

Greenbank Primary School

Address: Greenbank Road, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 0HZ

Unique reference number (URN): 105768

Inspection report: 15 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils leaving this school are well prepared for secondary education. They achieve outcomes in assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 that are in line with their peers nationally. This includes disadvantaged pupils. These outcomes reflect the secure bodies of knowledge that most pupils acquire across the curriculum during their time in the school.

Some pupils, particularly those in the early years, have marked barriers to learning when they join. This includes some who do not speak English and some with multiple or complex barriers to learning. It usually takes longer for these pupils to meet national benchmarks. For instance, the proportion of pupils who meet the standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is lower than the national average. Nevertheless, over time, pupils typically benefit from effective teaching that helps them to progress successfully through the curriculum by the end of key stage 2.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is broad, ambitious and logically ordered. Leaders have a thorough understanding of what works well and where further refinement is needed.

Staff benefit from professional learning that ensures they have the expertise required to help pupils to secure the basics in reading and mathematics. For instance, staff model phonics sounds clearly. Similarly, they emphasise key vocabulary. This particularly supports those pupils who are newer to speaking English. However, leaders' work to ensure that staff take a consistent approach to addressing errors in pupils' writing is at an earlier stage. At times, gaps in pupils' writing knowledge go unchecked for longer than they should.

Staff have secure subject knowledge. They use this to help pupils link new content to what they already know. Staff typically design learning activities that emphasise the important information that pupils should learn. Frequent checks on pupils' understanding mean that, in the main, misconceptions are cleared up before teaching moves on. On the whole, pupils with barriers to their learning benefit from suitable adaptations that enable them to access the curriculum successfully. Even so, there is an occasional lack of precision in the agreed next steps for these pupils. This means that some support is not sufficiently aligned to what pupils need to know next.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the needs of children in the early years. Some children have multiple barriers to learning or wellbeing. Recognising that some children speak little or no English when they join, leaders have thoughtfully designed the curriculum to develop children's ability to communicate. Songs, rhymes and stories are abundant throughout the provision. Interactions with staff typically help to strengthen children's language skills further. This helps children to engage successfully with the phonics programme.

Leaders have precisely identified the important knowledge that children should learn to be ready for Year 1. Learning activities are purposeful and, in the main, they are informed by what children already know and can do. This helps to ensure that children make steady progress through the curriculum from their starting points. Those children with the most complex barriers to learning benefit from a bespoke curriculum delivered by expert staff.

Leaders work closely with parents and carers to ensure that children benefit from a positive transition into school. Careful attention is paid to children's personal, social and emotional development, and this helps to ensure that the atmosphere is calm and promotes learning. Children are taught to cooperate well with others and to develop learning habits that stand them in good stead for their journey through the school.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Pupils feel a deep sense of belonging, founded on highly positive relationships with staff and with each other. The school has a well-above-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including some who speak no English when they first join. Leaders have established thoughtful approaches to ensuring that these pupils feel welcome and settle quickly, for example by buddying them up with a peer.

Leaders prioritise the swift identification of any barriers to pupils' wellbeing or learning when they join the school. This means that support can be put in place without delay. In addition, leaders make appropriate use of additional funding, for instance, to provide comprehensive pastoral care. As a result, these pupils typically participate fully in learning and enrichment opportunities.

Leaders carefully assess the progress that pupils with barriers to their learning or wellbeing make, and they use this to inform the support that is put in place. However, for a few pupils, the agreed next steps in learning lack precision. Consequently, some support is not as closely matched to pupils' starting points as it could be.

The school has an increasing number of pupils with complex or multiple barriers to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders ensure that the curriculum and teaching are carefully shaped to meet each pupil's needs. These pupils are supported particularly effectively.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders know the school and the local community well. They are determined to strike a balance between providing a high-quality education that enables pupils to be successful academically and offering a comprehensive programme of enrichment. Leaders at all levels are rightly proud of the opportunities that they provide. The inclusive culture that they have established ensures that these opportunities are an entitlement for all pupils. Leaders act in pupils' best interests and, in this environment, pupils blossom.

A well-considered programme of professional development takes into account the school's strategic priorities, as well as staff's development needs. For instance, leaders have ensured that all staff are trained to deliver phonics effectively, and newer staff, including some teachers early in their careers, continue to benefit from ongoing support. This helps to ensure that the quality of teaching and the provision for pupils with additional barriers to

learning or wellbeing is consistently effective. In the main, staff appreciate the consideration that leaders give to reducing their workload.

Governors share leaders' accurate understanding of what is working well and what could be developed further. Governors appropriately support and increasingly challenge leaders to continue making improvements, particularly in raising pupils' attendance. This remains a key priority for all leaders. While sustained improvement has yet to be secured, the reductions in persistent absenteeism are encouraging.

Leaders engage positively with parents and carers. They ensure that language barriers do not prevent parents and staff from working together to support their children. Parents are highly complimentary about the school, particularly the extensive enrichment opportunities on offer.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a well-designed programme of personal development focused on enriching pupils' experiences and developing their resilience and confidence. Alongside an adventurous pursuits programme that includes raft building and sailing, pupils particularly enjoy multiple residential trips, which promote independence. These trips create joyful memories and help to equip pupils with skills for adulthood, including how to change bed sheets and how to clean up after themselves. Leaders ensure that all pupils are supported to engage in the wealth of activities on offer, regardless of any perceived barriers.

