

# Carter's Charity Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Preesall

**Address:** Pilling Lane, Preesall, 253 Pilling Lane, Poulton-Le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 0HH

**Unique reference number (URN):** 119392

## Inspection report: 3 February 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 

Most pupils attend school regularly. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages and continues to improve. Leaders and staff understand attendance patterns well and use clear approaches to address concerns. They analyse absence information carefully and take action when pupils are at risk of missing too much school. To support this work, leaders intervene early and work with families and external agencies. As a result, the number of pupils who are regularly absent has reduced. Leaders recognise that some pupils face additional barriers to attending regularly. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils known to children's social care receive timely and targeted support, when they need it. This helps leaders to support all groups of children to attend well.

Leaders set clear expectations for behaviour, underpinned by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. The behaviour policy promotes a positive approach, with rewards and praise used to recognise good behaviour. Pupils are polite, well mannered and patient. They treat others with respect. Pupils move calmly around the school, follow routines well and contribute to the school's positive atmosphere. They feel safe. In lessons, pupils are generally positive about their learning. Leaders address any bullying or discrimination promptly so that incidents do not escalate.

### Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school provides a coherent programme for pupils' personal development and wellbeing. This runs through the curriculum and is strengthened by carefully chosen wider experiences. Pupils develop respect for others and an understanding of how to stay physically and mentally healthy.

Leaders have carefully designed an age-appropriate relationships and health education offer. Pupils build knowledge about physical, mental and emotional wellbeing over time and use appropriate language to describe how they feel. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including online, and know who to speak to if they are worried. Pupils are confident that adults will act quickly to address concerns, including situations involving unwanted behaviour or online messages.

Pupils show respect for difference and understand how to treat others fairly. They talk confidently about different family types and cultures and explain why everyone should feel welcome in school. Pupils understand right and wrong and show empathy when others feel uncomfortable or upset. They are confident that adults will act to keep them safe.

The school's values are reinforced through daily routines and leadership opportunities. Older pupils take on roles, such as ambassadors and buddies. They support younger pupils and help to organise assemblies and social times. These responsibilities help pupils develop confidence, patience and a sense of responsibility. Pupils value these roles and see them as an important part of contributing to the school community.

Leaders ensure that all pupils can take part in personal development opportunities, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders track pupils' participation and make adjustments so that all pupils are included. Leaders use various strategies to reduce barriers to participation effectively and pupils access a range of opportunities in sport, music and creative activities. These experiences broaden pupils' horizons and help them develop their interests and talents.

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## Needs attention

### Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Older pupils are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education. Pupils in key stage 2 typically do not secure results in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics in line with national expectations. Pupils do not make enough progress across some other parts of the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve less well than their peers.

Children in the Reception Year make a positive start to their education. Teachers prioritise how well children learn their phonics knowledge. Pupils' results in the Year 1 phonics screening check are above national standards and stable over time. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to practise reading sounds that they know. This helps pupils recognise sounds quickly and accurately. Most children gain the essential knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for Year 1.

### Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Some parts of the curriculum are not taught effectively. In some lessons, teachers do not select activities that match pupils' needs closely enough. When work is too hard or too easy, pupils lose focus and their attitudes to learning deteriorate. At times, pupils do not learn well or build their knowledge securely. In some subjects, teachers move on to new learning without checking what pupils have understood. This makes it harder for some pupils to make sense of new work. When this happens, pupils do not deepen their learning successfully.

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum, sequenced so that pupils can learn the knowledge they need in preparation for their next steps. However, fundamental skills such as spelling and handwriting are not reinforced evenly across subjects. Pupils do not develop these skills as well as they should. This makes it harder for pupils to record their work clearly and explain their learning.

Professional development focuses on supporting teachers to improve their subject knowledge and expertise. However, leaders do not check carefully enough whether this is making a difference in lessons. Leaders' actions to improve teaching are not precise enough. This means that improvements in teaching are not brought about consistently.

