

Blackpool St Nicholas CofE Primary School

Address: School Road, Marton Moss, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY4 5DS

Unique reference number (URN): 119594

Inspection report: 19 May 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.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Across all year groups, pupils build a deep body of knowledge across all of the subjects that they study. They make secure progress through the curriculum and remember what they learn well. Pupils apply what they know to new contexts effectively. They demonstrate this through the high-quality work they produce and the articulate way they talk about their learning.

Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above the national average by the end of Year 6. Disadvantaged pupils usually attain better than other disadvantaged pupils nationally. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils quickly secure the essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities gain the knowledge and skills that they need for future learning. They have an equal chance of success as other pupils in the school.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a calm and welcoming environment, which motivates pupils to come to school regularly and learn successfully. Overall, pupils' attendance rates are in line with the national average. Leaders rigorously check pupils' absences and seek to understand the reasons why they do not attend school. They work productively with families and external agencies to put the right support in place to help overcome these obstacles to regular attendance. This reduces the barriers that might prevent some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, from being in class each day. Leaders take a relentless approach to improve attendance, particularly for some of the most hard to reach in their local community.

Leaders have established clear rules and routines. They have a well-understood approach to managing behaviour that staff follow consistently well. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are polite, courteous and learn to manage their emotions maturely. From the early years, children are taught how to be curious and engaged learners. Older pupils display self-discipline in lessons. Those who struggle with their feelings benefit from highly purposeful and targeted support. This helps them learn to work and play well with others. Pupils know that, on the rare occasions that bullying occurs, whether online or offline, staff will deal with it quickly.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the expertly constructed curriculum is being delivered across the school. They make astute decisions when improving teaching. For instance, leaders have invested in staff training so that pupils develop language and communication skills alongside securing subject-specific vocabulary across subjects. This

means that pupils consistently benefit from a high-quality curriculum that is delivered expertly.

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive effective support to begin to read quickly. The well-established phonics programme is taught effectively. This is because leaders make sure that staff have the subject knowledge they need to teach reading and other fundamental skills in writing and mathematics. Teachers routinely check pupils' understanding. They guide pupils to make improvements in their work and teachers address any gaps in knowledge accordingly. This helps pupils to catch up with essential learning quickly.

Teachers are fully aware of the barriers that some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, may face. They adapt their teaching thoughtfully and use a range of strategies to make lessons accessible, such as visual prompts, movement breaks and the precise deployment of highly skilled additional adults. This supports pupils to consistently experience success in their learning.

Early years

Strong standard 

Leaders have developed the curriculum in the early years carefully so that children make a very positive start to their school journey. They understand the importance of children building secure foundations for future learning. Staff use the ongoing training that they receive to interact skilfully with children. Throughout the school day, children are expertly guided to develop their communication skills and learn new words. They demonstrate advanced levels of language development, when engaging in well-thought-out learning opportunities alongside their friends.

The Reception class is alive with stories, rhymes and songs. The school's phonics programme is delivered well, enabling children to learn to read swiftly. They use the sounds that they know to begin to write independently. The vast range of learning opportunities allows children to practise the skills they have been taught with increasing independence.

Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers. They quickly get to know children's interests and any barriers to learning. Early identification of children's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is prioritised. Children with SEND have their needs met through clear adaptations to activities and well-targeted support. This helps them to progress well through the curriculum. Children are prepared very well for the demands of key stage 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified swiftly and accurately. The high-quality training that staff receive supports them in recognising pupils' barriers to learning and/or wellbeing with precision. There are clear systems in place to make sure pupils receive the support they need at the time that they need it. Leaders involve pupils, families and external professionals to review and adjust the support in place to make sure it is focused on reducing difficulties. This helps pupils feel safe, valued and included in all aspects of school life.

Staff's adaptations to teaching are highly effective. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are able to access the curriculum. Pupils with SEND benefit from consistent daily routines and receive support from highly skilled staff alongside specialist approaches. As a result, pupils with SEND learn an ambitious curriculum successfully.

Leaders and staff show a commitment to ensuring that pupils who face any barriers to learning experience success. Disadvantaged pupils are able to fully participate in extensive opportunities beyond the classroom. This is because leaders make effective use of additional funding. Their carefully chosen strategies are proven to make a difference. This creates a positive, supportive atmosphere, where every pupil feels part of the school community.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They understand the community they serve and have thoughtfully shaped the curriculum and wider provision to meet pupils' needs, particularly in developing communication, confidence and skills for future learning. Leaders know what works well and put positive changes in place, when they identify areas that need some refinement. They show determination to provide the highest quality of education and care for pupils, particularly for those who are disadvantaged.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They understand their statutory responsibilities and share leaders' vision for excellence. Governors check that their actions are making a difference. Ongoing training further develops their skills so they can provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders to consistently improve the school. Leaders and governors make decisions that place pupils' needs at the centre of their work.

