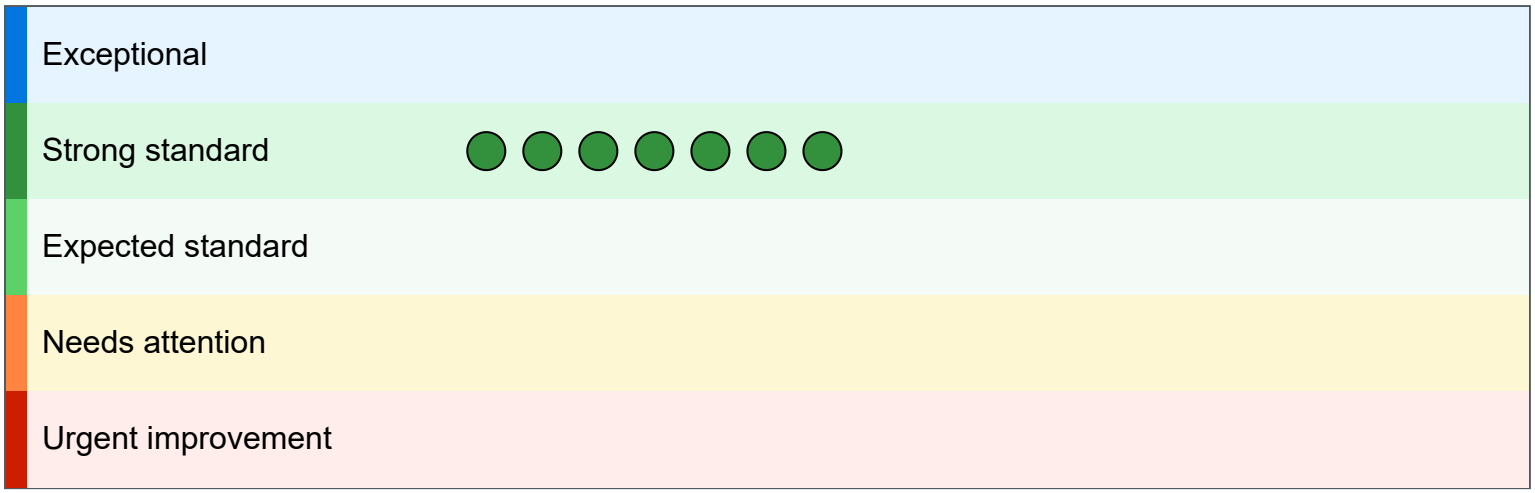
# Heathfield Primary School

**Address:** Henniker Road, Heathfield Primary School, Bolton, Lancashire, BL3 3TP

**Unique reference number (URN):** 105172

# Inspection report: 28 April 2026




## 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

## Achievement

**Strong standard**

Pupils achieve very well across the school curriculum. They gain deep and rich knowledge across a range of subjects. Consequently, they are very well prepared for their next steps in education. This is reflected in the end of key stage 2 national tests and assessments. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above the national average. This is also true for disadvantaged pupils, who outperform other disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities fare very well due to the close attention that is given to reducing their barriers to learning.

Younger pupils gain a secure grounding in key skills, such as phonics, handwriting and number. This forms a solid foundation on which older pupils can build. As a result, pupils are proficient mathematicians, read with fluency and understanding and write with accuracy, using an extensive range of vocabulary.

## Attendance and behaviour

**Strong standard**

Leaders manage pupils' attendance very effectively. Well embedded systems enable leaders to analyse patterns and trends in absence rates over time. Leaders use this information well to identify the barriers that cause some pupils to miss out on school life. Due to leaders' sustained and successful focus on making every day count, attendance rates for different groups of pupils are consistently above the national average.

Pupils display extremely positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn. Pupils take real pride in all that they do. The relationships that they foster with staff underpin their desire to succeed. Pupils are respectful to adults and kind to each other. They play together harmoniously during breaktimes, taking full advantage of the well-developed outdoor spaces.

The behaviour policy is applied consistently and fairly. Any unacceptable behaviour, including incidents of bullying or discrimination, are dealt with swiftly by leaders and staff. Those pupils who find managing their behaviour difficult are supported well by caring staff. This ensures that the school is calm and purposeful.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Strong standard**

Leaders have developed an ambitious, rich and well-structured curriculum that is implemented consistently well across all classes and subjects. The curriculum is well embedded and highly effective. It provides teachers with clear guidance on what pupils should learn and when this should happen. The curriculum has a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils gain strong foundations for later learning. The emphasis on reading, writing and number means that pupils are able to unlock their learning across all subjects.

Teachers design activities that enable pupils to continually build on what they already know. They provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to recall previous learning. Teachers use assessment strategies very well to check pupils’ understanding of the curriculum. They

identify pupils' mistakes and address gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly. Pupils who find learning difficult are helped to catch up so that no-one is left behind.

Teachers have a deep understanding of pupils' barriers to success. They use this knowledge to adapt tasks and activities so that pupils access the curriculum and learn all that is intended. For example, teachers ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly gain rich vocabulary.

## Early years

**Strong standard**

Leaders have carefully considered and implemented a highly effective curriculum, giving children the best start to school. Knowledgeable leaders and well-trained staff ensure the curriculum meets children's needs and interests.

Staff have high expectations of what children can and should do. This means that children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, secure the skills and knowledge necessary for their next stage of learning.

Children are consistently taught the correct pencil grip and sitting position when writing. They learn to count and use phonics to read words. Children glue, stick, climb and ride bikes to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Large pieces of paper support early writing during 'squiggle time'.

Staff's interactions with children are high quality and help them to develop their ideas and communication skills. Carefully selected texts enrich their vocabulary. Children use these in play. 'I'll huff and puff and blow your house down' was heard when building a foam brick wall.

Children follow established routines and increase their independence over time. Staff work very well to manage behaviour and ensure that children develop good manners and respect for each other. Children feel safe, secure and happy. As a result, children achieve extremely well across all areas of learning. They are very well prepared for key stage 1.

## Inclusion

**Strong standard**

Pupils thrive at school. A united commitment to inclusion underpins every aspect of school life. Leaders quickly identify pupils who require additional help with their learning. They make sure that pupils have the right support in place to make sustained progress through the curriculum. Leaders carefully consider the help and resources that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities need so that they learn alongside their peers.

Staff are well informed about the barriers that hinder some pupils' success. They are highly trained to support pupils to access learning, manage their emotions and develop independence. Professional advice is routinely used to make sure that pupils and their families get all the help they need.

Leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively. Pupils who are disadvantaged are fully included in school life and have the same chance as others to flourish academically and in their personal development.

The pastoral support available to pupils is highly effective. This ensures that all pupils, including those who are known to social care, have someone to turn to when they are upset or worried.

## Leadership and governance

**Strong standard**

Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils. They understand the school's community very well. Leaders know the school's strengths and are insightful in their understanding of how to improve the school further. They make well-informed decisions that are in the best interests of pupils. This includes introducing a new phonics scheme, which has had a significant impact on pupils' readiness to read. Leaders have ensured that the high-quality curriculum and the way in which it is taught is checked so that minor weaknesses are addressed quickly. This enables all pupils to flourish academically.

Leaders act as strong role models for all staff and pupils. Staff overwhelmingly say they are proud to work in the school. They are listened to by leaders. Their workload and wellbeing are well supported. Staff feel valued and demonstrate their commitment by doing their very best for all pupils. They access professional training, which is tailored to their development needs and career aspirations. Leaders work with other schools and professionals to support staff development and share expertise.

Governors undertake their statutory duties effectively. They play an active role in the life of the school. They provide suitable challenge. Governors carefully check the work of leaders to ensure that everyone is safe. They make sure that resources are used well. They use their professional expertise to support leaders.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school's work. They say leaders go above and beyond to secure pupils' academic progress and personal development.

## Personal development and wellbeing

**Strong standard**

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are a high priority across the school. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from rich experiences that prepare them very well for life beyond primary school. Leaders ensure that the personal, social, health and economic curriculum is adapted to reflect the changing context of the school and society. Leaders also make sure that teachers adapt their delivery of this curriculum so that pupils who experience barriers to learning have an equal opportunity to gain the knowledge they need to lead healthy and safe lives. Nurturing pastoral support ensures that pupils have someone to turn to when they need comfort or guidance.

Pupils develop a secure and in-depth understanding of fundamental British values. They know about and appreciate the differences between themselves and others, showing respect for all. Pupils gain a strong sense of social justice and they are keen to help others less fortunate than themselves because of their absolute belief in equality.

Leaders ensure that statutory elements of the relationships and sex education and health education curriculum are sensitively taught at age-appropriate levels. Pupils have a secure understanding of consent and the changes that take place in their bodies as they grow. They

talk confidently about keeping themselves safe online. Leaders provide training for parents and carers regarding the importance of sleep and toilet training.

