

# Blacklow Brow School

**Address:** Blacklow Brow School, Tarbock Road, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside, L36 5XW

**Unique reference number (URN):** 144355

## Inspection report: 20 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.

# Strong standard ●

## Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well across a range of subjects. They build their learning over time and are able to recall key knowledge and concepts. They progress well through the school's curriculum from their different starting points. Pupils take pride in their work and discuss their learning confidently. They are academically, socially and emotionally ready for new challenges and approach future experiences with resilience and self-assurance.

Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average by the end of Year 6. This means they are well prepared for their next steps in education. Disadvantaged pupils achieve better than disadvantaged pupils nationally, and their outcomes compare well with those of non-disadvantaged pupils. In writing, disadvantaged pupils continue to attain above disadvantaged pupils nationally, although their attainment remains below that of non-disadvantaged pupils.

## Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' attendance rates are consistently high. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), attend school regularly and arrive confidently each day. They settle quickly in lessons, feel safe and are eager to learn. Leaders monitor attendance carefully, spotting patterns and issues early. They act decisively to support pupils who need extra help with their attendance. Through individual meetings with parents and carers, plus personalised rewards and practical support, leaders ensure that barriers to attendance are removed.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is calm, respectful and purposeful. Staff ensure that pupils follow routines and the expectations of 'The BLB Way'. They treat one another with kindness and engage enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils trust staff to deal with any issues swiftly and effectively. Thoughtful adaptations, including brief opportunities to move and reset, ensure every pupil, including those with SEND, can manage themselves and participate fully. Pupils remain focused and fully engaged, making the most of every lesson. They take pride in their work and approach learning with confidence and enthusiasm. The school is a welcoming, orderly and safe environment. Pupils are confident that any issues related to bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively.

## Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious, broad and carefully designed. Learning is organised in a clear sequence from the Nursery Year to Year 6. Lessons follow well-established steps, giving teachers clear guidance. This structure helps pupils build on what they already know and ensures learning is consistent and connected across each year group. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, can access learning purposefully and apply their knowledge independently. Vocabulary is taught explicitly, enabling pupils to communicate fluently and confidently across all areas of learning.

Teaching is high quality. Staff have deep subject knowledge and understand how to adapt activities to meet all pupils' needs, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Lessons are engaging and carefully designed. Pupils' progress is checked carefully at the start, during and at the end of topics, so gaps are identified quickly and addressed effectively.

Leaders constantly check the quality of the curriculum and its delivery. This informs their decisions about school improvement priorities. The curriculum ensures that pupils secure important knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics and apply it confidently across the curriculum. The programmes that pupils study help them to become motivated and resilient learners who develop a deep, lasting understanding across all areas of learning.

## Early years

Strong standard 

The early years at Blacklow Brow is well organised and carefully designed to give children strong foundations for learning. Staff interactions with children are purposeful and supportive, helping children to communicate with confidence. From the moment children start school, staff consider their starting points carefully, ensuring that no assumptions are made about what children may already know. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, are supported to progress well through the curriculum.

Reading is a clear priority. Children in the Reception Year secure early reading and writing skills. Staff provide high-quality support for early mathematical understanding, fine motor development and physical skills. This enables children to access activities with independence. The curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced across the Nursery and Reception classes, with opportunities to build on previous experiences. Visits and practical activities, such as the recent trip to a pizza restaurant, are carefully planned to extend children's vocabulary and deepen their knowledge.

Strong partnerships with parents and carers ensure that children are supported effectively at home and in school. Children leave the early years well prepared for Year 1, ready to continue learning with confidence.

## Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders make sure that every pupil is valued and supported. Pupils are recognised as individuals, and their differences are respected and celebrated. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to children's social care are identified, and their needs are assessed accurately. Staff adapt teaching and resources thoughtfully so that all pupils can access the full curriculum and learn alongside their peers.

Leaders reduce barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing through targeted support and additional help where needed. Pupils' progress is tracked closely, enabling leaders to monitor the impact of support and make timely changes when necessary. Leaders provide staff with high-quality training to ensure that they can meet pupils' needs effectively. Leaders work closely with families and other professionals to shape support and opportunities for each pupil.

Pupil premium funding is used purposefully to help disadvantaged pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Pupils with SEND are supported to participate fully in learning and enrichment activities. As a result, pupils develop confidence and thrive socially and academically. They feel valued and included. The school is a welcoming and inclusive community where every pupil can succeed and be themselves.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leadership at Blacklow Brow is highly effective and focused on achieving the best outcomes for all pupils. Senior leaders have a deep understanding of the school's community and every pupil, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others who face barriers to learning are supported to succeed. Leaders are a visible presence each day, welcoming pupils and families by name, fostering a sense of belonging and building respectful relationships. Pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding are led consistently well, creating a calm environment where pupils are valued and ready to learn. Leaders make evidence-informed decisions to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and that provision is thoughtfully adapted to meet their individual needs.

Leaders provide staff with targeted support, mentoring and professional training. This accounts for the high-quality teaching across the school, which enables pupils to achieve well. Staff appreciate the care that leaders take when considering their workload and wellbeing.

Governance is effective. The trust and local governing body provide purposeful challenge and support to school leaders. Clear structures and committees ensure a thorough oversight of their statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding. Leaders and governors make decisions firmly in pupils' best interests. Their work drives sustained, well-established improvements across the school. Every pupil is known, valued and supported to flourish academically, socially and personally. This ensures that the school community thrives as a whole.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders at Blacklow Brow provide a rich personal development offer that equips pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to thrive beyond school. They make sure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from all that is on offer. Leadership opportunities, including school council members and head boy and girl roles, allow pupils to take responsibility and contribute to the life of the school. As a result, pupils develop confidence and pride in improving their community. These roles also help pupils strengthen communication and teamwork skills, preparing them for future challenges.