## Early years

Needs attention 

The early years curriculum is not taught as well as it should be. Interactions between staff and children do not consistently help children to talk more or develop their ideas effectively. Staff do not routinely use play opportunities well to extend children's learning by asking questions, explaining ideas or building on what children say. As a result, some children do not extend their vocabulary or develop their thinking as well as they could. However, leaders are suitably ambitious about what children can learn and do. The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for children to experience high-quality texts and encounter new words.

Staff take time to get to know children and work closely with parents and carers, when children join the school. This helps children to settle quickly into routines. Children are calm and purposeful during activities. They feel safe and are well cared for.

Learning to read is prioritised. Most children develop the early reading skills they need for Year 1. Children also develop the personal and social behaviours needed to settle into the next key stage. This helps them approach Year 1 with confidence and familiarity with school routines.

## Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders' work to identify and address pupils' barriers to learning is not effective enough. Adaptations to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not embedded consistently across the school. Staff do not always use information from families, professionals and external agencies well, or follow the advice set out in education, health and care plans. Leaders have not ensured that all staff have the skills to adapt their teaching for pupils with SEND. Leaders do not check whether the support pupils receive is making a difference to their learning over time.

Leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. However, they do not evaluate clearly enough whether their strategies improve pupils' achievement. Consequently, gaps in learning are not addressed quickly enough. Some pupils with SEND do not make the academic progress of which they are capable.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. Pupils are valued as individuals. The school has recently strengthened its leadership of inclusion. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing. Pastoral support for pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged and those known to social care is effective and timely. Pupils feel safe and build trusting relationships with staff.

## Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Improvements needed across the school have not been consistently tackled or developed by leaders. Changes in staffing over time, including in leadership roles, have reduced leaders' capacity to address weaknesses quickly and embed improvement securely. Leaders know the school and its pupils well, and understand the barriers that some families face. They have sought external support to strengthen the curriculum, teaching and leadership, and have taken appropriate action to improve provision for pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities. However, leaders have not ensured that the teaching consistently addresses gaps in pupils' knowledge across the school. This limits how well some pupils progress through the curriculum.

Leaders, including governors, consider staff workload and wellbeing in their decision-making. Staff feel supported, and relationships with parents, carers and the wider community are positive. Staff value professional development opportunities. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of professional development well enough or check routinely whether training, guidance and external support, improve pupils' experiences. As a result, leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the impact of their professional development programme on teachers' practice.

Those responsible for governance do not have a secure understanding of school performance or the impact of key spending decisions. For example, governors are not clear about the impact of expenditure to support disadvantaged pupils. This limits their ability to hold leaders to account and challenge improvement priorities with precision. Governors understand the school's context and contribute to school life. They share with school leaders a clear and inclusive vision for the school.

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

Pupils at Carter's Charity Voluntary Controlled Primary School feel safe and well cared for. Staff know pupils well. They deal with any bullying quickly. This helps pupils feel secure and supported. The values of kindness, respect and responsibility run throughout the school.

Pupils usually behave calmly around the school. They follow clear routines in classrooms, corridors and at social times. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive, including in the early years. The school expectations are clear and mostly applied consistently by staff. However, in some lessons, activities are not well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils experience outdoor learning as a distinctive part of school life. Staff draw on the school's location to encourage pupils to learn about the local area. Pupils enjoy being active, working together and exploring the coastal environment. These experiences build confidence and enjoyment of learning. The school's eco-work strengthens this further. Pupils care for an allotment, where they grow and sell vegetables. This helps them to understand sustainability and contribute to the community. Pupils also help keep school areas clean and well cared for. They show pride in their school and its surroundings. Most pupils attend school regularly. They arrive ready to learn. When pupils struggle to come to school regularly, the school supports them. It helps them participate more fully in school life.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences beyond the curriculum. They learn how to stay safe, including online, and develop respect for difference. Pupils take on responsibilities, such as buddies and ambassadors, and contribute to the school community. Pupils lead lunchtime clubs, such as creating comics and playing chess. These clubs help pupils build on their interests.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that high-quality teaching leads to the intended curriculum being implemented well, so that all pupils make suitable progress.
  - Leaders should make sure that teachers have the expertise to effectively check what pupils know and remember, so that they address gaps in knowledge and skills promptly.
  - Leaders should ensure that there are high expectations across the curriculum for pupils to embed their foundational skills, such as spelling, handwriting and numeracy, so that they are better prepared for the next stage of their education.
  - Leaders should strengthen inclusive classroom practices across the curriculum in order to address variation in the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.
  - Leaders should strengthen the early years provision by ensuring that the curriculum sets out how learning builds over time. They should make sure staff understand children's starting points so that they engage in high-quality interactions with children that develop their language and thinking.
  - Leaders and governors should strengthen their evaluation and oversight so that the strategies they use and the professional development offer they provide lead to consistent improvements in classroom practice.
  - Governors should ensure they have a clear understanding of school performance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that their challenge is focused and resources, including pupil premium spending, are effectively evaluated against pupils' outcomes.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr Chris Haughton.

