

Manshead Church of England Academy

Address: Dunstable Road, Caddington, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 4BB

Unique reference number (URN): 144342

Inspection report: 3 February 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

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are central to school life and shaped by the school's values and Christian ethos. Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through form time, collective worship, 'drop down days' and a dedicated personal development week.

Pupils show a mutual respect and understanding of one another. Pupils make a contribution to the local community through their commendable work to support local food banks and the school 'Christmas appeal'. Staff encourage pupils to develop social skills, such as cooperation, respect and responsibility. The student council is a shining example of how pupils demonstrate these characteristics. The personal development programme helps pupils understand fundamental British values and celebrates cultural diversity, heritage and creativity through events, such as culture day, enrichment activities and the arts. Pupils also have opportunities to share their views through pupil voice groups, helping them to feel heard and valued.

Pupils understand how to stay safe, both online and offline. They learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe from risks such as exploitation and extremism. Wellbeing is supported through mentoring, pastoral care, chaplaincy and trained wellbeing ambassadors. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive support through inclusive provision, including nurture support and tailored preparation for adulthood. Pupils speak highly of the support they receive about careers and next steps. They receive a range of guidance and are well prepared for their next steps. Pupils have the opportunity to encounter a range of professions, including links to the Royal Air Force, the local professional football team and the National Health Service.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

The sixth form provides students with a well-structured academic, pastoral and personal experience that supports their learning and development. Leaders have a strong and accurate understanding of the quality and suitability of the post-16 study programmes. These are carefully designed and adapted to meet students' needs and reflect the school's context. Leaders work closely with curriculum and inclusion teams to review provision and secure continual improvement. Students generally achieve well.

Teachers understand the needs of their students, and teaching responds and adapts to these. While outcomes have been mixed, current students make notable progress from their starting points and are well supported to succeed in national examinations. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers and progress to aspirational destinations.

Students are well prepared for their next steps. They benefit from high-quality, personalised careers information, education advice and guidance, including effective support with university applications, apprenticeships and employment pathways. The vast majority of pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training.

The sixth form provides a range of wider opportunities beyond qualifications. Students take on leadership roles, mentor younger pupils, support reading, fundraise and contribute positively to whole-school events. Pastoral support is effective and responsive. Leaders ensure that all students feel supported to succeed.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Pupils' achievement over time is inconsistent, particularly for those who have gaps in their prior learning. While many pupils make expected progress through the curriculum, a minority do not, especially in English and mathematics. Published examination outcomes show that progress in mathematics has been below national averages over time, with only modest recent improvement. English outcomes remain a priority, with attainment and progress below national figures for pupils of all starting points. Although leaders identify pupils who need support with reading, tracking and intervention lack precision. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read do not receive the targeted support they need.

More broadly, pupils achieve as expected. Leaders are determined to make this a more stable and consistent picture. They have begun to take targeted action. In Year 11, changes to groupings, routines and focused interventions help pupils feel better supported. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are improving gradually, though gaps remain. While behaviour and engagement provide a positive foundation, further improvement is needed to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention ●

Pupils' overall attendance remains low. However, there has been some improvement for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Persistent absence also continues to be a significant barrier, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders recognise that further work is needed to ensure that improvements are sustained for all groups and that every pupil benefits fully from being in school regularly. Attendance is a key priority for leaders. Pupils are increasingly aware of its importance, and a comprehensive 4-phase attendance strategy has been introduced. This is supported by relationships with parents and carers and close monitoring.

Behaviour is generally positive in lessons, with only some instances of low-level disruption. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes throughout the school are improving. The school is generally calm, orderly and respectful. Pupils arrive to lessons on time, settle quickly and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils report that incidents of bullying, discrimination or derogatory language are rare. Leaders deal with any incidents swiftly and effectively through clear systems, assemblies and the personal development programme. The school promotes a strong culture of care and support. They use mentoring, restorative approaches and the 'disruption free learning' room to help pupils reflect and re-engage. Staff understand the behaviour policy well. The 'Chance, Choice, Consequence' system has contributed to reduced disruption and suspensions.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching and assessment is inconsistent, particularly in key stage 3. In some subjects, pupils do not learn or remember enough because teaching does not always build on pupils' prior knowledge or address gaps effectively. Support for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also variable. Adaptations in lessons are not always precise enough to remove barriers to learning. Although systems exist to identify pupils who have fallen behind, this information is not used consistently well to help them catch up and keep up.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of the curriculum and have identified the right priorities for improvement. They are strengthening assessment practice, improving classroom routines and expectations and refining how teachers check pupils' understanding. Staff training is being enhanced to build expertise in feedback, adapting lessons and curriculum delivery, with a focus on raising consistency across all classrooms.

The curriculum itself is ambitious, broad and coherently sequenced. Pupils benefit from a wide range of subjects and pathways that prepare them well for future study or employment. Teachers generally have secure subject knowledge and provide clear explanations that help pupils develop independence and confidence, particularly in the sixth form.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Information about pupils' needs lacks the precision required to support consistently high-quality adaptations in lessons. As a result, teaching does not always reduce barriers to learning, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils at the early stages of learning to read. The academic impact of interventions is not evaluated with sufficient consistency across year groups, limiting leaders' ability to judge whether support is improving outcomes. New systems designed to strengthen inclusion, such as 'active learning folders', are at an early stage and have not yet secured sustained improvement.

