

Sir William Stanier School

Address: Coronation Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 4EB

Unique reference number (URN): 139953

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.

Expected standard

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership. This is at school and trust level. Trustees, directors of the trust, governors and school leaders all share the same vision for this school. They provide appropriate challenge to leaders and, in return, ensure that leaders have the resources needed to see the school improve.

Leaders have enacted a prompt programme of school improvement. They have stabilised staffing, established pupil rules and routines and secured the curriculum in most subject areas. Leaders have introduced better inclusive practices. They have also created a programme of professional learning for staff, alongside quality assurance processes to drive an improvement in teaching. Older pupils and staff reflect positively on the significant changes that have happened in a short amount of time.

Leaders are deeply passionate about this school. They are raising pupils' aspirations, including those who are disadvantaged pupils. While leaders have put important improvements in place, it is too soon to see this work through published examination results. Leaders have taken a sensible and logical approach to improve the school in a timely way and these improvements are beginning to be seen. They know what to do next to create consistency and sustain improvement across all areas of the school's provision.

Staff feel well-supported by leaders. The vast majority of staff are now proud to work at this school. Despite the recent changes, leaders have been mindful of staff's workload throughout.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a comprehensive programme of personal development. This ensures pupils are taught the important information that they will need in their lives and broadens pupils' understanding of the world. Leaders also link the well-designed personal, social and health education curriculum to local issues, when appropriate. This ensures that the personal development programme is relevant to pupils' lived experiences. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), articulate an understanding of the topics that they have been taught, including knowledge of local politics and financial management.

Pupils access a wide range of activities and opportunities. This allows them to explore new interests and hobbies. Leaders ensure that these happen during the school day so that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are able to attend. Some activities are adapted when necessary so that pupils, including those with SEND, can participate. This can include creating smaller groups or moving to a quieter space. Leaders also encourage pupils to complete community work such as collecting food donations for a local charity. Leaders understand the school's role in the local community and these opportunities help to develop a sense of pride in pupils about where they live.

Leaders have created a culture where pupils feel cared for. Pupils have a 'champion' who they can go to for support. This is in addition to the wider pastoral team and has helped

pupils to feel more heard and understood.

Leaders have created an effective careers programme. Pupils participate in a number of events such as visiting local colleges and meeting local employers. This helps to raise aspirations. Pupils are supported in applying for appropriate further education, employment or training. When necessary, leaders provide transport for pupils to attend interviews. This programme has seen a notable increase in the number of pupils securing appropriate destinations for when they leave the school.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Historical weaknesses in the design and teaching of the curriculum have resulted in pupils' achievement in national examinations being much lower than average. This includes those pupils who are disadvantaged.

Pupils who struggle with reading benefit from the support that leaders have put in place. This is improving their comprehension and fluency. Pupils who need help with numeracy or handwriting have also recently started to receive it. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this.

Currently, pupils are developing a more secure understanding of topics than in the past. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils. Typically, pupils can articulate what they have recently been taught. However, some struggle to remember learning from longer ago. Leaders have started to address the historical weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training placements. The number of pupils accessing further education courses has risen sharply in recent years.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance to school is significantly below the national average. Leaders are grappling with a longstanding culture of low attendance at this school. They have recently established clearer systems and processes to address the high levels of absence. There are early signs that these systems are helping to improve attendance, including reducing persistent absence. When appropriate, leaders provide bespoke support for pupils who find regular attendance difficult. This is also seeing some early success. Leaders reflect on their work to improve attendance. They take a proactive approach to finding new ways of supporting pupils to attend more.

Recently, leaders have established rules and routines to create a calm environment at the school. However, some staff do not apply these rules consistently. A small number of pupils also choose not to follow these rules. On the whole, however, leaders have created a culture where pupils feel safe and able to raise concerns with staff. Pupils trust staff to deal with incidents quickly and effectively, including bullying. Most lessons are free from disruption,

though not all pupils engage with their learning. Pupils who need additional support are helped by staff to regulate their emotions in quiet spaces and reflect on their experiences.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The design of the curriculum and how consistently it is delivered are improving across the school. However, some subjects do not yet have an ambitious or well-defined curriculum. This hinders pupils from building their knowledge of these subjects. Leaders are working with staff to address this.

