

The Greenwell Academy

Address: Commonsides Road, Harlow, Essex, CM18 7EZ

Unique reference number (URN): 149745

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 ●

Pupils' attendance overall is above the national average for similar schools. Most pupils improve their attendance significantly during their time at the school. Typically, they enjoy coming to school, so they want to attend. Leaders act quickly to support families when attendance falls short of their high expectations. They work successfully with parents and carers to remove barriers, so pupils benefit fully from the opportunities on offer in school. In this way, leaders ensure that pupils are prepared well for their future lives.

The school environment is calm and caring. Clear and well-established routines are key to this success. Pupils feel safe. They trust staff and know they are there for them if they have any worries. Most pupils settle in quickly, gain confidence and build their self-esteem. Their attitudes to learning improve as a result. Highly positive relationships between staff and pupils are at the heart of the substantial improvements in many pupils' behaviour. The school's values of safety, respect, responsibility and kindness pervade school life. Staff offer well-focused, highly successful support to improve behaviour when pupils need it. Pupils learn to manage their feelings and make positive choices. They get on with others and join in during lessons. Staff do not tolerate bullying or unkind behaviour, which they address promptly. Pupils understand what is expected of them and respond very well.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Pupils arrive with significant personal challenges, including social, emotional and mental health needs and disadvantage. They flourish in the school's welcoming and nurturing culture. Staff know pupils extremely well. They identify their individual needs promptly. Regular training, alongside positive relationships with parents, carers and external specialists, deepens staff's understanding of how to best support pupils. As a result, pupils receive highly effective, individualised support. In-school counselling and therapeutic support, such as play therapy, is accessible to those who need it. Regular checks ensure that these initiatives remain impactful.

Pupils are valued members of the school community. They rebuild their confidence and trust in education. Importantly, pupils gain the skills to apply strategies to manage their feelings. Staff use up-to-date information carefully to adapt teaching and therapeutic approaches as pupils' needs change. Pupils know that staff understand them, so they want to participate in learning. Most pupils progress well during their time in the school.

Alternative provisions are used in pupils' best interests. Leaders work closely with families and the local authority to support this. When pupils learn in different settings, their attendance, safety, wellbeing and progress are monitored closely. Additional funding is used successfully to enhance pupils' learning, including to reduce barriers to their learning and wellbeing. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically achieve well from their different starting points. Their achievement extends beyond academic studies. Most pupils join the school with significant gaps in their learning due to previous disruption to their education. Many lack confidence in their ability to succeed. Well-considered support systems mean that pupils now join in their lessons, re-engage in learning and interact positively with others. Younger pupils build their knowledge and skills effectively, including in reading and mathematics. Older pupils gain qualifications to progress successfully to post-16, including GCSEs and functional skills in English, mathematics and science.

Typically, learning is carefully matched to pupils' needs. At times, when some teaching is not consistently well focused on the detail of pupils' subject-specific knowledge, they do not learn as much or as deeply as they could. Overall, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have adopted an ambitious curriculum. It is designed to meet pupils' needs as soon as they join the school and adapted as pupils' needs change. Rightly, the focus on meeting pupils' social and emotional needs is well embedded. Pupils often arrive with significant gaps in their learning. Typically, they build their knowledge and skills successfully over time. Staff use adaptations based on their detailed understanding of pupils' needs and interests. These combine effectively with therapeutic support, so pupils successfully re-engage in education.

Primary-age pupils focus on important subjects, such as reading, writing and mathematics. They apply their understanding in wider topics, such as 'rainforests'. Staff support older pupils to gain the qualifications they need to move on post-16, including in English and mathematics. Staff prioritise pupils' ability to read accurately and fluently. Pupils who need additional help with reading get the right support to improve.

Typically, staff check pupils' learning regularly. This enables pupils to progress securely through the curriculum. However, these strategies are still being refined. Sometimes, staff do not check systematically that all pupils secure the intended learning. As a result, some pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

Leaders' improvement actions suitably focus on embedding consistently high-quality teaching in all aspects of the school's work. Targeted professional training helps to build the subject knowledge of non-specialist teachers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear, ambitious vision. They know what is working well and what needs to improve. Together with trust leaders, they have managed the challenges of staffing changes, growth in pupil numbers and a delayed move to new premises effectively.

Staff benefit from the expertise available in the trust, as well as professional training in school. This includes, for example, subject specialist support and training linked to pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff value opportunities to share ideas with colleagues from other trust schools. They appreciate the school's cohesive community and enjoy working there. Most staff feel well supported, including in managing their workload and wellbeing.

