

St James' Lanehead Church of England Primary School

Address: Briercliffe Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB10 2NH

Unique reference number (URN): 119487

Inspection report: 14 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well overall. By the end of key stage 2, many meet the national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Where pupils do not meet this standard, they make clear progress from their starting points. Leaders prioritise securing fundamental knowledge, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. This is evident in pupils' work, although some misconceptions persist.

Information from national tests typically reflects pupils' work and discussions, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In the main, if results should dip, leaders act promptly. For example, changes to the teaching of number facts and mathematical fluency, supported by staff training, are improving pupils' achievement in mathematics. However, pupils' attainment at the higher standard remains variable, particularly in writing and mathematics. Leaders recognise this and are taking appropriate action to tackle this issue. Overall, pupils make progress across the curriculum and leave the school prepared for their next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise attendance and communicate high expectations across the school community. Attendance is typically in line with national averages and is improving over time. Leaders track patterns closely and take timely action when pupils' attendance gives cause for concern. This includes working with families and external agencies to reduce barriers for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Where persistent absence affects a small number of pupils, leaders provide sympathetic support. These actions help pupils to attend more regularly and sustain engagement with learning. Leaders understand the impact of disruption on previous cohorts and have placed sharp focus on improvement over time.

Pupils behave well. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They welcome visitors, new pupils and staff kindly and readily. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils usually sustain focus on their work. Staff address any infrequent incidents of bullying, including online concerns, quickly and consistently. The school promotes respectful relationships and addresses any form of discrimination without delay. Leaders adopt inclusive approaches to behaviour and attendance, making sensible adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can participate fully. As a result, pupils are helped to feel supported and valued. They are proud of their school and show this through their positive conduct.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have planned a sequence of learning that is appropriate for the school's mixed-age classes and enables pupils to build knowledge step by step. Pupils generally learn the curriculum well. Typically, they can recall key information and concepts.

Pupils secure the basics in reading, writing and mathematics. Vocabulary teaching supports their understanding across subjects. Teachers usually deliver the curriculum content with

clarity. At times, the curriculum and teaching do not consistently support pupils to embed and apply key knowledge, particularly in writing. This affects the accuracy of pupils' work. Leaders' clear and coherent focus on handwriting and spelling is evident. However, practice sometimes varies as this work develops.

The curriculum is inclusive, and pupils typically access the intended learning. Teachers check pupils' understanding to identify their starting points and make adaptations where needed. These approaches are usually effective. However, there are times when teachers do not use the information that they gather about pupils' learning well enough. As a result, some activities do not help pupils to extend or deepen their understanding as well as leaders intend.

Pupils enjoy learning and benefit from first-hand experiences. For example, pupils visit a Tudor manor house to deepen their understanding of William Shakespeare.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise the early years as the foundation for children's learning and achievement. They understand the requirements of the early years foundation stage and ensure that the curriculum meets children's needs. This curriculum provides a clear pathway from entry into the Reception Year through to transition into Year 1.

The curriculum places clear emphasis on communication, language and early reading. Staff select purposeful activities, supported by a well-organised and stimulating environment, to promote children's independence and engagement. Learning areas typically support the curriculum delivery. Phonics teaching is accurate and consistent, with staff modelling correct sounds and vocabulary effectively. Staff interactions usually support children's learning well. At times, however, delays in extending vocabulary or addressing misconceptions limit opportunities for children to deepen their understanding.

Children feel safe, settled and well cared for. Staff form warm relationships that support children's personal, social and emotional development. Children generally behave well. They typically share resources and show increasing resilience when completing activities. Leaders ensure effective supervision and safeguarding arrangements. Inclusive practices enable all children to participate, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Children make progress from their starting points and are prepared appropriately for transition into Year 1. This is underpinned by effective communication between staff and parents and carers.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify and assess pupils' needs with precision. This enables them to put in place timely and appropriate support for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those known or previously known to social care. This typically begins with a calm and welcoming start to the day, which especially benefits pupils who need additional reassurance. Leaders take appropriate action to support pupils' learning and ensure that they are fully involved in the school community.

In lessons, pupils who face barriers to their learning access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers usually adapt tasks thoughtfully and maintain ambition, ensuring that pupils with SEND and other potentially disadvantaged groups participate fully. Staff receive relevant training that supports their understanding of pupils' needs and informs the way they design learning.

Leaders use evidence to inform how they spend additional funding. This contributes to improved access and participation for disadvantaged pupils. Although an attainment gap persists, effective inclusive practice is evident in pupils' day-to-day experiences.

Pupils known to social care benefit from coordinated work with external agencies and the school's highly effective emotional support. This enhances pupils' wellbeing. Leaders typically monitor the impact of this support and adjust it when needed. Pupils share an understanding of each other's differing needs, reflecting a culture of equity that permeates the school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders know their school community well. They keep pupils at the heart of their decision-making and priorities. Leaders respond appropriately to changes in context, including changes in staffing, to ensure that pupils benefit from continuity.

Middle leaders understand their roles and contribute coherently to whole-school priorities. Staff engage in professional learning both in school and with external partners to refine subject expertise and embed agreed approaches. Leaders protect time for professional learning and invest in building expertise across their workforce, including early career teachers. These actions contribute positively to pupils' experiences of school life.

