

Bhylls Acre Primary School

Address: Bhylls Lane, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV3 8DZ

Unique reference number (URN): 149420

Inspection report: 21 April 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

By the end of Year 6, pupils mostly gain the knowledge and confidence that they need for secondary school. Over time, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, achieve well across subjects.

Due to previous weaknesses in provision, some pupils, and especially older pupils, have gaps in their learning and most notably in writing. Current evidence shows that while these gaps are closing, a few pupils in the school do not consistently write with accuracy or neatly. Pupils learn to read fluently and with expression as they move through the school. In mathematics, pupils acquire the fundamentals that they need to reason and solve problems with accuracy.

Typically, pupils achieve in line with the national average at the end of key stage 2. The proportion of pupils that met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is similar to the national average. In 2025, pupils in Year 4 performed significantly better than pupils nationally in the multiplication check.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

An inclusive culture helps pupils feel welcome. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Leaders clearly communicate that daily attendance matters. Assemblies and regular conversations with families reinforce consistent messages about pupils coming to school every day. Staff monitor attendance closely each day and review patterns across classes, groups and individuals. This allows them to spot concerns early and respond quickly. Leaders provide effective support to pupils who miss school persistently through individual work with their family and with external professionals. This joined-up approach has successfully reduced persistent absence over time, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders support a consistent, positive approach to behaviour through shared expectations and training. This consistency helps staff respond calmly and fairly. In lessons, most pupils listen carefully and work cooperatively. Pupils move around the school in an orderly way. In the playground, pupils make positive choices, such as reading in the shed, dancing to music or taking part in organised sports. These activities promote calm social interactions. Bullying and poor behaviour are rare. Any incidents are addressed promptly. Pupils who need support with managing their emotions receive effective support. Calm corners and relaxation stations in classrooms help pupils to regulate emotions and re-engage with learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out a broad and ambitious curriculum that reflects what pupils should learn and remember over time. Curriculum plans provide staff with clear guidance on what information to teach and when. This helps staff to teach knowledge and skills to pupils with confidence. Staff help pupils to learn to make links with learning from earlier years and other

subjects. For example, staff help pupils to imagine that they are Sir David Attenborough as they write about polar bears and draw on their knowledge of the polar region.

Leaders, in partnership with the trust, keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and the curriculum. They help staff to take a common approach to the structure of lessons. This approach supports clear explanations and opportunities for pupils to practise using their knowledge, before working independently. As a result, pupils know what they are learning and how to approach tasks. Sometimes, teachers do not probe pupils' understanding in enough depth. Consequently, they miss opportunities to extend pupils' thinking or address misconceptions. Adaptations and adult support usually help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve well, but task choices by staff sometimes limit what a few pupils can complete during a lesson.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders and the trust have worked with determination to strengthen all aspects of early years provision. They have designed a coherent curriculum that builds from Nursery Year to Reception Year. Staff plan learning so children gain key knowledge and practise it through purposeful play and planned activities. As a result, children leave early years well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Early reading, writing and mathematics receive clear priority. Children learn letter sounds with growing confidence, which supports their early reading and writing. Adults model language well and use prompts to encourage children to talk about their ideas. However, the quality of these interactions varies. Sometimes, opportunities to extend children's language and thinking are missed.

Learning about the natural world forms a central feature of the early years curriculum. For example, during a spring hunt among the blossom, children spot insects and birds before recording their findings. Activities such as this successfully support early scientific thinking.

Warm and trusting relationships help children to feel safe. Close work with parents and carers helps children to settle quickly when they first join the school. Inclusive practice, in which staff help all children to feel that they belong, sits at the heart of provision. Accessible spaces and tailored resources help children with additional needs to take part successfully, alongside their peers.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

At Bhylls Acre, every pupil feels part of the school community. Leaders and staff build a shared insight into pupils' needs through regular contact with parents and carers. This helps staff to understand pupils as individuals, identify needs early and accurately, and respond appropriately. Leaders decide whether pupils need more support in the classroom or more targeted help. They work effectively with external professionals such as mental health and specialist language experts to help staff to adjust provision when pupils need something different.

Training helps staff recognise pupils' varying needs and understand how to reduce a range of barriers to learning, including those linked to pupils' social, emotional and mental health.

Overall, teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enable pupils to keep pace with their learning. However, on occasion, curriculum adaptations are not precisely matched to pupils' individual requirements, which can limit the progress they make.

Leaders use additional funding appropriately to provide tailored academic and pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils and any pupils who may face challenging circumstances. As a result, these pupils achieve well from their starting points, attend regularly and access a range of learning and enrichment experiences.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The school has been through a turbulent period, with significant changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection. Trust leaders have taken decisive action to secure stability and improvement. Decisions have focused closely on pupils' learning and care, for example revising the curriculum, strengthening the school's phonics programme and working with external professionals to build staff expertise. This work has improved pupils' day-to-day experience. Staff, pupils and parents and carers speak positively about the changes at the school.