Pastoral support is readily available to pupils who need a bit of extra help or care. Working closely with families or external agencies when appropriate, leaders provide thoughtful support to those pupils who need it. Warm and trusting relationships with staff help pupils to feel comfortable in seeking out advice or a friendly ear to listen to them.

Leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). This includes age-appropriate learning about relationships, such as pupils' understanding of their rights over their own bodies and knowing about different types of families. Leaders consult parents and carers to ensure that they understand the content that will be taught. The PSHE curriculum also helps pupils learn to recognise risks, both online and in the local area. Pupils typically acquire a secure knowledge of the fundamental British values, including tolerance and democracy. In the main, they leave school well equipped for life in modern society.

Leaders provide an extensive array of opportunities for pupils to discover new interests and hobbies. From opera singing to Irish dancing, cycling to archery, pupils embrace the chance to try something new. This helps to instil in pupils a curiosity about the wider world as well as the confidence to step out of their comfort zones.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Too many pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This means that they do not benefit fully from all that the school provides. Leaders comprehensively analyse the causes of absence and, increasingly, implement strategies to remove barriers to regular attendance. These actions are beginning to bear fruit. For instance, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is reducing. That said, leaders' actions have not secured sustained improvement in attendance overall. They know that there is more to do.

Pupils' studious behaviour reflects their commitment to learning, as well as their determination to make staff proud. In the early years and beyond, classrooms are purposeful environments where learning proceeds with little interruption. Motivated by rewards for positive conduct, pupils aim to stay on 'green', which demonstrates that they have behaved in accordance with staff's high expectations. Pupils behave with consideration for others. For instance, they hold doors open without prompting. In this harmonious atmosphere, bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly.

Some pupils, including some with multiple barriers to learning or wellbeing, find it hard to meet leaders' high expectations of their behaviour. Staff are experts at supporting these pupils. Carefully considered routines, complemented by additional support when needed, enable these pupils to engage fully with school life.

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

An ethos of kindness permeates the school. Pupils are considerate of others and they prize their friendships with their peers. They are quick to champion each other's successes and positive qualities. For instance, pupils are keen to share the reasons why their friends have been awarded 'child of the week'. Motivated by such recognition from staff and their peers, pupils strive to be kind, behave well and try their best.

Pupils build warm relationships with staff, which shine through their interactions. These trusting relationships develop quickly and help children in the early years to make a smooth transition into school. Staff know pupils well. Those pupils with barriers to their learning or wellbeing are quickly identified and supported. The well-above-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including some who are new to speaking English, are thoughtfully supported to become immersed in school life. Pupils understand the importance of respecting differences, and they behave accordingly. As a result, incidents of unkindness or bullying are rare.

Pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum that is typically taught well. Over their time in school, they develop the knowledge and skills that they need to be ready for secondary education. Pupils are attentive in lessons and eager to learn. Even so, too many pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This prevents them from benefiting fully from all that the school has to offer.

Of particular note is the school's adventurous pursuits programme, through which pupils of all ages engage in activities such as climbing, kayaking and archery. Pupils beam with delight as they describe these experiences and talk earnestly about the skills they develop as a result, including effective teamwork and resilience. Pupils also greatly enjoy the annual residential trips that begin in Year 3. Over the years, these trips last longer and go further afield, which helps pupils to become progressively more independent.

Next steps

- Leaders should further refine their approach to monitoring the performance of groups of pupils with barriers to their learning so that this information is consistently used to inform sharply focused targets that support pupils to make sustained progress through the curriculum.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff consistently identify and address any gaps and errors in pupils' transcription (handwriting and spelling) skills swiftly so that pupils can write with increasing accuracy and fluency.
 - Leaders should carefully evaluate and refine their strategies to improve rates of attendance so that more pupils attend school regularly.
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About this inspection

At the time of the inspection, there was an acting chair of the board of governors in this school, Joanne Elcock.

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

This inspection took place on 15 and 16 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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is part of a federation with Howard Street Nursery School. The executive headteacher of Greenbank Primary School is the executive headteacher over both schools.

The executive headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. She has been in this role since September 2025.

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

Executive headteacher: Lisa Walsh

Lead inspector:

Sally Rix, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ian Young, Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Finnegan, 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 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

423

Above 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

480

Well above 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)

34.97%

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

5.67%

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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.95%

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	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	66%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	56%	60%	Close to average

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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	77%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	71%	Close to average

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	74%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	81%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average

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	49%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	47%	Close to average

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

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	60%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	68%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	57%	60%	Close to average

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	60%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average

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	65%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	68%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils 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	49%	68%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	69%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	67%	-21 pp
2022/23 (final)	46%	66%	-20 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	60%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	68%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	80%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	78%	-21 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	60%	78%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	78%	-15 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	78%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	77%	-20 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	65%	80%	-14 pp
2024/25 (final)	68%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	79%	-15 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	64%	79%	-15 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)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.1%	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)	18.4%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	19.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	23.5%	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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