

Chesterton Primary School

URN: 143345 | Inspected: 09 December 2025

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.

Achievement

Expected standard

On the whole, pupils make suitable progress through the curriculum. This equips them well for later learning in secondary school. Pupils achieve well in reading. This is reflected in their achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check and outcomes at the end of Year 6 in the last two years. There have also been evident improvements in pupils' achievement in writing during this same time. However, pupils do not achieve as well as expected at the end of Year 6 in national tests in mathematics. Recent results have been affected by a significant number of pupils joining the school in Years 5 and 6 with gaps in their mathematical knowledge. While the school addressed many of these gaps, there was insufficient time to address all of them, resulting in lower outcomes in 2025. The current picture is far better. For example, for the last two years, pupils have achieved above national averages in the multiplication tables check at the end of Year 4. Ensuring that disadvantaged pupils achieve well is a clear focus for leaders and staff. In many respects, they are achieving as well as those nationally and, in the case of reading, achieving as well as all pupils nationally.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders, supported by the trust, make astute decisions about the school's curriculum. They have identified the crucial knowledge in each subject and year group that pupils need to learn over time. Skilled staff deliver the curriculum as expected. Consequently, pupils are typically ready for their

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in education. Staff identify gaps in learning and generally address these well. However, while teachers regularly check how well pupils learn, there are times when approaches to assessment are not used consistently to secure pupils' knowledge. This means that some pupils do not make progress through the curriculum as well as they could. The school is determined that pupils gain the important foundations in mathematics, reading and writing that they need to succeed. The development of pupils' communication and language skills underpins this. Leaders ensure that pupils learn to read as soon as possible. The school's phonics programme is delivered effectively. Pupils learn letter sounds and how to segment and blend words effectively. They practise these skills in their reading. Staff focus on ensuring that basic knowledge has been learned in mathematics and writing

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before pupils move on to other learning. They make appropriate adaptations to learning for pupils to remove barriers to success when needed. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn successfully alongside their peers through carefully selected use of technology and relevant resources or additional adult support.

Early years

Expected standard

Children make a positive start in the early years. The early years curriculum is well sequenced and adapted to children's specific starting points. This effective approach begins in the provision for two-year-old children. Staff focus on making sure that every child, particularly the most disadvantaged, is cared for and learns well. For example, the focus on physical development in the provision for two-year-olds helps to make sure that they are ready to hold a pencil with confidence in the Reception Year. Children develop the essential skills they need to underpin all other areas of learning by the time they leave the early years. Staff understand the need to focus on the development of children's communication and language skills. They ensure that their interactions with children are a high priority. Those children who need extra support with communication receive effective and focused support, for example through the 'time to talk' sessions. Children love to share books. Younger children explore sounds in the environment. Reception children learn the phonics they need to read and write with increasing confidence. Children are well prepared for Year 1. Staff work with Year 1 teachers to ensure that children make a smooth transition into their new classes. The school works in partnership with parents and carers. Parents are well informed. For instance, regular 'stay and play' sessions help them understand how best to support their children's learning at home.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders have established an effective, inclusive ethos with high expectations for all vulnerable pupils. The school's ambition for inclusion is palpable across classrooms and communal spaces. Leaders prioritise meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who are known (or previously known) to children's social care receive the tailored support they need to succeed educationally and socially. Staff are diligent in ensuring pupils' needs are identified early. Staff use effective strategies to address barriers to learning for all pupils. Leaders use comprehensive and well-considered systems to make sure that these strategies address pupils' needs effectively. For example, interventions for pupils with SEND are rigorously checked and skilfully adapted where necessary for maximum impact on pupils. Staff are well supported by leaders through high-quality professional learning and discussion. This enables them to provide purposeful and effective provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders are determined that disadvantaged pupils should thrive. They use pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils feel included and are successful in all aspects of school life. Leaders ensure that funding has the intended impact. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well here.

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Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are determined to make a positive difference for all pupils. They know pupils well, which helps to make astute decisions based on their individual needs. Parents and carers largely agree. One parent, typical of many views, commented: 'Every child is treated as an individual and their needs catered for in a very supportive and caring way.' Leaders ensure that staff receive suitable professional learning, both in relation to their individual role and in developing practice linked to whole-school priorities. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing. They provide staff with suitable support regarding their work and pastoral needs. Staff work well together as a team. They appreciate that leaders listen to them and have the best interests of the pupils at heart. The trust and local governors carry out their roles diligently. They provide effective challenge and support for leaders. This makes sure that leaders are focused on the right aspects to benefit pupils and that the school continues to improve. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to develop. They ensure that these priorities are a focus for improvement. In many respects, this is having a positive effect. For example, subject leaders are supported to fulfil their roles and focus on developing their subjects. However, in a few subjects, some of this work is at an earlier development stage. As a result, it has not fully impacted pupils' learning and achievement as well as possible across the curriculum.

