

Armathwaite School

Address: Armathwaite, Station Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA4 9PW

Unique reference number (URN): 112102

Inspection report: 9 September 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 ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children in the early years, including those in the Nursery Year, get off to a positive start. Leaders have designed an ambitious and highly effective early years curriculum, matched precisely to children's starting points. Interactions between staff and children are warm and purposeful. This helps children to feel confident and eager to learn. Children's language development is a priority. For example, staff are highly skilled at teaching children new words. This teaching helps children to use new words confidently in their everyday speech. Staff make checks to find out what children know and can do. They use this information to make sure that children learn new things and remember what they have been taught.

Reading is prioritised from the start. Children learn the sounds that they need to read words accurately. This helps them to become fluent and accurate readers. Children who fall behind receive timely support so that they can catch up quickly.

Leaders work closely with parents and carers from the moment their children arrive at the school. This means that children receive well-matched and responsive support right from the start. Staff adapt activities seamlessly for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children leave the early years very well prepared for Year 1.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Most pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is in line with the national average. In writing and mathematics, pupils have been above the national average.

Across most subjects, pupils build secure knowledge over time. However, in some subjects, pupils do not build on the subject-specific knowledge and skills that they learned in the previous year. This means that their knowledge, in some subjects, is less detailed. Pupils generally achieve well in reading, including in phonics. In mathematics, many pupils have secure knowledge of multiplication facts. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils make suitable progress from their starting points.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Leaders have established clear systems to identify pupils at risk of attending school less regularly. Leaders provide highly effective support to help pupils attend well. They work closely with families to remove barriers to attendance. This particularly helps pupils who face barriers to attend more regularly than they did previously. As a result, pupils' attendance is above the national average, and persistent absence is significantly below national levels. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend as well as their classmates. Leaders have sustained these improvements over time.

Staff build warm, positive relationships with pupils. Pupils follow the clear routines that leaders have established. They respond well to the expectations that staff have for behaviour. This contributes to a calm and orderly environment across the school. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons and around the school. They generally pay full attention to their teacher. Pupils who need extra support with their behaviour receive careful, sensitive help from staff. Bullying or any discriminatory behaviour is rare and not tolerated.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Across subjects, leaders have set out clearly the knowledge that they want pupils to learn and when. However, in some subjects, leaders do not set out the subject-specific skills that pupils should learn. Leaders do not apply the same clarity to skills as they do to knowledge. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are hindered from planning activities that help pupils to develop important skills over time.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. This helps them to explain new ideas clearly to pupils. Teachers check what pupils know and remember. Generally, they use this information to adapt their teaching to help pupils address any gaps in their knowledge. They also use this information to make appropriate adaptations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can learn alongside their peers.

Leaders and teachers prioritise the basics. For example, they prioritise the teaching of reading across the school. This means pupils build their vocabulary and reading fluency over time. Leaders have recently made changes to the school's handwriting programme. This is helping pupils to form letters accurately.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. They assess pupils' needs as soon as they emerge. This means that leaders draw on external professionals, including speech and language therapists, when specialist advice is needed. As a result, leaders have a secure understanding of each pupil's individual needs.

Leaders make considered use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Staff receive training from specialists to help them meet these pupils' needs. This helps staff to adjust their teaching to individual pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils receive the same range of experiences as their peers.

On the whole, staff provide pupils with an education, health and care plan with a curriculum that helps them to secure the basics. This is well matched to their stage of development. Staff adapt their teaching so that pupils can learn alongside their classmates. Leaders make careful checks on this support. They use this information to make helpful changes for pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils make suitable progress from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use this information to set out improvement priorities that are clear and carefully planned. However, leaders and governors do not closely check the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes. This means that some of the actions that leaders are taking are not as precise as they could be.

Leaders provide training that helps staff to teach with more consistency. For example, this has helped teachers to teach some subjects with greater confidence and skill. Leaders think carefully about the workload and wellbeing of staff as they provide this training. They make sure that teachers have the time that they need to complete their many responsibilities in this small school. As a result, staff feel valued and supported in their roles.

Leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, directing it towards pupils who need it most. This helps disadvantaged pupils to take part in the same experiences as their classmates. For example, they take full part in the experiences and opportunities provided by leaders.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. Governors use their visits to the school to check on leaders' priorities. This helps them to support and challenge leaders to improve the school. Governors also hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Leaders and staff develop positive relationships with parents and carers and the wider community. This has strengthened the relationship between the school and its community. Parents value the support their children receive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong. They learn to respect the views and beliefs of others, including those from different backgrounds and faiths. This helps pupils to understand and appreciate diversity beyond their own community. Pupils take on a range of leadership roles within the school, such as leading on charity work. This helps them to develop a sense of responsibility and confidence. Pupils reflect on their own beliefs and experiences through structured discussion sessions and assemblies. They explore a range of faiths, including through visits to different places of worship. Visits to the Houses of Parliament help pupils to encounter the fundamental British values of democracy and the rule of law. This helps pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils benefit from relationships and health education that is appropriate to their age and stage. This complies with statutory guidance. As a result, pupils understand what makes a healthy relationship. Pupils learn how to stay safe online. For example, they learn how to recognise content generated by artificial intelligence. Pupils also learn to recognise their emotions and develop resilience. Leaders work with external agencies to support pupils' wellbeing. They put additional support in place quickly when it is needed. Pupils know who to talk to if they have worries.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including clubs, outdoor learning and residential visits. For example, older pupils take part in a residential visit, alternating

between a city and an outdoor experience. This helps pupils to develop teamwork and resilience. Leaders check pupils' participation regularly to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are able to take part. However, some pupils do not have detailed knowledge of some aspects of these opportunities. This means that they are not able to get the most from them.

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

Pupils come into school happy and are keen to learn. They take pride in their work. Pupils feel settled and ready to learn. They know who to speak to if they have a worry and are confident that staff will act. Staff know pupils individually. This helps pupils to feel safe and valued.

Children thrive in the early years. They master the basics during their first years at the school. As pupils get older, they learn a broad curriculum and typically achieve well. They read with increasing accuracy, enjoy choosing books and talk about the stories they have read. However, in some subjects, pupils' knowledge is not as detailed as it could be. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are well prepared for their next stage of education. Older pupils speak positively about what lies ahead for them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils take a full part in school life alongside their peers. Pupils understand how the support they receive helps them to learn the curriculum well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are kind and considerate to one another and show enthusiasm for some aspects of their learning. Pupils naturally take on a nurturing role with younger pupils. This adds to the warm and supportive atmosphere that runs through the life of the school. Bullying or any discriminatory behaviour is rare and not tolerated. Pupils rarely miss a day at school.

Pupils enjoy a rich and varied range of wider opportunities at the school. For example, they appreciate the opportunity to join sports, crafts or mindfulness clubs. Pupils are proud of the leadership opportunities that are available. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine their curriculum further so that teachers are able to design activities that help pupils to build detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum over time.
 - Leaders should make sure that pupils are equipped with the knowledge they need to get the most from the opportunities in the school's personal development programme.
 - Governors and leaders should make sure that their quality assurance procedures focus on the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' outcomes.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Duncan Hall.

This inspection took place on 9 and 10 September 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 (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke to representatives of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors engaged with pupils throughout the inspection. They also spoke to some parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys and Ofsted Parent View.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Headteacher: Aimee Stamp

Lead inspector:

Mark Hazzard, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Annie Douglas, Ofsted 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 9 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

64

Well 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: 268

School capacity

80

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

10.34%

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: 26.5%

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

1.56%

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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.94%

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	74%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	55%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	90%	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	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	90%	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	90%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	100%	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	81%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	55%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	90%	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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24		46%	
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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		62%	
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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		58%	
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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		59%	
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘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		67%	
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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		80%	
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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		78%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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		79%	
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘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)	2.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.2%	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)	1.8%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	10.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	22.4%	16.2%	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

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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