

Hemlington Hall Academy

Address: Briscoe Way, Hemlington, Middlesbrough, TS8 9SJ

Unique reference number (URN): 145136

Inspection report: 28 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders promote the importance of good attendance to parents and carers, and pupils. As a result of leaders' actions, pupils' attendance has improved well over time. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend school very well indeed. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased and continues to fall. Leaders analyse attendance patterns closely to identify pupils whose attendance begins to decline. They balance high expectations with compassion, ensuring that parents receive highly personalised support to help improve their child's attendance.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and during social times. They play cooperatively, welcome newcomers and show consistent kindness towards one another. They constantly model the school virtues of fairness and kindness. Bullying is rare and not tolerated. Pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour receive timely and highly effective support. As pupils move through the school, they listen attentively, regulate their behaviour well and concentrate hard in lessons. Staff rarely need to remind them of the school rules. This results in the school being a calm and positive place for pupils to learn and develop.

Early years

Strong standard ●

The Nursery provision lays very secure foundations from the outset. Children benefit from a rich and highly inspirational environment. An abundance of activities are carefully planned to support the development of the skills children need to become successful learners. Across Nursery and Reception, staff model language effectively, helping children to develop their speech and broaden their vocabulary. Children work well together, sustain their concentration and demonstrate high levels of independence. Staff know the children well and hold high expectations of what they can achieve. Children are safe and happy. They enjoy sharing their thinking with adults. Staff develop warm relationships with parents and carers.

The early years curriculum is coherently planned and supports children's progress across all areas of learning. Storytelling and the explicit teaching of vocabulary are a key focus. Children confidently recall the stories they have learned. Leaders have a clear understanding of gaps affecting children who are disadvantaged. These children receive a breadth of opportunities to ensure these are addressed. Children develop their fine motor skills and early writing through carefully chosen activities, such as using scissors to carefully chop mint.

From the very start, children learn phonics through daily, well-structured sessions. They receive frequent opportunities to apply their learning throughout the day. Mathematics is skilfully taught which helps children develop a secure understanding of number. As a result, most children leave the early years well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion is at the heart of this school. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those who are disadvantaged and those known (or previously known) to children's social care, are very well supported to succeed. Their needs are accurately and swiftly identified. Where necessary, specialist advice is accessed and acted upon. Pupils benefit from a bespoke programme of support to consistently help them catch up or keep up with their peers. Pupils in the resourced provision are extremely well supported by skilled a staff. A programme of activities is carefully planned and resourced to help engage them and promote learning.

All pupils with SEND have a detailed plan that sets out the steps needed to help them learn well. These are written in collaboration with parents and carers. Regular reviews rigorously monitor pupils' progress against the targets set. Plans are appropriately adjusted to further secure learning.

Teaching ensures that all pupils have the precise help they need. Where required, extra adult support help individuals to access learning. Over time, pupils learn to become more independent by using a range of resources and taught strategies.

The additional funding the school receives to support pupils who are disadvantaged is appropriately targeted to widen their experiences and accelerate learning.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have a clear ambition to raise pupils' aspirations and do all they can to ensure they equip pupils to be safe in the community and online. Pupils receive rich opportunities to engage with local industry and to hear about the different jobs available in the area. For example, they loved the visit to Fujifilm Biotechnologies, where they were amazed by the variety of roles and career paths.

Leaders' ambitions extend to the wider curriculum offer. Pupils participate in an extensive range of educational visits and clubs. Older pupils had an opportunity to travel to London by train, attend two London theatre performances, ride the London Eye, and take a cruise up the River Thames. Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or other barriers to their learning, have full access to the range of clubs.

Leaders have carefully developed plans for personal, social and health education to ensure they meet the needs of pupils in the school. They have built positive links with the local police and other agencies, who deliver assemblies and sessions to strengthen the offer. Leaders are mindful of balancing the importance of teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe from knife crime and drugs, without instilling a sense of fear. Through work with the NSPCC, pupils throughout the school are clear about seeking permission and know they need to ask before holding hands or hugging someone. Pupils learn about how their bodies change as they grow. Staff expertly ensure that pupils with SEND are provided with an appropriately adapted curriculum, so that they are not at additional risk because of potential vulnerabilities.

Pupils also support the local community. For example, they visit the elderly where they read stories on World Book Day and sing songs at Christmas. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of fundamental British values. They know it is wrong to discriminate. Their understanding of other faiths and cultures is promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, and a diverse range of books available in the library.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, generally acquire the knowledge they need to be ready for the next stage of their education. Published outcomes at the end of Year 6 are broadly close to the national average, with an increasing proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard. As a result of precise and well targeted support, pupils in the resourced provision make steady progress from their individual starting points.