Staff say that leaders are approachable and mindful of workload. They meet the high expectations set for them because they feel genuinely valued as members of the school community. Leaders involve staff in decision-making. This helps them to play an active role in developing the school further. Up-to-date research about how pupils learn sits at the heart of the professional learning programme. Staff are skilfully developed to provide high-quality education and care so that pupils consistently achieve well.

Parents and carers are equally positive and proud of the school. They appreciate the time that staff take to build relationships with them and value the 'family feel' of the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. The extensive programme of learning follows a logical sequence. It builds pupils' sound understanding of topics, such as healthy relationships and staying safe, including when using personal mobile devices. Staff use the training that they receive to make suitable adaptations to the curriculum for pupils who need a different approach to more sensitive subjects. As a result, pupils develop a secure and detailed knowledge across the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education programmes.

Pupils understand fundamental British values. They know that Parliament makes laws. Pupils use a democratic process to elect their classmates into roles of responsibility and vote for their favourite class book. During PSHE lessons, pupils engage in debates and recognise the importance of having their voice heard. They show courtesy and respect for others and celebrate the differences between themselves and others. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They treat everyone equally.

Leaders provide a wide range of extra development opportunities for pupils. These include careers education, a chance to try new sports and to perform to live audiences. As a result, pupils develop a range of talents and have high aspirations for their futures. They are positive about the variety of trips and clubs that enrich their learning, including overnight stays. Leaders very effectively remove financial and practical barriers so that all pupils can take part. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, have full access to the school's offer.

Leaders have developed a highly effective pastoral programme underpinned by nurturing and trusting relationships. Staff notice changes in pupils' emotions through daily checks. They take action to provide responsive care and attention. Consequently, pupils are resilient and know how to keep mentally healthy. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

Pupils have a sense of belonging at this welcoming and vibrant school. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, receive a high level of carefully tailored support, which allows them to thrive. Inclusion is central to the school's work. Pupils are greeted happily each morning by adults, who know them well. They feel secure, highly valued and settle to learning quickly.

Pupils are proud to be a part of this school and attend regularly. They know that adults are proactive and resolve any worries that they may have, including concerns about bullying, in a caring and sensitive manner. Woody, the school therapy dog supports pupils with their emotions.

Pupils' behaviour is extremely positive. At playtimes, pupils of different ages play together harmoniously. They are responsible and respectful. In lessons, pupils work hard and try their best. They rise to the high standards that staff have for them in their learning and their conduct. Pupils articulate their ideas confidently to show how much they know and to learn from each other. They achieve very well and are fully prepared for their next stages in education.

Through the extensive outdoor learning offer, pupils develop resilience and teamwork skills. Experiences to learn beyond the classroom allow pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have SEND, to develop confidence and social skills. They demonstrate a deep sense of independence and citizenship through the leadership roles that they hold, such as being school councillors and buddy role models for children in the early years. Pupils understand why having these roles is important. They voice clear opinions about using their leadership skills in later life. Pupils are aware of age-appropriate risks and how to

keep themselves safe. They understand how to protect themselves, including when using the internet and when responding to peer pressure. Pupils are ready to play an active part in modern British society.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to build on their strong practices in inclusion and attendance to address some of the more persistent barriers to pupils' attendance and achievement.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Susan Hauff.

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, other school leaders and governors during the inspection.

The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the school improvement partner. They also spoke to a representative from the Diocese of Blackburn.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in December 2023.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Claire Taylor

Lead inspector:

Emily Morris, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Michelle Joyce, Ofsted Inspector

Julie Brown, Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Scholz, His Majesty's 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

415

Above 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

420

Above 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)

15.42%

Below 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

1.45%

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

11.81%

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	73%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	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	85%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	93%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	80%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	76%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	87%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	84%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	86%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	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	51%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	61%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	55%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30%	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	77%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	89%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	64%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	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	64%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	64%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	59%	Above
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	51%	68%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	61%	69%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	55%	67%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	66%	-36 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	77%	80%	-3 pp
2024/25 (final)	89%	81%	8 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	80%	-16 pp
2022/23 (final)	70%	78%	-8 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	64%	78%	-14 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	78%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	78%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 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	64%	80%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	81%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	79%	-7 pp
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 (3 term)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	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 (3 term)	13.3%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.8%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	13.4%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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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