

University Academy Long Sutton

Address: 84 Little London, Long Sutton, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 9LF

Unique reference number (URN): 147268

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.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school is ambitious that all pupils should be well prepared for their lives in modern Britain. Pupils learn to appreciate the fundamental British values and understand the personal characteristics that are protected by law. Across the curriculum, they are exposed to learning about different faiths and cultures. There are opportunities to engage in discussion and debate about spiritual questions, for example 'Were we created by accident or design?' Pupils learn to respect diversity and to challenge extremism and intolerance.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) supports pupils' character development and equips them with the knowledge they need to be prepared for adulthood. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including online. They are taught how to manage their finances, how to keep physically and mentally healthy and how to maintain positive relationships. The PSHE curriculum is complemented by 'super learning days', led by external experts, which focus on specific issues in greater depth, for example drug and alcohol awareness, avoiding harmful relationships and delivering first aid.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. These include lunchtime and after-school clubs as well as annual trips to Iceland and to experience skiing in Europe. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can benefit from these opportunities, and monitor their participation. However, they do not strategically use this participation data to make sure that the extra-curricular offer is as impactful as it could be.

The school's careers programme provides pupils with detailed information about the options available to them when they leave the school. All pupils, along with parents and carers, have access to local employers and education providers at the careers fair. Older pupils benefit from personalised, independent careers advice as well as the opportunity to gain work experience and visit universities.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Too many pupils do not attend school as well as they should. Attendance is below national averages and has been for some time. Leaders identify improving attendance as a priority. They monitor attendance data carefully and work closely with pupils, and their families, to

remove any barriers to good attendance. This has led to improved attendance for some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, leaders recognise that more work is needed to make sure all pupils attend school as well as they should.

On some occasions, pupils lose focus and become distracted. However, the school is typically calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and respectful. They enjoy positive relationships with each other and with staff. In classrooms, the majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy the rewards they can earn for behaving well and trying hard. Leaders have worked to raise behaviour expectations and to improve consistency in the way poor behaviour is managed. As a result, the number of disruptions to learning has reduced significantly.

Incidents of bullying and discriminatory behaviours are rare. When they do happen, leaders act quickly and decisively to resolve them fairly.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers do not routinely check that pupils are secure in their learning or provide opportunities for pupils to revisit topics they have learned before. This means that teaching does not reliably identify or address gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils struggle to make connections in their learning or to secure a depth of understanding. At times, teachers' expectations of the quality of the work that pupils produce are not high enough.

Teachers do not consistently adapt learning to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who lack essential knowledge in English and mathematics. The school identifies when pupils need to strengthen their reading or writing skills. Staff provide individualised support that is impactful for some pupils. However, too often basic writing and spelling errors are not corrected, meaning that pupils repeat mistakes.

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum identifies the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn it. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge across the full range of subjects. Leaders have strengthened the way that they monitor the impact of the curriculum. They have identified professional learning to develop the expertise of staff, which has led to some improvement.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

The identification of specific barriers to learning faced by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) lacks precision. This means that staff sometimes do not have an accurate understanding of how to adapt learning to help these pupils achieve their full potential. Leaders have begun to provide staff with more detailed information as well as training in how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND more effectively, but this work is in the early stages.

There is a lack of oversight of the strategies used to support disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate view of the impact for pupils. Leaders recognise the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care. Additional funding is used effectively to support these pupils to attend school more regularly and participate in the wider activities on offer. The school takes care to ensure that pupils attending alternative provision are kept safe and receive an appropriate curriculum.

Leaders are committed to making sure that all pupils are supported to access the curriculum and take part in all aspects of school life. Leaders quickly identify when any pupils may need extra support. Leaders accurately identify when pupils may need support for their wellbeing or mental health, and share information with staff so that they can provide support.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders' improvement work is in the early stages. Achievement and attendance have been weaknesses over time and have not been addressed quickly enough. With the support of strengthened leadership from the multi-academy trust, as well as external partners, school leaders have established a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for urgent improvement. Leaders have significantly improved the behaviour of pupils and begun to strengthen the curriculum.

School leaders have not established a coordinated approach to monitoring the effectiveness of all of their actions to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they cannot be sure which strategies are most impactful for pupils. The school prioritises raising the aspirations of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are committed to supporting vulnerable pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, overcome any barriers they face. The systems in place to support this are strengthening.

Under new leadership, the trust has supported the school to begin to make necessary changes. Trust leaders have the experience and expertise to hold school leaders to account and to make sure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities.

Leaders have improved systems for assuring the quality of the delivery of the curriculum, alongside a programme of high-quality professional learning for staff. This has been received positively by staff, who share leaders' dedication to making sure that all pupils thrive at the school. Staff value the school's support for their wellbeing and leaders' commitment to helping them to manage their workload.

Urgent improvement

Achievement

Urgent improvement 

Pupils' attainment and progress are consistently below national averages over time. This is demonstrated by published outcomes from national examinations. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils has also been consistently below that of disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils with low starting points typically make progress on a par with similar pupils

nationally. Some pupils benefit from targeted support for reading and writing. However, too many pupils do not receive the support they need to strengthen basic literacy and numeracy skills. This means that they leave the school without the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need to be successful in their next stages in education, training or employment.

At times, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, pupils are not routinely challenged to produce work of high quality or to gain a deep understanding of the subjects they study across the curriculum.

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

Pupils are happy at University Academy Long Sutton. They are well cared for and enjoy warm relationships with staff. Pupils are tolerant and respect differences. Incidents of bullying or discrimination are rare. Pupils know whom they can turn to if they are worried or if they need pastoral support.

The school provides an ambitious curriculum. However, the quality of teaching is variable. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, too many pupils do not achieve well. They are not as well prepared for their next steps as they should be. Leaders have begun to make necessary improvements, but these have not yet had a significant impact on pupils' achievement.

Staff know pupils well and prioritise their wellbeing. However, often staff do not have an accurate understanding of the barriers to learning that pupils face. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. As a result, teaching does not routinely support pupils to overcome barriers, or to help them to strengthen basic skills, such as reading and writing.

The school is typically calm and orderly. Pupils follow routines without fuss and the vast majority show positive attitudes to learning. However, too many pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should.

There is a real sense of community at the school. The school provides a broad range of enrichment activities that raise aspiration and provide memorable experiences. These include overseas trips as well as clubs that develop talents and interests in sports, games, music and the arts. Opportunities to act as role models and leaders, such as form captains, prefects and reading ambassadors, offer pupils leadership experience. Other pupils take part in community events, for example leading a Christmas dinner for local pensioners.

Next steps

- Leaders need to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, gain the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need to be well prepared for their next stages in education, training or employment.

- Leaders need to make sure that staff share high expectations for all pupils and that the curriculum supports pupils who have weak foundational reading and writing skills to catch up quickly so that all pupils achieve well.
 - Leaders need to make sure that teachers consistently deliver the curriculum effectively, checking pupils' learning carefully to identify any gaps or misconceptions, and support pupils to learn securely and to remember what they have learned.
 - Leaders need to ensure that staff have an accurate understanding of the specific barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils, as well as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and that they routinely adapt teaching to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning.
 - Leaders need to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.
 - Leaders need to ensure that they have strategic oversight of the actions they take to improve the school to make sure that actions are coordinated and impactful for the benefit of all pupils.
 - Leaders should continue to prioritise disadvantaged pupils when considering the extra-curricular offer to ensure that all pupils benefit fully from the activities that are available.
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About this inspection

This school is part of University of Lincoln Academy 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), Stuart Anderson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anita Backhouse.

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 principal, the vice-principal, other school leaders, teachers, support staff, pupils and governors during the inspection. Inspectors also met with representatives of the multi-academy trust, including the chair of trustees 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.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

The school makes use of 2 registered alternative provisions.

Principal: Liam Davé

Lead inspector:

John Spragg, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Vasey, Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Mosley, His Majesty's Inspector

Ruth Hurcombe, 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

696

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

720

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)

40.95%

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

3.88%

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

16.38%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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

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)	17.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	19.4%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	17.3%	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 (revised)	32.4	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	35.8	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	34.6	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)	-0.68	-0.03	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	-0.48	-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 (revised)	14.0%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	15.9%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	15.2%	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 (revised)	28.5	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	31.9	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30.1	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)	-1.04	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.84	-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 (revised)	14.0%	53.1%	-39.1 pp
2023/24 (final)	15.9%	53.1%	-37.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	15.2%	52.4%	-37.2 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)	28.5	50.4	-21.9
2023/24 (final)	31.9	50.0	-18.1
2022/23 (final)	30.1	50.3	-20.2

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)	-1.04	0.16	-1.20
2022/23 (final)	-0.84	0.17	-1.01

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)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	87%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	89%	94%	Below

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)	10.6%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	11.5%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	12.6%	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)	32.7%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	38.3%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	42.3%	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.

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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