

Frederick Gent School

Address: Mansfield Road, South Normanton, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 2ER

Unique reference number (URN): 145109

Inspection report: 18 November 2025

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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have established a culture of high expectations. Pupils' conduct is exemplary. There is an effective behaviour policy in place that is extremely well understood. Leaders and staff know the pupils well. They have an accurate understanding of what might be happening for a child at any point. Staff plan, provide and review support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. This ensures that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, pupils with SEND and those known to social care, have their behaviour carefully managed and are supported to improve.

Pupils understand school routines and follow them to the letter. Pupils learn without disruption. Social times and the start and end of the school day are well managed.

A highly skilled team of staff works tirelessly to ensure pupils are in school. Where poor attendance is identified, they build relationships with pupils and families, removing barriers and implementing appropriate support. Nothing is left to chance.

Pupils want to attend this school. Attendance for all groups of pupils are ahead of national averages and improving consistently year on year. The school is rightly proud of these successes.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders act with moral integrity. They put the needs of pupils at the heart of all they do. Leaders have taken brave and effective action to make sure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils known to social care, have their barriers addressed, attend school and go on to thrive. Pupils describe the school as caring, inclusive and kind.

There is strong leadership capacity. Leaders know the school well. They accurately self-evaluate the strengths and the areas that need to develop further. They have rapidly improved aspects of the school since the last inspection, particularly pupils' behaviour and attendance.

The trust provides expert governance. It holds leaders stringently to account and provides high-quality support. The local governing board members are passionate advocates of the school. They have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their delegated duties, and they do this well.

Staff learn from the best. Training, including first-rate training from trust experts, ensures that staff develop their expertise and feel valued.

Staff are keen to praise the strength of the school's leadership. They appreciate the way in which their workload and wellbeing is considered. Staff care deeply about the pupils and the community that they serve. They are incredibly proud to work at the school.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

An increasing number of pupils with more complex needs are joining the school. Leaders have taken intelligent action to address this change to the school's context. Pupils' needs are accurately identified. This includes the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who face other barriers to their safety and wellbeing. Communication between staff is a strength, for example conversations take place weekly to review pupils' needs and adapt support accordingly. Pupils know that there are a range of people and school-based services that can help them. Student services offer excellent support for pupils' needs. Leaders link with external agencies effectively.

Staff have received appropriate training, including on SEND. Suitable adaptations are available in classrooms to ensure that pupils can access their learning well. However, sometimes pupils do not receive the teaching that they need to help them to read complex texts or to write with accuracy. This can slow their learning.

Leaders ensure that pupil premium funding is appropriately allocated to match the school's priorities. Leaders review the impact of this funding on pupils' learning and wellbeing carefully. The achievement, attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged pupils have improved because of this.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders know the community and its challenges well. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is carefully planned to respond to pupil need and ensure pupils, including those who are the most vulnerable, are educated to keep safe and healthy. Pupils show a sound understanding of the importance of consent and respectful relationships. They know the risks of being online. They value the PSHE lessons and the efforts of their teachers to keep them safe and well informed.

Leaders' approach to careers is well planned, implemented and monitored. They see the moral purpose behind providing effective careers education. Leaders advise and plan with the aim of transforming the lives of all pupils. They ensure that all statutory expectations are met, including working closely with a range of training providers in the local area. Pupils feel well prepared for next steps. They are clear about their goals and how to achieve them.

Pupils are supported to understand cultures other than their own. They are also encouraged to play an active role within their own community, too. 'Fantastic Fridays' are an opportunity for the school to come together and celebrate pupils who have emulated the school aims of 'ambitious, brave and caring'.

Pupils are taught to value diversity and celebrate their own unique characteristics. They are very familiar with the terminology linked to these important ideas. Events such as 'odd socks day' provide opportunities for pupils to speak about difference and the importance of tolerance and respect.

Pupils are incredibly positive about events that enable them to showcase their cooking and artistic talents. They value the opportunity to go on trips. Leaders are aware that although there are many extra-curricular opportunities, including dance, disadvantaged pupils' participation in these events is not as strong as they would like.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Previously, pupils' achievement in national tests was inconsistent and not as good as it needed to be. Until very recently, some pupils significantly underachieved in some key stage 4 subjects, including science and English. They achieved much better in mathematics and modern foreign languages. This is an improving picture and pupils' attainment across subjects, including English, is far more consistent and is now in line with national averages.

Leaders are taking appropriate action, but currently, because of the variation in teaching, there are still some pupils who do not acquire the knowledge and skills needed across the full curriculum. This hinders pupils' progress and, although improving, remains a barrier to achievement in some subjects.

