

Barlby High School

Address: York Road, YO8 5JP

Unique reference number (URN): 144929

Inspection report: 25 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils generally achieve well, including in public examinations. For example, the proportion of pupils who attained well in GCSE English and mathematics in 2025 was broadly in line with the national average. Published outcomes for disadvantaged pupils reflect a low number of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, demonstrate secure knowledge of their learning and make appropriate progress from their starting points. This is typically reflected in the quality of the written work they produce. In a small number of subjects, more work is needed to help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding further. Leaders recognise the need to embed their recent changes in these areas to ensure that pupils achieve consistently well across the curriculum.

As a result of effective achievement and support, pupils typically pursue ambitious next steps in further education, apprenticeships and training.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have improved the quality of teaching at Barlby High School. The curriculum is ambitious and clearly designed and sequenced. Teachers benefit from regular training on high-quality, adaptive teaching. They use the school's 'learning cycle' to ensure that pupils connect what they are learning about to what they already know. Teachers set appropriate activities during the 'independent learning zone' to help pupils embed their knowledge and apply their learning.

Teachers know pupils and their needs well. The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. Teachers ensure that they overcome barriers to learning and access the curriculum alongside their peers. The school quickly identifies pupils who need additional support with their reading and puts effective support in place. This helps pupils to catch up and develop crucial foundational skills.

Teachers use assessment well. They check pupils' understanding and adapt the curriculum to address any misconceptions that pupils have. Teachers provide pupils with clear feedback that helps them to improve their work. Teaching assistants provide appropriate levels of support for the pupils who need it most, while also encouraging independence. The school has improved the curriculum recently in a small number of subjects. Leaders recognise the need to embed these changes moving forward.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Barlby High School is an inclusive place for pupils to learn and develop. Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They work effectively with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils get the support they need.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Staff are trained effectively to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning. The school uses a range of strategies, resources and interventions to ensure that pupils access the curriculum securely. As a result, pupils with SEND generally achieve well. Leaders monitor the progress that pupils make closely, as well as the effectiveness of the support that is in place. The school's recently developed targeted mainstream provision (TMP) is designed well to meet pupils' specific needs, including their physical and sensory needs. The pupils who access the TMP integrate fully in the life of the school.

The school has a well-informed strategy to ensure that pupil premium funding helps disadvantaged pupils. The school's work is generally having a positive impact on pupils, particularly in relation to the support they receive for reading.

The school works collaboratively with the virtual school to ensure that staff are trained to meet pupils' individual needs and that pupils are supported closely with their transition into the school. Leaders have secure oversight of the alternative provision that some pupils access. It is in pupils' best interests and it helps pupils to engage positively with education.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those with responsibility for governance, have taken effective action to improve the school since the last inspection. They understand the school's strengths and they take a strategic, informed and targeted approach to making improvements. For example, there is now greater consistency in the quality of the curriculum and in teaching. Leaders have developed a positive and inclusive culture. They have responded carefully to the changing context of the school as a significant proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans recently joined the school. Effective training means that staff have a secure understanding of pupils' needs, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known or previously known to children's social care. As a result, the school meets the needs of pupils who face additional barriers, which helps pupils to generally progress well.

School leaders make decisions that are in pupils' best interests. For example, the recent development of the targeted mainstream provision ensures that pupils receive targeted support while still experiencing a sense of belonging, as they often learn and participate in the wider life of the school, alongside their peers.

Staff are very positive about working at the school. Leaders are considerate of their workload and wellbeing. Staff value that leaders are highly visible and supportive. Most parents and carers are positive about the school. They recognise the many improvements that have been made in recent years.

Personal development and well-being

Expected standard 

Since the last inspection, the school has prioritised pupils' personal development. There is a carefully planned and sequenced personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum that teaches pupils important elements such as healthy relationships and online safety in an age-appropriate way. This has a positive impact on pupils. For example, they have a secure

understanding about how to protect themselves online. The PSHE curriculum is complemented by the 'Respect programme', which offers pupils the opportunity to debate topical issues and share their beliefs regularly. This helps pupils to develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values.

The school offers pupils high-quality pastoral care. This is tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. For example, appropriately trained staff provide pupils with targeted support to help them improve their self-esteem and build confidence. The school draws on a range of professionals and their expertise to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils effectively.

The school's house system promotes pupils' sense of belonging effectively. As one pupil told inspectors, 'It's like being part of a family.' Through the house system, pupils develop their social and teamwork skills through enterprise and charity projects.

The school continues to develop the range of inclusive opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents. Pupils build their confidence and teamwork skills in performing arts and as part of an increasing number of sports teams. The school organises diverse trips and visits, making appropriate adjustments where they are needed, to ensure that all pupils are included and benefit.

There is a clearly planned careers programme at the school. This ensures that pupils are informed and supported when they are planning their next steps. Pupils typically go on to secure their places in further education, apprenticeships or employment at the end of key stage 4.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Attendance is not as high as it needs to be. Rates of attendance are below the national average. There is evidence that the school's work in this area is beginning to bring about improvements, including for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders recognise the need to further develop their work on attendance to ensure that improvements are sustained.

Leaders have established high expectations of behaviour. There are warm, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. For example, pupils often greet adults politely at social times. There is a well-developed anti-bullying culture in school. Pupils have confidence that when they report concerns to staff, they are dealt with effectively. The school's behaviour policy is clear. Pupils understand it and think that it is fair. Younger pupils are motivated by the school's rewards. Lessons are generally calm and orderly. However, there are some instances of low-level disruption around school, particularly among some older pupils. There is some variation in the ways that teachers use the school's policy to address behaviour.

The school has developed a range of effective targeted interventions to support pupils with additional social, emotional and mental health needs. These are delivered by staff who have

specialist training in strategies to support pupils with their emotional resilience, regulation, self-esteem and wellbeing.

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

Pupils at Barlby High School are happy and safe. There is a deep sense of community, and pupils are regarded as individuals. Staff understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the barriers that some other pupils face, for example those who are known to children's social care and those who are disadvantaged. In lessons, teachers have high expectations and they work effectively to remove barriers so that pupils can access the learning and typically achieve well.

Positive relationships between staff and pupils are the norm at this school. Pupils have confidence that staff respond to their concerns quickly and effectively. Pupils have a voice and they are encouraged to speak out on matters that they think are important. At social times, pupils often greet staff warmly. They are welcoming to visitors. For example, they hold doors open for adults and show good manners. There are some inconsistencies in the way some staff use the behaviour policy to address the occasional instances of low-level disruption, more typically from some older pupils. There are signs that the school's work to support pupils' attendance is beginning to have a positive impact.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about fundamental British values effectively and they have a secure understanding of tolerance and equality. There is a growing offer of extra-curricular clubs and sports teams for pupils to develop their interests and talents. Pupils value the responsibilities they are given because they feel they are making a difference to the school community through roles such as house captains, wellbeing ambassadors and from sitting on the school council. The school supports pupils' understanding of active citizenship by offering them the opportunity to help in the local community, for example at local community gardens, seasonal fairs and Remembrance services.

Next steps

- Leaders and governors should build on their recent work to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour by ensuring that policies are followed consistently by staff and that support and interventions are timely and have sustained impact.
 - Leaders should ensure that recent improvements to the curriculum and teaching are further embedded so that pupils develop consistently detailed knowledge and achieve well.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Heartwood Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Winn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jane Lewis.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, leaders from the school and from the trust, members of teaching and non-teaching staff and several groups of pupils during the inspection. An inspector spoke with the chair of the board of trustees and others responsible for governance.

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 hosts a targeted mainstream provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and speech, language and communication needs.

The school makes use of two registered alternative provisions.

Principal: Anouska Gardner

Lead inspector:

Dan McKeating, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Wakefield, His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Sergeant, His Majesty's Inspector

Nikki Heron, 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 25 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

480

Well 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: 1,152

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

15.21%

Below 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

3.54%

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

6.88%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Below 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	37.8%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24	45.0%	45.9%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23	28.0%	45.3%	Below

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	42.8	45.9	Close to average
2023/24	47.8	45.9	Close to average
2022/23	42.3	46.3	Close to average

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	-0.03	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23	-0.35	-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	0.0%	25.6%	Below
2023/24	9.1%	25.8%	Below
2022/23	25.0%	25.2%	Close to average

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	24.8	34.9	Below
2023/24	31.8	34.6	Close to average
2022/23	33.3	35.0	Close to average

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	-1.16	-0.57	Below
2022/23	-0.78	-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	0.0%	52.8%	-52.8 pp
2023/24	9.1%	53.1%	-44.0 pp
2022/23	25.0%	52.4%	-27.4 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	24.8	50.3	-25.5
2023/24	31.8	50.0	-18.2
2022/23	33.3	50.3	-17.0

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 non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24	-1.16	0.16	-1.32
2022/23	-0.78	0.17	-0.95

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	97%	91%	Above
2022 leavers	91%	93%	Average
2021 leavers	97%	94%	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 (1 term)	10.6%	7.7%	Above
2023/24	10.5%	8.9%	Above
2022/23	10.0%	9.0%	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 (1 term)	27.3%	21.1%	Above
2023/24	29.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23	25.9%	26.5%	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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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