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 (HMI)s or by Ofsted Inspectors (OI)s who have previously served as HMI)s.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and several other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, during the inspection. Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.

Inspectors spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school manages a breakfast and after-school club.

### Lead inspector:

Dianne Holcroft, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Trish Merritt, Ofsted Inspector

Sue Bowman, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 3 February 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**174**

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)**

**27.01%**

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**

**1.72%**

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**

**15.52%**

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**

**Above average**

### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

## **Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)**

# No resourced provision

## What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

## All pupils' performance

### Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

| Year                  | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Latest 3 year average | 49%         | 61%              | Below                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 46%         | 62%              | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 59%         | 61%              | Close to average               |
| 2022/23 (final)       | 42%         | 60%              | Below                          |

### 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 | 65%         | 74%              | Below                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 68%         | 75%              | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 72%         | 74%              | Close to average               |
| 2022/23 (final)       | 54%         | 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 69%         | 72%              | Close to average               |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 75%         | 72%              | Close to average               |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 79%         | 72%              | Above                          |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 50%         | 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 58%         | 73%              | Below                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 57%         | 74%              | Below                          |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 69%         | 73%              | Close to average               |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 46%         | 73%              | Below                          |

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

| Year                         | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 31%         | 46%              | Below                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 36%         | 47%              | Close to average               |

| Year            | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2023/24 (final) | 50%         | 46%              | Close to average               |
| 2022/23 (final) | 17%         | 44%              | Below                          |

### 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 | 48%         | 62%              | Below                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 55%         | 63%              | Close to average               |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 67%         | 62%              | Close to average               |
| 2022/23 (final)       | 33%         | 60%              | Below                          |

### 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 | 55%         | 59%              | Close to average               |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 82%         | 59%              | Above                          |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 83%         | 58%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final)       | 17%         | 58%              | Below                          |

### 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 41%         | 60%              | Below                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 55%         | 61%              | Close to average               |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 50%         | 59%              | Close to average               |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 25%         | 59%              | Below                          |

## 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 31%         | 68%                              | -37 pp                  |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 36%         | 69%                              | -33 pp                  |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 50%         | 67%                              | -17 pp                  |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 17%         | 66%                              | -50 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 48%         | 80%                              | -31 pp                  |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 55%         | 81%                              | -26 pp                  |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 67%         | 80%                              | -13 pp                  |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 33%         | 78%                              | -45 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 55%         | 78%                              | -23 pp                  |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 82%         | 78%                              | 4 pp                    |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 83%         | 78%                              | 6 pp                    |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 17%         | 77%                              | -61 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 41%         | 80%                              | -38 pp                  |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 55%         | 81%                              | -26 pp                  |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 50%         | 79%                              | -29 pp                  |

| Year            | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2022/23 (final) | 25%         | 79%                              | -54 pp                  |

## Absence

### Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

| Year             | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2024/25 (2 term) | 5.1%        | 5.2%             | Close to average               |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 5.8%        | 5.5%             | Close to average               |
| 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 (2 term) | 9.2%        | 13.3%            | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 12.7%       | 14.6%            | Close to average               |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 13.1%       | 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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