Leaders model professionalism and set clear expectations. Staff note that leaders are attentive to their wellbeing and workload. Consequently, staff morale is very positive.

Leaders establish trusting relationships with parents and carers as well as the wider community. Parents value the support provided. Leaders demonstrate a commitment to the community and act in pupils' best interests, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Governors meet their legal duties. They understand the school's priorities. As such, they support the management of resources effectively and respond to emerging needs such as enhancing provision for pupils with SEND. Governors carry out appropriate checks to gather and analyse relevant information. However, sometimes, leaders and governors do not consistently evaluate the impact of their actions with sufficient focus and depth. Leaders and governors recognise this and have taken steps to strengthen the rigour of impact checks. This aims to ensure that improvements are achieved consistently and in a timely manner.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out a coherent approach to pupils' personal development and wellbeing. The established programme runs through the curriculum and wider school life. This supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps to prepare them well for

the next stage of education. Pupils benefit from leaders' clear intent of the programme as an entitlement for all pupils. Learning is enhanced through enrichment activities, leadership roles and carefully planned experiences. For example, the school's outdoor learning provision, 'the classroom under the sky', helps to build pupils' confidence, independence and maturity over time.

The school's provision for personal development, including relationships and health education, meets pupils' needs. It covers a wide range of relevant themes, including helping pupils understand and reduce online and offline risks to their wellbeing. Leaders respond promptly to emerging issues with additional sessions when needed. Engagement with current affairs gives pupils safe opportunities to discuss local and global issues. This also deepens their understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils show respect for others in their interactions. They demonstrate an emerging awareness of discrimination through supported discussion. Learning about different faiths, cultures and viewpoints broadens pupils' views. Planned experiences that the school has set out, known as 'butterfly moments', contribute positively to broadening pupils' horizons.

Leaders promote inclusive personal development by tracking pupils' participation in clubs, activities and leadership roles. They target support to ensure access for all pupils. Reasonable adjustments enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to participate fully in all that the school offers. Wellbeing support is a notable feature of the school. Staff know pupils and families well. Leaders ensure that the school offers flexible, tailored support that helps pupils to feel safe, confident and ready to learn. Pupils trust adults and are assured that they can seek help when needed. Staff support pupils in preparing to attend secondary settings equipped with knowledge and confidence.

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

Pupils experience a calm, welcoming and inclusive school life. Staff greet pupils warmly at the start of the day. This supports a settled climate for learning and reassures any pupils who need extra support.

Pupils are helped to feel safe and confident. They know to approach adults if they have any concerns. Pupils describe bullying as rare and trust staff to deal with issues quickly and effectively. Clear routines and consistent expectations shape behaviour across lessons and social times. Pupils usually behave well, show courtesy to others and most take pride in their work.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged take part confidently in everyday school life. They learn alongside their peers, experience the same curriculum and routines, and contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of fairness and respect for difference in how they treat each other.

Pupils value the wider opportunities available to them. Leadership roles such as school councillors, play leaders, digital leaders and head pupils help them to develop responsibility and confidence. Pupils can choose from a broad range of clubs, for example judo, tag rugby, doodle and choir. Trips, music and sporting activities further extend pupils' experiences

beyond the classroom and encourage high levels of participation. Pupils are compassionate towards others. For example, they recently raised money for a charitable organisation to positively impact their community.

Pupils benefit from staff knowing them and their families very well. Where appropriate, pupils access tailored help, including emotional support. These actions help them to attend regularly and feel ready to learn.

Pupils typically achieve well academically and enjoy their learning. Most pupils reach the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the time that they leave. Many pupils make clear progress from their individual starting points.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that assessment is used consistently and effectively to further secure pupils' foundational knowledge by addressing misconceptions promptly, so that pupils build understanding securely.
 - Leaders should ensure that learning activities across the curriculum, including in the early years, are matched to pupils' prior knowledge so that all pupils are supported to achieve well over time, including at the higher standard.
 - Leaders and governors should further refine their analysis of the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes. They should use this information to assess whether improvements are having the intended effect and to make timely adjustments where necessary.
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About this inspection

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

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

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

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher and other leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, during the inspection.

The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority, a representative of the diocese of Blackburn and members of the governing board, including the chair.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's previous section 48 inspection, for schools with a religious character, took place in May 2019.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:
The school does not use any alternative provision.

The school is overseen by an executive headteacher who took up role in December 2025.

Executive headteacher: Mark Elliott

Lead inspector:

Sheena Clark, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nicola Howard, Ofsted Inspector

Gaynor Roberts, 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 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

280

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

280

Close to 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)

30.71%

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

1.43%

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

16.79%

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

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	59%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	72%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	65%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	79%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	69%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	68%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	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	66%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	60%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	44%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	42%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	47%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	47%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	57%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	58%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	56%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	53%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

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

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	68%	-23 pp
2024/25 (revised)	42%	69%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	67%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	44%	66%	-23 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	56%	80%	-24 pp
2024/25 (revised)	47%	81%	-33 pp
2023/24 (final)	68%	80%	-11 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	57%	78%	-20 pp
2024/25 (revised)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	56%	77%	-21 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	53%	81%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	79%	-32 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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)	4.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	4.7%	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 (2 term)	9.5%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	9.0%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	9.9%	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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