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

Chesterton Primary School is a small school where leaders and staff get to know pupils and their families well. Leaders ensure that pupils are 'learning, growing and achieving'. To fulfil this motto, leaders have established high expectations of all pupils. Pupils typically rise to these expectations. They know that staff keep them safe and care for their individual needs deeply. Pupils enjoy learning a broad range of subjects. They typically achieve well from their starting points and are well prepared for their

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in education. Their educational and pastoral needs are well considered and supported. Relationships between staff, pupils and families are warm and positive. Pupils are kind and respectful. They behave well in lessons and at social times. They know that staff will help them with any issues of poor behaviour or if bullying should occur. Pupils attend school regularly because they and their families are well catered for. Leaders provide effective support to ensure that pupils attend well. This enables attendance at school to improve over time. Families appreciate this support. One parent's comment summed up the views of many when they stated, 'I don't know what I'd have done without them.' Pupils play an active role in school life by being part of the school council or as 'wellbeing ambassadors'. They enjoy clubs and activities that stimulate their talents and interests. Leaders listen to pupils' views and requests when making decisions about which clubs to offer. Pupils also engage in broad and rich opportunities to enhance their learning. For example, pupils describe how a trip to a Victorian-themed town enabled them to understand life and shopping during Victorian times. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are empathetic, and they learn to understand the perspectives of others. This includes, for example, participating in experiences that develop their awareness of different cultures and religions.

Next steps

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- Leaders should ensure that assessment strategies are used consistently well to support pupils in securing their learning over time.
- Leaders should strengthen subject leadership so that improvements in teaching and learning are embedded, and in turn, pupils learn well and achieve consistently highly across the curriculum.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils benefit from a rich, well-structured personal development programme that reflects the school's values. Pupils think deeply about their beliefs, respect others' views and explore moral issues. From the early years, the curriculum builds pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and fundamental British values. Through visits to places of worship, themed pupil-led assemblies and workshops, pupils broaden their outlook and stay informed about current affairs. They demonstrate effective social skills, work well together and help to shape an inclusive school community. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Across the personal, social and health education and relationships and sex education and health education curriculums, pupils develop appropriate, deep and detailed knowledge. This strengthens their self-awareness, helps them to understand risks to their wellbeing and make informed choices online and in the local community. They speak confidently about the impact of bullying, what makes healthy relationships and the importance of respect for all. Pupils also speak of their understanding that 'we are all different, but we are all friends'. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities access a full range of enrichment opportunities alongside their peers. These include leadership roles, clubs and trips, which build pupils' resilience, independence and confidence. Leaders monitor and adapt this offer carefully, keeping it relevant and impactful. The school is proactive in supporting and developing pupils' talents and interests. Disadvantaged pupils particularly benefit from music lessons. The school choir is proud to be active in the school and the local community. The school promotes pupils' aspirations for the future. Pupils learn about a wide range of careers through assemblies, workshops and themed career days. Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral care to support their wellbeing. This is because staff have detailed knowledge of each pupil. The school provides carefully crafted support to nurture those pupils who need it. Leaders maintain strong links with families, including, for example, through open communication and tailored workshops. This work is helping pupils be successful at school. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders systematically track attendance to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and benefit fully from their education. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages for all pupils. Leaders offer effective support to families and work closely with them to overcome any barriers to attendance. This consistent approach has led to a recent significant reduction in persistent absence. Leaders have established clear expectations for pupils' behaviour through a well-defined behaviour policy. Staff usually apply this with consistency. Behaviour across the

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school is generally positive. Pupils behave well in class and around school. They are keen to learn and develop positive attitudes to learning. Any low-level disruption to learning is dealt with well. Pupils are polite and respectful and show this, for instance, by holding doors open and being well mannered. Pupils who struggle with their behaviour are supported well. For example, they are given regular opportunities to take time to calm and refocus when needed. Pupils understand what bullying is and know how to report it to staff. Staff act quickly to prevent any issues from escalating. This results in incidents of bullying being rare and dealt with effectively. Leaders have created a culture where discrimination or harassment are not tolerated at this school.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/chesterton-primary-school-newcastle-under-lyme>