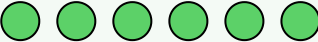


St Anne's Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn

Address: Feilden Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 1LQ

Unique reference number (URN): 119511

Inspection report: 13 January 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 

Pupils feel a sense of belonging at the school and most attend regularly. They enjoy seeing their friends and teachers each day. Leaders check pupils' levels of attendance carefully. This has helped to encourage some pupils to come to school more often. A breakfast club and additional activities, such as 'soft starts' for those who need them, help pupils to have a positive start to the day. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and external agencies to overcome any barriers to attending school. This means that pupils who have had difficulties get the support that they need to get back on track.

Pupils typically behave well during lessons and around the school, including at social times. They understand the school's rules. Pupils are well mannered and polite towards their peers, staff and visitors. They have positive attitudes to learning and engage well during lessons. Well-established routines help them to feel settled. Pupils appreciate that staff help to resolve any concerns that they may have quickly and effectively. Staff understand the school's expectations for behaviour. Most staff support pupils to follow these well. As a result, the environment is calm and orderly.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, leaders have renewed their focus on improving the curriculum to make sure that it is broad and balanced. The curriculum is well ordered. It sets out the knowledge that pupils need to learn. This helps them to build on their prior knowledge. Leaders ensure that staff benefit from professional learning that develops their subject knowledge and teaching skills. Staff typically deliver the curriculum well. However, at times, the adaptations that teachers make to support some pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be.

The curriculum emphasises developing pupils' language and vocabulary. This particularly helps pupils who speak English as an additional language to build their understanding. Generally, teachers check that pupils learn and remember what is taught. For the most part, teachers use this information well to inform subsequent teaching. For example, they make sure that pupils practise their reading using books that match the sounds that they know and provide any necessary support to help pupils catch up quickly. However, there is some variability in how well staff use the information that they glean from their checks on learning. As a result, some gaps in pupils' knowledge, especially in their writing knowledge, go unaddressed.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an effective curriculum that gives children a secure start to their early education. The curriculum sets out what children need to know across all areas of learning and supports their progress. This helps to prepare children for moving up to key stage 1.

Leaders have high expectations for children's achievement. Leaders prioritise children's communication and language skills. They have selected high-quality stories for children to experience. Leaders have identified precise vocabulary for children to learn, which is designed to develop their speaking skills. Staff interact well with children. This helps children who speak other languages at home to gain a secure command of English. The well-ordered phonics programme and effective teaching typically help children to develop their early reading skills well.

Staff have warm and caring relationships with children. They ensure that parents and carers are included in their children's learning. Settling-in arrangements and well-established routines help children to feel secure and learn well. For example, children learn how to wash their hands before snack time and to brush their teeth after eating lunch. Children develop positive attitudes towards their learning. They understand the school's expectations, with sensitive support from staff.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders strive to include pupils in all aspects of the school. Staff are knowledgeable about pupils as individuals. Using effective systems, they quickly and accurately identify any additional needs or barriers that pupils may have. Leaders ensure that staff typically support disadvantaged pupils effectively. This is also the case for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Leaders have focused on strengthening relationships with parents and carers so that they can help their children's learning. They draw on links with external agencies and local partners to find the best ways of supporting pupils.

Leaders understand the barriers that pupils may face. They have developed effective strategies to address these. For example, leaders regularly review how well pupils progress through the curriculum. In the main, this enables pupils with SEND and those who face other disadvantages to learn well alongside their peers. Often, adaptations that teachers make during lessons support pupils' wellbeing and help them to access learning. Occasionally, these approaches do not support some pupils to learn as well as they could.

Leaders ensure that staff have the training they need to help them with meeting pupils' needs. They make sure that additional funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils' wellbeing, attendance and learning, for example through the additional resources and support staff that leaders provide.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders act in the best interests of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They understand the school's priorities for improvement and have acted swiftly to address these, for example by strengthening safeguarding practices and by improving the provision in the early years. Children have a secure start to their education as a result. Leaders have focused on improving the curriculum and pupils' learning. This has led to a positive impact in many areas of the school's work. Recent actions to improve pupils' writing are underway, but leaders have not had time to secure improvement.

Governors share leaders' determination to continue to improve. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Governors support and challenge the school well. For example, they ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and that additional funding is well spent. Governors review pupils' attendance and check how well pupils benefit from school and the wider opportunities that exist for them. This includes ensuring that pupils with SEND benefit just as well as their peers.

