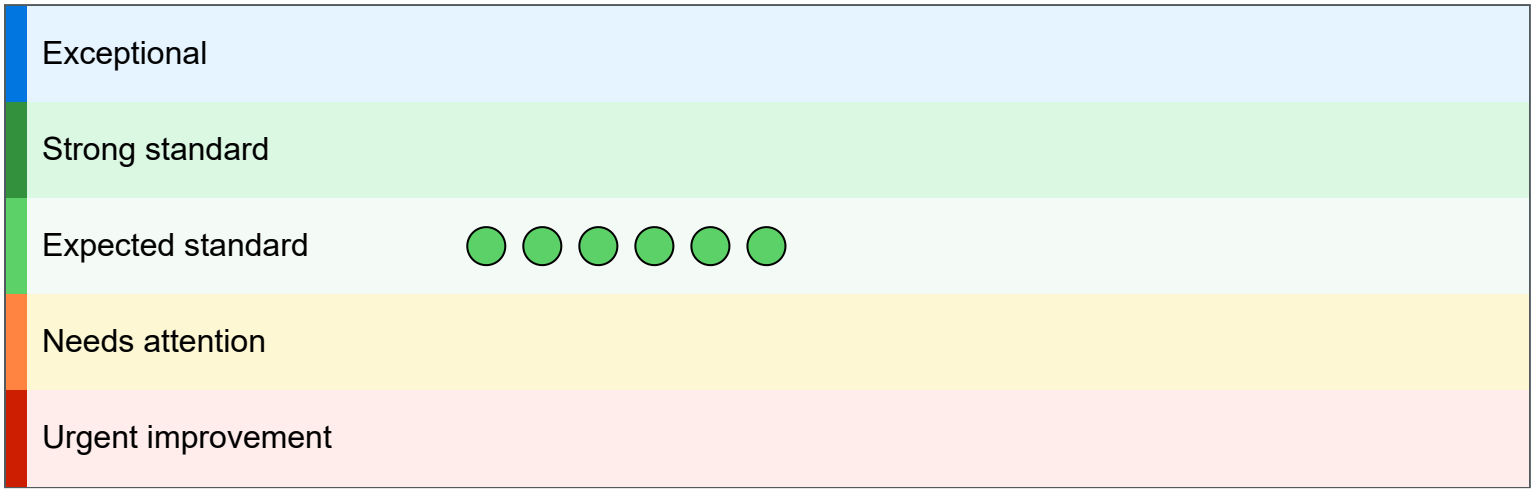
Wellfield School

Address: North Road East, Wingate, County Durham, TS28 5AX

Unique reference number (URN): 149739

Inspection report: 6 May 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

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils generally achieve at least as well as their peers nationally, and sometimes better and this is reflected in their academic attainment at the end of key stage 4. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Leaders pay close attention to areas where pupils could do better and take swift action to address this.

Pupils' work shows clear progress over time. For example, in English, pupils study increasingly challenging books, plays and other texts. They are supported to write more-complex pieces of extended writing as they progress through the school. Most pupils talk confidently about what they have learned. However, this is not yet the case in all subjects, for all pupils.

Pupils who have gaps in their foundational knowledge in reading, mathematics or handwriting receive structured support that helps them improve. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps and typically, most move on to destinations that match their aspirations and interests.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders have robust and accurate systems to monitor pupils’ attendance. They analyse attendance information closely and intervene early when pupils need help to attend more regularly. This work has had a significant positive impact. Attendance has improved for all groups over the past 2 years. Although overall attendance remains below the national average, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils now attend at levels similar to their peers. Leaders have improved the attendance of pupils who are persistently or severely absent. Staff work well with parents and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.

Pupils behave well and treat each other with respect. Leaders have high expectations for behaviour in lessons and around the school and typically pupils live up to these. Leaders provide effective support for pupils who need help to improve their behaviour. Pupils feel that the behaviour systems are fair and that staff deal with bullying and other concerns quickly. The school promotes an inclusive approach and pupils show positive attitudes to learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They work with teachers to put in place learning activities that help pupils learn and build their knowledge and skills over time. However, these strategies are not being used consistently across all subjects.

Teachers know their subjects well. They sequence learning carefully so that pupils can build on what they already know. Teachers generally check pupils understanding. However, this is not always sufficiently precise to enable teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

When this happens, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and they do not make the progress that they should.

Leaders have worked with teachers to develop regular opportunities for pupils to strengthen their writing skills. This approach is effective and in some subjects, including English, pupils produce high-quality pieces of extended writing.

Reading is a priority. Pupils in the lower years have regular reading lessons and access to a well-resourced library. Pupils who need further help with foundational skills receive regular support. This includes support to develop reading, mathematics and handwriting that helps pupils improve quickly. However, pupils who need additional support because of their specific needs are usually, but not always, supported effectively in lessons.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders use a range of approaches to identify the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or other barriers to learning. Staff work diligently to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the right assessments and support. Pupils who need help with reading, handwriting or mathematics receive support that helps them improve these skills quickly. In addition, some pupils with SEND in Year 6 receive additional support to prepare them for their move to Year 7.

