

Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Address: Goldenhill Road, ST4 3DP

Unique reference number (URN): 148219

Inspection report: 18 November 2025

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 have established a strategic, whole-school approach to improving attendance that is inclusive and responsive to pupils' needs. Attendance is monitored rigorously. Barriers to attending well are addressed through tailored strategies. Leaders work closely with families to reduce absences linked to pupils' mental health. Pupil and staff 'attendance ambassadors' ensure that pupils' views shape the school's ongoing improvements. High attendance is consistently reinforced through warm welcomes, targeted incentives and supportive conversations. These actions have created a culture where pupils want to attend and feel that they belong.

Behaviour across the school is highly positive and underpinned by clear, consistently upheld routines. Pupils behave well, show confidence in their learning and are keen to learn. Staff receive high-quality professional training to support positive behaviours. Pupils feel safe. They discuss the strategies they use to manage their emotions. Behaviour is supported by restorative approaches and the use of calm spaces. Bullying and discriminatory incidents are rare and addressed swiftly when they do occur. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils receive highly effective, tailored support to engage well with learning. Staff promote respect and cooperation during lessons and social times. The school's culture of high expectations and personalised support enables pupils to develop academically and socially.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that helps pupils to build their learning. The curriculum is well designed and sequenced so that pupils build relevant knowledge and skills as they move through the school. Teachers make highly effective choices about what to teach and when. They check and revisit key ideas so that pupils understand them well.

Teaching is underpinned by deep subject knowledge. Teaching includes strategies, like 'think, pair, share', which are used very effectively to promote pupils' language development and help to extend their vocabulary. Staff work together seamlessly to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers adapt lessons expertly so that all pupils access the same curriculum.

Leaders prioritise staff development through highly effective training and coaching. Teachers have impressive expertise that enables them to deliver the curriculum in depth. As a result, gaps in pupils' mathematic knowledge are closing rapidly.

Pupils gain a secure knowledge in early reading, writing and mathematics, as well as confidence in their communication and language skills so that they can access the full, rich curriculum.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion is at the heart of the school's work and is lived out through high expectations and very positive relationships. Leaders have created a deeply inclusive culture, where pupils' needs are swiftly and accurately identified through well-embedded systems. Inclusive teaching with effective adaptations is evident across classrooms. Staff ensure that timely interventions, tailored strategies and reasonable adjustments reduce barriers to learning. This creates an environment where every pupil is supported well.

Highly effective leadership drives improvement for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those facing additional challenges. Leaders rigorously monitor pupils' progress and the impact of support, including the use of pupil premium funding. They use this information to make well-informed decisions. Staff receive high-quality training and confidently implement strategies to include all disadvantaged learners in lessons. For example, work to strengthen understanding of different types of need has helped staff adapt teaching more effectively.

Leaders work closely and successfully with parents, the trust and external agencies to meet the more complex needs of some pupils. Inclusion extends beyond lessons through initiatives, such as the 'Sunshine Café' and the use of diverse curriculum texts that celebrate community cultures. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils attend well and achieve positive outcomes. Pupils thrive academically and socially.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders have a well-developed plan to continue to build on the school's successes. They think carefully about what pupils need so that they can achieve highly. Leaders make well-considered and very effective decisions to improve pupils' learning. They act quickly and effectively to make changes that lead to improvements. Leaders evaluate the impact of decisions rigorously to ensure that these improve outcomes for pupils.

Leaders provide staff with excellent training and opportunities to collaborate. Early career teachers are supported well with highly effective mentoring and coaching. Staff say leaders manage workload well and protect time for professional learning.

Inclusion is a key, continued priority for leaders. They make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who need extra help are fully included in lessons and all wider opportunities.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They visit regularly and understand the strengths and priorities of the provision. School leaders are held to account through highly effective support and challenge. Governors ensure that their statutory duties are met. The trust works closely with the school giving highly effective support and challenge.

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. One parent summed up the views of many by saying, 'Every single person who makes the school what it is works hard to meet the needs of every child who is in attendance.'

Together, leaders and wider stakeholders create a culture of high expectations and improvement so that pupils can thrive.

Personal development and well-being

Strong standard 

The school has created a highly effective personal development programme. It promotes pupils' well-being through a caring and inclusive ethos. As a result, pupils enjoy attending school and describe it as a happy place.

Pupils are remarkably responsible and seek help when needed. They understand what makes a good friend and value kindness and respect. Pupils speak confidently about healthy relationships and managing emotions. They know how to stay safe online, when crossing roads and when they feel worried. They know not to share private information online and to report any concerns to adults.

Pupils respect and show a keen interest in cultural diversity. They know the difference between right and wrong and understand the need for rules. They demonstrate their deep understanding of these concepts through their interactions with others. By taking on leadership roles, for example, as a school councillor and through fundraising events, pupils learn how to have a beneficial impact on the lives of others. Pupils become community minded and considerate young people.

The school offers a wide range of enrichment opportunities. Pupils take part in clubs, such as crochet, netball and drama. Older pupils start thinking ahead to their future ambitions by attending career fairs. These opportunities help to raise pupils' aspirations and encourage them to learn new skills. Leaders ensure that these opportunities are accessible to all pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are very well supported to take part in the wider curriculum offer.