Staff draw on a wide range of high-quality professional learning that helps them to further improve and develop their expertise. For example, they have opportunities to share effective teaching by being members of a school improvement group. Leaders and governors ensure that staff workload is manageable and their wellbeing prioritised. Staff appreciate the time that they are given to complete their roles. They feel valued through leaders' commitment to a teamwork approach.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school has adopted a suitable personal development programme. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from rich experiences. Leaders have tailored the knowledge that pupils learn to the school's context. This typically prepares pupils well for life in the area in which they live and beyond. Leaders engage well with parents and carers to help them to understand the information that pupils will learn.

Pupils develop their social skills. They understand how to make a positive contribution to the experiences of others. For example, members of the school council help to organise events for pupils across the year. Pupils raise money for charities. The choir visits a local care home to sing to residents. These activities help pupils to learn how to become active citizens in their community. Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from additional music and drama tuition. Pupils take part in physical activities such as football and dodgeball. These opportunities encourage pupils to develop their talents and interests.

Pupils' pastoral needs are well supported. Staff check regularly on pupils' wellbeing, providing activities to help them to manage their emotions. Pupils understand how to treat others with kindness. They develop their understanding of fundamental British values. For example, pupils learn about democracy. They show respect towards other people's differences, such as disabilities. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They learn how to stay safe outside of school, including when online and when travelling to school. Overall, pupils are well informed about looking after themselves physically and mentally.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not develop their writing skills securely. Actions to address gaps in pupils' writing are recent and not fully embedded across the school. Many pupils do not have the knowledge that they need in spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting. As a result, they make repeated mistakes in their written work. Staff do not consistently identify or

address these over time. There is further work needed to close these gaps for some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

In other subjects, pupils' attainment has improved over time, particularly in mathematics and reading. This includes for disadvantaged pupils. These improvements are reflected in pupils' outcomes in national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils broadly progress well through the wider curriculum. They remember their learning and build a useful body of knowledge across subjects. This prepares them well for their next steps in education.

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

Pupils enjoy spending time with their friends at school. They embrace the school's motto of 'making tomorrow a better day'. Pupils know that they can learn from their experiences and keep a positive outlook for the future. They feel well cared for by staff. Pupils know that they can speak to trusted adults if they have any worries.

The school uses effective systems to reduce any barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Leaders work with staff to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, to follow the curriculum alongside their peers.

Pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning. Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. The school's curriculum is ambitious. It enables pupils to build their knowledge over time. As a result, pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, learn well across most subjects. However, pupils across the school do not develop their writing skills consistently. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting, which are not addressed over time.

Most pupils attend school regularly. They typically demonstrate positive behaviour and treat others respectfully. Pupils follow the school rules closely. They are kind, care for others and try their best. They know that staff respond promptly to any rare incidents of bullying or unkindness.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences in school that develop their character and understanding of life in modern Britain. They support their peers in their roles as buddies, sports leaders and members of the chaplaincy team. Pupils enjoy a range of trips, for example, to zoos, museums and outdoor learning sites. These visits help to enrich their learning across the curriculum.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff deliver the curriculum consistently well and that, when needed, they successfully adapt teaching to enable all pupils to learn as effectively as they can.

- Leaders should support staff in using their checks on learning more precisely to identify and address any gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge.
 - Leaders should ensure that their approaches to raising pupils' attainment in writing improve pupils' foundational knowledge of grammar and spelling and the quality of their writing over time.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Reverend James McCartney.

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 headteacher, deputy headteacher and several other leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body. Discussions also took place with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in January 2018.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed.

Headteacher: Adam Pierce

Lead inspector:

David Lobodzinski, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Andy Hunt, Ofsted Inspector

Tracy Beaty, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

216

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

230

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)

35.15%

Above 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

5.09%

Above 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

11.57%

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

Well 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	56%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	59%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	52%	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	69%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	83%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	61%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	60%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	62%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	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
Latest 3 year average	49%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41%	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	67%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	85%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	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	51%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41%	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
Latest 3 year average	60%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	54%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	53%	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	49%	68%	-19 pp
2024/25 (revised)	54%	69%	-15 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	67%	-14 pp
2022/23 (final)	41%	66%	-25 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	67%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (revised)	85%	81%	4 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	80%	-18 pp
2022/23 (final)	59%	78%	-19 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	51%	78%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	54%	78%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	78%	-16 pp
2022/23 (final)	41%	77%	-36 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	60%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25 (revised)	77%	81%	-4 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	79%	-26 pp
2022/23 (final)	53%	79%	-26 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)	4.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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)	14.2%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.7%	16.2%	Above

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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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