Governance is effective. Trustees and the local governing body meet their statutory duties well. They provide informed challenge and support, such as around outcomes, including for disadvantaged pupils, attendance and safeguarding. Those in governance and the trust have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need further refinement. They review the impact of the school's actions regularly and prioritise support for the school accordingly. Leaders' plans to further strengthen and improve the school's work are appropriate and well considered.

Leaders engage positively with parents, professionals and the wider community. Partnership work with external agencies strengthens pupils' wellbeing, safety and families' confidence in the school.

Professional learning is well planned and draws effectively on the support of the trust and external expertise. For example, subject networks and visits to other trust schools help to strengthen staff's practice. Staff morale is high, and they feel well supported. They appreciate being part of the school and trust team.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a personal development programme that builds key ideas carefully over time and gives pupils access to a range of experiences. Spiritual development features naturally across the curriculum. For example, pupils reflect in awe and wonder when learning about the universe in science. This helps them to pause, reflect and ask 'big questions'. Pupils learn about fundamental British values through practical examples, such as having a voice in decisions about school dinners. They have a growing understanding of different beliefs and cultures.

Highly effective pastoral support helps pupils feel safe and ready to learn. Calm morning routines, daily wellbeing activities and targeted support such as therapy activities help pupils

manage emotions and talk about their feelings. Pupils benefit from sensitive and tailored support during significant life events, including bereavement.

The school strengthens pupils' wellbeing further through close work with families. Initiatives such as the trust's 'Off-Screen Adventures' programme encourages pupils and families to spend quality time together through shared activities, including outdoor play, creative tasks and mindfulness. Initiatives such as this help pupils develop healthy habits beyond school.

Pupils have a well-rounded understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They speak confidently about online safety and healthy relationships. Pupils know how to seek help if something worries them. Visits from police officers and other community members strengthen pupils' awareness of who helps protect them in the community.

Leadership opportunities help pupils develop confidence and a sense of responsibility. For example, Year 5 pupils take turns as play leaders. They organise playground games and help pupils of all ages to feel included. Enterprise projects help pupils build financial awareness and support teamwork and decision-making. Musical and sporting opportunities widen pupils' interests. Leaders track participation in these opportunities to ensure that all pupils can take part.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to Bhylls Acre. They speak positively about their day-to-day experiences and say that they feel welcomed, valued and included. Relationships with staff and peers are warm and respectful. Pupils describe the school as a place where adults know them well and care about how they feel.

Pupils leave school suitably prepared for the next stage of their education. Over time, they make secure progress through the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make steady progress from their individual starting points. This demonstrates the effective support provided, which continually reduces barriers to learning and supports pupils to actively participate in lessons.

Pupils demonstrate the school's shared values in everyday interactions. They treat one another with respect and kindness. In lessons, most remain focused. Pupils move calmly around the school and consistently show courtesy, such as holding doors open for adults and peers. Bullying is uncommon. Staff deal with concerns quickly, should they arise. Pupils feel safe and know who to speak to if something worries them. They show an age-appropriate understanding of online safety. Pupils talk confidently about fairness and how their words and actions can affect others. They attend school consistently. Pupils who previously had lower attendance now attend school more often.

First-hand experiences enrich pupils' learning successfully. For example, in the early years, children are captivated by watching tadpoles grow. Activities such as this spark their curiosity and encourage them to ask questions, while they begin to understand change over time. Pupils value the opportunities they have to make a difference in the school and community. They are proud to take on roles such as reading ambassadors and school

council members, as well as fundraising for a local homeless charity. These opportunities give pupils a sense of purpose and responsibility.

Next steps

- Leaders should further develop staff expertise in adaptive practice so teaching responds more precisely to the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders should further develop staff expertise in assessing pupils' understanding during lessons so that misconceptions are addressed promptly and opportunities to deepen learning are not missed.
 - Leaders should continue to refine teaching approaches so the small number of pupils with remaining gaps develop greater accuracy and consistency in spelling, handwriting and sentence construction in their written work.
 - Leaders should further develop early years practice so all adults consistently extend children's language and thinking through purposeful interaction.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Ignite Learning Partnership 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), Wayne Downing, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anna Kelshaw.

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, the head of school and a range of staff. They met with the CEO and other representatives from the trust. They also met with representatives from the board of trustees and the local governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant change. The school joined Ignite Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust in March 2023. The head of school took up his permanent post in April 2024 and the executive headteacher in February 2025. Almost all the current class teachers have joined the school since the previous school inspection in 2019.

The school does not use alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher: Lisa Thompson

Lead inspector:

Usha Devi, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jonathan Moore, Ofsted Inspector

Barry Yeardsley, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

221

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

230

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)

18.72%

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: 26.3%

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

0.90%

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

13.57%

Close to 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	53%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	60%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	93%	74%	Above
2022/23		73%	

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		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	72%	Above
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	63%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	61%	73%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	33%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	44%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	56%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	56%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘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		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	33%	69%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	44%	81%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	56%	78%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	56%	81%	-25 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

‘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)	4.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.7%	5.5%	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)	10.1%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.4%	14.6%	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 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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