

De Warenne Academy

Address: Gardens Lane, Conisbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN12 3JY

Unique reference number (URN): 135942

Inspection report: 3 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.

Exceptional

Inclusion

Exceptional 

Disadvantaged pupils are at the centre of each decision made by leaders. Work to support vulnerable pupils begins well before they join the school. Leaders have well-established working relationships with primary schools, outside agencies, parents and carers. Each pupil is well understood. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs precisely identified and addressed. Staff are trained to recognise signs of emerging or changing need. Adaptations to lessons are sometimes subtle but always highly effective. Leaders' checks on the progress that these pupils make is insightful.

Academic and pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils has a transformational impact on their educational experience. Leaders have modified the curriculum that some pupils with SEND receive. These changes are exceptionally well considered. Pupils with SEND move seamlessly between provisions so that gaps do not develop in their knowledge and skills. If pupils access alternative provision, this is thoughtfully considered and highly effective.

There is a school-wide focus on pupils who have barriers to their learning. Leaders have a detailed and precise pupil premium strategy. How and why this money is spent is understood well by staff at all levels as well as trustees. Barriers that stop pupils from achieving and thriving are removed swiftly and efficiently.

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard 

Pupils have achieved highly at the school over several years. Leaders' ambitions for pupils have ensured that they obtain a wide range of qualifications that support future success. Disadvantaged pupils consistently achieve well above their peers in national tests and examinations. Where pupils' achievement is marginally less consistent, leaders know precisely why this is the case. Staff take swift and effective action to address any variations in pupils' achievement. This work is well considered and very effective.

Younger pupils quickly secure a deep, rich understanding of the intended curriculum. This equips them with the knowledge that they need for later learning. Regardless of pupils' starting points, leaders ensure that all pupils progress very well through the curriculum. Additional sessions to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are highly effective. Gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills quickly close. They are well prepared for life beyond school and their next steps in education, employment or training.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard 

Leaders' actions have significantly improved pupils' attendance over time. Rates of persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have reduced markedly. Pupils understand the value of

regular attendance. Leaders proactively explore ways in which attendance can be improved. They ensure that staff understand the barriers to attendance for each individual and act to overcome them. The school builds strong relationships with pupils and their families and this helps to secure ever improving attendance rates.

Pupils behave consistently well throughout the school. Staff encourage a calm and orderly atmosphere. They ensure that the high expectations are clear and shared by all. Ongoing training makes sure that staff support pupils with specific behavioural challenges to meet these expectations. Rates of suspension for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND have fallen dramatically. Pupils enthusiastically engage in their learning. Many independently reflect on how to improve their work. Staff encourage debate and discussion to enrich learning. Pupils value the rewards and recognition they receive, such as 'Above and Beyond' awards. Pupils are polite and supportive of one another. Bullying is rare and not tolerated. Staff act swiftly to address it when it does occur.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

A broad and ambitious curriculum is on offer at the school. Leaders have used their accurate insights into the curriculum and its delivery to refine it over several years to precisely reflect the context and needs of pupils. Teaching ensures that pupils develop the skills and knowledge they need to progress to the next stage of their education. Lessons regularly revisit prior topics to ensure pupils understand them. 'The Drill' and other lesson routines support effective learning in each classroom. The excellent subject knowledge of staff enhances lessons and pupils' depth of understanding. Staff check with precision what pupils know and can do before moving on in lessons.

Teaching approaches and classroom resources are expertly selected to support pupils' learning. Disadvantaged pupils are carefully considered at each stage of the lesson. This ensures that all pupils learn very effectively. Important vocabulary is regularly emphasised so that pupils master it. Those who are at an early stage of learning to read or with gaps in literacy skills get the support that they need to succeed. Of late, pupils' handwriting has been a focus for leaders. Issues with transcription have been addressed swiftly. This ensures that pupils communicate well, both orally and in writing.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders make astute and well-informed decisions that significantly enhance pupils' education and wellbeing. Leaders and governors understand precisely what the strengths and next steps are for the school. They act upon these energetically and effectively. Trustees and members of the local governing body are ambitious and challenging. They hold leaders to account but also support them when needed. Statutory duties are well understood by those responsible for governance. For example, governors ensure that alternative provision is commissioned appropriately and that pupil premium funding is spent well. These decisions significantly improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in particular.

