

The Hathershaw College

Address: Bellfield Avenue, Hathershaw, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL8 3EP

Unique reference number (URN): 137039

Inspection report: 14 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' attendance. This includes working closely with other schools to determine effective strategies to support pupils to attend regularly. Leaders analyse attendance information closely. They spot and intervene quickly when patterns of absence appear. Leaders actively engage with pupils and their families to help overcome any barriers. Staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders work effectively with the local authority to secure support for the most vulnerable pupils when needed. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged attend well.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have put in place clear routines, which most pupils follow. In lessons, behaviour is mostly calm and purposeful. Learning typically continues without disruption. Attitudes to learning are largely positive. During social times, most pupils follow the school's expectations. Staff deal with any boisterous behaviour quickly. They apply the behaviour policy fairly and consistently. Discrimination and harassment are not tolerated. Pupils are generally respectful to one another. If pupils do not show respect or follow behaviour expectations, sanctions are used proportionately. For a minority of pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour, leaders put appropriate support in place to help them.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

This is an inclusive community where pupils experience a positive sense of belonging. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified quickly. Pupils with specific needs, such as those with impaired hearing, are supported well by specialist staff. This helps pupils to successfully access the curriculum alongside their peers.

Leaders work effectively with outside experts to reach decisions that put pupils' interests first. Leaders establish positive relationships with external agencies, including professionals who support children in care and others with social care needs. These professionals speak highly of the school's support for pupils.

Staff understand the strategies they should use to help pupils to succeed. Most staff make suitable adaptations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can access learning. For example, staff use writing templates to model and support extended writing for pupils so that barriers to literacy are reduced. However, the way staff adapt learning for pupils is not consistently effective across all lessons.

Leaders use additional funding carefully to support disadvantaged pupils' attendance and academic learning. As a result, these pupils attend school regularly and achieve well. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the same access to wider opportunities as their peers. Pupils, including those with SEND, who need support to develop their independence benefit from trips specifically designed to do so.

The personal development programme is well designed. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about fundamental British values such as tolerance and respect. Largely, pupils make the right choices because of what they have learned. Pupils have a secure understanding of relevant topics such as healthy relationships, online safety and the negative impact of sexism and misogyny. They are taught about these topics at an age-appropriate time and are developing their understanding of how to apply this learning in their own lives.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is delivered in such a way that all pupils can access it. For example, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn about the changes to their bodies in young adulthood in personalised sessions. The school's pastoral team work closely with leaders to ensure that any emerging issues in the school, local or national community are addressed. For example, external visitors regularly support pupils to recognise the risks of knife crime, gang behaviour and substance abuse.

There are various opportunities for pupils to take part in clubs and activities, including bowling and trips to the cinema, and the seaside. Leaders track pupils' participation in these activities to ensure all pupils can take part. For example, they check that any pupils who face barriers to their attendance are supported to join in. Participation for most pupils, however, is low. Leaders are working towards ensuring that more pupils benefit from what the school offers them.

Leaders have designed a careers programme that ensures that pupils access detailed information about a wide range of future opportunities. This supports them to make informed choices. Pupils, including those with SEND, are well prepared in this regard as they move on to their next steps. As a result, most pupils go on to successful destinations in further education, employment, or training.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils have not achieved well enough by the time they leave Hathershaw. In 2025, most pupils attained below national averages in their examinations at the end of key stage 4. Despite this, disadvantaged pupils' attainment is broadly in line with similar pupils nationally. Leaders have put in place more rigorous systems to ensure that teachers make increasingly accurate checks on pupils' learning. As a result, some teachers are beginning to address pupils' misconceptions. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are being filled. However, these new systems are taking time to embed across all subjects and classes and have yet to demonstrate a sustained impact on pupils' learning and examination results.

Pupils benefit from well-considered approaches to reading across the curriculum. Consequently, reading is improving. Pupils who struggle with reading receive effective support so that they catch up with their peers and access the curriculum successfully.

However, some older pupils, such as those in Year 11, do not receive the help they need to close the gaps in their reading skills.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Recently, leaders have made substantial changes to the school's chosen teaching strategies, including the introduction of a new approach to the way lessons are delivered. However, there is still further work to do to ensure that, across subjects, teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly and consistently. Although teachers are beginning to use assessment information to understand pupils' learning more accurately, pupils do not currently make the progress that they should through the curriculum.

Leaders' work to improve curriculum and teaching means that they have a more accurate grasp of the quality of teaching and the curriculum. They have established higher expectations. The curriculum is increasingly ambitious and, in many subjects, is carefully designed and well ordered. Staff identify and teach the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember.

