

Pikemere School

Address: Pikemere Road, Cheshire East, Alsager, Cheshire, ST7 2SW

Unique reference number (URN): 145036

Inspection report: 9 September 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 ●

Leaders have a very clear oversight of all aspects of attendance and behaviour. Their actions are carefully planned to have the most impact on improvement.

Pupils attend regularly because they value the high-quality education they receive. They do not want to miss a day of important learning. Leaders use their detailed knowledge of individual pupils and families to put support in place to reduce any barriers to regular attendance. Parents and carers feel able to ask for support if they need it. A very low number of pupils are persistently absent. This is because leaders' monitoring of pupils' attendance is highly effective. It enables them to offer support at the earliest opportunity, with tangible impact.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are impressive. They are very clear that any form of unkind behaviour, including bullying, would never be tolerated. Pupils rarely need any reminders from staff about the behaviour expectations. They behave well when no one is watching, because they know it is the right thing to do. Pupils look out for each other. They told inspectors that this is important to them because they are all part of the school family. Pupils are extremely polite and respectful. This prepares them very well for their lives beyond school.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders make their vision a reality for all pupils to be known as individuals at Pikemere School. Expert staff check that systems in place for identifying pupils' needs and vulnerabilities are highly effective. Staff receive the training that they need to do this well. Consequently, pupils' emerging needs are known at the earliest opportunity. Leaders waste no time in securing additional support and guidance where this is needed.

Leaders make regular checks on the effectiveness of the support in place for pupils. Swift changes are made where they are needed to help pupils to make the most progress. Staff skilfully recognise even the smallest steps forward. They enable all pupils to experience what success feels like.

Leaders go above and beyond in their mission to uncover even the smallest barriers, or potential barriers to learning or engagement. For example, siblings of pupils who have additional needs or vulnerabilities are invited to additional nurture groups and enrichment sessions.

Although there are only a very small number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding, leaders take a great deal of care to get the offer right for them. They are meticulous in how they check on the impact of decisions made on each pupil's education experience.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

The school's published outcomes are largely above the national average. Pupils achieve very well both in their academic studies and in their wider development. Pupils have the secure foundations of learning that they need to build on in the future. This begins in the early years where children quickly secure the important knowledge and skills they need to prepare them well for the curriculum in Year 1.

Pupils progress well from their starting points in the broad range of subjects they learn. Where staff have any concerns about the progress pupils make, swift actions are taken with highly positive impact on pupils' learning and development.

Leaders balance pupils' academic success with a high level of care and consideration for their emotional wellbeing. This well-thought-out approach supports all aspects of pupils' development and enables them to thrive. Consequently, pupils leave the school very well prepared for their next phase of education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear oversight of the quality of the curriculum and teaching from early years right through to the end of key stage 2. Their careful monitoring gives them a valuable insight into pupils' experience of the curriculum across the school.

Pupils learn a curriculum that is carefully designed. Teachers skilfully make changes to what is taught and when. They have the secure subject knowledge that they need to explain new learning clearly. This helps pupils to make good progress through the curriculum.

Pupils secure the essential reading, writing and mathematics skills and knowledge that they need to build on for later learning. Pupils who need it receive the additional support that they need to deepen their understanding. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to practise their learning in advance of whole-class teaching. This helps pupils to recall previous knowledge and to build on what they already know. Pupils have regular opportunities to revisit previous learning. However, at times, the feedback that some pupils receive about how to improve is not as clear as it could be.

Teachers have an impressive knowledge of how to adapt teaching to meet pupils' individual needs. This helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to learn well alongside their peers.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders are knowledgeable about the quality of education the school provides in the early years. Children in the early years benefit from a well-considered curriculum that supports them to build on what they already know. Staff balance designing activities based on children's interests with being clear about the key knowledge children need to gain. Teachers understand how young children learn. They balance well-planned interactions with

knowing when to step back to encourage children to build independence. As a result, children develop into curious and confident learners.

Children in the early years are well cared for. Staff appreciate and understand their stage of development and do what they can to help pupils feel safe and secure. For example, children quickly recognise the established routines of the setting.

Staff have a secure understanding of the school's approach to early reading. They share useful information with parents about how to support learning at home. Children quickly learn to recognise and join in with a range of songs and rhymes. This readily supports their vocabulary development.

Staff in the early years receive the training that they need to identify any concerns about pupils' learning or wellbeing. As a result, pupils who need it receive support from external agencies and regular monitoring of their progress.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Even though the school is highly successful, leaders show a relentless determination to get it right for pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable. Leaders effectively prioritise actions for school improvement. They make regular meaningful checks on the impact of their actions. Pupils are at the heart of leaders' decision-making across all aspects of the school.

