

Kidsgrove Primary School

Address: Gloucester Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 4DL

Unique reference number (URN): 146636

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 place a strong emphasis on securing high levels of attendance for all pupils. Robust systems enable staff to monitor patterns closely and respond swiftly when concerns arise. Leaders work in close partnership with families, offering both support and challenge to remove barriers to regular attendance. Consequently, overall attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is above national averages and continues to improve. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND benefit from carefully tailored support, which enables them to attend school regularly and engage fully in learning.

Leaders and staff have established a calm and purposeful environment where pupils behave well and feel safe. Clear expectations and consistent routines ensure that pupils understand how to conduct themselves across the school day. Staff model these expectations effectively and pupils respond positively. In lessons, pupils demonstrate focused and positive attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively, contribute thoughtfully and take pride in their work. At social times, pupils interact respectfully and cooperatively. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful, which fosters a strong sense of belonging. Bullying and any incidents of discrimination or harmful behaviour are rare and addressed quickly and effectively. This consistent approach ensures that classrooms remain orderly and that learning is rarely disrupted.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children make a positive start in the early years due to a well-planned, ambitious curriculum and high expectations from staff. Leaders ensure that children's starting points are identified accurately and used to shape learning. Activities are carefully matched to children's needs and enable them to sustain concentration, develop effective relationships with their peers and build knowledge securely over time. Communication and language are prioritised. Staff model vocabulary precisely and use thoughtful questioning to extend children's thinking. Children respond with increasing confidence, speaking in full sentences and sharing their ideas clearly.

Interactions between adults and children are purposeful and support learning across all areas. Early reading is given a high priority. Phonics is taught with consistency and precision, so that children quickly secure their knowledge and apply it to read simple texts and write with confidence. A love of reading is fostered through regular storytelling, songs and rhymes.

Routines are clear and well established. This helps children to behave well, feel safe and develop independence. Staff identify any additional needs promptly and provide targeted support so that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. Strong partnerships with parents enhance learning beyond the classroom. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. They use this to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. Since the previous inspection, leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that sets out the key knowledge pupils should learn from the early years onwards. This knowledge is carefully sequenced so that pupils build their understanding over time.

Staff deliver the curriculum effectively, using clear explanations and well-chosen resources to support learning. They check pupils' understanding to address misconceptions and inform next steps. Teachers adapt tasks so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged learn alongside their peers. However, some activities do not always allow pupils to deepen their knowledge and explore more complex content when they are ready. Leaders are taking appropriate action to strengthen this aspect further.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Phonics is delivered consistently and staff are trained to follow agreed approaches. Teachers identify pupils who fall behind and provide timely support. Across subjects, staff place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary. However, teaching does not consistently address errors in pupils' handwriting, spelling and grammar, which limits the quality of pupils' written work.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders place a strong emphasis on inclusion. They identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately, including those who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to children's social care. Staff use a range of information to understand pupils and identify barriers to learning. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and external professionals, including the virtual school where appropriate, to ensure that support is well informed and carefully planned. As a result, pupils feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

Staff receive regular training that helps them to adapt teaching effectively. They apply the graduated approach well. Staff use visual prompts, practical resources and clear routines to make learning accessible for all pupils. These adaptations enable pupils with additional needs to learn alongside their peers and access the full curriculum. Leaders monitor pupils' progress closely and review the impact of any interventions. When support is less effective than intended, they take swift action to refine their approach.

The school uses additional funding, including the pupil premium, thoughtfully. This helps to reduce barriers and widen pupils' experiences. Consequently, most pupils, including those who are vulnerable, engage well in learning and make steady progress from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, new leadership has taken decisive action to strengthen the school's work. Leaders and those responsible for governance share a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They have a secure understanding of its context, strengths and the areas that require further refinement. Leaders prioritise the right actions and implement these with care and consideration. They routinely evaluate impact and adapt plans where necessary. This ensures that improvements are purposeful and benefit all pupils, particularly those who may face barriers to their learning. There is a shared commitment to inclusion and to ensuring that all pupils achieve well and feel a sense of belonging.

Governors and members of the trust fulfil their roles effectively. They draw on a range of information to maintain an accurate oversight of the school's work. Through regular visits and well-focused discussions, they provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support to leaders. Those responsible for governance ensure that statutory duties are met and that safeguarding remains a high priority. They are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing when making strategic decisions and hold leaders to account for this.

