

Duke Street Primary School

Address: Duke Street, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 3DU

Unique reference number (URN): 119352

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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

In recent years, leaders have prioritised raising attendance. This has been successful. Careful and accurate analysis of absence data enables leaders to act swiftly to identify and reduce any barriers to pupils attending regularly. Pupils' attendance is in line with national averages and continues to increase, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders ensure that pupils understand how to behave well in the classroom, in school corridors and during social time. These expectations are underpinned by well-established routines, which begin in the early years. Pupils follow these routines consistently well, and this helps to ensure that the school is calm and orderly. On the whole, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They are quick to engage in lesson activities and respond well to adult guidance. Pupils know that any form of bullying will not be tolerated. When it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and effectively.

The number of pupils in the school who struggle to manage their own emotions and behaviour is increasing. Leaders have taken suitable action to ensure that staff are skilled at supporting these pupils well. Bespoke support is put in place, tailored to pupils' individual needs. Over time, pupils develop strategies that help them to make positive behaviour choices independently.

Early years

Expected standard 

The embedded routines that promote positive behaviour throughout the school are rooted in the early years. From the very start, children are taught to develop habits that are conducive to learning. They quickly develop highly positive relationships with staff, which help them to settle into the provision successfully. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the thoughtful transition process that facilitates this.

The school has increasing numbers of children who join the early years with low starting points or multiple barriers to learning or wellbeing. Leaders have carefully designed the curriculum to take account of these needs. For instance, there is a firm emphasis on developing children's vocabulary, communication and social skills. Staff benefit from a comprehensive programme of professional development, which ensures that they are skilled at adapting their teaching to support children effectively.

Leaders have precisely identified the knowledge and skills that children need to be ready for Year 1. This includes important foundational knowledge of number, phonics and handwriting. Leaders are continuing to review provision to ensure that children have ample time to practise and embed this vital learning. Staff check regularly that children are building knowledge securely and respond appropriately when this is not the case. Supported by high-quality interactions with staff, children typically progress through the curriculum well.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have ensured that inclusion is at the forefront of all that they do. Increasing numbers of pupils with multiple barriers to their learning or wellbeing have recently joined the school, including a well-above-average proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans. In response, leaders have reviewed some aspects of provision to ensure that these pupils are fully catered for and supported. Leaders collaborate closely with families and external professionals to shape the support that they put in place. The curriculum and teaching are carefully tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. This work is particularly effective.

Leaders have rigorous systems to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Staff use their expertise to provide additional support for these pupils and to adapt their teaching appropriately. Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of this support and make changes when needed. In the main, any barriers to pupils' learning or wellbeing are reduced successfully.

The school has an above-average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged. Leaders use additional funding appropriately, in line with the school's wider priorities. The impact of this is particularly apparent in the increase in attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' actions to secure greater gains in disadvantaged pupils' achievement are ongoing.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have identified and begun to address a decline in standards. Concurrently, the proportion of pupils with complex needs has increased. With many priorities to balance, leaders have made sensible decisions about how to improve the school, always with pupils firmly at the centre. Encouraged by warm support and clear challenge from those responsible for governance, leaders have begun to drive the school forward. This is particularly evident in the high-quality provision for pupils with complex barriers to learning or wellbeing and in pupils' improved attendance.

Leaders at all levels have appropriate oversight of what the school does well and where further improvements are needed. That said, occasionally, they do not diagnose the underlying causes of underachievement as precisely as they could. Even so, suitable actions to increase pupils' attainment are underway. While it is too early to see the full impact of this work, there are clear signs of improvement.

Leaders provide a suitable programme of professional development. The impact of this is particularly apparent in the early years. Although work to improve the curriculum and teaching is ongoing, leaders have ensured that staff have the time and, increasingly, the expertise to develop their practice further. This helps to keep the workload of staff manageable. Staff are incredibly proud to work at the school and they value the support that they receive from leaders and from each other.

Parents and carers are highly positive about the school and the care that staff give to their children. Parents of children in the early years particularly appreciate the thought that is given to supporting their children to have a smooth start to school life.

Leaders have established a nurturing culture in which pupils' wellbeing is paramount. Staff are alert to any indications that pupils might need some extra guidance and care and, when necessary, support is put in place swiftly. Highly positive relationships with staff help pupils to feel safe and at ease in school.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to broaden pupils' experiences, for example through trips to enrich the curriculum. In addition, leaders invite visitors into school to speak to pupils about different careers to raise their aspirations. Leaders take thoughtful action to reduce any barriers that might prevent pupils from participating in these activities.

Leaders provide a suitable curriculum for personal, social and health education to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Important information, such as equality, healthy relationships and how to be safe in the community, is reinforced in different contexts. For instance, pupils learn about democracy in the classroom and subsequently revisit this learning during assemblies and enrichment days. This helps pupils to remember key knowledge. In the main, pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of this learning. They consistently behave with respect and tolerance towards others.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to discover new interests through a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, such as crafts and darts. Older pupils are encouraged to share their own hobbies and passions with younger pupils by pitching proposals to run clubs themselves. This helps pupils to develop confidence and leadership skills, as well as promoting positive relationships between pupils of different ages.

