

Morpeth Chantry Middle School

Address: Mitford Road, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1RQ

Unique reference number (URN): 137747

Inspection report: 3 March 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 consistently promote the importance of attendance. They have created a school environment that pupils want to attend. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, attend school regularly. Leaders provide timely and effective support to pupils and their families to break down any barriers to attendance. Leaders work closely with external agencies to help pupils who find attending school difficult. Persistent absence is lower than national averages.

Leaders have created a calm, orderly and productive learning environment. Pupils behave very well in lessons and during social times. Staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. Pupils respond positively to staff's high expectations and value the routines in place. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to impress. They are kind and respectful towards each other and know how to resolve conflicts. Older pupils are role models for younger pupils. Staff know their pupils and care about their wellbeing. They notice subtle changes and make adaptations for pupils with SEND. When pupils need extra help to manage their emotions, they receive the support they need. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. Any form of discrimination or harassment is not tolerated.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders know the pupils and their individual needs incredibly well. They skilfully identify and assess the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders use their expertise and advice from wider professionals to provide support that removes barriers to learning and/or wellbeing. They make sure that staff have access to high-quality training and make adaptations and reasonable adjustments that enable all pupils to experience success at school.

Leaders listen to their pupils and their families to make sure pupils receive the help they need at the right time. For example, 'know me to teach me' meetings capture the views of pupils and how they would like to be supported in lessons. Pupils visit dedicated 'warm spaces' when they need some extra help. Leaders carefully check that the support being provided to pupils makes a positive difference to their learning and wellbeing.

Leaders make sure the use of additional funding has a positive impact on pupils who need it. Every effort is made to make sure all pupils benefit from the opportunities and experiences offered. Leaders work closely with the virtual school to make sure children with a social worker are well cared for and able to flourish. Alternative provision is used rarely and in the best interests of pupils.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well. Improvements that leaders have made to the curriculum and teaching mean that pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 national tests are improving. In the most recent year, pupils achieved above-average outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who are disadvantaged achieve broadly in line with their peers nationally over time. Leaders are aware that there is more work to do to fully embed the improvements made by leaders to secure above-average outcomes over time, including for pupils who are disadvantaged.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, progress well through the curriculum. They produce high-quality work and are proud of their achievements. Pupils in key stage 3 build on their knowledge and skills from key stage 2 and are well prepared for their next steps.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders know the strengths of the curriculum in place and make improvements where they are needed. The curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils learn more over time. Pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need for their next steps and develop a love of learning.

Teachers have the subject knowledge needed to deliver the curriculum well. They make sure that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before. Teachers encourage pupils to take part in discussions and challenge their thinking to deepen their learning. Typically, teachers regularly check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching when needed. However, on occasion, this lacks accuracy, which leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers make appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This supports pupils with SEND to access their learning and make progress in line with their peers.

Teachers make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils become confident readers, writers and communicators. Pupils who need some extra help receive effective support and quickly catch up with their peers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a secure understanding of their school and their pupils. They have implemented a range of improvements, which are having a positive impact. Leaders know what they need to do next to lead to sustained improvements over time.

Leaders act in the best interests of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. They are committed to supporting all pupils to thrive in school.

Governors and trustees have effective oversight of the school's work. They support and challenge leaders to continue to develop the school. Governors and trustees meet their statutory duties and hold leaders to account.

Leaders value their staff team members and care about their wellbeing and workload. Staff are proud to work at this school. They benefit from a high-quality professional learning programme that builds on their expertise and supports them to conduct their role effectively. Some leaders use their skills to provide support to other schools and professionals.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

There is a well-sequenced personal development programme that builds pupils' knowledge and experiences over time. Pupils develop an understanding of physical and mental health. They learn about relationships at an age-appropriate level. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online.

The 'global curriculum' provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, explore ethical issues and reflect on their own beliefs and values. Pupils participate in structured discussions and learn how to tolerate and respect the views of others. They develop a sense of right and wrong. This curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. However, there is more to do to embed this knowledge, particularly for older pupils.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences through educational visits. Leaders make reasonable adjustments and adaptations to make sure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, can participate. Pupils explore their local history through visits to heritage sites and museums. They participate in residential visits to major cities, such as Edinburgh and London. Pupils experience adventurous activities such as skiing and develop their team-building skills through outdoor education.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of clubs to nurture their talents and develop their hobbies and interests. Pupils join sports clubs such as judo, archery or gymnastics. They can also join the jazz band or the school choir. Leaders have tailored clubs to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.

Many pupils become leaders and take on responsibilities through the elected school council, house captains, reading buddies or as sports leaders. These pupils are role models for others and support younger children in the neighbouring first schools.

The careers education programme prepares pupils well for their next steps. Pupils have opportunities to engage with providers and local universities. They are supported to develop their aspirations for the future.

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

Pupils at Morpeth Chantry Middle School are safe and happy. They feel part of a community and share positive relationships with staff and their peers. Pupils know where to go when

they need extra help. Many older pupils become leaders and role models for younger pupils.

Pupils access a wide range of opportunities to enhance their experiences. They participate in a range of enrichment activities, such as ukulele band, eco club, card games and chess club. Pupils have opportunities and are encouraged to try new sports, such as mixed martial arts or acrobatics. Pupils engage in meaningful educational visits to cities, museums and places of heritage. Pupils have opportunities to explore their future options and build their aspirations.

Pupils behave well and show kindness and respect towards staff and each other. They benefit from clear rules and expectations, which staff consistently apply. Pupils are keen to learn and develop their confidence and resilience throughout their time in school. They are considerate of the beliefs and values of others and know how to be a good citizen. Bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with effectively. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.

Pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum across a range of subjects. Pupils typically benefit from high-quality teaching that supports them to develop their knowledge over time. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils achieve well in national tests at the end of key stage 2. Pupils then build on their success throughout key stage 3 and are well prepared for their next steps.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers identify gaps in learning accurately and consistently adapt their teaching so that learning can be secured quickly.
 - Leaders should continue to embed their improvement work to secure above-average outcomes in national tests over time, including for pupils who are disadvantaged.
 - Leaders should continue to embed the global curriculum across all key stages so that all pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them, in preparation for life in modern Britain.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Cheviot Learning 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), Alice Witherow, and overseen by a board of trustees, co-chaired by Ben Cole and Steven Duckworth.

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, assistant headteachers, the CEO, trustees and governors during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 2 unregistered alternative providers.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection with the appointment of a new headteacher, who started in September 2023.

Headteacher: Mr Glen Whitehead

Lead inspector:

Nikki Heron, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Christine Durand, Ofsted Inspector

Lyndsey Reed, His Majesty's Inspector

Shelley Heseltine, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

556

Well 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: 1,067

School capacity

593

Well 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.75%

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: 28.9%

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

3.42%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.67%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Well 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	65%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	76%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	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	81%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	88%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	81%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	85%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	77%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	84%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	72%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	41%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	52%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	36%	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	63%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	80%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	48%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	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 (revised)	76%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	53%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	68%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	59%	Below

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	41%	68%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	52%	69%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	35%	67%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	36%	66%	-30 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	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	80%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	48%	80%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	60%	78%	-18 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 (revised)	76%	78%	-2 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	78%	-21 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	64%	77%	-13 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	53%	80%	-26 pp
2024/25 (revised)	68%	81%	-13 pp
2023/24 (final)	48%	79%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	44%	79%	-35 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)	5.9%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.4%	9.0%	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)	14.5%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	15.9%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	17.0%	26.5%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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