Teachers check regularly for gaps in pupils' understanding. However, teachers sometimes do not address this missed or forgotten learning effectively. This means that pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not consistently develop a secure understanding of the knowledge that they are taught. Teachers know about their pupils' barriers to learning and the strategies that will best support them. However, they do not always use these strategies or alter their teaching in helpful ways. Consequently, some pupils struggle to access their learning.

Leaders support pupils who struggle with their reading, writing and numeracy. Pupils benefit from reading lessons and, when appropriate, support with phonics. This has helped to improve most pupils' confidence in their reading. Leaders understand the importance of high-quality teaching. They have enhanced the support and professional learning opportunities for teachers to improve their practice. In subjects and classrooms where leaders have focused that support, there are green shoots of improvement.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Teachers do not consistently use appropriate strategies to reduce pupils' barriers to learning. This means that some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not access their learning as well as they could. Leaders have recently established a clearer process for identifying pupils' barriers to learning or wellbeing. Staff understand better what these barriers are and what strategies will help to reduce them.

Leaders carefully track pupils' progress, including those known, or previously known to social care. When necessary, leaders work with pupils, parents and carers and external professionals to adapt the support on offer so that pupils can access their education more effectively. Staff provide appropriate support for pupils who struggle with emotional regulation. Pupils benefit from speaking to an adult in a quiet and safe environment and this helps them to become calmer, and ready to return to their lessons.

Leaders make effective use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Interventions put in place enable pupils to better access their learning and wider opportunities. At times, this includes alternative provision, which is used appropriately. Through this support, some pupils have improved their attendance, closed gaps in their knowledge and found new personal interests.

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

Since the last inspection, pupils have experienced positive change at this school. They are welcomed at the school gates and made to feel part of the school community. Most pupils appreciate the rules and routines that are now in place. This helps to create a general feeling of calm in the building. Pupils typically feel safe. They usually build positive relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils are confident in reporting incidents of unkind behaviour or bullying. They know that staff will deal with these incidents quickly and effectively. However, while staff support pupils to attend school regularly, many of them still miss too much school.

Most pupils reflect positively on the recent improvements at this school. Where teaching is of a higher quality, pupils know more and remember more. However, this is not always the case. Staff know pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing, including those faced by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. That said, pupils are not consistently well supported to access their learning successfully.

Lessons are generally calm and this allows pupils to work. However, some pupils do not engage well with their learning. Historical weaknesses in the curriculum mean that pupils have some gaps in their knowledge. As such, they do not achieve as well as they should by the end of key stage 4. Leaders are addressing this and pupils are starting to show increased understanding of what they have been taught.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities and opportunities, including 'eco projects' and contributing to the success of the school allotment. They show an understanding of different social issues, such as how to keep themselves safe online, as well as current affairs. This helps to broaden their views of the world and prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is ambitious, well-designed and consistently well implemented.
 - Leaders should support teachers to use the information from their checks on pupils' understanding to design teaching activities that close gaps in pupils' knowledge. This will reduce pupils' barriers to learning, secure their knowledge over time, and help to raise their attainment.
 - Leaders should ensure that behaviour rules and routines are consistently embedded so that pupils are better engaged in their learning.
 - Leaders should continue their work in reducing school absence for all groups of pupils so that attendance figures improve to be in line with the national average.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Learning Partnership Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dan Thomas, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Wootton.

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 trustees, trust leaders, governors, school leaders, staff and pupils 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.

The school currently makes use of 2 alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Headteacher: Elizabeth Robinson

Lead inspector:

Tom Theobald, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Linda Griffiths, Ofsted Inspector

Chris Glennon, Ofsted Inspector

Jamie Jardine, 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

688

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

1,050

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

46.22%

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: 28.9%

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

7.85%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12.94%

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

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)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	11.0%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	15.0%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	6.1%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	28.4	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.6	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.6	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.90	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.36	-0.03	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	6.8%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	10.4%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	4.3%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	23.3	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.3	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	20.5	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.16	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.73	-0.57	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	6.8%	53.1%	-46.4 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	10.4%	53.1%	-42.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	4.3%	52.4%	-48.1 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	23.3	50.4	-27.1
2023/24 (final)	25.3	50.0	-24.7
2022/23 (final)	20.5	50.3	-29.8

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.16	0.16	-1.32
2022/23 (final)	-1.73	0.17	-1.89

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	78%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	84%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	90%	94%	Average

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)	13.6%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	12.3%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	14.2%	9.0%	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 (3 term)	42.4%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	45.3%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	44.9%	26.5%	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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