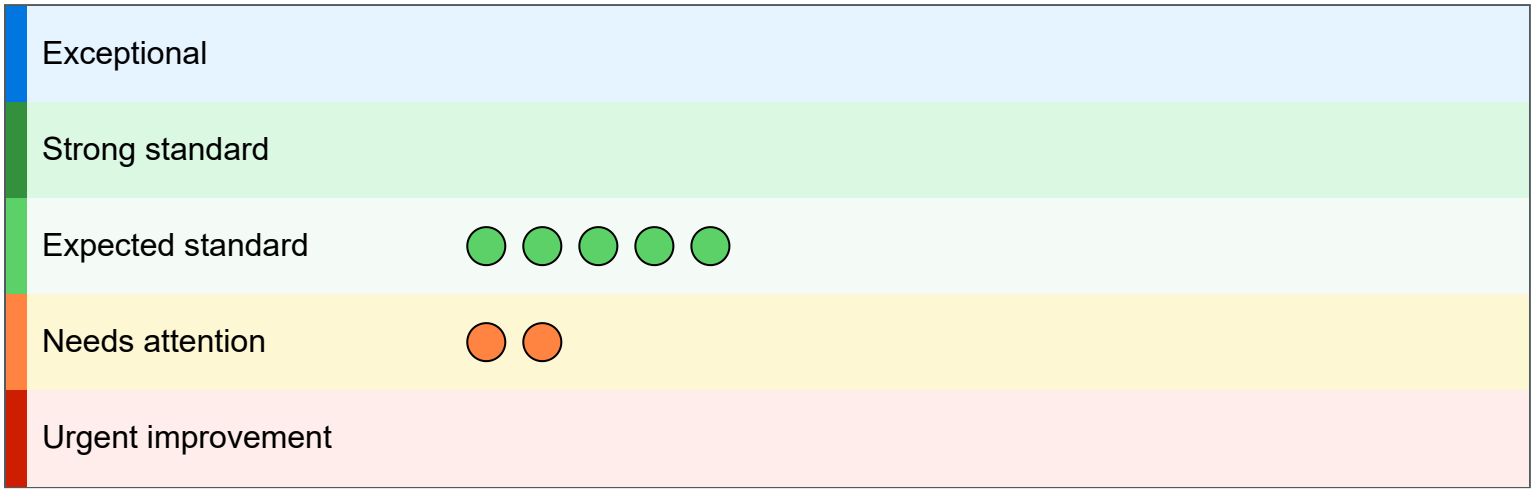
Blackpool Gateway Academy

Address: Seymour Road, Blackpool, FY1 6JH

Unique reference number (URN): 142175

Inspection report: 2 June 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Many pupils struggle to attend well, including pupils who join the school midway through the school year. Leaders swiftly take action to reduce and remove the barriers that pupils face to attendance. When pupils remain at the school for long enough, they benefit from leaders' actions and their attendance improves. As new pupils arrive, leaders quickly get to grips with helping them to attend regularly. Attendance is improving, overall and for different groups of pupils, as a result of leaders' well-considered actions. Often, leaders' actions extend well beyond the school gate. Leaders provide considerable support for families that helps pupils to attend more regularly.

Pupils behave well. Pupils rise to the expectations that staff have for their behaviour and conduct. Some pupils find it hard to manage their feelings and behaviour. Staff use their expertise and detailed knowledge of pupils to shape support that helps pupils to manage their emotions. Pupils who struggle to behave well get back on track quickly. As a result, lessons are calm and pupils focus well on their learning. Bullying is very rare. Leaders have created a school culture in which discrimination and bullying are never tolerated.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders have made sure that staff in the early years benefit from considerable professional development. From the Nursery Year onwards, the school has established a well-considered early years curriculum that is consistently well taught. Children benefit from interactions with adults that support their language development. Children use this language in their own play. Adults help children to learn phonics well. Leaders have recently improved the way that children are taught to form their letters correctly. This work is gaining traction. Children are rapidly acquiring the skills that they need to read and write.

Adults make sure that children are well cared for. From the start of the school day, children receive a warm welcome. Many children face additional challenges to their learning and development. In the Nursery and Reception classes, adults provide carefully matched support that helps children to become ready for school. Children quickly settle into new routines. They enjoy the activities that they are given to do. Children sustain their concentration and are eager learners. Adults provide children with clear routines to follow. This helps children to behave consistently well.

