

Clitheroe Brookside Primary School

Address: Bright Street, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1NW

Unique reference number (URN): 119321

Inspection report: 21 April 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

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start to their schooling in Reception class. They build positive relationships with staff. This helps them to quickly feel happy and secure at school. Staff understand and meet each child's personal needs well. They recognise when children need additional reassurance and provide comfort and care to support them at these times. Staff help children to understand and follow the routines and expectations. They promote children's independence and develop their confidence to try out new ideas.

Leaders have a clear and accurate view of early years. They continually reflect on how to develop the early years further. For example, recent improvements to the outdoor provision has resulted in children maximising their learning opportunities both indoors and outside. Leaders ensure that children access a rich, ambitious curriculum that is informed by the needs and next steps of the children. Staff use their interactions to promote children's learning. They check that children have secured the knowledge they need and provide the right help at the right time for children who struggle with their learning. Leaders work effectively with other professionals to ensure that children who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing are supported effectively. Children typically achieve well in the early years and develop the important knowledge they need for Year 1.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

While pupils make progress over time and achieve well in some aspects of their learning, they do not achieve as well as they could. Weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching in key stage 1 and 2 have resulted in pupils having gaps in important aspects of their knowledge and skills. The work in pupils' books is variable in quality. Pupils struggle to recall learning in the longer term. This is reflected in pupils' results in national tests, which are below average, including for disadvantaged pupils. This means that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not well prepared for their next steps in education.

Leaders' have begun to take effective action to improve pupils' learning, for example to develop pupils' handwriting skills and their fluency in mathematics. However, it is too early to know the long-term impact of leaders' actions on pupils' achievement.

Children in early years make positive progress from their starting points and are typically well prepared for key stage 1.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

While leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' behaviour, there is not a consistent positive behaviour culture in the school. Leaders have made recent changes to

the school's rules and routines. This has reduced incidents of disruptive behaviour and significantly reduced suspensions. However, these expectations are still being embedded. While pupils generally follow the school rules, they regularly lose concentration and become disengaged in lessons. This is reflected in the variable quality of the work they produce. Furthermore, older pupils have not developed the skills to independently resolve minor disagreements with their peers. Leaders help staff to develop their knowledge and expertise in managing pupils' behaviour. For example, staff have support from specialist professionals. This has strengthened their understanding of how to meet the needs of pupils who find it difficult to manage their emotions. Leaders and staff ensure that any incidents of bullying or discrimination are dealt with appropriately.

Leaders have recently developed the school's systems and processes to monitor and promote attendance. They have a clear understanding of the barriers that some families face in ensuring that their children attend school. Leaders identify where pupils' absence rates are becoming a concern. They work with families to provide support around this. This has a positive impact on improving pupils' attendance. The school's attendance rates, over time, are typically in line with the national average. Leaders identified a recent rise in absence rates and took swift and effective action to address this.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

While leaders have taken effective action to strengthen the curriculum and teaching, these changes are in their infancy and are not embedded. As a result, there is inconsistency in the quality of the delivery of the curriculum.

Leaders have developed an improved approach to supporting pupils in lessons who find learning difficult. However, teachers' checks on pupils' learning are not used effectively to inform what is taught next or to make timely adaptations to lessons. This means that, at times, activities are not well matched to pupils' next steps in learning. While staff offer additional support and resources to pupils to help them access tasks, these activities do not ensure that pupils secure the knowledge they need.

Leaders have an accurate, precise view of the developments that are needed in the curriculum and in teaching. Their actions have begun to improve the clarity and coherence of the curriculum. Leaders have considered the order of learning within mixed-age classes to ensure that learning builds consistently. They have placed a sharper focus to ensure that teaching helps pupils to secure the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have prioritised the development of staff's knowledge and expertise in delivering the curriculum.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders have strengthened the school's processes to identify the needs of pupils who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing. However, there are still inconsistencies in how effectively staff reduce these barriers to meet pupils' needs. Adaptations made to the delivery of the curriculum are not consistently well matched to pupils' identified needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. This makes it difficult for these pupils to build the next steps in their learning.

However, where needed, pupils with SEND do benefit from additional support from staff in lessons and resources to help them to access tasks and to regulate their behaviour.

Leaders work collaboratively with other professionals, and with parents and carers, to ensure that they understand pupils' needs. For example, they act on advice from specialists to ensure that the strategies and resources used to support pupils' behaviour are effective. Leaders carefully consider how to use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, they invest in additional staff support and targeted learning programmes to support these pupils. Leaders also provide pastoral support to reduce any barriers to pupils' wellbeing that they may face.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

While governors provide support and some challenge to leaders, their processes to check the quality of some aspects of the school's work needs further development. For example, governors provide effective challenge to leaders to ensure that resources are used effectively and that the school fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities. However, governors have not ensured that there are robust processes in place to check the quality of the curriculum, teaching and achievement. This means that they do not ensure that leaders' actions quickly and effectively address weaknesses that arise.

