

Green Lane Church of England Primary School

Address: Green Lane, Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 8LG

Unique reference number (URN): 149902

Inspection report: 15 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 ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children do extremely well in early years. Skilled leadership has ensured that the 'Happy Hollow' is a jewel in the school's crown. Children achieve well across the different areas of learning.

Staff know the abilities and any additional needs of children when they arrive. This is due, in part, to highly effective partnership work with parents and carers.

The curriculum is well designed. Children's knowledge and skills develop step by step. Staff focus on language, relationships and vocabulary building.

Purposeful activities support children's learning well. They are precisely matched to children's individual needs. Staff listen and respond skilfully to children. Lessons are extremely well taught and supported by high-quality interactions. Phonics is taught well in the pine room. Fine and gross motor skills are developed in the cherry tree room. Children develop their curiosity in the secret garden.

Children's achievement is monitored using 'heart sheets', which are shared with parents. These help everyone to know the skills that children are already 'showing' and the areas where they particularly need to keep 'growing'. This process is highly effective. Children are safe and happy here. They belong and they thrive.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils generally achieve well at Green Lane. This is reflected in the school's published outcomes in national tests and assessments at the end of Year 6. Most pupils make secure progress through the curriculum. Leaders have ensured that the standards that pupils reach in mathematics have improved.

Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are successful and attain well in comparison with disadvantaged pupils nationally. In addition, children in early years are very well prepared for Year 1, and pupils also do particularly well in the phonics assessment. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are successfully supported to overcome barriers and make suitable progress.

Pupils successfully develop the basics. Their handwriting and reading skills are secure. They speak with confidence and express themselves well. Pupils do well in subjects across the curriculum. In physical education, their dancing skills are practised so that all can perform in the school show, for example.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

A rich curriculum that captures pupils' interest is in place. Always wanting to improve, leaders have changed the writing curriculum and phonics programme. They have tweaked how mathematics is taught. These changes are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Leaders have ensured that teachers are well prepared to deliver the curriculum. In history and geography, for example, teachers know exactly what knowledge they need to teach. Networks for schools across the trust help teachers to develop their subject-specific knowledge.

Where teaching is most effective, teachers are precise in checking how well pupils are making progress. They present material with clarity. Their questioning probes pupils' understanding. Teachers adapt activities well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are included in lessons and given help when needed. The extent to which teachers check exactly how well pupils are doing varies slightly.

There is a renewed focus in school on the basics. For example, teachers are helping pupils to further improve their handwriting. Class novels support pupils to develop their reading skills. There is a focus on helping pupils to speak confidently and with precision. Leaders promote diversity and equality within the curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

This is an inclusive school. Leaders welcome pupils whatever their needs or backgrounds. Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils receive the support they require. This includes those with the highest levels of need.

Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve well. It helps staff to break down barriers to academic or personal development for vulnerable pupils. These pupils do particularly well in phonics. Disadvantaged children in the early years do very well too.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and professionals to put effective support in place to meet each individual pupil's needs. Teachers generally use information about how to support pupils well. Work on making targets for individual pupils more precise is bearing fruit.

Pupils known (or previously known) to social care are supported well at school. Leaders check to make sure that they belong and thrive here. Recent staff training on helping pupils to understand their emotions is helping pupils with specific social, emotional and mental health needs. These pupils are more confident to talk about how they are feeling. They know how to stay calm and refocus much more quickly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders help pupils to develop a love of learning and to love one another. The school values of care, respect, honesty and forgiveness are evident at Green Lane. Leaders seek to nurture and inspire pupils and make them all feel included.

Leaders know the school well. The trust has had a very positive impact on the quality of education at the school. Together, leaders at all levels have ensured that teaching is consistently effective and that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs met. Leaders have had a particularly impressive impact on the early years.

Leaders, including trustees and the local academy council, have secure oversight of the school's priorities. They recognise that attendance remains an area for further improvement. Governors have a sharp focus on how the pupil premium funding is spent to help disadvantaged pupils achieve their potential.

Leaders are compassionate and caring. Staff are very positive about working at the school, particularly regarding how leaders consider their workload and wellbeing. The professional learning programme is cohesive and aligned to school priorities. For example, the recent focus on helping pupils to understand their emotions and to remain calm is having a positive impact. The focus on phonics and developing pupils' writing skills has helped pupils improve their attainment.

Parents and carers are very happy with the school. Leaders work hard to ensure that relationships with families are positive. They make sure that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils feel a sense of belonging at school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school has a well-designed programme to support pupils' personal development and wellbeing. It is enriched by clubs, visiting speakers, leadership opportunities and community events. Leaders make sure that everyone can be included, regardless of financial circumstances or ability.

Sport has a high priority in the school. For example, pupils practise and participate in competitions in rugby, cricket and golf. Everyone has the opportunity to go on the residential trip, where climbing and canoeing are the order of the day. Pupils learn about the natural world. Those who are brave enough can get close to millipedes and giant toads in special wildlife events. Members of the school community dress up and fundraise during the 'Barney meet' in the town. Green Lane staff and pupils have even dressed as dalmatians as part of this event.

