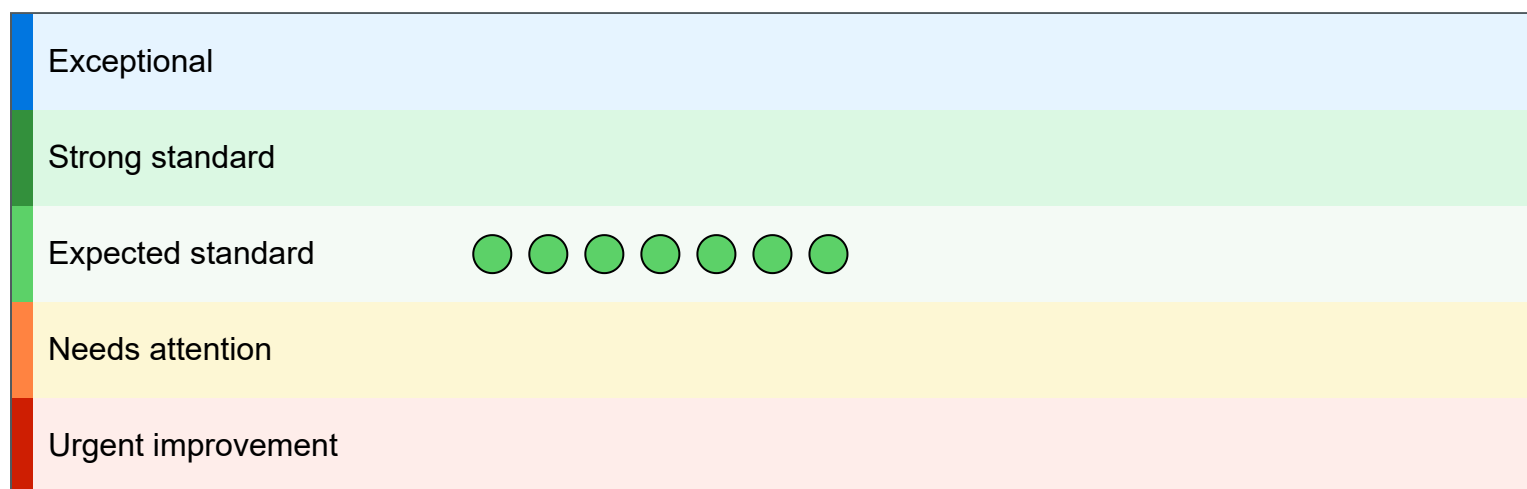


Harwood Meadows Primary School

Address: Orchard Gardens, Harwood, Bolton, Lancashire, BL2 3PS

Unique reference number (URN): 137991

Inspection report: 28 April 2026



✔ **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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn effectively. They generally make secure progress through the curriculum across a range of subjects. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with that of pupils nationally. Leaders have prioritised pupils' core knowledge in reading. Pupils become fluent and accurate readers. Typically, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is in line with the national average. This prepares pupils to tackle the demands of the curriculum in key stage 2. On the whole, pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary school.

Across the school, pupils' success in writing is more variable. A small number of pupils do not write with fluency. This hinders how well they achieve in other curriculum subjects.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders place great importance on making sure that pupils attend school every day. They know pupils well and support families who need extra help to ensure that pupils arrive on time. Leaders ensure they analyse attendance information carefully so that they have an accurate picture of pupils' attendance. If a pupil's absence becomes a concern, leaders work with parents and carers, alongside external professionals, to reduce barriers to attendance. As a result, attendance rates are typically in line with national averages.

Pupils generally behave well. Around the school, they are positive and polite. They show respect for others. Leaders ensure that routines and expectations are understood well. They address any form of discrimination or bullying promptly. Pupils understand that this behaviour is not acceptable in their school. Some pupils find it challenging to manage their emotions and behaviour. These pupils receive targeted pastoral support. Specialist programmes and resources, such as 'calm boxes', help pupils regulate their emotions. As a result, they return to lessons quickly and calmly. Leaders use suspensions appropriately and in pupils' best interests. They work with parents and the local authority when needed.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum and how well it is taught across the school. They have prioritised securing pupils' knowledge in reading and writing. The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils learn letter sounds and begin to write with increasing accuracy from the start of the early years. Reading is central to the curriculum. For example, in key stage 2, pupils engage with the 'top 100 books' carefully selected by staff for them to read.

Leaders have refined their approach to teaching writing, particularly in upper key stage 2, to ensure pupils can achieve as well as they should. These pupils have many opportunities to practise and build these writing skills independently. However, some approaches do not support pupils well enough to build on their prior learning. For a minority of pupils, teachers

do not break learning into small enough steps. This limits pupils' ability to write with increasing fluency, independence and stamina.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Since the previous inspection, leaders have used research and worked with professional bodies to strengthen the curriculum and its delivery. Leaders make well-considered changes to refine what pupils learn. Typically, teachers deliver new learning clearly. Staff provide appropriate support so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the curriculum successfully.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children arrive at school eager to learn and play. Staff help children feel safe and secure through warm, trusting relationships. They support children to learn new vocabulary and deepen their understanding across different areas of learning. However, in a small number of instances, this is less effective. This is particularly the case when children are learning through play, because their knowledge is not extended as fully as it could be. Staff interactions do not consistently build children's language and understanding. Leaders prioritise reading from the start of children's lives in school. They ensure that phonics is taught clearly and accurately so that children learn to read well.

Children benefit from well-established routines in the Nursery and Reception Years. At times, staff's expectations are not consistently high across the early years. This limits children's independence and their effective use of the learning environment. Leaders have designed a clear curriculum that sets out what children should learn and when. Staff assess children's learning accurately and use this information to provide timely and effective support, especially to secure key knowledge before key stage 1. Consequently, children make secure progress through the curriculum and most are ready for Year 1.

Leaders build productive partnerships with parents, carers and external professionals. This ensures that children receive effective support at home and at school. Leaders have high expectations for children, which ensures they get a secure start to their education. They ensure children receive the support they need to thrive academically and personally.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders place a high importance on including everyone in all that is on offer in the school. Leaders have strengthened their approach to identifying and meeting pupils' needs. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders ensure they capture the views of pupils and their parents and carers. They clearly communicate the range of strategies and approaches that each pupil with SEND needs to access the curriculum. Where appropriate, these supportive steps are informed by specialist advice. Leaders ensure that staff know how to reduce barriers to learning in the classroom.

Staff have received suitable training so they can adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs. They generally use this training well to make sure that pupils with SEND can succeed. Parents appreciate the support that they receive from staff and external professionals. For example, the SEND coffee mornings help parents to access support from a range of agencies and charities.

Leaders have developed a strategy to identify the main barriers that disadvantaged pupils and children in care typically face. They are knowledgeable of pupils' needs, and they direct resources, including additional funding, to support these pupils appropriately.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders act as role models and demonstrate care, compassion and reflection in their work. Staff act in the best interests of pupils, showing determination to help them succeed at school and in later life. Leaders, including governors, have responded swiftly to changes in the school's context. For example, they have strengthened their provision for pupils who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing through high-quality pastoral support.

Leaders celebrate the school's strengths and take appropriate action to tackle the areas for improvement. Staff benefit from high-quality, evidence-informed professional development. Leaders are keen to learn; they create opportunities for staff to work with other schools and external partners to develop their practice. Staff value this support. They appreciate the steps that leaders take to manage their workload and promote their wellbeing.

Trustees are knowledgeable and committed to the school. They provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders. Trustees gather information from a range of sources and understand their statutory duties. However, leaders and trustees are not precise enough in identifying how they will reduce barriers for disadvantaged pupils through the use of additional funding. Trustees do not evaluate the impact of this funding sharply enough. As a result, they are not confident in holding leaders to account for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders aim for pupils to develop 'roots to grow and wings to fly'. This informs how they provide broad and rich opportunities that support pupils' personal development effectively. Leaders ensure that all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have access to enriching experiences. These include the opportunity to perform live in a music arena.

Pupils make keen use of the wide range of clubs on offer. Activities such as gardening, a choir, and multi-sports develop pupils' talents and interests well. Leaders prepare pupils well for later life and place a high priority on pupils' emotional wellbeing. For example, the 'Relax Kids' programme helps pupils to manage their emotions and develop healthy habits. Financial education develops pupils' understanding of spending, saving and budgeting. Leaders provide high-quality pastoral support. Pupils use this help to talk about worries and difficulties. Leaders provide a suitable relationships, health and sex education programme, which supports pupils to develop their knowledge of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and they have a secure knowledge of the risks that the online world can pose.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to the local community and the wider world. For example, the school council has taken action to reduce traffic congestion outside the school. Other pupils take on leadership roles, including reading and playground buddies, litter-pickers and gardeners. Pupils value and respect diversity within modern British society. They understand individual liberty and can distinguish right from wrong. Stories shared in

assemblies develop pupils' understanding of moral choices and individuality. Pupils share a firm belief that everyone is welcome at their school.

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

Harwood Meadows is a friendly and respectful school community. Pupils feel able to be themselves and they develop a secure sense of belonging during their time here. At the start of the day, staff warmly greet pupils and their families. Pupils enjoy attending this nurturing school and speak positively about the care and opportunities that are available to them. This helps them to feel safe. Children in the early years make a secure start to their education. Pupils are motivated by rewards such as the 'golden book' and the opportunity to share hot chocolate with the headteacher. Pupils attend school regularly and on time. They are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Pupils understand and live up to the school's values, which underpin daily life. Consequently, the school is calm and purposeful. Pupils experience a curriculum that is well planned and taught. They build their knowledge well as they progress through the school. This equips pupils well for future learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged receive helpful support to access the curriculum.

Pupils make friends quickly and generally play well together. Any bullying is rare. If it does happen, staff deal with concerns swiftly. Pupils typically show positive attitudes to learning. They generally behave well in class and around school, which contributes to a calm environment.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to represent the school. They take part in musical experiences and sporting competitions. As a result, they develop confidence and independence over time. Older pupils value their residential visit to Yorkshire, which helps them to deepen friendships with their classmates.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently use the agreed teaching approaches to support pupils to achieve as well as they can in writing.
 - Leaders, including governors, should ensure that they routinely evaluate the pupil premium strategy to ensure it reduces barriers and maximises impact for disadvantaged pupils to achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff's interactions with children in the early years during play activities help to extend and deepen their learning.
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About this inspection

Harwood Meadows Primary School is a single academy trust overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Katharine Collingwood.

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 school leaders and governors during the inspection. They also spoke to a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school: the school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Julian Bevan

Lead inspector:

Elliot Costas-Walker, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Philip Barlow, Ofsted Inspector

Joe Dryland, 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 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

217

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: 272

School capacity

236

Close to 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)

20.30%

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: 26.3%

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

1.84%

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

12.44%

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

Well 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

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	67%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	59%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	60%	Above

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	78%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	76%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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	81%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	79%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	81%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	71%	Above

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	85%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	79%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	81%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	73%	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 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	69%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	44%	Above

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	78%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	70%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	60%	Above

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	81%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	90%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	58%	Above

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	88%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	70%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	100%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	92%	59%	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 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	69%	68%	1 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	67%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	83%	66%	17 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	78%	80%	-1 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	80%	80%	0 pp
2022/23 (final)	83%	78%	5 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	81%	78%	3 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	78%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	90%	78%	12 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	83%	77%	6 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	88%	80%	8 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	100%	79%	21 pp
2022/23 (final)	92%	79%	12 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)	5.3%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.7%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	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)	15.3%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	16.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.9%	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.

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