

Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School

Address: Calder Vale, Garstang, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 1SR

Unique reference number (URN): 119518

Inspection report: 24 March 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. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged. They become proficient in the crucial skills needed to read, write, communicate and calculate effectively. Younger pupils build positive habits that help them to build their skills for handwriting, language and early reading from the outset. Pupils that have gaps in these early skills receive appropriate support to acquire them quickly. As a result, most pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Pupils' written work is generally of a high quality.

Pupils develop an appropriate body of knowledge across the other curriculum subjects. They can recall much of what they have learned. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well through the curriculum from their individual starting points. This means that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Most pupils attend school regularly. Few are persistently absent. Leaders take effective action to remove barriers that affect attendance. For example, a daily school minibusservice helps to support access to this rurally located school where public transport services do not provide coverage. Leaders have suitable systems in place to track when an individual pupil's attendance starts to dip. They work with parent and carers to put in place tailored strategies for pupils with more specific barriers to their attendance.

Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. They are attentive in their lessons which creates a calm atmosphere in their classrooms. Staff uphold the school's behaviour expectations effectively to maintain a positive learning environment. Pupils play nicely during social times and follow school routines well. They are kind towards each other. Pupils very rarely experience any forms of bullying and can recognise signs of it. Leaders take appropriate action to deal with any unkind behaviour. They support pupils to quickly rebuild relationships if there has been a disagreement. This contributes to a harmonious school environment in which pupils get along well.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have constructed a broad and balanced curriculum. They have identified appropriate content that pupils should learn in each topic. In mathematics and English, leaders have introduced effective strategies to teach the content to mixed-aged classes. This ensures that pupils learn in a logical, sequential manner which helps them to build their knowledge securely. Leaders are highly alert to pupils that may need support with the basic skills in these subjects. They ensure that these pupils get what they need to catch up quickly in these areas when needed.

In other curriculum subjects, content is typically delivered well by knowledgeable teachers. Staff generally use effective strategies to check on pupils' understanding. They provide timely support or guidance to address their misconceptions. Leaders have an appropriate

understanding of the quality of teaching. They generally make suitable decisions to bring about improvements to the curriculum and its implementation. However, some approaches to evaluate the curriculum and the quality of teaching lack enough rigour to provide leaders with well-informed detail.

Leaders have a deep understanding of pupils' individual needs, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to make appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments for pupils where appropriate.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders are adept at identifying any special educational needs and/or disabilities that pupils may have. They are quick to assess what support these pupils might need to access their learning successfully. Leaders use this information effectively to decide the most appropriate level of support to match these pupils' individual needs and circumstances. For instance, they ensure that training helps staff to make suitable adaptations to teaching for pupils who need different levels of support. When needed, leaders seek expert advice or guidance. Leaders routinely engage with external specialists or outreach teams to provide highly-tailored support to pupils with a range of needs. As a result, this helps to overcome many pupils' barriers to learning which paves the way for them to access their learning well.

Leaders make sensible choices on how they use additional funding, including the pupil premium, to support disadvantaged pupils to thrive at school. Many of their decisions have a positive impact on these pupils' education or wellbeing.

Overall, leaders have suitable approaches to monitoring the implementation of their strategies to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, leaders often visit lessons to check that appropriate adaptations for pupils are in place. This typically helps leaders to identify and remedy potential gaps in support without much delay.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. They typically set suitable priorities. Leaders take appropriate action to secure improvements in the school's provision. They root their decisions in the best interests of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Nonetheless, some of the approaches that leaders take to check and evaluate the effectiveness of their work across different areas are not fully rigorous. This sometimes includes how leaders evaluate the school's work to support some disadvantaged pupils. This means leaders do not have the information to pinpoint areas for further refinements and then to act on this with precision.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They typically support and hold leaders to account to drive school improvement. Governors ensure that leaders deploy school resources appropriately so that pupils, especially those with SEND, receive a good standard of education.

