

Birkenhead Park School

Address: Park Road South, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH43 4UY

Unique reference number (URN): 136411

Inspection report: 30 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' deep understanding of pupils helps them to identify and address barriers to attendance and behaviour swiftly. They build powerful relationships with families and use individual approaches for pupils who require additional support. This work is underpinned by leaders' high expectations that pupils attend school regularly and behave well. As a result, attendance has risen to be above the national average. Persistent absence has reduced markedly over time. Pupils and their parents and carers understand the importance of regular attendance. Pupils also feel safe, supported and cared for in school which contributes to them wanting to be here.

Leaders have established clear and consistent expectations for behaviour. Pupils understand what is expected of them and value the fair application of the school rules. They are incredibly respectful towards staff and each other. Pupils move calmly around the school and are rarely late to lessons. In lessons, pupils engage positively with learning and readily contribute to discussions.

Pupils report the rare instances of bullying and unkind behaviour promptly. They are confident that leaders will deal with concerns quickly and effectively. Leaders provide targeted support for pupils who find managing their behaviour difficult. This support is often effective. Many pupils who were once at risk of permanent exclusion have successfully reintegrated into school.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion is central to the school's work. Leaders have created a culture in which pupils are valued and supported. The school provides a safe environment where pupils develop academically and personally, regardless of the challenges they may face.

Leaders have a in-depth understanding of the barriers that pupils face to their learning and wellbeing. They have established robust systems to identify swiftly when support needs to be adapted or introduced. Leaders work closely with staff to make sure that pupils receive prompt help. As a result, pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend regularly, achieve well and feel that they belong in the school community.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies and professionals to support pupils well. Their partnership with the local authority virtual school helps pupils who are supported by a social worker make rapid progress towards their individual targets. Leaders also use additional funding well to reduce barriers for pupils who are eligible for free school meals. This includes providing additional pastoral support and targeted tuition.

When appropriate, leaders make effective use of alternative provision. Pupils who receive this support make positive progress towards their targets. Many pupils successfully reintegrate into the school.

The actions that leaders have taken over recent years have led to marked improvements in this school. With the support and challenge of governors and trustees, leaders have embedded a culture of high expectations. Pupils at this school face many barriers to their learning and wellbeing. The culture that leaders have established has helped to reduce these barriers. As a result, attendance is now above the national average and results in national examinations have improved over time. Leaders are not complacent. They are unwavering in their commitment to further improvement and are motivated by the positive impact that the school has on the community it serves.

Staff share leaders' high expectations and vision for the school. Trustees have invested in a comprehensive programme of professional development that helps staff to improve their practice. This includes support for staff who aspire to leadership roles. Leaders are approachable and consider the impact of their decisions on staff workload carefully. Consequently, staff feel highly valued and are proud to work at the school.

Leaders work closely with other schools and colleges to share what makes the biggest difference for pupils. This has strengthened transition arrangements from primary school to secondary school and on to post-16 education. Leaders also collaborate with organisations which support the training of new teachers. Leaders understand the importance of community engagement. Parents and carers recognise the improvements at the school and speak positively about how well the school communicates with them.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those with barriers to their learning or wellbeing, build their knowledge and understanding well through the curriculum. They can explain what they have learned and produce work of high quality. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) often achieve as well as their peers. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics. The support they receive helps them to address these gaps effectively. As a result, they access learning more successfully.

Most pupils are eligible for free school meals. A larger-than-average proportion have SEND. Despite facing multiple disadvantages, pupils typically attain grades in national examinations that are at least in line with the national average. Results at the end of key stage 4 have improved markedly. In some subjects, disadvantaged pupils at this school outperform the average for all pupils nationally.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a curriculum that enables pupils to build knowledge securely over time. The curriculum is structured so that pupils revisit increasingly complex ideas. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding and remember important learning.

Since the last inspection, leaders have developed the 'BPS way' of teaching. This approach helps teachers to ensure that pupils make progress through the curriculum. Generally, this is the case. Teachers set tasks that encourage pupils to apply what they have learned. In all classrooms, teachers use a range of strategies to check pupils' understanding. In some classrooms, this is highly effective. Teachers typically adjust their teaching when pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This helps to address pupils' misunderstandings.

A high proportion of pupils face barriers to their learning, including special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have embedded adaptive teaching strategies into everyday practice. As a result, pupils who face such barriers are usually supported through high-quality teaching. Pupils with SEND who require additional resources or individualised support receive this help.

Teachers support pupils who have gaps in their reading, writing and mathematical knowledge. This is often addressed in the classroom. However, leaders have trained specialist staff who provide additional support outside lessons when needed.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have crafted a personal development programme that is informed by the community they serve. It is driven by leaders' pledge to ensure that pupils benefit from opportunities that broaden their experiences of the world. Pupils develop new talents in clubs like drama or computing. Culture days help pupils learn about different beliefs and ways of life. Pupils also visit the theatre and take part in residential trips. Leaders are committed to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have equal access to these opportunities. Leaders keep a sharp eye on pupils' individual circumstances and adapt their approach to support those who would benefit the most.

Leaders also ensure that pupils learn about the fundamental values that British society is based on, including respect for individual differences and the role of politics in society. Pupils' understanding of these topics is sometimes not as detailed as leaders intend. Pupils do, however, have a solid understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know what makes a healthy relationship and how to seek help if they should need it.

The careers programme ensures that pupils, especially those facing additional barriers to their learning or wellbeing, get the support they need to apply to and succeed at their next step in life. Visits to local colleges, universities and employers help pupils to appreciate the wealth of options open to them, while mock interviews help them to practise the communication skills that will help them to succeed. Almost all pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training after Year 11.

Pastoral care is embedded in the culture of the school. Leaders know pupils well and provide additional support when needed. When necessary, leaders bring in experts from outside the school to provide targeted help and raise pupils' awareness of risk and safety.

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

Over recent years, pupils' experiences at this school have improved dramatically. Pupils, regardless of their background, learn in an environment where staff care deeply for them. This care is combined with extremely high expectations. Pupils are motivated by the impressive support that they receive from staff. Consequently, pupils now have high aspirations and are well prepared to pursue them. Additionally, pupils gain a broad understanding of the world around them through the additional opportunities that leaders offer. This includes trips to local museums, joining clubs such as art and cooking and participation in debating competitions.

Most pupils face added challenges in their lives. Even so, pupils' attendance is consistently very positive. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Pupils have developed a firm trust in staff to keep them safe. Predictable rules and routines allow them to thrive. Pupils are calm and respectful. Any incidents of bullying or unkind behaviour are dealt with swiftly. As a result, pupils are safe. Moreover, school is a place of solace for many pupils.

Lessons are very rarely disrupted. This allows pupils to focus on their work. Pupils recognise the importance of education and are keen to deepen their understanding. Pupils who face barriers to learning or wellbeing get the support that they need. In most lessons, pupils benefit from clear and effective teaching. Pupils engage enthusiastically with their reading. Through leaders' 'big read' programme, pupils immerse themselves in a range of texts. This helps pupils to develop their knowledge of reading, vocabulary and culture. Pupils produce work of high quality. Their attainment in national examinations has improved sharply, helping pupils move on to appropriate and ambitious education, employment or training after leaving the school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that highly effective teaching is embedded across all subjects and year groups so that pupils' attainment in national examinations improves further.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain, supported by a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental British values, which includes the importance of respecting others who are different to them.
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About this inspection

This school is part of BePART Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by its chief executive officer (CEO), Mike Kilbride, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lyn Hazell.

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 trustees, governors, the CEO and school leaders during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with groups of staff and pupils and considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of 2 alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

Head of School: Nicola McNamee

Lead inspector:

Tom Theobald, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ian Young, Ofsted Inspector

Erin Wheeler, Ofsted Inspector

Karen Lynskey, 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

767

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: 1,067

School capacity

750

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

66.10%

Well 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: 28.9%

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

3.39%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

25.95%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to 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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	30.4%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	15.6%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	17.3%	45.3%	Below

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	39.9	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	33.8	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	32.4	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.55	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.64	-0.03	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	25.5%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	14.0%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	13.3%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	38.3	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.4	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.0	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.65	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.85	-0.57	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	25.5%	53.1%	-27.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	14.0%	53.1%	-39.2 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	13.3%	52.4%	-39.2 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	38.3	50.4	-12.2
2023/24 (final)	31.4	50.0	-18.6
2022/23 (final)	29.0	50.3	-21.3

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.65	0.16	-0.82
2022/23 (final)	-0.85	0.17	-1.01

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	76%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	79%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	85%	94%	Below

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)	6.9%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	10.2%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	13.5%	9.0%	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)	16.8%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	28.9%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	41.5%	26.5%	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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