Leaders support pupils and their families who may need extra help during difficult times. The school works well with a range of agencies to help pupils get the support they need.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils are generally well prepared for their next stage of education. They develop secure knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Pupils' phonics knowledge is secure, giving them a very positive start in reading.

Writing is a strength, including for disadvantaged pupils, with frequent opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum. Pupils apply their English skills successfully in wider curriculum subjects. While pupils' knowledge and skills in mathematics are improving, some pupils' depth of understanding is less secure. Disadvantaged pupils generally achieve well across the curriculum.

Most pupils achieve the expected standards in national tests at the end of key stage 2. Outcomes for pupils are improving but need embedding. Leaders have refined and adapted the curriculum to ensure that there is consistency and high-quality teaching across subjects and year groups. This helps pupils know more, remember more and apply their learning securely in different subjects.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years benefit from warm relationships with adults who know them well. Staff create a nurturing environment, where routines are clear and consistent. This helps children feel safe.

As children learn and play, they talk confidently with adults and their classmates. There is a consistent emphasis on helping children to learn new words and express their ideas. Staff model language well and encourage children to use a varied vocabulary.

The curriculum is well designed. It identifies what children are expected to know and be able to do in the different areas of learning. As a result, most children in the Reception Year leave well prepared for Year 1. However, some learning activities do not help children to build on what they already know. This means that some children do not learn as much as they could.

Reading is prioritised from the moment children join the school. Children learn to pronounce letters and words with accuracy. Staff check children's phonics knowledge frequently. Any children at risk of falling behind in phonics receive the right support. This helps those who are struggling to catch up quickly.

Staff ensure that parents and carers are well informed about how well their children are developing and learning and how they can support learning at home.

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

Staff create a warm, welcoming start to the day. Pupils arrive at school ready to learn. They feel known and valued as individuals because adults understand and support their needs and ambitions. Extremely positive relationships between pupils and staff help to foster a deep sense of belonging. Pupils who need extra care receive highly appropriate, tailored individual support. This support makes a real difference to their wellbeing, attendance and learning. As a result, most pupils achieve well and attend regularly. They enjoy learning and are well prepared for their next steps.

Behaviour across the school reflects a positive and highly respectful culture. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are vulnerable, are fully included in every aspect of school life. Acts of kindness and compassion are typical between pupils. Pupils help each other throughout the day and take pride in 'buddying up' to offer support. These experiences strengthen friendships and promote a remarkably calm and purposeful atmosphere.

Beyond lessons, pupils benefit from clubs, visits and residential that broaden their horizons. They learn how to stay safe through highly useful practical guidance on road and water safety. Pupils enjoy learning and take on responsibilities within the school that build confidence and character. These experiences help pupils understand how to make positive choices and provide opportunities for them to contribute to their community.

Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff truly is one big family made up of pupils, parents and carers, staff and the wider community.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the activities adults use in the early years are sufficiently well designed and ambitious so that children consistently build upon what they already know and can do.
 - Leaders should continue to embed the work that has taken place, so that pupils continue to develop a deep body of knowledge and skills across the curriculum, including in mathematics.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Co-op Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dr Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill.

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

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and members of the senior and middle leadership teams. The lead inspector also had meetings with one of the regional directors of Co-op Academies Trust and the director for early years of the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

The school has undergone a significant change in leadership since the last inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2024.

Headteacher: Mrs Emma Day

Lead inspector:

James Dean, His Majesty's Inspector


Team inspectors:

Eve Morris, His Majesty's Inspector

Usha Devi, His Majesty's 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 18 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

400

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: 272

School capacity

420

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)

51.67%

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: 26.3%

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

2.00%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support

18.50%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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 maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and maths measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	61%	Close to average
2024/25	71%	62%	Above
2023/24	58%	61%	Close to average
2022/23	57%	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	72%	74%	Close to average
2024/25	84%	75%	Above
2023/24	68%	74%	Below
2022/23	65%	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	80%	72%	Above
2024/25	84%	72%	Above
2023/24	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23	76%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in maths.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	73%	Below
2024/25	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24	59%	73%	Below
2022/23	63%	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 maths

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	59%	46%	Above
2024/25	69%	47%	Above
2023/24	55%	46%	Close to average
2022/23	52%	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	84%	63%	Above
2023/24	67%	62%	Close to average
2022/23	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	75%	59%	Above
2024/25	81%	59%	Above
2023/24	79%	58%	Above
2022/23	61%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	60%	60%	Close to average
2024/25	69%	61%	Close to average
2023/24	58%	59%	Close to average
2022/23	52%	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 maths

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	59%	68%	-9 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25	69%	69%	0 pp
2023/24	55%	67%	-13 pp
2022/23	52%	66%	-14 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	84%	81%	4 pp
2023/24	67%	80%	-13 pp
2022/23	57%	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	75%	78%	-3 pp
2024/25	81%	78%	3 pp
2023/24	79%	78%	1 pp
2022/23	61%	77%	-17 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	60%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25	69%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24	58%	79%	-22 pp
2022/23	52%	79%	-27 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 (1 term)	4.5%	5.1%	Close to average
2023/24	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23	7.5%	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 (1 term)	11.7%	14.3%	Close to average
2023/24	21.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	24.7%	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 standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards 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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