

Knuzden St Oswald's Church of England Primary Academy

Address: Mount St James, Stanhill Road, Knuzden, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 2DR

Unique reference number (URN): 149624

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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' attendance. It is an important aspect of pupils' school experience. Attendance is broadly in line with national figures. Leaders check attendance information regularly to identify patterns and understand any emerging concerns. When absence becomes a concern, staff work closely with families and external agencies to identify barriers and provide support. This means most pupils attend school regularly, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour is typically calm and orderly. Pupils feel safe in school. They respond well to adults' guidance and understand what is expected of them. Clear routines create a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils say staff deal with incidents of bullying, discrimination or unkind behaviour promptly. The school adapts activities so that pupils with SEND can take part fully in learning and social times. During unstructured times, most pupils play well together and behave well. Some pupils find playtimes more challenging. Staff intervene quickly to support these pupils to manage their feelings. The school remains calm and purposeful overall.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders know pupils well and identify barriers to learning promptly. This means the school can provide a range of support to meet pupils' needs, including adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work closely with families and external professionals to ensure that this support is appropriate and effective. As a result, most pupils benefit from timely support that promotes their wellbeing. Parents and carers of pupils with SEND value the communication and support they receive.

Leaders provide staff with training related to SEND to identify, monitor and meet pupils' needs. As a result, staff understand pupils' needs and how to support them effectively. Teachers adapt tasks and provide additional help so that pupils can access learning. Some pupils use the sensory room to regulate their emotions before returning to lessons. This means most pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and learn alongside their friends.

The school uses pupil premium funding thoughtfully to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders provide targeted support to help pupils to access clubs, trips and enrichment activities. As a result, disadvantaged pupils can take part in school life and learning more fully.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school has an appropriate personal development programme that builds pupils' knowledge over time. From the early years, children learn about people from a range of backgrounds and beliefs. Pupils develop their social and moral awareness. They understand the importance of treating others fairly. Pupils value and talk confidently about respecting

differences such as culture, religion and family backgrounds. Pupils develop empathy and mutual respect. This helps pupils to prepare for life in modern Britain.

Pupils learn about relationships, sex education and health education in an age-appropriate way. They have a secure understanding of healthy relationships and understand the importance of consent. Pupils know that some relationships can be unhealthy and understand how to seek help if they are worried. Pupils learn how to stay safe online. They understand the importance of mental and physical health. Pupils know who to talk to if they need help.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from a range of enrichment opportunities, including clubs such as forest den building, chess, drawing, film and construction. These experiences help pupils to build confidence and develop their wider interests. Pupils enjoy learning about issues in the world around them. They enjoy taking on leadership responsibilities and contributing their views.

The school ensures that pupils' wellbeing is a priority. Pupils who need additional emotional support benefit from targeted provision. Nurture-based routines help pupils to manage their emotions and start the day positively. As a result, pupils are ready to learn.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils have not achieved well enough over time in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), in particular, have underperformed compared with their peers. Many pupils do not secure essential knowledge in key areas such as accurate handwriting, secure spelling and number facts. As a result, these pupils struggle to write clearly or work confidently with numbers. These gaps make it harder for pupils to build secure knowledge as they move through the school.

Although leaders have introduced some additional support for pupils who struggle, this has not led to sufficient improvement. Too many pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, still do not achieve as well as they should. Consequently, many pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching does not consistently enable pupils to learn the curriculum well. Teachers do not routinely check for gaps in what pupils already know or identify mistakes quickly enough. This means many pupils have gaps in essential knowledge, including accurate letter formation, spelling and number sense. As a result, these pupils struggle to build secure knowledge over time.

Leaders have introduced a new curriculum that sets out clearly what pupils should learn in each subject across the school. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Some teachers

use this knowledge effectively to help older pupils address gaps in their learning. In some subjects, teachers explain ideas clearly and help pupils revisit what they have learned previously. This is beginning to help these pupils build more solid knowledge. However, this is not consistent across all classes and subjects.

Reading is a high priority for leaders. The early reading curriculum helps younger pupils to learn to blend sounds to read words. Teachers adjust their teaching so that pupils with barriers to learning can access lessons. This means more pupils learn to read fluently over time. Despite this, some pupils do not receive the precise support that they need to catch up quickly.