The extra-curricular activities on offer are extensive. Pupils' engagement in these clubs is high because they meet pupils' needs and interests. Leaders canvass pupils for their ideas and amend the offer so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have the chance to shine. Nearly every disadvantaged pupil accesses an enrichment activity. Pupils play competitive sport from the early years onwards. Many pupils attend the annual sports dinner with a family member, where they meet a sportsperson from the community.

Pupils take pride in their leadership roles. They show responsibility, maturity and confidence as young leaders.

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

Pupils flourish within this caring, friendly community. They love learning and value the many opportunities they receive to explore each subject. Staff skilfully adjust activities to reduce barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, all pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education. The school's values positively prepare pupils for life. Resilience, mutual respect and commitment to learning are embedded across the school’s work.

Pupils feel safe. They are listened to by nurturing and trusted staff. They know who to turn to if they need emotional support.

Pupils consistently behave well in school. They say that bullying is rare. Leaders and staff deal swiftly with incidents of poor or unkind behaviour. Pupils attend school regularly. They thrive academically and emotionally because of embedded routines and the well-designed curriculum that is taught consistently well. Pupils experience educational visits that bring learning to life, for example Year 3 go to the Peak District and Year 6 enhance their knowledge of life during the Blitz through a visit to an air raid shelter museum. Pupils are proud of the ‘Learning Avenue’ and the ‘Learning Street’ in the heart of school, which help them to know and remember more.

Pupils embrace leadership responsibilities. They are elected to the school government where they make decisions to improve pupils' experiences further. Pupils welcome the opportunities to debate topical issues. For example, members of the 'Global Gang' talk about the impact of waste on the environment. Pupil play leaders listen to younger pupils read at lunchtime to help them learn. Staff set up activities so that pupils have fun during their social times. Pupils learn songs and play the ukulele. They sing with professional choirs. Pupils develop their art skills to a high standard working alongside a professional artist.

## Next steps

- Leaders and those with responsibility for governance should sustain the effectiveness of their work in all areas, including the delivery of the curriculum, so that pupils' learning, including for children in the early years, continues to deepen further.

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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Sharmeen Atcha.

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 other leaders. They also met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectos spoke with a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.

Inspectors spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted’s surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mark Thornley

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**Lead inspector:**
Ruth Baldwin, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**
Ian Young, Ofsted Inspector
Matthew King, 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 28 April 2026

# School and pupil context

### Total pupils

## 272
Close to average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

### School capacity

## 276
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)

## 35.21%
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

## 3.68%
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**

## 7.72%
Well below average

**What does this mean?**

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

National average: 15%

**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

**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** | 76% | 61% | Above |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25 (final)** | 75% | 62% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 74% | 61% | Above |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 80% | 60% | Above |

### 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** | 82% | 74% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 88% | 75% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 77% | 74% | Close to average |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 80% | 73% | Above |

### 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** | 85% | 72% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 84% | 72% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 81% | 72% | Above |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 90% | 71% | Above |

### 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** | 90% | 73% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 88% | 74% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 87% | 73% | Above |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 97% | 73% | Above |

## 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** | 65% | 46% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 72% | 47% | Above |
| **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** | 73% | 62% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 89% | 63% | Above |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2023/24 (final)** | 64% | 62% | Close to average |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 50% | 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** | 81% | 59% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 83% | 59% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 82% | 58% | Above |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 75% | 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** | 84% | 60% | Above |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 89% | 61% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 73% | 59% | Above |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 88% | 59% | Above |

## 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** | 65% | 68% | -3 pp |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 72% | 69% | 3 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** | 73% | 80% | -7 pp |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 89% | 81% | 8 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 64% | 80% | -16 pp |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 50% | 78% | -28 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** | 81% | 78% | 3 pp |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 83% | 78% | 5 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 82% | 78% | 4 pp |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 75% | 77% | -2 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** | 84% | 80% | 4 pp |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 89% | 81% | 8 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 73% | 79% | -7 pp |
| **2022/23 (final)** | 88% | 79% | 8 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)** | 5.0% | 5.2% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 5.4% | 5.5% | Close to average |
| **2022/23 (3 term)** | 5.4% | 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)** | 14.1% | 13.0% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 13.3% | 14.6% | Close to average |
| **2022/23 (3 term)** | 13.2% | 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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