Leaders encourage pupils to perform on stage in an annual 'Duke Street's Got Talent' competition. Pupils speak with real pride about the confidence that they develop from rising to this challenge and the sense of accomplishment that they feel as a result.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils have not achieved highly enough in national tests at the end of key stage 2. Too often, they leave the school without securing important reading, writing and mathematics knowledge. In addition, some pupils in Years 1 to 6 have gaps in their learning in other subjects. That said, there are indications that leaders' actions to strengthen the curriculum and teaching are having a positive impact on how successfully pupils are currently learning.

Some pupils, particularly in the early years and key stage 1, have multiple barriers to learning and wellbeing when they join the school. The proportion of pupils who meet the standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 does not accurately reflect the marked progress that pupils make from their starting points, particularly those with the greatest

barriers to learning. Children in the early years typically benefit from effective support to get them ready for the demands of Year 1.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching and they have taken appropriate action to make improvements. However, pupils are not supported consistently well to remember their learning in the long term. This hinders how successfully pupils learn in some subjects.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious. Staff have clarity about the important knowledge that pupils should acquire and, on the whole, they design learning activities that emphasise this knowledge. However, in Years 1 to 6, teaching strategies do not consistently support pupils to remember key learning over time. In addition, there is variability in how well staff check whether pupils have secured important knowledge before learning moves on. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their understanding, including in reading, writing and mathematics, which are not identified and remedied swiftly. Leaders have begun to address these weaknesses. However, gaps in knowledge persist for some pupils.

The school has an increasing number of pupils with significant barriers to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders have provided a programme of professional development to ensure that staff have the expertise required to support these pupils effectively. Pupils who need additional help to access their learning are typically supported well.

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

Pupils arrive at school excited for what the day has in store. They typically enjoy learning and try their best in lessons. Equally, pupils embrace opportunities to participate in extra-curricular clubs or to go on trips that bring the curriculum to life. Attending school regularly and behaving well is the norm, as pupils are keen to make the most of the experiences on offer.

From the early years, children are immersed in a nurturing environment. They quickly forge positive relationships with staff and with each other. This helps pupils to feel settled and happy in school, free from worries about bullying.

Pupils consider it a privilege to take on leadership roles that enable them to help others. For instance, Year 6 pupils become buddies to children in the Reception Year, helping them to adjust to school life. Similarly, reading ambassadors read stories to younger pupils at breaktime, sharing their love of reading. Pupils eagerly anticipate these opportunities and take their responsibilities seriously.

Pupils with barriers to their learning or wellbeing typically benefit from leaders' commitment to ensuring that their needs are understood and met. The well-above-average proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans and those with the most complex needs are particularly well supported. Carefully tailored adaptations help these pupils to engage in school and learning fully.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious and logically ordered. Children in the early years benefit from effective teaching that is closely matched to their starting points. However, pupils in Years 1 to 6 do not consistently experience teaching that helps them to remember important knowledge over time. As a result, they make uneven progress through the curriculum. This is reflected in pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of key stage 2, which is typically below the national average.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching approaches in Years 1 to 6 consistently promote retention of learning in the long term, so that pupils' knowledge builds securely over time, enabling them to achieve highly.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff carefully check what pupils in Years 1 to 6 know and remember, so that gaps in knowledge can be addressed before learning moves on.
 - Leaders at all levels should continue to refine their systems to evaluate the causes of underachievement, so that they can continue to build on recent improvements to teaching and enable pupils to achieve highly across the curriculum.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Christine Toward.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This inspection took place on 9 and 10 September 2026.

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 senior leaders during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The current headteacher has been in role as the sole headteacher since the start of September 2026.

Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new chair of governors.

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

Headteacher: Sarah Ridley

Lead inspector:

Sally Rix, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Cath Cooke, Ofsted Inspector

Tony McCoy, 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

317

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: 268

School capacity

327

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)

41.96%

Above 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

9.78%

Well above 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

15.46%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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

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	38%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	53%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25%	60%	Below

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	51%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	44%	73%	Below

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	62%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	71%	Below

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	54%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	73%	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 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	24%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	21%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	40%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	13%	44%	Below

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	41%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	37%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	38%	60%	Below

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	48%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	53%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42%	58%	Below

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	46%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	65%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	21%	59%	Below

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	24%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (final)	21%	69%	-48 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	67%	-27 pp
2022/23 (final)	13%	66%	-54 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	41%	80%	-38 pp
2024/25 (final)	37%	81%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	78%	-41 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	48%	78%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	53%	78%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2022/23 (final)	42%	77%	-36 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	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	65%	79%	-14 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	21%	79%	-58 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)	5.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.0%	5.9%	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 (3 term)	15.1%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	20.9%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	24.0%	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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