Pupils work in mixed-age classes on days focused on wellbeing and mental health. They get to know pupils from different year groups. The 'go getters' programme encourages pupils to try a new skill or club to develop resilience. Pupils' leadership skills can be honed through being part of the 'caring council'. This group gives pupils a voice and helps to improve life at school.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is well organised and delivered effectively. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including around water. They learn about healthy and unhealthy relationships. They understand what makes a good friend and how to stay safe while using the internet. Many remember what is taught, including about what it is to be a good citizen and about different religions. A minority of pupils' recall is not as secure.

Pupils live the school values. They know that care, respect, honesty and forgiveness are important. They value difference. Staff care deeply for pupils. Any needing additional pastoral support receive it.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

In the past, attendance has been below the national average. This includes the rate of attendance for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most recently, the work of leaders is having a positive impact. Systems are in place to ensure that families and pupils know the importance of attending school. The 'golden attendance certificate' is part of this work. Leaders know there is still work to do. Everyone is working together to ensure that recent improvements continue.

The school values guide how pupils behave. Pupils here are caring and nurturing. Relationships between pupils and staff are based on respect. In class, pupils behave well and generally focus on the task in hand. Any minor issues are dealt with by teachers effectively. Around the building, pupils behave sensibly. Outside, pupils enjoy breaktimes and ensure that everyone is included. 'Kindness coins' and 'castle coins' are part of the rewards system. Pupils who demonstrate the school values across the week receive these rewards. Celebration assembly helps the whole school community to recognise pupils' honesty and inclusivity. Unkind words and bullying are extremely rare. Staff help pupils to sort out any disagreements. Discrimination is not present at Green Lane.

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

All pupils are welcomed and celebrated at Green Lane. Pupils here love to learn and understand the importance of kindness. Pupils are nurtured, inspired, respected and included. These values weave through all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils are welcoming to one another and show respect. They are thoughtful and behave well in classrooms and around the building. Bullying or unkind words are rare. Staff help deal with any disagreements should they occur. Pupils feel safe here. Parents have a very positive view of the school. Most recently, pupils' rates of attendance are improving.

Pupils benefit from effective teaching. Their achievement is improving and they enjoy lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do well. Teachers know their individual needs and help pupils to overcome any barriers they may have. When pupils

leave Green Lane, they are ready for secondary school both socially and academically. This includes disadvantaged pupils. Children in the early years are very well served here. They make strides in their learning in the 'Happy Hollow'. The learning environment is impressive.

Education is well rounded at Green Lane. Pupils get the opportunity to dance in the annual performance. Pupils can join rugby and cricket teams. The school community dresses up and fundraises at the annual 'Barney meet'. The 'go getters' programme ensures that pupils develop new skills. The 'caring council' works with leaders to improve the school, providing the pupils' perspective.

Pupils can earn 'kindness coins' and 'castle coins' for showing respect and living the school values. The celebration assembly on Fridays showcases pupils' achievements and behaviour. Of note is the way pupils are compassionate to one another and the way in which they actively help each other. Many go above and beyond for their classmates.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain the momentum of recent improvements in attendance.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers check how well pupils are learning the curriculum and adjust their teaching strategies accordingly.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils' understanding of the personal, social and health education curriculum is thorough and secure.
 - Leaders should continue to raise standards throughout the school and at key stage 2, including for disadvantaged pupils.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning 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), Paul Rickeard, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Taylor.

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

This inspection took place on 15 and 16 September 2026.

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 school leaders, representatives from the trust, the CEO and those responsible for governance during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Durham. Its last section 48 inspection was in July 2019.

The school currently makes use of 2 alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Rob Goffee

Lead inspector:

Michael Wardle, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Sonia Fraser, 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 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

188

Below 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

258

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)

31.69%

Close to 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

3.72%

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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.43%

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

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		61%	
2024/25 (final)	55%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (final)	82%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	74%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

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		72%	
2024/25 (final)	79%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	89%	72%	Above
2022/23		71%	

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		73%	
2024/25 (final)	66%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	81%	73%	Above
2022/23		73%	

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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	53%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	60%	46%	Above
2022/23		44%	

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		62%	
2024/25 (final)	80%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	60%	62%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	73%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	58%	Above
2022/23		58%	

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%	
2024/25 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2022/23		59%	

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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	53%	69%	-16 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	67%	-7 pp
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	80%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	80%	-20 pp
2022/23		78%	

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		78%	
2024/25 (final)	73%	78%	-5 pp
2023/24 (final)	90%	78%	12 pp
2022/23		77%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	67%	81%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	79%	-9 pp

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

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)	6.7%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	5.5%	Above

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)	17.0%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	18.3%	14.6%	Above

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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