Staff value the positive and collaborative culture that leaders have established. They appreciate the coherent programme of professional learning, which is aligned to school priorities. This supports staff, including early career teachers, to develop their practice. Leaders take thoughtful steps to manage workload, and staff feel listened to and respected. As a result, staff are motivated and committed to delivering high-quality education for all pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a comprehensive and well-sequenced programme for pupils' personal development. This programme is woven through all aspects of school life and supports pupils to develop the knowledge and skills they need for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about respect, equality and diversity. They understand that people may have different beliefs, backgrounds and experiences, and that everyone should be treated fairly. Pupils can explain how rules and laws help to keep people safe. They talk about how these link to events in the news locally, nationally and internationally.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. Pupils learn how to maintain their physical and mental health, including strategies to manage their emotions. They develop an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and know how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. Leaders' carefully structured support enables pupils to be confident to speak out if they are worried or need support. This contributes to a strong sense of safety and belonging across the school.

Leaders ensure pupils take part in a wide range of enrichment opportunities that broaden their experiences. Extra-curricular clubs, educational visits and residential trips help pupils to develop new interests and build confidence. Many pupils take on leadership roles, such as junior leaders, head pupils, wellbeing warriors or eco-warriors. They are proud of these responsibilities and understand how their actions can have a positive impact on the school and the wider community. Leaders monitor participation closely and adapt provision so that

disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the full range of opportunities. As a result, they participate fully and develop confidence comparable to their peers.

Through these experiences, pupils develop resilience, independence and effective social skills. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Leaders have begun to address weaknesses in pupils' achievement across the school. There have been improvements in the early years and across key stage 1. As a result, more pupils are secure in their handwriting, spelling, reading and mathematics knowledge and skills. Improvements to the mathematics curriculum are helping pupils to recall number facts more securely, including in preparation for the Year 4 multiplication check. However, while there are signs of improvement in spelling, punctuation and grammar, inconsistencies remain. Consequently, some older pupils have gaps in their foundational knowledge and skills.

At the end of key stage 2, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Although some pupils attain in line with national expectations, outcomes in writing and mathematics have been below the national average. Leaders have taken decisive action to address this, although the impact of these actions is still at an early stage. Therefore, not all pupils are sufficiently well prepared for the next stage of their education. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically achieve well from their starting points.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and inclusive school. Each morning, they are greeted warmly by staff who know them well. This helps pupils to feel safe, valued and ready to learn. There is a strong sense of community across the school with stakeholders and pupils describing the school as a 'big family'. Pupils say everyone is supported and encouraged to succeed. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to them if they have any worries.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They engage well in lessons and are keen to share their ideas. The curriculum is designed to build pupils' knowledge over time. However, older pupils did not benefit from the positive start that younger pupils now receive. As a result, some older pupils have gaps in their learning that are not identified or addressed quickly enough. This slows their progress and means they are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be. Leaders have taken decisive action to address this. Pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to access the curriculum alongside their peers.

Behaviour around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils understand the high expectations placed upon them and follow routines well. They treat one another with kindness and respect. Bullying is rare. Pupils trust staff to deal with any concerns promptly and effectively. This contributes to a safe and harmonious environment for pupils to learn and play in.

Pupils benefit from a range of wider opportunities that enrich their experience. They enjoy participating in clubs, educational visits and leadership roles, such as head pupil and playground leaders. These opportunities help pupils to develop confidence and responsibility. Parents and carers are positive about the school and feel confident that their children are happy, safe and cared for.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that there is a more consistent approach to correcting the basic errors in pupils' grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting, to ensure that this knowledge is more securely applied in subjects across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff use assessment information astutely to design activities that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding, so that more pupils achieve what they are capable of.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Shaw Education Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kerry Inscker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Meehan.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the executive headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector spoke with the chief executive officer, deputy chief executive officer, representatives of the trust and representatives of the local academy council during the inspection.

Inspectors spoke to pupils in lessons and at social times, and met with groups of pupils.

Inspectors met with groups of staff. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school runs an on-site nursery for children aged 3 years.

The school runs a breakfast club managed by the school.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher: Helen Cunliffe

Lead inspector:

James Dean, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sarahjane Cuncannon Edwards, Ofsted Inspector

Mark Gilbert, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 23 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

155

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

236

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

37.88%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

2.58%

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

20.65%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs 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	48%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	67%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	60%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	74%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average

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	58%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	58%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	47%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	63%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	44%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	20%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	64%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	70%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	40%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	82%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	100%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	59%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	20%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	82%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	52%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	30%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	44%	68%	-23 pp
2024/25 (final)	20%	69%	-49 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	67%	-4 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	66%	-16 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	70%	80%	-9 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	80%	2 pp
2022/23 (final)	100%	78%	22 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	59%	78%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	20%	78%	-58 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	78%	4 pp
2022/23 (final)	83%	77%	6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	52%	80%	-28 pp
2024/25 (final)	30%	81%	-51 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	79%	-16 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	67%	79%	-13 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)	4.2%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.8%	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)	4.4%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	15.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	18.4%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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