The trust and the local governing board maintain a clear and accurate oversight of the education pupils receive. They hold leaders to account for their actions. The views of all stakeholders are considered when reviewing the school's effectiveness. The trust seeks the relevant assurances about pupils' learning and how they are kept safe on a regular basis.

Staff feel well supported in their roles. They value the training that they receive and the time they have to embed new ideas. Staff say that leaders show genuine care for their workload and wellbeing. They feel able to raise any concerns with leaders with a high level of confidence for a positive resolution. Staff who are at the start of their career receive additional support to develop in their roles.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school's impact on their children. They particularly praise leaders for how well they know each pupil and how quick they respond to any small issues that arise. 'It is a privilege to be part of this school community' was a typical comment from a parent.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders use their in-depth understanding of the school's context to plan an effective offer for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn a curriculum for personal, social, moral and economic education that gives them the knowledge that they need for successful further learning. Pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of the range of ways that people are different. That said, leaders recognise that there is more to do to help some pupils develop a detailed knowledge of the range of ways that people live differently in modern Britain.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through carefully planned units of work, assemblies, visiting speakers and workshops. Leaders make sure that the content of pupils' learning about safety reflects current local issues. This not only helps pupils to be safe in school but also within the local community.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships through a carefully considered curriculum. They know that all healthy relationships rely on trust. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of who they could go to for help and support if something worries them. They have faith in staff to act quickly if they share concerns with them.

Staff provide a range of opportunities for pupils to develop talents and interests. These span across a variety of interests, such as music and sport. Staff have high expectations for what pupils will achieve within the enrichment offer. For example, pupils take part in musical performances at a high level. Leaders make sure that all pupils can benefit from the offer in place. Financial barriers do not prevent any pupil from taking part.

Pupils benefit from well-considered pastoral support. Staff know each child as an individual. This enables them to identify what actions will make the biggest difference in reducing any barriers to learning or wellbeing.

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

Pikemere School is a warm, caring and inclusive school where pupils are genuinely known, valued and supported as individuals. Pupils flourish in the warm and supportive environment that staff create. Positive relationships feature throughout the school. Pupils feel safe and secure because they know that staff care deeply about their wellbeing.

By the time they leave the school, most pupils achieve above the national average in most subjects. They progress well from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or other vulnerabilities, thrive because staff know exactly what they need to succeed. Staff skilfully identify and remove any barriers to learning or wellbeing.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They know what appropriate behaviour is for different parts of the school day. Older children act as role models without being asked. They take responsibility for setting a culture where everyone is valued and encouraged to try their best. Pupils make decisions with careful thought for how their actions can impact others. Social times are vibrant and harmonious. Pupils make sure that no one is left out. They embody leaders' vision that no one is left behind and everyone is important.

Pupils do not worry about bullying. They struggle to remember a time when it happened and know that staff would deal with it quickly if it were to happen. Pupils look out for others and take genuine care if someone is upset. Where a small number of pupils find it difficult to reach leaders' high expectations, the support they receive helps them to quickly succeed.

Staff provide a range of opportunities for pupils to learn about the world we live in. Pupils are inquisitive and curious learners. They develop highly respectful attitudes towards difference. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should make sure that more pupils receive clear feedback about their learning so that they know how to improve.
 - Leaders should continue to develop the personal development offer so that more pupils develop a detailed knowledge of the full range of ways that people live differently in modern Britain.
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About this inspection

The school is part of Chancery Multi-Academy Trust. The chief executive officer is Louise Gohr. The chair of trustees is Ann Kowalska.

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 headteacher, senior leaders, staff and representatives from the trust and local governing board.

Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and spoke to some parents. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

The school offers a before- and after-school club.

Headteacher: Anthony Hughes

Lead inspector:

Jane Dennis, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Schelene Ferris, Ofsted Inspector

Alison Lawson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 9 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

254

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: 268

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)

7.91%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

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

6.69%

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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.39%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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 (final)	77%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	84%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	84%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	84%	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	82%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	81%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	91%	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	86%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	88%	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	47%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	50%	46%	Close to average
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	73%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	83%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
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	67%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	58%	Close to average
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	60%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average
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	47%	68%	-21 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	69%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	67%	-17 pp
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	73%	80%	-6 pp
2024/25 (final)	83%	81%	3 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
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	67%	78%	-11 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	78%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	78%	-11 pp
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	60%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	83%	81%	3 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	79%	-13 pp
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 (3 term)	3.6%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.7%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.8%	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 (3 term)	4.7%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	13.1%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	11.2%	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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