Pupil destination figures show that pupils move to appropriate next steps in education, employment and training, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention ●

Leaders know the school extremely well. They have made well-informed decisions to address the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The school's agreed teaching and learning strategies are consistently present in lessons. However, the effectiveness with which those strategies are used varies within and between subjects. When teachers focus well on important knowledge and carefully check pupils' understanding, pupils achieve well. Where lessons are not as successful, it is these elements of teaching that are less effective. This can mean that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified, errors are repeated and misconceptions continue.

Leaders are in the process of developing robust systems to support pupils' literacy. Pupils are supported by a range of successful interventions, including work on phonics. However, some pupils' inaccurate handwriting and spelling are a barrier to their further learning. This issue is yet to be fully addressed.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is as ambitious as the national curriculum. Staff are often subject experts. They receive additional, and high-quality, professional learning opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge. This training is successfully accelerating the improvements needed in curriculum delivery.

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

This is a 'small school with a big heart'. Leaders have ensured that there is a strong school community, which pupils and staff say feels like a family. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, are known extremely well. Effective action is taken to remove any barriers to high attendance and to ensure that pupils are in school and are safe. Pupils are proud of their school. They feel well cared for and happy.

Pupils learn in a safe and calm learning environment. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. A noticeable feature of pupils' conduct is their self-discipline, and friendliness towards those around them. High levels of respect are in evidence throughout the school. Bullying is never tolerated by leaders and staff and is skilfully dealt with.

There is variability in the quality of teaching. Leaders have taken effective action to address this, but more work is needed. Achievement is improving, but some pupils achieve better in some subjects than in others. Some pupils have gaps in their skills and knowledge. Some do not write and spell with the accuracy needed. This hinders their achievement.

The needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are swiftly identified. Staff are well informed about these pupils. Support is well considered. Published information indicates that disadvantaged pupils achieved well at the end of key stage 4.

Pupils are very positive about how the school's personal, social and health education curriculum impacts on them. They are knowledgeable about keeping safe and are keen and well informed about fundamental British values. Pupils are well prepared to be a valuable member of society. The pupil 'reading leaders' for example, act as extremely positive role models for younger pupils and are a credit to the school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching focuses on identifying and resolving quickly any misconceptions, explaining important knowledge and carefully checking pupils' understanding consistently well so that pupils achieve well in every subject.
 - Leaders should make certain that pupils secure the necessary accuracy and fluency in handwriting and spelling, in readiness for their next learning steps.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Two Counties 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), Wesley Davies, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Karen Potts.

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.

To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the CEO, the chair of the trust, a trustee and members of the local governing board.

Inspectors conducted learning walks with leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They sampled the work of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who are known to social care. Inspectors also reviewed a range of documentation, including education, health and care plans relating to pupils with SEND.

Inspectors reviewed a range of pupil attendance information. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times. They observed the start of the school day.

The views of staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered. Additionally, inspectors reviewed the views of parents through the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

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 school makes use of 2 unregistered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Christopher Woollard

Lead inspector:

Jayne Ashman, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Al Mistrano, His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Fearn-Davies, His Majesty's Inspector

John Spragg, His Majesty's Inspector

Nyree Parker, 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 18 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

801

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

862

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: 1,152

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

34.33%

Close to 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

2.62%

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

14.61%

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

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

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)	39.5%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	33.8%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.7%	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)	46.3	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42.2	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40.9	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)	-0.34	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.34	-0.03	Below
2021/22 (final)	-0.18	-0.03	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' 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)	15.0%	25.6%	Below
2023/24 (final)	19.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	13.5%	25.2%	Below

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)	35.3	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	37.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	33.6	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)	-0.59	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.69	-0.57	Close to average
2021/22 (final)	-0.57	-0.55	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)	15.0%	52.8%	-37.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	19.2%	53.1%	-33.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	13.5%	52.4%	-38.9 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)	35.3	50.3	-14.9
2023/24 (final)	37.0	50.0	-13.0
2022/23 (final)	33.6	50.3	-16.7

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)	-0.59	0.16	-0.76
2022/23 (final)	-0.69	0.17	-0.86
2021/22 (final)	-0.57	0.15	-0.72

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
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	92%	94%	Average
2020 leavers (revised)	92%	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 (1 term)	6.5%	7.7%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.0%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.7%	9.0%	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 (1 term)	17.8%	21.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.0%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	23.2%	26.5%	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.

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