Leaders know the areas where they need to secure greater consistency, including ensuring a more consistent approach to teachers' checks on learning. The aim, appropriately, is to improve precision in identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' subject-specific knowledge and skills. Changes to assessment systems are already in place. This, and the associated staff development, focuses on securing further improvements.

The trust provides relevant support and challenge for leaders to continue to improve. Trust leaders understand their responsibility to build the school's leadership capacity as the school grows. The significant delays in the move to the new school building are being resolved. Leaders ensure that pupils continue to access a broad and balanced curriculum. They mitigate limited space in the temporary accommodation by using external facilities. Most parents are highly positive about the school. A few, understandably, express concerns about delays in the move to a permanent site.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders know that securing pupils' social and emotional wellbeing is the key to their academic success. This aspect of pupils' learning is prioritised appropriately when they join the school. Pupils value the range of support offered. This includes specialist help from in-school counselling services, as well as specialist support for their positive mental health. Pupils learn to build effective relationships, gain confidence and become part of the school community. Leaders ensure that this progress is closely monitored, with tailored, individualised support in place. Typically, pupils gain the skills they need to overcome personal challenges and to progress successfully to the next stage of education and adulthood.

The personal development programme underpins all aspects of pupils' learning. Leaders thread wide-ranging opportunities purposefully through the curriculum. Pupils build their understanding of important themes, such as the fundamental British values of respect and the rule of law. The school's values are closely aligned. For example, pupils are taught to respect individual differences, as well as about the safe and appropriate use of social media.

Leaders broaden pupils' learning through a range of enrichment opportunities. These include opportunities to learn in different settings, such as on residential visits and outdoors. The democratically elected pupil council represents all pupils' views to leaders. Pupils play a part in school development, such as by shaping the enrichment programme and rewards system. Pupils also share their ideas on facilities in the new school building. Younger pupils readily take on responsibilities in class, such as handing out and collecting books. Older pupils support their younger peers during outdoor activities.

Careers education provides pupils with the information they need to make the right choices post-16. While pupils are prepared appropriately to take the next steps when they leave,

leaders are still developing the school's careers education. Pupils' opportunities for meaningful work experience are limited.

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

Pupils thrive in the school's warm and highly supportive environment. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They know that staff understand their needs and act promptly to support them. Highly positive relationships lead to pupils feeling a deep sense of belonging. Pupils, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs, settle into school quickly. They build confidence and self-esteem and become ready to learn, often after long periods away from formal education.

Pupils benefit from a well-designed curriculum. Staff reduce barriers to pupils' learning with thoughtful adaptations and well-focused actions. This includes, for example, adjustments to individual timetables and effective therapeutic support. Typically, pupils achieve well from their different starting points.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They attend regularly, with many pupils improving previously low attendance. Pupils feel safe in school. They participate in lessons well and are confident to share their ideas with others. Pupils are proud of their successes. Leaders' high expectations and clear routines mean that pupils know what is expected of them. Most pupils learn to manage their emotions and behave well. Pupils who need additional support with this receive the help that they need to improve. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any issues quickly.

Pupils access a range of experiences, including opportunities to learn in different settings. Activities, such as outdoor learning, cycling and trips to London, complement pupils' learning in school. Pupils build wider skills, such as teamwork, resilience and cultural awareness as a result. The school council represents pupils' views. Pupils contribute well to positive changes in school life.

Pupils learn about the options open to them when they leave school. Typically, they are well prepared to take the next steps in education or employment. The careers education programme is still developing. As a result, pupils' access to meaningful work experience is limited.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff routinely support precise, well-informed checks on learning and set clear targets for pupils' progress so that any gaps in learning are closed quickly.
- Leaders should embed further refinements to the careers education programme so that pupils have opportunities to experience meaningful work experience and work-related learning.

- The trust should ensure sufficient leadership capacity to continue to secure ongoing improvements as the school grows.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Beckmead 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) Dr Jonty Clark, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Laurence Nesbitt. There is an associate headteacher, Liam Collins, who is also responsible for this school.

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 pupils, leaders and staff, the CEO, the chair of the board of trustees and other trust leaders during the inspection. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

There has been a series of leadership changes.

Acting headteacher: Lucy Goodman

Lead inspector:

Christine Dick, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspector:

Lynda Walker, 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

16

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.

School capacity

64

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.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

56.25%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

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

100.00%

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.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0.00%

What does this mean?

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

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).

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
2024/25 (3 term)	20.4%
2023/24 (3 term)	18.7%

Persistent absence

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

Year	This school
2024/25 (3 term)	55.6%
2023/24 (3 term)	50.0%

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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