

Park Grove Primary Academy

Address: Park Grove, YO31 8LG

Unique reference number (URN): 144266

Inspection report: 18 November 2025

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 

The school places a strong emphasis on regular attendance, recognising it as a key factor in pupils' success. Leaders use a range of effective strategies, including targeted use of pupil premium funding, to drive improvements. The impact of these efforts is evident in attendance data, which shows figures broadly in line with national averages, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.

Leaders set high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff understand the policy well and apply it effectively. This results in positive pupil behaviour both in lessons and during social times. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils respond promptly to staff's instructions and demonstrate familiarity with routines and expectations. They take pride in their work and show positive attitudes towards learning. There is a strong culture of mutual respect in the school. Bullying is not tolerated. When it does happen, leaders respond swiftly and effectively.

Pupils show empathy towards peers who find managing their behaviour more challenging. They understand that the school may need to use different approaches to support these pupils. At social times, pupils play cooperatively together. Older pupils enjoy supporting younger pupils through the 'buddy' system.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders take a thoughtful and strategic approach to curriculum design, ensuring that it meets the diverse needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. The curriculum is broad, ambitious, and carefully sequenced across subjects. This allows pupils to revisit and build upon their prior learning in a progressive manner. Leaders' recent refinements to the curriculum, informed by current research, are showing early signs of positive impact. The teaching of writing has been reviewed to place greater emphasis on foundational knowledge and skills, such as pencil grip and letter formation. The impact of this is particularly evident in the early years. This sets children up well for future learning.

Leaders provide training that gives staff the tools they need to carry out their roles well. Consequently, teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They make effective use of resources to support teaching, including those aimed at supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Assessment information is generally used well to identify and address gaps in pupils' understanding, especially in reading. Pupils receive targeted help to close gaps in their phonics knowledge swiftly. Some pupils have had persistent gaps in their basic knowledge and skills. Recent changes to the curriculum are supporting teachers to identify these gaps and take action to address them.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out a clear and ambitious vision for education and care in the early years. This is underpinned by a well-sequenced curriculum and a strong emphasis on communication, language and personal development. Learning to read is a key priority. Staff teach the phonics programme effectively. They use precise assessment to tailor learning to each child's needs.

Staff know the children well. They receive training that enables them to engage in high-quality interactions with children. These successfully support the development of children's language and vocabulary. Children are happy, inquisitive and eager to learn. They make positive progress from their individual starting points, including children who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. By the end of Reception, most children are suitably prepared for the transition to Year 1.

Leaders continue to refine the curriculum and strengthen consistency in its delivery, with a particular focus on building strong foundations. For example, recent adjustments to enhance children's curiosity about objects, events and people are well considered and thoughtfully implemented.

The school fosters purposeful relationships with both external agencies and parents and carers. Strong links with the on-site nursery ensure a smooth and supportive transition into the Reception Year.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school has well-established procedures for identifying pupils who have additional needs or face barriers to learning. Consequently, pupils' individual needs are spotted and assessed quickly. Staff benefit from targeted training, enabling them to adapt lessons effectively to support pupils who require additional help. These support strategies are applied consistently across the school. For instance, pupils use colour-coded display boards in classrooms, to help them locate information that aids their learning.

Leaders use robust systems to track the progress and attainment of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged. When pupils fall behind, they receive timely support to help them to catch up.

The school works effectively with external agencies, such as local authority specialist services, to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need. The school's pastoral provision is extensive and high quality. This helps to foster positive relationships with parents and carers. It has led to measurable improvements, such as increased pupil attendance.

The school's plan for spending the pupil premium grant aligns with broader school development priorities. The school uses this funding appropriately to address both the pastoral and academic needs of disadvantaged pupils. Governors play an active role in scrutinising the strategy and holding leaders to account for its impact.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including governors, have a clear and largely accurate understanding of the school's current position. They identify appropriate priorities for improvement and take effective action to address them. These priorities are shaped by a strong commitment to doing what is in the best interests of pupils, with a sharp focus on inclusivity. As a result, no pupil is left behind or excluded from full participation in school life.

The school benefits from the support of a skilled and knowledgeable governing body that is well equipped to hold leaders to account. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities. They monitor key aspects of provision, including the quality of education and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Central trust staff provide targeted support to help leaders address any areas for improvement.

Staff, including support staff and early career teachers, benefit from a comprehensive range of professional learning opportunities. These help to strengthen their teaching expertise and expand their professional networks. There is a strong sense of cooperation and teamwork across the school. Staff enjoy working here and value leaders' efforts to reduce their workload. This positive working environment is a testament to the school's leadership and its commitment to staff's wellbeing.

Personal development and well-being

Expected standard 

The school has a well-structured and inclusive programme for personal development, accessible to all pupils. Leaders remove barriers to participation. For example, pupil premium funding is used to subsidise educational visits and music tuition for disadvantaged pupils. The programme begins in the early years, with a strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. At this stage, children learn to form friendships and regulate their emotions effectively.

