

some people need extra help and support at times.

Pupils' wellbeing is a high priority at school. Leaders make sure that pupils understand what they can do to maintain their own positive emotional and mental wellbeing. Pupils access the resources that leaders provide when they feel overwhelmed.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities often do not achieve as well as they could across the curriculum. Some other pupils do not make the progress that they could, considering their starting points. This is often true in mathematics and in writing.

The standard of pupils' written work is variable. Pupils do not apply and practice what they know about writing consistently well. Their understanding of learning in subjects beyond English lacks depth at times. Pupils are not as well prepared for their next stages of education as they could be as a result.

Pupils typically develop secure reading knowledge. The school's published results for the Year 1 phonics screen check and those at the end of key stage 2 reflect this.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders make clear what pupils should learn and the order that learning should occur. Despite this, there is variability in how effectively teachers support pupils. This includes in mathematics and when developing pupils' writing. This is in part because teachers do not consistently check that pupils have secured previous learning before moving on to something new. For example, they do not ensure that pupils can form letters correctly before attempting joined-up script.

Teachers' confidence in meeting the differing needs of pupils in their class fluctuates. At times, some pupils struggle to successfully access their classes' curriculum. They do not make the progress that they are capable of as a result. Frequently, this includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders do not ensure that these pupils' needs are met consistently well. Leaders' view of how well some of these pupils achieve is over-optimistic at times.

There is a strong focus on reading within the curriculum. The phonics programme is effective. Staff are well trained in how to teach it. They skilfully support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. Leaders make sure that support continues until pupils become fluent and accurate readers.

Leaders welcome all pupils at the school, no matter what difficulties they face. However, their expectations are not high enough for some disadvantaged pupils. This is also true for other pupils who face additional challenges in their lives, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders do not identify these pupils' needs consistently well. In addition, the process of pinpointing the support that individual pupils need sometimes takes too long. As a result, teachers are unsure how best to help the most vulnerable pupils in their class at times. Moreover, the checks that leaders make about the impact of some support lack rigour. As a result, they do not make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they could.

Teachers' have differing levels of confidence in overseeing or meeting the needs of pupils in their class. Leaders support teachers in deciding how best to support pupils with SEND and other pupils who may struggle at school at times. However, there is often insufficient focus on these pupils' academic achievement. Leaders and teachers focus on emotional and pastoral needs. Despite this, strategies agreed for managing individual pupils' behaviour are not used consistently well. Some pupils do not engage in learning as well as they could. In most cases, these are pupils with SEND.

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

Pupils feel safe and happy at school. They enjoy breaktimes, especially when they can play games or take part in other physical activity within the school grounds. Pupils typically behave well during lessons and at social times. Most attend school regularly and on time.

Some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. They do not make the progress through the curriculum that they are capable of. This is especially true for some disadvantaged pupils and for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders do not make sure that these pupils consistently receive the support that they need to access the curriculum successfully. The degree to which these pupils feel part of the school community varies as a result.

Leaders make sure that pupils benefit from trips and visitors that enrich their learning. Pupils also take part in activities that broaden their understanding of the wider world. These include learning about pupils' experiences in their twinned school in Gambia or keeping up to date with current national and international news.

Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing. They provide a range of resources and strategies to help pupils to regain their composure if they begin to feel anxious. Pupils build positive relationships with caring staff. They trust staff to deal with problems that they may have at school. For example, if bullying occurs, pupils know that leaders will deal with it quickly and well.

Most pupils participate in the many opportunities on offer to develop their skills and interests. Pupils take part in craft, baking and sports clubs. Many pupils are keen to take up leadership roles on offer. These include acting as a sports ambassador, eco-councillor or

digital leader. Activities such as these support pupils to make a positive contribution to society in later life.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge so that they are fully prepared for their next stages of education.
 - Leaders should make sure that all pupils achieve the highest standards that they are capable of across the curriculum. This is particularly important for disadvantaged pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils' additional needs are identified accurately and in a timely fashion so that teachers know how best to help them.
 - Leaders should make sure that the checks that they carry out on the effectiveness of the curriculum and support for pupils are rigorous and make clear where improvements need to be made.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Patricia Jones.

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders during the inspection. An inspector spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector also spoke with representatives of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of alternative provision for pupils. A new headteacher and other leaders have been appointed since the previous inspection.

Headteacher: Kate Penarski

Lead inspector:

Claire Cropper, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Andy Hunt, Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Whittaker, Ofsted Inspector

James Marsh, 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 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

205

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

210

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)

10.47%

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

0.49%

Well 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

1.46%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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	66%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	69%	60%	Above

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	83%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	68%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	73%	Above

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	72%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	79%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	79%	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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

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

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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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

‘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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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

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

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

‘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)	6.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.3%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	5.2%	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)	15.8%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	19.6%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	12.4%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright