

Briercliffe Primary School

Address: Delamere Road, Briercliffe, Burnley, Lancashire, BB10 2JU

Unique reference number (URN): 119168

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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, most pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Published outcomes show that pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national averages. This includes in reading, writing and mathematics tests at the end of key stage 2. Overall, pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.

Children in early years develop the essential knowledge and skills that they need to access later learning. They learn to read words accurately and develop their understanding of number. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make suitable progress. They develop appropriate knowledge and skills from their starting points to progress to the next stage.

Most pupils read fluently and develop secure knowledge in mathematics. However, some pupils make persistent errors in their writing, particularly related to letter formation and grammar. Additionally, some pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge across subjects that leaders intend.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' attendance. Overall attendance is in line with the national average and the number of pupils who are frequently absent is reducing. Leaders track pupils' attendance carefully. This enables them to spot pupils whose attendance is a concern and provide timely support. Where intervention is required, the school works with families and, where necessary, the local authority's attendance support team. Improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils remains a priority.

The school is a calm and orderly place to learn. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around the school. They live up to staff's high expectations for their behaviour. School values are reinforced through weekly celebration assemblies, expectations are commonly understood and applied consistently by staff. Low-level disruption is not tolerated. Pupils arrive at school ready to learn. They settle quickly into their work and are eager to share what they know.

Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Staff provide careful support where needed to help pupils regulate their emotions. This has a positive impact on behaviour. Incidents of bullying or discriminatory behaviour are rare. When they occur, staff deal with them swiftly. Pupils feel confident to speak to a trusted adult if they have worries.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. They have thought carefully about the order in which learning is taught, so that pupils build knowledge over time. The curriculum sets out clearly what pupils need to know in each subject and year group. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and have taken sensible steps to improve consistency in how staff deliver the curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this to help pupils learn effectively. Leaders provide training that develops teachers' expertise. Teachers explain new learning clearly and use questioning to check pupils' understanding. They adapt their teaching to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Reading is a priority. Staff teach phonics effectively to help pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. This helps most pupils to become fluent readers by the end of Year 1.

Overall, teaching is effective. However, teachers do not spot and rectify errors and misconceptions in pupils' work consistently well, particularly in writing. In addition, occasionally, the activities which teachers design do not help pupils to deepen their knowledge. As a result, some pupils' errors persist, and some do not develop sufficient depth of knowledge across the curriculum.

Early years

Expected standard 

The early years curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. It builds on what children know and can do, towards achieving sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning. There is a sharp focus on ensuring that children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and secure their knowledge of phonics. This gives children the foundations they need, especially in preparation for them to become confident and fluent readers.

Staff engage children in high-quality interactions to develop their language and vocabulary. They present information clearly, check understanding, identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations to improve children's learning. One-to-one support is effective at developing the clarity and accuracy of children's speech. Staff use stories, songs and rhymes purposefully to help children develop their language effectively, including those at the very early stages of their development. Children learn the building blocks of knowledge in mathematics and English.

Children are highly motivated and eager to join in with activities. They take turns and play happily. Provision both indoors and outside enables children to learn through carefully planned activities. Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's progress through the curriculum. Children are typically well prepared for their transition to Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have established an inclusive culture. They identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately, including those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are known or previously known to children's social care, or face other barriers to their learning and wellbeing. Pupils' needs are identified early through transition activities such as stay-and-play sessions, and teachers' ongoing checks on learning.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They take a structured approach to identifying needs, setting up provision and reviewing its impact. This means pupils' needs are generally met. Staff receive ongoing training on SEND, trauma and safeguarding, which helps them reduce pupils' barriers to learning. Vulnerable pupils typically achieve and learn alongside their peers, accessing the same ambitious curriculum. Adaptations support pupils to learn

effectively. For example, pupils with fine motor skill difficulties use adapted equipment to record their learning independently.

Additional funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have a secure understanding of the barriers these pupils face and use evidence-informed approaches to select provision for them. They monitor the progress that pupils make and adjust support when needed. Strong relationships with parents and carers, along with external agencies, help pupils to succeed. Leaders secure specialist support when required.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's context, strengths and areas for development. The expansion of the senior leadership team has strengthened ongoing work on these areas. Leaders and staff work together around a shared vision for what the school should achieve for its pupils. Leaders routinely consider the workload and wellbeing of staff when they make decisions about how to further improve the school.

Leaders have established a high-quality professional learning programme that builds staff expertise. For example, staff have developed their knowledge and skills in removing barriers to learning for individual pupils. Leaders at all levels have benefited from targeted support to develop the curriculum, which is now ambitious across all subjects.

Governors demonstrate a secure understanding of their statutory responsibilities and provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. They play an active role in monitoring the school's performance and holding leaders to account. A notable strength is that all leaders' strategic decisions are made with a clear focus on the potential impact on pupil outcomes.

Leaders' and governors' actions are always in the best interests of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or face other barriers to their learning. There is a genuine commitment to working in partnership with parents and carers, and the local community. Leaders' work with external agencies helps to provide the support that pupils need to succeed and flourish.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a rich and responsive programme of personal development that is tuned into the school's context. The personal, social and health education curriculum runs from Reception to Year 6, and is adjusted to meet the emerging needs of pupils and the community. Pupils' conduct around the school reflects the focus that leaders have on developing character. Pupils understand right and wrong. A strong sense of equality and fairness is evident across the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the curriculum and wider school life. Pupils learn about different cultures, faiths and the lives of people who are different from themselves. They enjoy these opportunities and show respect for others. Pupils understand diversity and know that discrimination should not be tolerated. Engagement with organisations such as the local church and faith centre helps to deepen pupils' understanding of these issues.

Pupils develop an age-appropriate knowledge of healthy relationships through the school's relationships and sex education and health education programme. They learn about online and community safety, consent, and how to recognise risks to their wellbeing. Visits from the police, school nurse, mental health team and fire service reinforce messages that help pupils to keep themselves safe.

The school promotes pupils' knowledge of how to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and keep physically and mentally healthy. A wide range of after-school sports clubs enable pupils to participate in sports competitions. Partnerships with a local youth theatre and music service provide enrichment activities, allowing pupils to develop their talents and interests. Additional funding supports disadvantaged pupils to benefit fully from this offer.

Pupils value opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as being librarians, sports leaders, school council members or prefects. Pupils understand fundamental British values, including democracy and the rule of law. They are typically well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

Pupils are happy and safe at this school. They arrive excited to start their day in a calm and harmonious environment. Pupils feel they belong. They speak confidently about their learning, and many are proud of their work and eager to share their achievements. Overall, pupils progress well through the curriculum. Most achieve well, including in national tests at the end of Year 6.

The school welcomes pupils from different cultures and backgrounds with genuine warmth and care. Some join at short notice throughout the year. Pupils are kind-hearted and considerate, making deliberate efforts to befriend newcomers and ensure they feel included. This reflects the school's inclusive ethos where every child is valued and supported to thrive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive support that enables them to succeed.

Pupils know they can speak to any member of staff if they have worries. They are confident that staff deal with any disagreements or concerns swiftly, including allegations of bullying, which are rare. Boys and girls treat each other with respect. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around school, moving between activities calmly and purposefully. They understand staff's expectations of them and do not need repeated reminders of these. There is a collective ethos where pupils enjoy supporting each other's learning and sharing ideas.

Children in the early years are helped to settle and develop their independence through clear routines. They learn to take turns, share and follow instructions. Those with additional needs make progress and form lasting friendships.

Pupils enjoy a broad range of opportunities beyond lessons, including being in a rock band, carrying out leadership roles as hall monitors and library leaders, and access to various clubs. Pupils value the chance to take on responsibilities and contribute to their school community. They are well prepared for life after Briercliffe.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers identify and address pupils' errors and misconceptions consistently and effectively, particularly in writing, so that pupils progress through the curriculum as well as they can.
 - Leaders should ensure they support teachers to design activities that help pupils to demonstrate sufficient depth in their learning, in line with the ambitious curriculum.
 - Leaders should continue to embed their strategies to improve attendance so that more pupils attend school regularly.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Heather Demaine.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Joanne Ramsbottom

Lead inspector:

Andy Cunningham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Rachael Alarcon, Ofsted Inspector

Cole Andrew, 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

396

Above 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

420

Above 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)

16.16%

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

1.77%

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

9.34%

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	62%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	51%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

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	71%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	74%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	79%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Close to average

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	74%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	79%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	80%	73%	Close to average

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	45%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	53%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42%	44%	Close to average

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	57%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	63%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

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	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	58%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	58%	Close to average

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	61%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	63%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	59%	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 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	45%	68%	-23 pp
2024/25 (revised)	53%	69%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	39%	67%	-29 pp
2022/23 (final)	42%	66%	-25 pp

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	57%	80%	-22 pp
2024/25 (revised)	63%	81%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	80%	-35 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	78%	-12 pp

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	53%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (revised)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	78%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	77%	-19 pp

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	61%	80%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	63%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	79%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	79%	-13 pp

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)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	5.9%	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 (2 term)	11.9%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.3%	16.2%	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.

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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