Leaders take appropriate actions to support staff's wellbeing. Staff fully appreciate such actions, reporting that their workload is manageable and that they are happy at work. They

also benefit from appropriate professional development planning that enhances their knowledge and practice. For instance, staff regularly receive specific training on supporting those with a wide range of special educational needs, which helps them to cater for pupils' individual needs well.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from the school's plans for their personal development. The personal, social and health education curriculum covers appropriate content that prepares pupils well for their futures. For instance, pupils learn how to form healthy relationships with others. They also learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically healthy through lessons that teach them the importance of exercise and hydration for the body. They enjoy lessons that give them strategies to help maintain their mental wellbeing.

Pupils develop a genuine respect and tolerance for the differences of others. They demonstrate high compassion and understanding of the additional needs or disabilities that their classmates might have. For example, older pupils recently learnt British Sign Language to better communicate with some of their peers. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate awareness of the concepts and attitudes that underpin fundamental British values. They understand democracy and can discuss their learning about its origins in ancient civilisations. Their knowledge of democratic systems in this country has been further enhanced by a visit from their local member of parliament.

Leaders broaden pupils' school experiences in a range of ways. For instance, they have recently enjoyed a visit from a local artist who taught them how to make wire structures and another visitor who provided a workshop linked to their history topic on the Mayans. Overall, pupils have sufficient opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. Leaders use additional funding appropriately to support disadvantaged pupils to regularly access these wider opportunities. However, in recent times, the variety of these opportunities have been narrower than pupils would like. This limits some pupils from expanding their interests and potential talents further.

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

Staff welcome pupils warmly at this caring small school. From the moment pupils arrive, leaders make it their mission to get to know pupils thoroughly. Leaders quickly develop a deep understanding of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. This often ensures that these pupils' needs are well catered for. Staff successfully reduce pupils' barriers to learning or wellbeing. As a result, these pupils benefit from learning conditions that enable them to thrive. In general, pupils progress well through the curriculum from their individual starting points.

Pupils enjoy positive working relationships with staff. They say how teachers help them with learning is one of the best things about their school. Pupils enjoy their learning in the knowledge that their teachers support them every step of the way. Pupils are safe under the

care of leaders and staff. Leaders ensure that bullying or harassment is rare, taking appropriate action when issues arise.

Most pupils attend regularly. They enjoy their learning. They often demonstrate a diligent attitude to their written work, especially in English lessons. Pupils develop an appropriate body of knowledge across much of the curriculum which prepares them well for the next steps in their education.

Pupils engage in all aspects of school life. Many access the numerous sporting clubs and competitions on offer, including table tennis and dodgeball. Most pupils undertake monitor duties in their classroom or wider roles like school councillors. They support several national charities and engage in some local initiatives, such as a letter writing project that reaches out to community members that live alone. These opportunities contribute towards pupils' readiness for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders, including governors, should make sure their approaches to strategically evaluating the quality and impact of the school's practices and procedures are robust across all areas of their work, so that decisions to act are based on insightful and detailed information.
 - Leaders should review and enhance the school's extra-curricular offer, so that pupils can explore a wider variety of potential interests and talents.
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About this inspection

This school is part of a federation called The Bowland Federation of Schools which formed in April 2022. There are two schools in this federation.

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

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, who is also the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, and several other leaders including some from the federated school. The lead inspector also spoke with representatives from the local authority and the diocese. The lead inspector spoke with members of the local governing body including its chair.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Christian religious character. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2024.

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

The headteacher oversees both schools in the federation.

Headteacher: Rebecca Scholtz

Lead inspector:

David Spruce, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Sharon Cowey, 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 24 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

37

Well 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

60

Well 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)

36.36%

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

24.32%

Well 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

10.81%

Below 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	62%	S
2023/24 (final)	0%	61%	Below
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	17%	74%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	0%	72%	Below
2022/23		71%	

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		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	73%	Below
2022/23		73%	

‘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

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

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

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

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

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

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

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

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

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

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

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

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

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

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

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	7.5%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	9.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.9%	5.9%	Above

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)	25.0%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	33.3%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	32.1%	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.

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