Early years

Needs attention 

Many children in the early years do not learn to read and write as well as they could. Leaders acknowledge this. They have introduced a new early years curriculum that sets out the knowledge and skills that children should learn. They have prioritised reading in the new curriculum. As a result of these changes, more children are beginning to learn the sounds that they need to know to read words. However, this is not the same in children's writing. Too many children do not form letters accurately. This means that many children are not ready for Year 1.

Expectations of what children can learn and do are too low. Teachers design opportunities to develop children's communication, language and vocabulary. Staff use high-quality texts to introduce new words. However, interactions between adults and children do not consistently help children to talk more or learn new words. This means that many children do not learn new words as well as they could. Staff do not correct children's mistakes. As a result, some children repeat the same errors. Their gaps in knowledge persist.

Staff take time to get to know children and work closely with parents and carers when children join the school. This helps children to settle quickly into routines. Children are calm and purposeful during activities.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

At times, leaders are not clear enough about what needs to improve. Leaders do not check closely whether their actions make a difference to how well pupils learn and achieve. Changes have not secured sufficient improvement in curriculum, teaching or pupils' achievement, including in the early years. This is because leaders do not check consistently whether their actions are making a difference to pupils' outcomes. Leaders know the school and its pupils well. They understand the barriers that some families face. Leaders have acted more effectively to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, they have not ensured that the curriculum and teaching address gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Staff appreciate the support they receive to help their workload and wellbeing. For example, staff value the professional development and support they receive from leaders and the trust. Most parents and carers are positive about the care that the school provides.

Those responsible for governance understand the school's context. They fulfil their statutory duties. Members of the local governing body are visible and involved in school life. Trustees provide support and oversight. Leaders and governors make decisions in the best interests of pupils, including those who are vulnerable. However, challenge from governors and trustees does not consistently help leaders to secure the improvements needed.

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

Pupils feel known and cared for at Knuzden St Oswald's CE Primary School. Staff build warm and respectful relationships with pupils. From the early years, children settle quickly. They feel safe. Pupils trust adults to help them when they feel worried. Pupils feel a sense of belonging to the school community. If bullying happens, staff deal with it effectively.

While pupils enjoy their learning, too many pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is particularly evident in reading, writing and mathematics. Many pupils have gaps in essential knowledge and skills. In the early years, too many children do not learn to read and write as well as they should. This means that they are not ready for Year 1. These difficulties continue as pupils move through the school. Many are not well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils explain confidently how the school's vision guides their thoughtful actions and behaviour. They show kindness and responsibility through daily interactions. Pupils learn about different cultures, beliefs and life in modern Britain. This helps pupils to develop tolerance. They understand life beyond their immediate community.

Pupils behave calmly in lessons and as they move around the school. This creates an orderly start to the day. Most pupils attend school regularly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from helpful support that reduces barriers to their learning.

Pupils take part in a range of wider opportunities. They contribute through the school council. They have helped leaders to refresh the school's outdoor space. Pupils participate in awareness days, such as 'In Your Shoes' day. These experiences build pupils' confidence.

Next steps

- Leaders and governors should focus closely on the impact of their actions to bring about the changes needed to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
 - Leaders should help teachers to routinely identify and address gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils receive the support that they need when they fall behind, so that gaps in their knowledge are addressed quickly.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff in the early years consistently help children to develop their knowledge and vocabulary across the early years curriculum.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Cidari 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, Peter Ashworth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Reverend Paul Robinson.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OI) who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust, trustees and the chair of the local governing board. Inspectors spoke to pupils in lessons and at social times. Inspectors met with groups of staff and spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a Church of England Academy in the Diocese of Blackburn. It received its last section 48 inspection in June 2024.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school manages a breakfast club.

Headteacher: Andrea Gray

Lead inspector:

Dianne Holcroft, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Rachael Alarcon, Ofsted Inspector

Sue Bowman, 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

162

Below 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

210

Below 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)

30.86%

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

3.70%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.52%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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)	36%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	43%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national 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)	59%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	74%	Below
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)	55%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	72%	Close to average
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)	50%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	46%	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)	29%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	46%	Close to average
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)	43%	63%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
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)	43%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
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)	43%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2022/23		59%	

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)	29%	69%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	67%	-17 pp
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)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
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)	43%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
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)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp
2022/23		79%	

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)	5.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	5.5%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	18.9%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	22.4%	14.6%	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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