Many children begin their learning in school with gaps in their knowledge. By the end of their time in the early years, most of these gaps are reduced. Children are ready for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have established a well-considered process to make sure that pupils' needs are swiftly and precisely identified. A large number of pupils join the school later in their education. When this is the case, leaders' comprehensive programme of induction helps pupils to feel welcomed, included and deeply understood by the staff around them. Many pupils face barriers to their wellbeing. Leaders swiftly get to know pupils and their families in

order to wrap bespoke support around each pupil. Leaders use additional funding very effectively. Pupils benefit from a wide range of highly effective support for their wellbeing. The barriers that pupils have reduce rapidly.

Leaders have made sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive help that is right for them. Leaders check the impact of this support. Typically, this support helps pupils with SEND to access the curriculum successfully. Leaders have made sure that staff have the knowledge that they need to devise targets that help pupils with SEND to acquire important basic skills.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have swiftly secured a well-informed view of the school. They know exactly what is working well and what requires further development. Those responsible for governance share this sharp understanding. Together, leaders, trustees and governors use their expertise to target their actions on the things that will make the biggest difference to pupils. In a short time, this work has had a positive impact on pupils' work and achievement in school.

Leaders have established highly effective working relationships with parents and carers. Often, these relationships are key in helping pupils to be safe, happy and successful. Leaders have created a culture of welcome that means that parents and carers are increasingly participants in their children's learning.

Those responsible for governance understand and meet their statutory duties well. They use their knowledge to support and challenge leaders. In addition, the trust provides considerable expertise that is helping leaders to implement rapid improvement. Staff benefit from professional learning that is improving the teaching of the curriculum. Pupils receive an increasingly consistent quality of education as a result. Staff appreciate the guidance and care that leaders and the trust provide. They are proud to make a positive difference to pupils in this school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have established a well-designed personal, social, health and economic education curriculum for pupils to learn. Leaders ensure that this curriculum reflects the unique knowledge and experiences that pupils in this school need for the future. Pupils develop secure knowledge about how to stay safe near water or tramlines, as well as understanding important issues such as crime and policing. Pupils know how to stay safe when online and how to stay physically and mentally healthy. Staff make sure that pupils understand the signs that might indicate that a relationship is not healthy. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, they have acquired a body of knowledge that prepares them well for their future lives.

Pupils develop their understanding of fundamental British values through carefully designed activities to explore democracy and the importance of laws. Leaders enhance these experiences, for instance through local police officers visiting the school and talking with pupils.

When pupils need additional support to manage challenges in their lives, leaders and staff immediately wrap support around them. This aspect of the school's work is highly successful. Leaders carefully check that this support is helping pupils. Pupils thrive, often despite challenging situations, because of this support.

Leaders plan many opportunities for pupils to explore their interests and enhance their learning. Leaders involve pupils in designing the programme of clubs and activities. Some pupils participate in dance and theatre performances while others compete in sports events or learn additional computing skills. Pupils also benefit from a range of trips and visits. Leaders provide experiences for pupils that they would not otherwise have. Whether visiting a museum, theatre or a city, leaders deliberately broaden pupils' experience of the world. Leaders carefully check that all pupils can join in. If pupils have any barriers to participation, leaders take effective action to remove them.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Over time, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Pupils' achievement is hampered because teachers do not address gaps in pupils' knowledge as precisely as they could. The gaps that some pupils have in their basic knowledge persist. When pupils benefit from most of their education in this school, their achievement is much better and is closer to average attainment nationally.

Leaders are making rapid improvements to pupils' learning and achievement. Pupils' current learning and experiences in lessons are better than published information about the school suggests. Leaders' actions have not had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) progress well from their starting points. They secure some of the important foundations in learning that they need. However, pupils with SEND have the same gaps in writing and mathematics as their peers. Leaders are beginning to address these gaps more precisely. This work has not had time to impact on pupils' achievement in lessons.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Newly established school and trust leaders have rapidly got to grips with improving the curriculum and teaching. However, this work is in the early stages of development. Leaders have made sure that an effective curriculum is in place for all subjects. This is not yet taught consistently well. Sometimes, pupils are given activities to complete that do not help them to acquire the important knowledge that they need. Pupils have many gaps in their learning, especially when they join the school later in their education. Teachers do not check or address these gaps as precisely as they should. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to learn new things because they have not secured important prior learning.