Leaders at all levels have the skills and knowledge required to bring about rapid change. Strategic decision-making is highly effective. Leaders understand the context of the school and how to bring about rapid change. Leaders have a track record of transformational,

inclusive practice that is used to benefit this school and others. Leaders are open-minded and continually seek opportunities to reflect upon their practice. The school's professional learning programme is extremely well tailored to the needs of staff and pupils. Evidence informed training is highly effective at developing staff skills and expertise. The workload created by change is carefully considered by leaders. Staff's wellbeing is prioritised when changes take place. Leaders' decision-making is in the best interests of pupils. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and the wider school community to secure a high quality and inclusive educational experience for all.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have constructed an appropriate and flexible personal development programme. When national or local issues emerge that might impact upon pupils, leaders help pupils to understand these risks. Staff encourage pupils to be reflective and respectful. The texts that pupils study as part of the ethics, philosophy and citizenship programme are very well considered. This curriculum reflects fundamental British values and those of the school. Pupils clearly understand these values. Learning about different faiths and cultures is given a high priority by leaders. The relationships, sex and health education curriculum is age-appropriate and progressive. It prepares pupils well for adulthood. Disadvantaged pupils benefit greatly from this provision.

Pupils take part in a wide variety of extra curricular clubs, trips and visits. Pupils strongly value these opportunities and make good use of them. Leaders remove barriers to pupils participating in such activities. For example, pupils who lack confidence might attend small, tailored activities before being supported to attend larger clubs or go on trips further afield. Student leaders make a genuine difference to the school. Other pupils recognise and appreciate what they do. Pupils' character is further developed by participating in community work or raising money for charity. The school's assembly programme recognises events and commemorations of international importance.

The careers offer at the school is very well tailored to the needs of pupils and the local labour market. The careers offer has adapted to reflect pupils' aspirations for the future. All pupils get a wide range of relevant careers information. A school-based careers fayre, alongside careers input throughout curriculum subjects, complements this effectively. Pupils are very thoroughly informed about their future options and feel well supported by the school to achieve these. The 'Ambition Programme' and 'De Warenne Dozen' raise pupils' aspirations for their futures and educate them about important issues.

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

This is a school with high expectations of pupils and staff. Leaders' vision is that every pupil will receive a high-quality education. Staff continually remove barriers to learning so that all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged, meet their potential. Exemplary standards of inclusion have been maintained over time. Leaders' actions are carefully considered. Decisions are consistently made in the best interests of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils' educational experience has a transformational impact on how well they achieve, attend and

behave. Pupils are ambitious for their futures. They encounter a wide range of enrichment opportunities that broaden their horizons.

Positive relationships between pupils and staff are pivotal to the success of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are nurtured. Staff know each pupil incredibly well. Pupils are accepting and understanding of each other's differences. They behave very well. Bullying is rare and such incidents are handled well by staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend with increasingly regularity. Leaders ensure that each pupil receives a highly effective classroom experience. Pupils are recognised for their efforts and appreciate the support that staff give them. For example, older pupils benefit from dedicated study skills sessions to which their parents and carers are also invited. Pupils are very well prepared for life beyond school and in modern Britain.

Pastoral care at the school is responsive and intelligent. Pupils who might face barriers to their learning or wellbeing are quickly identified and supported. The school ensures that adaptations for pupils with SEND never limit ambitions for them. Some pupils join the school with negative experiences of education or with significant gaps in their learning. Leaders ensure these pupils quickly catch up, are fully included in the wider life of the school and thrive. Many pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged, have achieved highly in many subjects over time. This has a transformational impact on their future aspirations and opportunities.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that their actions continue to have a highly positive impact in all areas of their work, drawing on their experience of the transformational inclusive practice already established at the school.

About this inspection

This school is part of Delta Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Andy Barnett, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Hodsman.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the executive principal, principal and other senior leaders at the school. The lead inspector also met with the CEO and representatives of the trust during the inspection. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and headteacher of the virtual school. Other inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and designated teacher for looked-after children.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 7 alternative provisions, including 5 that are unregistered.

Principal : John Hall

Lead inspector:

John Linkins, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Crane, Ofsted Inspector

Paul Bell, Ofsted Inspector

Gemma Dixon, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

757

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: 1,067

School capacity

750

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

41.74%

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: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.64%

Close to 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.76%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	54.4%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.2%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.7%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	48.9	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46.2	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46.9	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.31	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.58	-0.03	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	39.1%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	40.7%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	29.8%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	40.7	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	42.5	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	40.9	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.10	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.28	-0.57	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	39.1%	53.1%	-14.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	40.7%	53.1%	-12.4 pp
2022/23 (final)	29.8%	52.4%	-22.6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	40.7	50.4	-9.7
2023/24 (final)	42.5	50.0	-7.5

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	40.9	50.3	-9.4

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	0.10	0.16	-0.06
2022/23 (final)	0.28	0.17	0.11

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	78%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	87%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	93%	94%	Average

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)	8.6%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.1%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	11.0%	9.0%	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)	25.5%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	31.7%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	33.9%	26.5%	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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