Staff receive regular training in how to adapt their teaching for pupils with SEND and other barriers to learning. Staff generally adapt teaching well, however this is not consistent across all subjects. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not always make the progress they could.

Pupils who are disadvantaged are well supported by the school. Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils thoughtfully, which has led to better attendance and improved outcomes for these pupils. The school uses alternative provision only when necessary. Leaders make sure that the provision matches pupils' needs and check their progress regularly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

School leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have made steady improvements in key areas of the school, including improving the quality of teaching and pupils' attendance. Leaders make decisions in the best interests of pupils and have a clear plan in place to continue to improve the school.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They are committed to the ambitious vision of the school. They effectively support and challenge school leaders to ensure that their statutory duties are met.

Staff receive appropriate and thorough training. Leaders draw on expertise across the trust to make sure that staff develop the skills and knowledge they need. Staff feel that leaders are mindful of both their wellbeing and workload.

Leaders and governors play a key role in building effective relationships with the local community. This is a clear priority of the school. For example, the school hosts an annual Christmas fair that is well attended by the local community. Leaders take part in the village Remembrance service each year. The school works effectively with other schools in their trust and beyond to share best practice and ensure that they are doing the best for their pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The personal development programme is well planned and thoughtfully sequenced. It ensures that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding over time. Pupils can talk reflectively about what it means to be a young person in modern Britain. The personal development programme covers all statutory requirements. Pupils learn to respect other cultures, traditions and faiths. Relationships and sex education is thoughtfully sequenced and age appropriate. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Pupils are given opportunities to explore their interests and abilities through a wide range of extracurricular experiences. Leaders listen carefully to pupils to make sure that their interests are reflected in the opportunities they are given. Pupils enjoy the wide range of trips and visits on offer. Leaders use funding to make sure that disadvantaged pupils can access the same opportunities as their peers. They are also thoughtful in making sure that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are offered activities that match their needs and abilities.

Pupils receive effective careers information, advice and guidance. They learn about the world of work through visits to employers and careers events in school. They are well supported in planning their next steps both by the school and by independent careers advisers. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are given additional specialist support to help them overcome any barriers they may have in moving on to their next steps in education. Leaders are developing further opportunities for pupils to gain meaningful experience in the workplace.

The pastoral team works closely with pupils and their families. When pupils need help, the pastoral team works with other leaders and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the right support.

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

Pupils at Wellfield School generally feel proud to be part of their school community. They typically enjoy their lessons and build their knowledge and skills over time. Pupils who need help with reading, handwriting or basic mathematics receive timely support. Teachers usually adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), although this is not fully consistent across all subjects. Typically, pupils achieve at least as well as pupils nationally, and sometimes better. This includes disadvantaged pupils.

The school takes care to understand the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff often meet pupils with SEND in Year 6 before they join Year 7, which helps them settle quickly when they start school.

Pupils treat each other with respect. There are clear rules in place that pupils generally think are fair. School leaders closely monitor behaviour and make sure that more serious behaviour, like bullying, is quickly dealt with. This means that pupils feel safe. Pupils who need help to improve their behaviour receive the support they need and their behaviour improves as a result.

Pupils take part in a wide range of extracurricular activities. Some pupils have sung in a concert at Durham Cathedral, while others are preparing for an expedition to South Africa. Leaders use funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can access the same opportunities as their peers. Pupils receive helpful careers information, advice and guidance. Almost all pupils move on to next steps that match their interests and abilities.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently adapt their teaching to remove barriers for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils so that they make similar progress to their peers.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers regularly check pupils' understanding so that they can address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding quickly.
- Leaders should continue to improve the attendance of all pupils so that pupils come to school more often and do not fall behind in their learning.

About this inspection

This school is part of Connect Multi 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, Linda Rodham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jude Robinson.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the Headteacher, school leaders, the CEO and other members of the trust during the inspection.

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 school currently makes use of 2 alternative provisions, including 1 that is unregistered.

Headteacher : Louise Colquhoun

Lead inspector:
Gemma Dixon, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Angela White, Ofsted Inspector
Ian Rawstorne, His Majesty's Inspector
Jacqui Johnson, Ofsted Inspector
Paul Bell, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

914
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: 1,067

School capacity

1,011
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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

42.01%
Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 28.9%

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

2.52%
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

16.19%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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)	51.8%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52.7%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23		45.3%	

Attainment 8

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)	47.8	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48.9	45.9	Close to average
2022/23		46.3	

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)	0.30	-0.03	Above
2022/23		-0.03	

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)	37.7%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	37.1%	25.8%	Above
2022/23		25.2%	

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)	41.0	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.7	34.6	Above
2022/23		35.0	

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)	-0.05	-0.57	Above
2022/23		-0.57	

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)	37.7%	53.1%	-15.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	37.1%	53.1%	-16.0 pp
2022/23		52.4%	

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)	41.0	50.4	-9.4
2023/24 (final)	41.7	50.0	-8.3
2022/23		50.3	

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)	-0.05	0.16	-0.22
2022/23		0.17	

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
2022 leavers (revised)	89%	93%	Average

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)	9.8%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	12.7%	8.9%	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)	28.3%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	36.4%	25.6%	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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Piccadilly Gate
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M1 2WD

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