Where leaders have prioritised their work, for example in phonics, teachers have the expertise to teach this well. Pupils quickly acquire the phonics knowledge that they need

and become increasingly fluent readers. In mathematics, pupils secure the important foundations that they need for their future learning. However, staff do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise using their mathematics knowledge. In the early years, children are taught the important foundations of writing well. However, leaders' plans to build on this successful start are in the early stages of development. The teaching of writing is not consistently effective in key stages 1 and 2.

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

A warm welcome awaits all pupils at Blackpool Gateway Academy. Leaders have established a school culture based on belonging that helps every pupil to know that they are included. Pupils and their families benefit from support that goes well beyond the school gate. This support is often key to keeping pupils safe and well cared for. Many pupils join the school later in their education. They, and others, can face multiple barriers to their wellbeing and learning. These barriers reduce rapidly because of the action that staff take. Pupils are happy and ready to learn.

Pupils behave well in school. Pupils rise to the consistent expectations that staff hold for their behaviour and conduct. From the Nursery Year onwards, children quickly and happily settle to new routines. Pupils benefit from secure and trusting relationships with the adults around them. These relationships influence the positive culture of behaviour in school. Bullying is very rare. If it happens, leaders take swift action to make sure that it stops. This is almost never needed.

Over time, a large number of pupils have struggled to attend well. Leaders systematically identify and reduce the barriers that pupils have to their attendance. When new pupils arrive, they swiftly receive the same help and support.

Pupils benefit from a well-designed curriculum. However, some aspects of the curriculum are less developed. The curriculum is not yet taught consistently well. Sometimes, pupils have gaps in their learning that are not addressed precisely enough. This limits their achievement. However, pupils benefit from many well-considered opportunities to explore their interests, for example pupils participate in musical theatre, practise photography and learn yoga. Pupils show each other kindness and care. They respect each other's differences. One pupil captured the views of many, saying, ‘It would be boring if we were all the same.’

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to implement their plans to build on the successful start to the teaching of writing in the early years so that it becomes consistent from Year 1 onwards.
- Leaders should make sure that teachers check and address gaps in pupils' knowledge more precisely so that pupils secure the important foundations that they need.
- Leaders should make sure that the tasks that teachers select for pupils to complete are precisely focused on the important knowledge that pupils need to acquire.

- Leaders should continue to implement their plans to provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematics knowledge so that pupils apply this knowledge more fluently.

About this inspection

This school is part of Fylde Coast Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dean Logan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kathleen Evison.

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, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also spoke with leaders in the trust, including the CEO and the deputy CEO. The lead inspector spoke with governors and trustees, including the chair of the trust board.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils in the school.

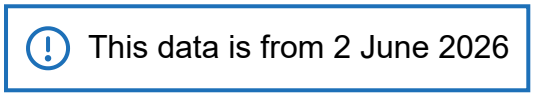
Headteacher: Nicola Makinson

Lead inspector:
Jen Sloan, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Elliot Costas-Walker, His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Greer, 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.



School and pupil context

Total pupils

322
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

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)

68.95%
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

2.48%
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

22.36%

Well 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	32%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	44%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	29%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	23%	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	43%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	51%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	47%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	45%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	39%	71%	Below

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	41%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	53%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	28%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	35%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	24%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	24%	44%	Below

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	39%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	63%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	42%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	34%	60%	Below

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	42%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	41%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	34%	58%	Below

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	35%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	32%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	34%	59%	Below

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	28%	68%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	35%	69%	-34 pp
2023/24 (final)	24%	67%	-43 pp
2022/23 (final)	24%	66%	-42 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	39%	80%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	42%	80%	-38 pp
2022/23 (final)	34%	78%	-44 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	42%	78%	-36 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	41%	78%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	34%	77%	-43 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	35%	80%	-44 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	32%	79%	-48 pp
2022/23 (final)	34%	79%	-45 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)	7.5%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.5%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.4%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	24.2%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	27.6%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	33.5%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

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

Strong standard

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

Expected standard

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

Needs attention

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

Urgent improvement

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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026

© Crown copyright