The teaching of early reading has been prioritised, which means the youngest pupils learn to read well. Leaders have also ensured that pupils develop the skills needed to write using accurate sentence structure. In mathematics, pupils receive regular opportunities to develop their fluency and to apply their knowledge with growing confidence when solving problems. Across most subjects, pupils build knowledge securely and acquire appropriate skills. However, in key stage 2 across the wider curriculum, pupils do not always recall prior learning or key conceptual knowledge as well as leaders intend them to.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed the curriculum content and how it is delivered. This has improved pupils' enjoyment, interest and retention of key knowledge. The curriculum is further enriched by a programme of visits to local places of interest, museums and the theatre. Teachers' enhance their subject knowledge through ongoing training. This equips them to teach effectively. This is particularly the case in the effective way mathematics, English and science are now taught.

Phonics teaching is systematic. Teachers regularly check for gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. They precisely target pupils and provide additional sessions to help any pupils who slip behind catch up.

Leaders have refined the use of assessment to check pupils' knowledge and progress over time. This has enabled teachers to identify pupils' gaps in learning more consistently. However, teachers do not always check carefully enough if pupils have secured the new knowledge before asking them to apply it in independent work.

Staff are aware of the pupils who have missing knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics and oracy. Through careful adaptations, timely intervention or by additional adult support, pupils generally make the progress they need to. Leaders have begun strengthening the teaching of handwriting and spelling. There are early signs that pupils'

letter formation and spelling is improving. However, teachers do not always correct pupils' pencil grip or their use of capital letters.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to Hemlington Hall Academy. Together, they have created a warm and welcoming school that embraces all pupils, regardless of need. Leaders know the context well. They actively seek support from the wider community to strengthen the curriculum and keep pupils safe. Leaders generally have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.

Staff have benefited from research-informed professional development, which has improved the teaching of phonics, reading, writing, and mathematics. Consequently, pupils are now making better progress in these areas. However, leaders do not always monitor staff's implementation of the curriculum closely enough. This has led to some inconsistency, particularly in the teaching of handwriting and in the teaching of the wider curriculum.

Leaders are mindful of workload and wellbeing. Staff feel known, supported, and valued. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The school provides a wealth of support to help parents, should the need arise.

Governance is effective. Trustees and governors are committed to improving all aspects of the school. They provide effective challenge and support. They regularly visit the school to see for themselves the progress against the agreed school improvement priorities. The trust provides high levels of support to the school. Staff benefit from the engagement in wider trust subject network. Governors ensure that leaders use the money the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and those with other vulnerabilities effectively. Leaders at all levels ensure that resources are always used in the best interests of all pupils.

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

Hemlington Hall Academy is an inclusive school where everyone feels part of the family. From the start of the day, pupils come to school with enthusiasm and are warmly welcomed by caring staff. This provides pupils with a secure sense of belonging and helps them feel valued and safe. This is further enhanced by the school's calm and orderly culture, which fosters an environment in which pupils can flourish. Pupils show high levels of respect to each other and staff. Bullying is rare. If it occurs, staff address it effectively. Pupils consistently show tolerance and respect. They understand that difference is something to celebrate and embrace. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged, and those who are known, or previously known, to children's social care have barriers to learning quickly and precisely identified. Staff do all they can to help reduce these so that pupils make progress from their varied starting points. Pupils are typically ready for their next stage of their education.

Routines at the beginning of the day are well established, and pupils settle quickly into a variety of learning activities. The curriculum has been carefully designed to be engaging and challenging. Pupils throughout the school enjoy learning and readily share their prior knowledge. Pupils participate in a wide variety of educational visits. These make their learning come to life. The youngest children develop the knowledge they need to read and write. In a number-rich environment, they also develop a good understanding of early mathematics. As pupils progress through school, they begin to take greater pride in their work. Pupils' attendance continues to improve through strong partnerships with parents and carers.

Pupils relish the opportunities to take on leadership roles. One peer mentor shared, 'I enjoy the opportunity to look after other children at playtimes.'

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to further support pupils in developing detailed knowledge and skills, and producing high-quality work, across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should further embed the newly implemented strategies, including handwriting and spelling development, to ensure the curriculum is taught well and that teaching is highly effective across all subjects and year groups.
 - Leaders should strengthen their approach to checking the quality of teaching and learning to support teachers in providing highly effective teaching in all subjects.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Lingfield Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nick Blackburn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Lancashire.

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 to senior leaders, including representatives from the board of trustees and members of the local governing body. They also spoke to pupils, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses two registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Karen Edmenson

Lead inspector:

Nicky White, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Gerry Wilson, Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Murray, 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 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

281

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

385

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)

47.20%

Well above 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

8.90%

Well above 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

19.22%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	69%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	65%	74%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

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	77%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	69%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	84%	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
Latest 3 year average	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	69%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	51%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	53%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	44%	Above

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	60%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	66%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	60%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	58%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	77%	58%	Above

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	58%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	51%	68%	-17 pp
2024/25 (final)	53%	69%	-16 pp
2023/24 (final)	43%	67%	-25 pp
2022/23 (final)	59%	66%	-7 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	60%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	81%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23 (final)	68%	78%	-10 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	66%	78%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	78%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	78%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	77%	0 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	58%	80%	-21 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	81%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	79%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	68%	79%	-11 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 (3 term)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.8%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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 (3 term)	14.9%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	22.1%	16.2%	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.

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