

Appley Bridge All Saints Church of England Primary Academy

Address: Finch Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lancashire, WN6 9DT

Unique reference number (URN): 149981

Inspection report: 23 June 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance. They ensure that pupils attend school often. Attendance is high for all groups, including pupils with barriers to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders monitor attendance closely. They have a detailed understanding of the small number of pupils who do not attend as well as they should. Staff work effectively with families and external agencies to reduce barriers to attendance. For example, bespoke support has helped pupils to attend school more often. As a result, persistent absence remains low and pupils benefit from the curriculum and teaching and wider school life.

Pupils behave respectfully and contribute to a very welcoming school environment. Relationships between pupils and staff are characterised by warmth, trust and mutual respect. Pupils are polite around school and understand leaders' high expectations. When concerns arise, leaders respond promptly. They work with pupils and their families to resolve any issues. Pupils say that they feel safe and that bullying is uncommon. They engage very positively in lessons and at social times. Leaders make thoughtful adjustments for pupils who need additional support, helping them remain included in school life. Pupils demonstrate a love of learning and take pride in being part of the school community. They take great care of their classrooms, beautiful grounds and one another.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The programme for pupils' personal development and wellbeing is highly effective. Leaders provide clear direction and give careful thought to the curriculum. They consult parents and carers and pupils to ensure that the well-structured programme reflects the views of pupils and parents. Staff sequence learning so that pupils deepen their knowledge over time. During their time at the school, pupils try many new experiences and develop as confident young citizens.

Staff help pupils to develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils learn to treat others with respect and to value different beliefs and backgrounds. They understand ideas such as democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect. Pupils explain these with clarity. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is given high priority. Pupils learn how to build healthy friendships and how to protect their wellbeing. They understand online and offline risks. Pupils learn about bullying and know what to do if it happens to them or someone that they know. Pastoral support is responsive. Staff know pupils well and act quickly when concerns arise. Pupils know how to seek help and report concerns. As a result, they feel safe and well informed.

Leaders ensure that all pupils take part in the many experiences that the school offers. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to social care, are fully included. Participation rates for these groups are consistently high. Pupils access a wide range of clubs, visits and several residential trips. Each pupil represents the school before they leave at the end of Year 6. These opportunities help pupils to develop confidence and resilience. Pupils take on responsibility through leadership and

service roles. Older pupils feel very well prepared as they move on to their secondary education. They are ambitious for what lies ahead.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well. In national tests, pupils achieve as well as or better than other pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make progress from their starting points. Most pupils secure the important skills of early reading, writing and mathematics. They learn to read using phonics and they learn to form letters accurately. A small number of pupils have not had sufficient opportunity to practise their reading and writing so that they can become more fluent. Pupils learn their multiplication tables and use this knowledge to work out fractions and to solve problems.

In other subjects, pupils typically recall what they have learned. This is less detailed for learning which was some time ago.

Pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and meets the requirements of the national curriculum and early years foundation stage framework. Leaders oversee each subject and check that teaching meets pupils' needs. Teachers make sure that learning is accessible to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that new learning builds on what pupils already know. There is an emphasis on helping to ensure that pupils secure basic skills in English and mathematics.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and typically present new concepts clearly. Lessons are designed to engage pupils and to build on their interests. Teachers follow the curriculum and ensure that key knowledge is taught in a clear order. They use questioning to check understanding. Learning is regularly checked and any errors or misconceptions are addressed so that pupils can move on successfully with their learning.

Leaders have focused on helping teachers present learning in clear, manageable steps. This has improved how precise teaching is. Teachers focus on the most important content. They revisit key ideas and vocabulary to help pupils remember important knowledge and skills over time.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders provide clear direction for the early years provision. They ensure that systems and routines are well established. Staff understand leaders' expectations for children's learning and development. Transition in and out of Reception is well established. Staff work closely

with parents and carers and staff in Year 1 to share accurate information about children's needs and starting points.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum is suitably ambitious. Staff introduce and model important vocabulary to develop children's spoken language. Most children quickly learn the sounds and letters that they need to start to learn to read and write. In mathematics, teachers focus on securing children's understanding of number. Staff support learning through timely guidance and questioning. Leaders are developing opportunities for high-quality interactions between staff and children.

Children, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well from their starting points. Staff check progress carefully and ensure that children are well supported if they find an aspect of learning more difficult. Children's wellbeing is at the heart of the provision for early years. Caring staff ensure that children feel happy and safe. Children develop confidence in social situations and learn to work and play together. Children leave the Reception class well prepared for the challenge of Year 1.

Needs attention

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders do not ensure that the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is as effective as it should be. Some pupils with SEND are not on the school's SEND register or do not have plans in place that set out clearly what their needs are and how they will be supported. This hampers leaders' oversight of these pupils to know what is working well and what needs to be refined. Parents and carers are not as well informed as they should be about how well their child is achieving. Vulnerable pupils, including those known to social care, receive caring support from staff although systems for leaders' oversight of this support are not as robust as they could be.

Despite some weakness in the oversight of this area, staff typically know pupils' needs well. They generally make appropriate adaptations so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. This helps to ensure that pupils with SEND make progress from their starting points. Pupils who are disadvantaged benefit from additional funding. This is utilised to offer additional adult support for learning and to ensure that cost is not a barrier to taking part in additional activities. Leaders ensure that alternative provision is appropriate and meets the needs of those pupils who require it.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Some aspects of leadership and governance are not as effective as they should be. In these areas, leaders do not have a clear enough overview of the school's work. As a result, they do not identify or address some weaknesses with sufficient urgency. This is the case in safeguarding and inclusion, where checks are not as precise as they should be and do not pick up issues in a timely way. Leaders do not follow up concerns with enough accuracy. Those responsible for governance, including the trust, are supportive and offer challenge.

However, they do not focus their challenge well enough on the areas where the school has weaknesses. As a result, they do not help leaders to improve these areas as quickly as they should.

Other aspects of leadership and governance are effective. Staff feel valued and respected. Leaders take workload and wellbeing seriously and act to reduce demands where they can. Staff say that leaders trust their professional judgement and listen to their views. This supports a positive and collaborative culture across the school. Leaders provide access to training through the trust. Staff value these opportunities and use them to improve their practice.

Those responsible for governance are committed and meet their statutory duties. They engage with leaders on a regular basis and show interest in the school's work. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. They value its clear sense of community and its family feel. Leaders build and maintain positive relationships with parents and the wider community.

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

Pupils are proud to belong to this caring Church of England school. Relationships between staff and pupils are supportive and respectful. Staff know pupils well and help them to feel safe and included. Parents and carers value the school's nurturing approach and speak positively about the support that staff provide. This starts in the Reception class where families are warmly welcomed to the whole school community.

Pupils study an ambitious curriculum that builds knowledge over time. They enjoy learning and make links between new and prior work, especially in history, geography and music. Children in the early years get off to a positive start. Older pupils talk about their learning with confidence. Some use a wide range of vocabulary in their writing. Most pupils achieve well and leave well prepared for the challenge of secondary school.

Pupils behave very well and show kindness to each other. Around school, they are polite and courteous. Attendance is positive. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Staff deal with any worries quickly, including incidents of bullying, so that pupils feel listened to and supported.

Pupils take part in an extensive range of activities beyond the classroom. These include clubs, visits, performances, sports matches and residential trips. The extensive school grounds support learning well and help pupils to develop interests and a sense of responsibility. Pupils benefit from attending a wide variety of clubs such as girls' football, choir, gardening and first aid.

However, pupils' experiences are not consistent in all areas. Some pupils who struggle with reading and writing, or have additional needs, do not receive timely support. Leaders' oversight of the identification of needs and provision is not secure enough. Weaknesses in oversight of safeguarding mean that information is not always checked well. As a result, leaders do not have a fully accurate view of safeguarding and support for vulnerable pupils.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they have clear oversight of all areas of the school's work so that, where an area falls short of the expected standard, they are able to address the precise issues in a timely and effective way.
 - Leaders should further develop their work to ensure that the plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are consistently specific and used to check how well these pupils achieve from their starting points.
 - Leaders should ensure that a small number of pupils at the early stages of learning to read and write get regular opportunities to practise and apply their phonics knowledge and writing skills so they develop greater accuracy, confidence and fluency.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Cidari Multi 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, Peter Ashworth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Reverend Paul Robinson.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Blackburn. Its last section 48 inspection was March 2026.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders during the inspection. They also spoke to members of the local academy committee and a trustee.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Janet Dunn

Lead inspector:

Frith Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Helen Friend, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 23 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

143

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: 272

School capacity

210

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

8.39%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

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

2.10%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

8.39%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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		61%	
2024/25 (final)	63%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	61%	Above
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (final)	81%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23		73%	

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		72%	
2024/25 (final)	81%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	72%	Above
2022/23		71%	

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		73%	
2024/25 (final)	85%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	73%	Above
2022/23		73%	

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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

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		62%	
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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		60%	
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		78%	

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		78%	
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	3.4%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.1%	5.5%	Below

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)	5.6%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	8.1%	14.6%	Below

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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