Staff ensure that fundamental British values are explicitly taught and modelled. Pupils understand fairness, respect and democracy and that they can apply these principles in daily life. Pupils take part in leading assemblies, contributing to projects and fundraising for charity. These experiences show them how their efforts make a difference, helping them to develop empathy and a sense of responsibility. Leaders and staff prioritise pupils' wellbeing and safety. Clear guidance on relationships, peer pressure, bullying and online safety

ensures pupils know how to seek support. This consistent care allows pupils to participate fully in lessons, develop resilience and approach challenges with confidence.

Age-appropriate activities such as whole-school theatre visits, banking workshops, knife-crime sessions and e-safety lessons give pupils practical experiences that help them make safe, informed and responsible choices.

Extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are carefully planned. Curriculum trips, speakers and sporting activities, including inclusive options such as seated volleyball, enable pupils to explore new skills, collaborate effectively and build self-assurance. Pupils gain the confidence to try new experiences, apply learning independently and contribute positively to their communities. Many of these experiences inspire pupils to pursue similar interests and activities outside of school, extending their learning beyond the classroom.

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

Pupils at Blacklow Brow achieve very well and approach learning with enthusiasm. They are attentive, motivated and eager to succeed. Staff know pupils well and provide high-quality teaching that helps them build knowledge securely and confidently from their starting points. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known or previously known to children's social care, make progress well through the curriculum. They are well prepared for secondary school.

Pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing are addressed promptly. Staff identify needs early and work closely with parents and carers to provide tailored support. This ensures pupils attend regularly, engage fully in lessons and demonstrate consistently positive behaviour. Pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and develop a secure sense of belonging.

Positive relationships are a cornerstone of school life. Pupils feel safe, cared for and supported each day. This starts with a purposeful welcome from staff. Pupils are consistently kind and respectful to one another. Bullying is rare, and any unkind behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils trust adults and confidently seek help when needed.

Beyond academic learning, pupils leave the school confident, articulate and ready to thrive in all areas of life. Leadership opportunities are well established, with pupils acting as subject leaders, playleaders and reading ambassadors. Older pupils take pride in responsibility, acting as positive role models. They contribute meaningfully to the community.

Wider experiences enrich pupils' learning. Residential visits build independence and friendships. Clubs, including food technology, drawing, languages and football, are popular. Pupils are inspired by the enrichment opportunities, including a planned visit to Spain. These experiences strengthen pupils' resilience, spark ambition and ensure that pupils flourish socially, morally and academically.

---

## Next steps

- Leaders should continue to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment in writing so that the gap between them and their non-disadvantaged peers nationally closes further over time.
- 

## About this inspection

This school is part of The Dean 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), Jane O'Brien, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Damian McGann.

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 executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, CEO, members of the local governing committee and a representative of the local authority during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher: Damian Kenny

---

### Lead inspector:

Frith Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

David Woodhouse, Ofsted Inspector

Ros Munro, 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 20 January 2026

## School and pupil context

## Total pupils

**232**

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

**236**

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)

**15.05%**

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: 26.3%

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

**0.86%**

Below 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**

**8.62%**

Below average

**What does this mean?**

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

National average: 15%

**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**

**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 | 82%         | 61%              | Above                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 86%         | 62%              | Above                          |

| Year            | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2023/24 (final) | 77%         | 61%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final) | 83%         | 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 | 92%         | 74%              | Above                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 97%         | 75%              | Above                          |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 83%         | 74%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final)       | 97%         | 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 | 87%         | 72%              | Above                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | 86%         | 72%              | Above                          |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 83%         | 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 96%         | 73%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | 100%        | 74%              | Above                          |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 90%         | 73%              | Above                          |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 73%         | 46%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | S           | 47%              | S                              |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 71%         | 46%              | Above                          |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 44%              | S                              |

### 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 93%         | 62%              | Above                          |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | S           | 63%              | S                              |

| Year            | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2023/24 (final) | 86%         | 62%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final) | S           | 60%              | S                              |

### 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 | 73%         | 59%              | Above                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | S           | 59%              | S                              |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 71%         | 58%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 58%              | S                              |

### 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 | 100%        | 60%              | Above                          |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | S           | 61%              | S                              |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 100%        | 59%              | Above                          |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 59%              | S                              |

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

### 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 | 73%         | 68%                              | 6 pp                    |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | S           | 69%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 71%         | 67%                              | 4 pp                    |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 66%                              | S                       |

**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 | 93%         | 80%                              | 14 pp                   |
| 2024/25 (revised)     | S           | 81%                              | S                       |
| 2023/24 (final)       | 86%         | 80%                              | 6 pp                    |
| 2022/23 (final)       | S           | 78%                              | S                       |

**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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 73%         | 78%                              | -4 pp                   |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | S           | 78%                              | S                       |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 71%         | 78%                              | -6 pp                   |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 77%                              | S                       |

### 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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Latest 3 year average</b> | 100%        | 80%                              | 20 pp                   |
| <b>2024/25 (revised)</b>     | S           | 81%                              | S                       |
| <b>2023/24 (final)</b>       | 100%        | 79%                              | 21 pp                   |
| <b>2022/23 (final)</b>       | S           | 79%                              | S                       |

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

## 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) | 4.3%        | 5.2%             | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 4.4%        | 5.5%             | Below                          |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 4.3%        | 5.9%             | Below                          |

## 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) | 9.4%        | 13.3%            | Below                          |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 8.3%        | 14.6%            | Below                          |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 5.6%        | 16.2%            | Below                          |

## 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)  
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright