

Waverton Community Primary School

Address: Common Lane, Waverton, Common Lane Waverton, Chester, Cheshire, CH3 7QT

Unique reference number (URN): 111106

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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well. In national tests, most pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Results have been above the national average for 3 years. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the national average, reflecting the school's clear priority for early reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils are supported with an approach tailored to each pupil, reflecting the small number of disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders have not fully ensured that teaching is appropriately challenging for some pupils. This means that some pupils do not build a deep enough knowledge to secure outcomes with greater depth. This is particularly true for writing, where fewer pupils reach greater depth in writing than seen nationally. This remains an area that leaders are working to address.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Rates of attendance for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, are above the national average. Leaders prioritise attendance. They work proactively with families to understand and remove barriers where pupils struggle to attend regularly. As a result, persistent absence is well below the national average. Leaders demonstrate detailed knowledge of individual pupils' circumstances, putting targeted support in place swiftly where it is needed.

Most pupils meet leaders' high expectations for their behaviour. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and at social times. Older pupils engage positively with younger ones. Interactions between pupils and staff are typically polite and respectful. Leaders have created a culture in which staff know pupils well and take care to support individual needs, including making reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND. Leaders do not tolerate bullying, discrimination or harassment, and they act promptly when incidents occur. As a result of leaders' positive impact on behaviour for all pupils, the number of suspensions has reduced from the previous year. However, some low-level disruption in lessons affects the learning of other pupils at times. This is not consistent with the calm and orderly environment seen across the rest of the school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that is carefully sequenced. It sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn across all subjects. Learning includes activities that help pupils to recall prior learning. Pupils enjoy using the class book to record learning and look back on what they have learned over time. They build their knowledge well as they move through the school.

Leaders ensure pupils at the early stages of reading follow a systematic phonics programme. Staff teach this effectively. Books are matched to the phase pupils know, and reading routines are well established across key stage 1. Pupils read widely and enjoy time spent in the library area reading for pleasure.

Leaders provide subject leaders with dedicated time to develop their subjects. Training enables teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers draw on their knowledge of pupils' needs and adapt their teaching for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities well.

In classes, teachers check understanding and address misconceptions in the moment. However, these checks do not consistently reshape teaching across all year groups. As a result, some pupils do not always reach tasks that fully challenge them.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders know pupils well and identify barriers to learning promptly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those who face other barriers to learning. Staff work closely with families and external professionals to ensure that support is appropriate. Leaders ensure that parents and carers are involved in the review of individual learning plans. Many parents value the relationships they have with staff and the support their children receive.

Leaders provide staff with training related to SEND to identify, monitor and meet pupils' needs. As a result, most staff understand pupils' needs and how to support them to overcome barriers to learning. Teachers adapt tasks and provide additional help so that pupils can access learning. This means most pupils with SEND can access the curriculum successfully and learn alongside their peers.

The school uses the additional funding carefully to support individual pupils, with a targeted approach that reflects the school's small cohort. Leaders carefully monitor the impact of support that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils benefit from. Termly pupil progress meetings and learning plans are reviewed and adjusted in response to pupils' progress.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders evaluate the school's work regularly and focus on the most important areas that need to be developed. Their oversight helps them to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They make decisions based on what pupils most need. There have been changes in leadership since the last inspection. Leaders have established clear priorities and a steady approach to improvement. For example, leaders recognise that further work is needed to develop the early years and greater depth of writing across the school.

Governors provide effective support and challenge. They discuss areas such as attendance, teaching and the use of additional funding with leaders, and they hold leaders to account for key aspects of their work. Governors know the school well and understand its priorities. They meet their statutory duties, for example ensuring that the school's funds are spent well to benefit the pupils.

Staff speak positively about working at the school. They describe leaders as supportive and approachable. Staff value how leaders consider their workload and wellbeing. They feel trusted to do their jobs well. They engage with the training that leaders provide and work with local partnerships to strengthen their practice.

Many parents and carers are positive about the care and education their children receive. They describe the school as nurturing and welcoming. Parents value the communication that they receive and the way that leaders respond to concerns. This builds trust and positive relationships between the school and its community.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a clear and coherent programme of personal development. It helps pupils build their knowledge and character. Pupils learn about diversity and difference through assemblies, themed events and class lessons. They take part in celebrations of religious and cultural festivals, supported by families and visitors from a range of faiths. These experiences help pupils develop empathy and mutual respect. Older pupils can explain the rule of law and recently created party manifestos during the local elections to explore these ideas in practice.

Leaders give pupils real responsibility in school life. Many take on elected and appointed roles, such as parliament representatives, house captains, librarians and safety officers. These roles allow pupils to contribute to the wider school community and to lead assemblies. Pupils also play an active part in the local community. For example, they visit a nearby lunch club to take part in craft activities with older friends. These opportunities build pupils' confidence, sense of responsibility and understanding of fundamental British values.

The relationships and health education curriculum is age-appropriate. It teaches pupils about healthy and unhealthy relationships, different family structures and online and offline risks. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), take part in this curriculum. As a result, pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and how to make healthy choices in their daily lives.

Leaders track pupils' participation in clubs and enrichment activities. This helps them identify gaps and remove barriers for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. As a result, more pupils now take up the wide range of sporting, creative and enrichment opportunities on offer, such as residential trips, cooking and music lessons. These experiences broaden pupils' interests and help them develop confidence and skills beyond the classroom.

Needs attention

Early years

Needs attention 

The quality of staff's interactions with children in the early years is not consistently effective. Staff do not always use talk, modelling or questioning well enough to extend children's vocabulary or deepen their learning. As a result, some children do not make the progress they could in some areas of learning. Leaders are starting to take effective action. They

understand the importance of identifying children's starting points accurately and improving the curriculum and the learning environment so that children can learn and develop fully.

However, by the end of Reception, many achieve well. Staff identify children's needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, quickly and put targeted support in place. This helps children with identified needs to build on what they know and can do over time.

Early reading is prioritised as soon as children join the school. Children develop their phonics knowledge in small steps and improve the accuracy of their reading. Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers, ensuring a shared understanding of what children are learning and how well they are developing at home and in school. Children are happy, and they feel safe and secure in school.

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

Pupils at Waverton Community Primary School are part of a close-knit village school where they are known well and cared for by staff. They are guided by the school's values of respect, resilience and responsibility. This is reflected in the way pupils speak to, and about, one another and take pride in belonging to their school community.

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. They build knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects, and, over time, become confident readers and mathematicians. Pupils delight in learning new knowledge, from studying three-dimensional work based on Alberto Giacometti, to finding out about how and why Roman roads were built. Pupils who face barriers to their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive support that enables them to progress well. Pupils are prepared well for their next steps. In the early years, however, expectations for what children can achieve, given their starting points, are not high enough. Staff interactions do not consistently support children to learn and develop as well as they could.

Pupils feel safe and want to come to school. As a result, pupils' attendance is high. They know who to turn to if something worries them. From their first days in school, children learn to socialise and follow routines. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils engage cooperatively at social times, and older pupils set a positive example for younger ones. When instances of bullying or unkind behaviour occur, most pupils feel confident that staff will act effectively.

Beyond the classroom, pupils benefit from a rich wider offer. This ranges from residential trips to outdoor learning activities. The school offers a wide range of clubs and activities, including musical and sporting experiences. These opportunities develop pupils' character and sense of responsibility while fostering talents and interests.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff in the early years use high-quality interactions to extend children's language and deepen learning, responding precisely to children's ages, stages and starting points.
 - Leaders should raise expectations for what children in the early years can achieve, ensuring that progress is clear across the year and that children learn and develop as successfully as they can.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should take action to strengthen their oversight of key systems and records, so that decisions are clearly evidence-based and governors can hold leaders to account with confidence.
 - Leaders should ensure that teaching of writing across all year groups consistently challenges pupils who are capable of achieving beyond the expected standard, so that attainment in writing at greater depth improves in line with national expectations.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Tracy Little.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our updated 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 and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. She also spoke with a group of governors that included the chair of the governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Carla Cartwright

Lead inspector:

Dianne Holcroft, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Saeeda Ishaq, Ofsted Inspector

Juliet Francis, 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

201

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

210

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

2.49%

Well 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

1.99%

Below 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

6.47%

Well 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 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	76%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	77%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	84%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	97%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	76%	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	87%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	97%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	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	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	90%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	38%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	63%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	63%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average

‘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 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	38%	68%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 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	63%	78%	-15 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	67%	77%	-11 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	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	67%	79%	-13 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 (2 term)	2.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.2%	5.9%	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)	2.8%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.5%	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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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