

Higher Lane Primary School

URN: 144575 | Inspected: 03 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 Needs attention

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some foundation subjects. They struggle to articulate what they know, and the quality of the work that they produce is not of a high enough standard because of the deficiencies in the previous curriculum. Pupils sometimes have difficulty in making connections between prior learning and new content. Although some disadvantaged pupils have not achieved well enough in the past in external writing and reading tests, leaders' recent improvements have helped these pupils to make more progress from their starting points. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils typically achieve well in national tests at the end of key stage 2. Leaders ensure that children in the early years secure the foundations that they need for future learning. Despite this, too many pupils in other year groups lack essential knowledge. For example, pupils' writing often contains inaccuracies, which limits their ability to achieve well enough across some other subjects.

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

Parents, carers, staff and pupils agree that Higher Lane Primary School is a happy place to learn. Each day, staff welcome pupils warmly as they arrive. Pupils attend regularly because they recognise the importance of learning. Staff actively support pupils' wellbeing and take time to understand them as individuals, including any barriers that they have to learning. This helps pupils to feel safe and valued. Pupils enjoy learning and typically achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. However, their progress in some other subjects is less secure. When this is the case, pupils do not retain and recall enough of their learning over time. Leaders have introduced positive changes to the curriculum, but in some subjects, pupils struggle to build new knowledge effectively. Pupils take great pride in belonging to the Higher Lane family. From the early years, they form trusting and supportive relationships with staff. Staff encourage pupils to grow into curious and confident learners. Pupils learn that their voice matters and they trust staff to respond quickly, when they raise concerns. Bullying is rare. Staff ensure that pupils know how to recognise it and how to access support, when they need it. Pupils demonstrate an impressive understanding of the world around them. This prepares them very well for life in modern Britain because they value and celebrate difference. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to showcase and develop their talents, including regular musical performances and sports competitions. Pupils are active in the local community and learn the value of helping and considering others. The school provides excellent support that enables all pupils to be able to benefit from the offer in place. For example, pupils who need it receive highly effective help to develop their resilience and confidence.

Next steps

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- Leaders should strengthen teachers' use of assessment across the wider curriculum to inform future teaching, to support pupils to know and remember more over time.
- Leaders should ensure that staff provide appropriate support to pupils to improve their writing and letter formation, so that all pupils can communicate their knowledge effectively and achieve well across the curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have carefully overhauled the curriculum in order to improve pupils' achievement. The curriculum now identifies the essential knowledge that pupils must learn. Staff have a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn from Nursery Year through to Year 6. Leaders provide carefully designed training that enables staff to understand and deliver the curriculum in line with the school's vision. The changes to the curriculum mean that it is sequenced with precision so that pupils now build new knowledge securely. Typically, teachers help pupils to address misconceptions. At times, teachers' checks on pupils' understanding in some subjects are not used well enough to inform future teaching so that pupils know and remember more. Staff have the subject knowledge they need to explain concepts clearly. They understand how the curriculum develops across each key stage. Staff adapt learning well for pupils who need it, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, some pupils benefit from the use of technology and extra opportunities to revisit previous learning. Staff maintain a focus on securing pupils' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics to underpin pupils' learning across the wider curriculum. This begins in the early years, when children regularly engage with nursery rhymes and traditional tales to develop a love of reading and an understanding of the basic letters and sounds.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years get off to a good start. This is because staff build warm relationships with them and their parents and carers. Children settle quickly into the established routines of the setting. They show independence when carrying out their daily routines, such as putting their coats and other belongings in the right places. Staff design learning opportunities that enable children to deepen their understanding of key areas of learning. Staff know children well as individuals. Interactions between staff and children promote vocabulary development and encourage children to be active in their learning. Staff are clear about the purpose of learning in each area, when children learn through play. This helps children to progress securely from their starting points and be well prepared for when they move to Year 1. Children in the early years begin to build their love of reading. Staff model their enjoyment of reading and provide a wide range of diverse books for children to explore. Children develop positive reading habits. They learn songs and rhymes off by heart, as well as a selection of traditional tales. This helps them to make predictions about what might happen next and gives older children ideas for their own writing.

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Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders demonstrate an unwavering commitment to understanding pupils' individual needs. Staff identify pupils' needs and barriers to learning promptly. This ensures that appropriate support is in place at the earliest opportunity. Leaders provide staff with well-structured training so that they know how best to support individual pupils. When necessary, staff collaborate with external agencies, including children's social care, to design and review tailored support packages. The school values its relationships with parents and carers. It actively seeks their input when determining appropriate

next steps

for pupils. Staff know pupils well and appreciate them as individuals. They use the information available to adapt learning so that it meets pupils' needs, including those in the school's resourced provision. Staff consider carefully how to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve well. They use additional resources, including the pupil premium funding, to remove barriers to learning. Leaders ensure that all pupils, regardless of their circumstances, are included fully in all aspects of school life. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in clubs, trips and residential visits, which enrich their time at the school. Leaders use alternative provision appropriately to support pupils' engagement with education.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and

areas for improvement

. They make sure that pupils are at the centre of their decision-making. Leaders continually look for ways to support disadvantaged pupils. They take appropriate action to improve the school, where they know there are weaknesses. For example, recent changes that leaders have made to the curriculum are starting to positively impact what pupils know and remember over time. Staff wellbeing and workload are carefully considered by leaders when they are making decisions to improve the school. Staff are proud to work at Higher Lane because of the clear vision that leaders set out and how pupils' wellbeing is prioritised. Leaders carefully craft a training package for staff based on their in-depth knowledge of different aspects of the school. They make regular checks on the impact of staff training on pupils' education. Staff at the early stages of their career value the expertise that leaders and other staff share with them. They receive the opportunities that they need and support from more experienced colleagues to hone their teaching skills. The vast majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They praise leaders for the care and consideration that staff show towards each pupil and their unique circumstances. Parents feel welcomed into the school as partners in their children's education. They benefit from a range of workshops provided by the school to help them to support pupils with their learning at home.

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The trust provides suitable support and challenge for school leaders. Those responsible for governance know and fulfil their statutory duties well. They make regular checks on the quality of education that pupils receive and how pupils are kept safe. Needs attention

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are carefully woven into school life. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging because they know that staff care for them deeply. They leave the school with a secure understanding of what is right and wrong. Pupils develop curiosity and knowledge of the world around them. They have highly respectful attitudes about people who may be different from them. This prepares them very well for life in modern Britain. Pupils talk with confidence about how their deep knowledge of different cultures and backgrounds helps them to understand stereotypes, discrimination and equality. Pupils benefit greatly from a vast range of opportunities to be active members of the school community. They learn that they can make a difference and that their actions have an impact on others. Through meaningful pupil leadership roles they develop their confidence, communication and resilience. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and know how they contribute to school life as active citizens. Pupils know that healthy relationships are based on trust. They learn about different types of relationships, which gives them a well-rounded understanding of the range of ways people can be different. Pupils learn about the risks associated with being online, while balancing this with the potential opportunities and benefits of using this technology safely. The school provides many ways for pupils to express themselves creatively. Pupils perform to a high standard in musical and theatrical performances. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can benefit fully from the school's extensive wider offer. There is an impressive level of effective pastoral support provided for pupils. This is meticulously designed to make sure that all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged, enjoy school, attend regularly and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium funding, attend school frequently because they value the importance of learning. Their attendance is typically above the national average. Leaders communicate with parents and carers about the importance of high attendance. The school draws on strong relationships with parents to provide support that helps pupils' attendance to improve. Leaders monitor attendance closely and inform parents quickly, where improvements are needed. This rigorous monitoring enables families to access the help they need and ensures that persistent absence is consistently below the national average. Pupils behave well because staff establish clear expectations for behaviour and conduct. Pupils act with kindness and courtesy, and typically show positive attitudes to learning.

When pupils struggle to meet the school's high expectations, their behaviour improves over time as a result of

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the targeted support they receive. Staff model the values they expect pupils to uphold, showing high levels of care and consideration for both pupils' academic progress and their personal development. Bullying is very rare because pupils understand the importance of caring for others. They learn to speak up for what is right and support each other to demonstrate positive and respectful attitudes.

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/higher-lane-primary-school-manchester>