As pupils progress through the school, they benefit from a thoughtfully designed curriculum for personal, social and health education. Many pupils remember key learning from these lessons, such as how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They understand the value of a balanced diet and regular exercise. Pupils' recall of certain aspects, such as the importance of maintaining positive mental health and how this contributes to overall health, is still developing.

Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of the importance of respect and tolerance, including towards those of different faiths. Their recall of specific learning about world religions and fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law, is less detailed.

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, thoughtfully organised to ensure even the youngest children can participate. Pupils appreciate leaders' willingness to run clubs at their request. The school enriches pupils' cultural knowledge and experiences through the use of educational visits and visiting speakers. Leadership opportunities are embedded throughout the school, including roles such as Year 6 buddies and members of

the school council. Pupils value these experiences and develop important skills such as teamwork and communication through their involvement.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Published data from national tests at the end of Year 6 shows a pattern of underachievement for some groups of pupils, namely disadvantaged pupils and those with low prior attainment. Both the progress and attainment of these groups have been consistently below the national average over time. Leaders are taking appropriate action to improve these outcomes, but this is at an early stage.

Many pupils achieve well, due to a secure curriculum offer across a broad range of subjects. Pupils achieve particularly well in phonics. The outcomes of the phonics screening check in Year 1 are above the national average. However, there are some instances where the school does not close the gaps in pupils' basic knowledge and skills quickly enough. In a few cases, this hinders pupils from completing tasks successfully. This affects their ability to achieve more.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this highly inclusive school. This is reflected in their positive attendance. They benefit from warm, caring relationships with staff and a vibrant, well-resourced learning environment. Pupils and their families benefit from positive relationships with the school and a wealth of pastoral support. This helps to remove pupils' barriers to attendance and learning. The school draws upon external agencies' expertise where necessary to make sure pupils and their families get the support that they need.

Many pupils achieve well. They talk enthusiastically about their learning in different subjects, particularly art and design, and design technology. However, published data from national tests shows that some groups of pupils, for example disadvantaged pupils, did not achieve well historically. In addition, some current pupils have gaps in their basic knowledge, particularly in writing. This inhibits their ability to achieve their full potential.

Pupils are kind to each other and behave well. They use the 'kindness tree' to highlight acts of kindness. The school celebrates these during assemblies. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils trust adults to resolve it quickly if it does happen. Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. They are very clear that everyone should be treated equally.

Pupils benefit from a carefully planned programme to promote and support their personal development. The extra-curricular offer is open to all pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils' interests are considered in the design of this offer. For example, the school runs a chess club in response to a request from a pupil. Pupils appreciate the educational visits they participate in, for example to attractions and historic sites within the locality. They know that these link to their learning in different topics.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they support teachers to use the new approach to the teaching of writing to identify and close gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge and skills, particularly where these gaps have been persistent.
 - Leaders should continue to drive up standards of attainment for disadvantaged pupils and low prior attainers so that their outcomes in national tests and examinations at the end of key stage 2 are more in line with their national counterparts.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils develop more detailed knowledge of some aspects of the personal development programme, such as knowledge and understanding of different faiths, fundamental British values and how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Ebor 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), Gail Brown, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Debbie Clinton.

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 school's senior leadership team, representatives of the governing body, the CEO of the trust and the vice-chair of the board of trustees during the inspection.

A nursery and a childcare provider operate from the school site. Neither come under the school's registration and are inspected separately. The school has sought the relevant assurances about the staff who work in these provisions.

Headteacher: Jo Sawyer

Lead inspector:

Philippa Kermotschuk, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's Inspector

Katie Hall, 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 18 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

264

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

270

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)

16.29%

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

4.92%

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

10.98%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

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 maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and maths measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	67%	61%	Close to average
2024/25	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24	73%	61%	Above
2022/23	63%	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	77%	74%	Close to average
2024/25	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24	85%	74%	Above
2022/23	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24	80%	72%	Above
2022/23	73%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in maths.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	73%	Close to average
2024/25	78%	74%	Close to average
2023/24	88%	73%	Above
2022/23	71%	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 maths

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	29%	46%	Below
2024/25	21%	47%	Below
2023/24	S	46%	S
2022/23	33%	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	54%	62%	Below
2024/25	43%	63%	Below
2023/24	S	62%	S
2022/23	44%	60%	Below

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	43%	59%	Below
2024/25	29%	59%	Below
2023/24	S	58%	S
2022/23	56%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	60%	Below
2024/25	43%	61%	Below
2023/24	S	59%	S
2022/23	44%	59%	Below

‘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 maths

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	29%	68%	-39 pp
2024/25	21%	69%	-48 pp
2023/24	S	67%	S
2022/23	33%	66%	-33 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	54%	80%	-26 pp
2024/25	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24	S	80%	S
2022/23	44%	78%	-34 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	43%	78%	-35 pp
2024/25	29%	78%	-50 pp
2023/24	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	56%	77%	-22 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24	S	79%	S
2022/23	44%	79%	-35 pp

‘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 (1 term)	4.0%	5.1%	Below
2023/24	5.4%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23	5.2%	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 (1 term)	10.3%	14.3%	Below
2023/24	14.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23	12.0%	16.2%	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 standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards 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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