Leaders have focused on improving pupils' skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. For instance, pupils who struggle to read fluently receive effective support that helps them to read more confidently. Nevertheless, leaders' actions to support pupils with their writing skills are less well developed.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Until recently, leaders did not make changes to bring about improvements quickly enough. Leaders' and governors' current actions are suitably targeted to secure necessary improvements. However, many of their renewed strategies have been implemented recently and it is too soon to see if they will have a sustained impact on the curriculum, teaching and pupils' achievement.

Governors and trustees understand their roles and responsibilities. They have strengthened the effectiveness of leadership and governance since the last inspection. They hold school leaders to account appropriately. Leaders at all levels are ambitious and determined to improve the school further. They have established a number of purposeful working partnerships with other schools and specialist professionals to support continued improvements and staff training.

Leaders recognise that the school is going through a period of change and some staff feel their workload is not considered well enough. Leaders are taking steps to ensure that staff are supported, including through the provision of extra pastoral support. Staff, including early career teachers, speak positively about the professional learning opportunities leaders provide.

Leaders engage with the local community and parents and carers. They acknowledge that, for some families, there is more work to be done to build positive relationships. However,

most parents would recommend the school to another family and consider that their children are safe and enjoying school.

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

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy their learning and are positive about the support they receive from teachers to help them to improve. In lessons, behaviour is positive. Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff. They appreciate that staff care for them and check on their wellbeing. Pupils are confident to report any worries that they may have. They trust that staff will deal with any bullying quickly. Most pupils are happy to attend school each day. They understand the school's rules and expectations, and most follow the routines expected of them.

There is a range of opportunities which pupils can enjoy to develop their talents and interests. These include learning British Sign Language, crafts, arts, sports teams and taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. They are taught how to keep safe both online and how to manage risks in life. Pupils learn about democracy and tolerance, which helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about diverse cultures, religions and the importance of respecting others despite their differences. They celebrate these through a range of cultural days.

Pupils with hearing impairments are well supported and fully participate in all that the school has to offer. Pupils who may face other barriers to their learning or wellbeing have their needs met.

Pupils do not achieve well in national examinations at the of Year 11. Leaders have begun work to improve the curriculum and teaching but teachers' checks on pupils' learning are not precise enough to ensure that all pupils make secure progress through the curriculum. Pupils are not as well prepared for the next steps in their learning as they should be.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all pupils achieve their best and that outcomes for pupils in national assessments improve.
 - Leaders should support teachers to use assessment procedures with precision across the curriculum to ensure that pupils' misconceptions are identified at the earliest stages. This should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are addressed through effective teaching to help all pupils to catch up and keep up with the curriculum, including in reading and writing.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of Pinnacle 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), Nick Lowry, and overseen by a board of trustees chaired by Dominic Wall.

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 principal and school and trust leaders during the inspection. An inspector spoke with the CEO, members of the local governing body, members of the board of trustees and local authority leaders.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

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 includes provision for 18 pupils with sensory and/or physical needs, specifically hearing impairment.

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision. This provision is unregistered.

The school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. An interim principal has been appointed and a new CEO of the trust has taken up post. A new chair of trustees and chair of the local governing body have also been appointed.

Interim Principal: Rob Logan

Lead inspector:

Lisa Corrigan, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stephanie Gill, Ofsted Inspector

Phil Smith, Ofsted Inspector

Kelly Leonard, Ofsted Inspector

Michael Wright, 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 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,051

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: 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

48.91%

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

4.38%

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

16.46%

Above 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 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

HI - Hearing Impairment

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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 (revised)	26.8%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37.6%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.9%	45.3%	Close to average

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 (revised)	39.3	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.0	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	42.5	46.3	Close to average

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)	-0.23	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.07	-0.03	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' 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 (revised)	17.4%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	26.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25.6%	25.2%	Close to average

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 (revised)	35.8	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35.1	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	36.5	35.0	Close to average

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)	-0.65	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.41	-0.57	Close to average

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 (revised)	17.4%	53.1%	-35.7 pp
2023/24 (final)	26.2%	53.1%	-26.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	25.6%	52.4%	-26.9 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 (revised)	35.8	50.4	-14.6
2023/24 (final)	35.1	50.0	-14.9
2022/23 (final)	36.5	50.3	-13.8

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)	-0.65	0.16	-0.82

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	-0.41	0.17	-0.58

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 (provisional)	87%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	96%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	93%	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 (2 term)	7.5%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.8%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.7%	9.0%	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 (2 term)	25.4%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	25.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	30.5%	26.5%	Close to average

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright