

Wybunbury Delves CofE Primary School

Address: Bridge Street, Wybunbury, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 7NE

Unique reference number (URN): 144381

Inspection report: 3 February 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 attend very well, with rates consistently above the national average, including for pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders monitor attendance closely and intervene promptly when patterns of absence emerge. They work with families to reduce any barriers and provide extra support. Leaders' focused actions ensure all pupils can engage fully in lessons, access the full curriculum, and take part in school life without disruption. This has a demonstrable impact on pupils' progress through the curriculum and overall experience at school.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently very positive. Leaders have established a very effective, calm and orderly environment where pupils feel safe, respected and valued. Staff know pupils very well, apply behaviour policies consistently and respond promptly to any bullying or unkindness. Pupils are highly respectful, kind and caring towards staff and each other. They understand that discrimination is not tolerated. Staff carefully adapt support for pupils with SEND, enabling all pupils to participate fully in learning and school life. These very effective approaches ensure a positive, inclusive and thriving school community.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Provision across the early years, including for 2-year-old children, is highly effective. From the moment children enter the school, their curiosity and engagement are evident. They settle quickly, explore learning areas with confidence and build secure relationships with trusted adults. Staff extend children's vocabulary and deepen their thinking through consistently high-quality interactions. Children communicate about their ideas clearly and respond thoughtfully to questioning.

Reading is a priority. Children listen intently to stories and confidently discuss characters and events. Phonics teaching from the beginning of Reception enables children to secure the foundations of early reading and writing rapidly. This strong start supports accurate reading, secure pencil grip and confident early number. This prepares children very well for Year 1.

The curriculum is carefully organised and supports children's progress from the 2-year-old provision through to Reception. Staff carefully consider children's starting points, ensuring that disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive timely, effective support. The school's 2 and 3-year-old provision is nurturing and promotes early independence.

Children develop resilience and work well with one another. The school has established effective partnerships with parents and carers. These further enhance learning and wellbeing, enabling children to transition smoothly into Year 1 as confident, capable learners.

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are central to the school's work. Adults set high expectations. They make time for pupils to talk, reflect and listen. Pupils understand the school motto, 'Towards the Light', as a commitment to kindness and service to others. Pupils explore different beliefs and experiences. They learn why honesty matters and how actions have consequences. Staff encourage sensitive discussion of themes such as equality, discrimination and injustice. Visitors, including members of the emergency services, enrich learning and reinforce messages about right and wrong. This helps pupils to develop empathy and a strong moral compass.

Pupils encounter a wide range of faiths and cultures. These experiences prompt thoughtful discussion and deepen understanding. Pupils learn to appreciate diversity and life beyond their immediate community.

The programme for personal development is carefully designed. Leaders review it regularly so that it remains responsive to pupils' needs. Pupils learn how to maintain their physical and mental health. They practise calming techniques and understand when and how to seek help. Pupils benefit from thorough and well-coordinated pastoral support. Staff act swiftly when concerns arise.

The school teaches relationships and health education with care. Pupils learn how to form respectful friendships. They understand how to stay safe online, including how to protect their privacy and recognise harmful content. They also learn about everyday risks, such as road safety. Pupils are clear that everyone deserves respect. They reject unkind language, for example, insults linked to gender.

Disadvantaged pupils access the school's many opportunities equally because leaders successfully reduce barriers to participation. Pupils learn about democracy through voting for class representatives. Older pupils benefit from early careers guidance and encounters with employers. As a result, pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education. They develop confidence, resilience and a strong sense of social responsibility.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

In the early years, staff ensure that children have firm foundations in reading, writing and number through expert teaching and careful assessment. As pupils move up through the school, they build knowledge and skills steadily and make progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Across the whole curriculum, pupils develop a broad and increasingly secure body of knowledge over time.

On the whole, pupils achieve well. However, in some aspects of writing, some pupils do not develop their handwriting and spelling as quickly as they should. This includes a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. At times, staff do not identify or address gaps in these skills swiftly enough to prevent them from hindering pupils'

learning. Despite this, by the end of Year 6, published results of national tests are typically close to average or better. Pupils are well prepared for the academic demands of secondary school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear and realistic understanding of how well the curriculum works day to day. They check on this regularly and help staff to teach with greater clarity and purpose. Leaders organise the curriculum so that pupils revisit important ideas and deepen their understanding as they move up through school. Staff know what pupils have learned previously and use this knowledge to plan learning that builds logically. For example, in Year 2 science, pupils use what they already know about animals' diets to help them to learn about food chains.

Leaders invest in developing staff expertise. Staff benefit from training that strengthens their subject knowledge and helps them to introduce new concepts with precision. Teachers introduce, and expect pupils to use, ambitious vocabulary. Pupils think deeply because teachers' explanations are clear and questioning is purposeful. For example, in Year 6 personal social and health education, pupils explore the qualities of effective leaders and link these to their experiences and ambitions.

Staff know pupils well and provide effective support for those who need it. Occasionally, for a small number of pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities, this support is not as sharply focused as it could be. As a result, these pupils do not consistently build as securely as they might on what they already know.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders create an environment where pupils feel included and cared for. Staff know vulnerable pupils and their individual circumstances well. Leaders identify pupils' needs early. They work closely with families and external professionals to provide timely help. Leaders coordinate a wide range of support so that pupils get what they need.

Staff develop expertise that helps them to guide pupils in lessons. Staff provide support that helps pupils to access the curriculum and make progress through it. Pupils usually engage fully in learning because of the adaptations that staff make. Leaders track pupils' progress and review the impact of their provision. They change approaches when necessary to ensure pupils continue to make progress. However, a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities sometimes do not benefit as much as intended. On occasion, adjustments to teaching are not well matched to pupils' needs.

Leaders use funding thoughtfully to improve outcomes for pupils. They reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing and offer timely, appropriate assistance. Disadvantaged pupils receive additional help to access learning and participate fully in school life. This reflects the caring and supportive environment that leaders have built.

Leaders identify the right priorities and plan actions that support pupils' learning. They check the impact of their decisions and adjust their approach when needed. Leaders place pupils' needs at the centre of their work, including pupils who are disadvantaged, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to social care. They act to reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing. However, the school's work to improve handwriting and spelling has not successfully secured stronger outcomes for pupils.

Staff benefit from a programme of professional learning that builds expertise over time. This training is research-informed and typically supports consistent practice across classrooms. Leaders think carefully about the effect of new initiatives on staff workload. Leaders support staff's wellbeing and listen to their views.

Governors understand their statutory duties and carry them out with care. They check how leaders use resources and provide support and challenge that help the school improve. Governors visit the school, speak with pupils and staff, and review information so that they can check that systems work as intended. They know their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Governors also reflect on workload and wellbeing when discussing school priorities.

Leaders engage with parents and carers in ways that support pupils' learning and welfare. They seek feedback and use it to shape improvement. Leaders ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged or who face additional challenges.

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

At Wybunbury Delves, pupils of all ages benefit from a caring and welcoming environment. Pupils feel valued, supported and encouraged to shine. They achieve well and enjoy learning. The curriculum promotes curiosity. It encourages pupils to ask questions and explore new ideas.

In the early years, children get off to a flying start. They experience high-quality interactions with staff. This ensures that children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. Across key stages, pupils benefit from effective teaching and a broad curriculum that helps them build knowledge securely over time. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make secure progress from their starting points. Staff identify barriers to learning and wellbeing early and address them effectively.

Pupils feel a sense of belonging. Staff know every child well and build trusting relationships that help pupils feel safe and confident. Pupils describe the school as a family where adults listen and offer support. Rich experiences beyond the classroom deepen pupils' learning and strengthen understanding. Pupils take part in residential visits and curriculum-linked trips, including visits to the zoo and a recreated Victorian working town. These experiences make learning memorable. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of clubs, such as craft, Lego, drawing and football, which help them develop interests and confidence.

Pupils thrive in calm and supportive surroundings. Behaviour is positive and respectful. Pupils feel safe and report that staff deal with any unkind behaviour quickly and effectively. Pupils want to come to school. Their rates of attendance are high.

Older pupils take pride in their leadership roles. Buddies, school councillors, ambassadors and house captains all contribute to the smooth running of the school. These responsibilities develop teamwork, confidence and pupils' strong understanding of their role in the school and wider community.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in handwriting and spelling are consistently identified and addressed promptly, so that all pupils are well prepared for their next steps in learning, and that this is reflected in pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2.
 - Leaders should ensure that adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well planned and consistently implemented so that activities match pupils' needs, enabling them to build securely on what they know and can do.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Chester Diocesan 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 (CEO), Neil Dixon, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Mason.

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 CEO, headteacher, other school and trust leaders and staff during the inspection. They also spoke with a representative of the diocese, a representative of the local authority and members of the local governing board, including the chair and a trustee.

This school is registered as having an Anglican religious character. The school is part of the Diocese of Chester and had its last section 48 inspection in January 2025.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mrs Kathryn Chesters

Lead inspector:

Frith Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Louise Smith, Ofsted Inspector

Joanne Hewson Hewson, 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 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

205

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

240

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)

12.15%

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

2.44%

Close to 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

12.68%

Close to 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	69%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	50%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	74%	60%	Above

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	82%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	89%	73%	Above

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	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Close to average

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	79%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	81%	73%	Above

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	43%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	71%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	50%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	50%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	50%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘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	43%	68%	-25 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	71%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	50%	78%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘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)	3.4%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.1%	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)	3.0%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	10.3%	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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