

Bilton School

Address: Lawford Lane, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 7JT

Unique reference number (URN): 145575

Inspection report: 27 January 2026

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

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school has developed a comprehensive and wide-ranging personal development programme for pupils. Much of this is taught through weekly character and culture lessons. A broad range of assemblies, tutor-time activities, visiting speakers and trips help bring the programme to life. This carefully crafted combination of learning and events helps broaden pupils' horizons and readies them for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have designed the character and culture curriculum to meet pupils' needs. It is responsive to the changing complexities of life outside of school and fosters a culture of mutual respect in it. As part of this, pupils learn about complex issues such as consent, exploitation and healthy relationships. They reflect on the difference between right and wrong and learn about life in modern Britain. They learn how to navigate the online and offline risks to their wellbeing. Teachers check that pupils understand and remember what they have learned. As a result, pupils are equipped to make positive decisions about their futures. Pupils value these lessons, and leaders ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to deliver them well.

The school provides a structured and well-sequenced careers programme. This combines timetabled careers lessons and career-related learning in the wider curriculum. Pupils have access to a wealth of information and expertise, from individual careers meetings to regular careers fairs. This means pupils are well informed about their next steps in education, employment or training.

There are varied opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Each school year starts with a clubs fair, run by pupils, that promotes the range of activities pupils can choose to participate in. These vary from crochet club to 'Up n Atom' science club. Staff encourage pupils to take part; participation rates have risen. Leaders are alert to the barriers that may prevent some pupils from attending and take steps so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Too many disadvantaged pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills. This is often a result of poor attendance. Across all subjects, there are agreed approaches to supporting pupils to catch up or keep up with the work set. However, the implementation and impact of these approaches are inconsistent. As a result, many disadvantaged pupils' gaps do not close quickly enough, and their achievement is hindered.

Overall, pupils achieve well. They make steady and appropriate progress learning the curriculum. Their achievement in national tests and examinations at the end of key stage 4 is broadly in line with national averages. In combination with the wider work of the school, this prepares pupils well for their next steps. Some pupils join the school close to the end of

key stage 4 with significant gaps in their knowledge. Leaders ensure that staff support these pupils appropriately.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance is below the national average. The number of regularly absent pupils is high. This has become the norm since the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are taking action to address this by building capacity and expertise, and placing attendance and punctuality at the top of their agenda. They have introduced a raft of strategies to support improved attendance and punctuality. These stem from a comprehensive analysis of trends and patterns to support improved attendance and to promote pupils' punctuality to school and lessons. These help leaders celebrate success and provide support for pupils when needed. Consequently, there are some early signs that attendance and punctuality are starting to improve, but there remains much to do.

Each morning as pupils arrive at school, they are warmly welcomed by staff. This sets the tone for the day ahead. At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils eat, chat, laugh and play together. In lessons, pupils behave well. Leaders have designed classroom routines that reward pupils' efforts. Teachers apply sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly. They take into account the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' views reflect this. They say that they are able to complete their work without being distracted or interrupted. If bullying or other types of unkind behaviour happen, pupils can tell a trusted adult who will help.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching across the school is inconsistent. Leaders know that further work is needed to ensure that the curriculum is taught well. They have introduced a model of teaching that draws on an understanding of how pupils learn. When used well, this leads teachers to check pupils' prior learning effectively. It then helps them shape new learning and continue to ensure pupils understand what they have learned. However, when this is less effective, teachers do not consider pupils' previous learning, unpick their misconceptions, deepen their thinking or assess what pupils know, understand and can do. Consequently, the teaching is then not tailored to meet pupils' needs.

The curriculum is clearly set out across all subjects and key stages. Leaders have considered what pupils should learn and when they should learn it. This means that pupils learn in a way that builds on what they already know and remember. Leaders provide staff with professional development opportunities to support their thinking about what they are going to teach. This helps teachers anticipate how they will explain tricky ideas and concepts.

The school identifies pupils who need extra support with speaking, reading, mathematics and handwriting when they join the school. Many get the help they need. Support for pupils who are at the early stages of reading is effective. However, this is not consistently so for all pupils who are regularly absent and miss these important fundamental areas of learning.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders have a plan to ensure that the additional funding the school receives helps its disadvantaged pupils. However, the systems in place to check the impact of this funding are not robust. This means that some disadvantaged pupils do not overcome barriers to attending and achieving well.

As the school has become more diverse, leaders have created a culture based on a sense of belonging. Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have made significant strides in improving this aspect of the school's work. When pupils with SEND join, staff assess their needs accurately and plan how to meet these needs. Staff benefit from regular effective training in supporting pupils with SEND. Pupils' support plans are concise. However, at times, they lack the detail on how best to help pupils overcome specific academic barriers.

Leaders share information on pupils' needs with staff and keep a watchful eye on vulnerable pupils. In most instances, staff use this information well. Support is generally timely and appropriate. The school works closely with families and external agencies. It is an effective advocate for its pupils with SEND and those known to social care. Internal and external alternative provision is used to good effect.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders' actions over time have not secured the improvements needed in inclusion, curriculum and teaching, attendance or the sixth form. Weaknesses in these areas are not new. Leaders are addressing these shortcomings with a new energy, and there is emerging evidence that the pace of change is accelerating. However, these changes have not yet had the sustained impact needed, and too many inconsistencies remain. Governors and trustees fulfil their statutory duties. They share leaders' vision. They understand what is working well and what needs to improve. Governors and trustees ask searching questions of leaders to scrutinise the rate of change.

Leaders lead with integrity and compassion. They have guided the school through a turbulent and difficult period that has delayed their plans. During this period, the school community has come together. It is now in a position to respond to the challenges that lie ahead. The context of the school continues to change, with increasing numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school during the academic year. Leaders have built this changing context into their plans. They know what needs to be done to improve and continue to take decisions that are in pupils' best interests.

Everyone at the school is working in unison. Staff know that leaders appreciate their efforts and all are proud to be part of the school. Staff value leaders' support. Leaders take workload into account, treat staff with respect and have put a comprehensive professional development programme in place.

In recent years, students' achievement in national examinations has been low. Students have not made enough academic progress while attending the sixth form. Leaders recognise this. They are now taking action to put this right. They have put extensive academic support in place for Year 13 students and have prioritised learning in both Years 12 and 13. This support includes students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Students have welcomed this support and the increased level of aspiration. Consequently, they are achieving more. Student absence is reducing. However, some variation remains, and more time is needed for the impact of leaders' work to show in published outcomes.

Leaders' focus on improving the sixth form extends beyond students' academic outcomes. Sixth-form students play a full and active role in school life. For example, they support younger pupils in peer reading sessions and act as wellbeing ambassadors across the school. Students take part in the varied enrichment programme on offer to them. They can opt into sessions ranging from cooking to critical thinking and learn about wider issues, from money matters to mental health. Careers advice and guidance in the sixth form is effective. This prepares students well for life as young, responsible adults when they leave school.

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

Bilton is a friendly and welcoming school where pupils feel safe. Staff care about them and want them to do well. Staff take the time to listen to and encourage pupils. Pupils value this. If bullying does occur, staff take action. Staff notice if pupils are finding school difficult and provide high-quality pastoral care. This helps pupils to overcome many of the obstacles that could hinder their academic and personal growth.

Leaders have implemented and refined their approach to managing behaviour. This has raised the bar in terms of expectations, and many pupils have risen to the challenge. Everyone understands the consequences if they make a poor choice. Pupils' successes are celebrated. They receive help to put things right when they go wrong. Pupils are pleased that staff notice their efforts. They wear the lapel badges awarded to them with pride. In-school provision, such as 'refocus' and 'Ignition' make a positive difference to pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of trips, activities and extra-curricular clubs. This makes school an interesting place to be. The school's wider offer expands pupils' view of the world and helps prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils can learn about, see and try out a range of new, different and exciting experiences. These range from gardening club to trips to Paris.

Pupils' attendance has remained low in recent years. Too many pupils are often absent and, consequently, regularly miss lessons. This creates gaps in pupils' learning and hinders their achievement. While many pupils achieve well, there are inconsistencies in the teaching across the school. These impact on pupils' ability to build their knowledge and skills

securely. In particular, the support disadvantaged pupils receive is not consistently effective, and they do not achieve as well as they should.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the pupil premium strategy is implemented consistently and evaluated robustly to ensure that support and interventions are timely, appropriate and effective.
 - Leaders should ensure that the checking of pupils' knowledge and understanding is used to accurately determine when it is appropriate to revisit previous learning, deepen pupils' thinking or move on to new concepts and ideas.
 - Leaders should ensure that agreed approaches to help pupils catch up and keep up following a period of absence are used consistently well and prevent pupils from developing gaps in their knowledge and skills that negatively impact their achievement.
 - Leaders should ensure that the strategies and approaches deployed to improve attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have a sustained impact and reduce levels of persistent absence.
 - Leaders should continually review and refine the improvements made to post-16 provision so that students make the progress they should and achieve outcomes that are at least in line with national averages.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that recent improvements are sustained and that there is rapid improvement to address the areas of weakness across the school.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Stowe Valley 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 (CEO), Ranjit Samra, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Clare Chevassut.

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.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with members of the local governing body and board of trustees. They met with the CEO and members of the trust's central team.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 3 alternative provisions, all of which are unregistered.

Headteacher: Miss Jayne Delves

Lead inspector:

Ian Tustian, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Helen Reeves, Ofsted Inspector

Amjid Zaman, Ofsted Inspector

Ed Leighton, Ofsted Inspector

Ezran Little, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,165

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

1,250

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

30.44%

Close to 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

3.00%

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

14.59%

Close to 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 (provisional)	43.2%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.8%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	46.0%	45.3%	Close to average

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 (provisional)	43.4	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.6	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	46.6	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 (final)	-0.31	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	0.44	-0.03	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' 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 (provisional)	21.2%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	15.4%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.1%	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 (provisional)	29.2	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.8	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.1	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 (final)	-1.02	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	0.01	-0.57	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' 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 (provisional)	21.2%	52.8%	-31.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	15.4%	53.1%	-37.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	31.1%	52.4%	-21.3 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 (provisional)	29.2	50.3	-21.1
2023/24 (final)	29.8	50.0	-20.2
2022/23 (final)	35.1	50.3	-15.2

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)	-1.02	0.16	-1.18
2022/23 (final)	0.01	0.17	-0.16

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 (provisional)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	94%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	26.57	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.83	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.91	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.4	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.7	0.0	Below

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 (2 term)	12.4%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	13.3%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	11.9%	9.0%	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 (2 term)	32.7%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	38.7%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	35.5%	26.5%	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.

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