The school's context and leadership have undergone significant changes in the last year. The school is currently led by an acting executive headteacher who has been in post since November 2025. There has also been changes within the governing body. In this time, leaders have quickly gained a precise view of the school's strengths and priorities for development. They have acted swiftly to improve the school. For example, they have strengthened processes to monitor attendance and identify barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing. They have also prioritised improving pupils' behaviour and raising their achievement. Leaders' actions are made in the best interests of pupils and are having a significant impact on improving the quality of the school.

Leaders and governors ensure that staff feel valued and that their wellbeing is supported. For example, leaders have considered staff's workload when making changes to the curriculum. As a result, staff's morale is high. Leaders make careful decisions about staff's professional development to build their knowledge and expertise. For example, staff access a wealth of support from leaders, professionals and the local authority linked to the school's priority areas. Leaders have also taken deliberate and effective steps to strengthen parental engagement.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Leaders have recently made significant changes to the curriculum to improve pupils' personal development and wellbeing. However, these changes are at an early stage of being implemented. As a result, they have not had the impact that leaders intend. Pupils' understanding of some of the aspects of the personal development programme are not secure. For example, while pupils understand the importance of respecting people's unique characteristics, their understanding of other cultures and of important fundamental British values is limited. This means that pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for life beyond school.

The newly developed personal development programme is broad and progressive. Leaders make adaptations so that all pupils can participate fully in the experiences on offer. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about positive relationships and have different ways to share how they are feeling. Staff offer pastoral support to promote pupils' wellbeing. This includes additional support for pupils who face challenges in their life. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn how to recognise and manage risks online, in the local area and in the wider world.

Leaders have increased the range of extra-curricular experiences on offer to pupils to enhance their experiences beyond the classroom. This enables pupils to have more opportunities to develop their interests and talents, for example increasing numbers of pupils learn to play an instrument. Leaders gather pupils' views before they make decisions about extra-curricular activities to ensure that the offer reflects pupils' interests and meets their needs. Leaders ensure that there is equity of access to these opportunities.

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

Pupils enjoy school and most attend well. They describe the school as a safe place where 'nobody is judged for who they are'. Children in the early years flourish from the nurturing relationships that staff build with them. Pupils feel confident that staff listen to their views. For example, pupils appreciate the 'tell us' box that they use to communicate worries or suggestions about school life.

Pupils understand the newly developed school rules. They value the opportunity to become a 'VIP' when they demonstrate positive behaviours. There is a typically calm atmosphere around school. However, while pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally calm, some pupils struggle to remain focused. This impacts on their learning. Pupils generally get along well together. However, at times, some pupils struggle to resolve conflicts with other pupils when minor fall outs occur. Nonetheless, pupils are confident that leaders quickly resolve any incidents of bullying.

The delivery of the curriculum in key stage 1 and 2 is inconsistent. This includes how well pupils who face barriers to learning are supported. Leaders have taken swift action to improve how well pupils learn the curriculum. However, many of these changes are new and are not fully embedded. Consequently, while leaders and staff have begun to address the gaps in pupils' learning, these are not yet closed. This is reflected in the school's published outcomes for key stage 2, which are below average. This means that pupils are not well prepared for their next steps. Children achieve well in the early years. There are also positive signs of older pupils' gaining more detailed knowledge.

Pupils take part in a broad range of extra-curricular activities. For example, pupils develop their interests and skills through attending clubs, such as archery, dodgeball, dance and science. They are proud of the progress they make in learning to play an instrument. Pupils who face barriers to learning receive the help they need to support them to participate fully in these opportunities.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff use assessment effectively to inform teaching and to address gaps in pupils' knowledge so that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure that activities match pupils' next steps in learning and effectively reduce any barriers to learning they face, so that they can build on their learning securely.
 - Leaders should continue to improve the culture of pupils' behaviour so that expectations are consistently clear and pupils develop independent strategies to maintain focus and build effective relationships.
 - Governors should develop their approaches towards checking the quality of the school's work, so that they have a precise picture of the impact of leaders' actions.
 - Leaders should ensure that the personal development programme has the impact they intend, so that pupils develop the knowledge they need, including in their understanding of fundamental British values.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Janet Neale.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the acting executive headteacher, other leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

The number of pupils who attend the school has reduced significantly. At the time of the inspection there were 85 pupils on roll.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The substantive headteacher was not at the school at the time of the inspection. The school was being led by an acting executive headteacher who had been in this role since November 2025.

Acting executive headteacher: Mick McKenna

Lead inspector:

Liz Dayton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Christopher Metcalfe, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

135

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

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)

25.19%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

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

3.70%

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

11.85%

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	51%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	30%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	63%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	63%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	48%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	61%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	60%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	91%	73%	Above

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	22%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	11%	46%	Below
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	33%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	62%	Below
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	44%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	44%	58%	Below
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	28%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	11%	59%	Below
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	22%	68%	-45 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	11%	67%	-56 pp
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	33%	80%	-46 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	80%	-46 pp
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	44%	78%	-33 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	44%	78%	-33 pp
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	28%	80%	-52 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	11%	79%	-68 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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 (2 term)	4.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.4%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.9%	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 (2 term)	12.7%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	15.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	16.4%	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.

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