Leaders recognise that inclusion is an area for further improvement across the school. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils receive fair and equitable support. Leaders identify pupils' needs through assessment, pastoral information and transition work with primary schools. They have a secure understanding of pupils eligible for pupil premium, those in care and those accessing alternative provision. Support through 'Thrive', the school's learning resource base, and alternative provision contributes positively to pupils' wellbeing and engagement. Partnerships with social care, the virtual school and external agencies are effective, and alternative provision is monitored closely. Leaders have strengthened staff training and are working more closely with families and professionals. They are prioritising clearer identification of needs and greater consistency so that all pupils make progress.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Further work is needed to improve the consistency of practice across the school, particularly in relation to staff workload, communication and the pace at which changes have been

introduced. The implementation of new systems has placed pressure on staff, and leaders recognise that actions have not always been prioritised or embedded in a sustainable way. Although recent developments are beginning to show early signs of impact, leaders recognise that it will take time for these changes to become fully established and deliver the intended outcomes.

School leaders, nevertheless, have a clear and honest understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have acted quickly to address key issues, such as behaviour, safety and routines, resulting in a calmer environment and improved consistency for pupils. Leaders identify the right improvement priorities and ensure that these reflect pupils' best interests.

Leaders have introduced clearer systems for identifying pupils' needs and ensuring appropriate support, including the use of alternative provision where necessary. These decisions are monitored carefully to safeguard pupils' wellbeing, engagement and long-term outcomes. Staff benefit from a wide range of professional development opportunities linked to teaching quality, inclusion and safeguarding.

Governors have strengthened their oversight by providing additional support while maintaining appropriate challenge and accountability. They have increased capacity in key areas, such as safeguarding, attendance and inclusion. Although the full impact of recent changes is still emerging, there are clear signs of improvement across the school.

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

Pupils feel part of a caring school community rooted in its Christian ethos. Staff and pupils maintain positive, respectful and supportive relationships. Pupils say they feel known and listened to. The school encourages pupils to take part in school life through leadership roles, the arts, sports, enrichment activities and community projects. Opportunities beyond the classroom, such as clubs, performances, careers events and the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, help pupils to develop their confidence and interests.

Pupils experience a broad and ambitious curriculum that encourages curiosity and enjoyment of learning. Many lessons are calm and purposeful, and work is well explained. This helps pupils to work independently and build confidence, particularly as they move towards examinations. Teachers know their subjects well and use a growing range of strategies to support pupils' learning. However, they do not always apply these strategies consistently well. As a result, some pupils miss out on the help they need, particularly those with barriers to their learning.

Pupils value the guidance they receive when preparing for their next steps, especially in Year 11 and the sixth form. Where pupils face barriers to their learning or wellbeing, staff provide pastoral support, mentoring and targeted help. While progress is stronger in some subjects than others, leaders do not always effectively address gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. This is important so that all pupils can make better progress from their starting points.

Behaviour is generally calm and orderly, allowing pupils to feel safe and focused on learning. Pupils report that bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively, when it occurs. Attendance is a clear priority, and the school continues to work with families to improve this further. Personal development, wellbeing and careers education help pupils prepare for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand how to stay safe and contribute positively to their community. Pupils feel supported, valued and encouraged to 'aspire, serve and flourish'.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is taught consistently well across all key stages and subjects so that pupils gain the detailed knowledge to achieve well.
 - Leaders should build on their work to improve the attendance of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders should identify pupils' needs and barriers to learning precisely so pupils consistently receive the support and adaptations they need, including those who find reading a challenge.
 - Leaders should ensure that changes are prioritised and clearly communicated to all stakeholders and that staff are supported to implement them effectively.
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About this inspection

The headteacher of this school is Wajid Tufiq.

This school is part of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Anna Rogers, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jenny Jenkins.

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 members of the school's leadership, trustees, a representative of the Diocese and the CEO.

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 5 alternative provisions, including 2 that are unregistered.

Lead inspector:

Louise Cooper, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Steve Woodley, His Majesty's Inspector

James Fuller, Ofsted Inspector

Dawn Ashbolt, Ofsted Inspector

Jane Bennett, 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 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,146

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,350

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

19.92%

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: 28.9%

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

5.24%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.43%

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

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)

SEN unit

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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 (provisional)	36.7%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.1%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.3%	45.3%	Below

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 (provisional)	42.9	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.8	45.9	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	39.6	46.3	Below

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)	-0.53	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.40	-0.03	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' 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 (provisional)	21.1%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	25.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	22.9%	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 (provisional)	33.5	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.6	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30.3	35.0	Close to average

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)	-1.05	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.85	-0.57	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' 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 (provisional)	21.1%	52.8%	-31.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	25.7%	53.1%	-27.4 pp
2022/23 (final)	22.9%	52.4%	-29.5 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 (provisional)	33.5	50.3	-16.8
2023/24 (final)	30.6	50.0	-19.4
2022/23 (final)	30.3	50.3	-20.0

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)	-1.05	0.16	-1.22
2022/23 (final)	-0.85	0.17	-1.02

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)	93%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	88%	93%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	27.42	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	31.54	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.19	34.16	Close to average

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.3	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to 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)	10.0%	8.1%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.7%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.8%	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)	28.6%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	32.4%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	31.3%	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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