

# Standish St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy

**Address:** Rectory Lane, Standish, Wigan, Lancashire, WN6 0XB

**Unique reference number (URN):** 139883

## Inspection report: 17 March 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 ●

### Achievement

Strong standard ●

Across all year groups and key stages, pupils make firm progress. They secure the important knowledge that they need. Staff sequence the order of learning carefully and ensure that pupils revisit essential ideas.

Over the last 3 years, results in national tests have been considerably above average in most areas. Disadvantaged pupils achieve highly, with better outcomes than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Children in the early years develop the knowledge and skills that prepare them to take the next steps. By the end of the Reception Year, they achieve well and are ready for the demands of Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 progress equally well across the whole curriculum. They build knowledge securely over time and apply it with increasing confidence. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps and move on with the knowledge that they need to succeed.

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They attend especially well. Leaders carefully check attendance daily and act quickly when pupils are absent. They work closely with families to understand worries or difficulties and help pupils to attend school regularly. Staff work with parents and carers to offer support that encourages steady routines. Leaders look carefully at the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and put helpful plans in place. When a small number struggle with low attendance, leaders meet families and involve external partners when needed. Leaders review this support regularly and help pupils build better habits so that they come to school more consistently.

Across the school, pupils conduct themselves considerately. Leaders create a calm and orderly environment where pupils treat one another respectfully. Staff share the same high expectations of behaviour, which pupils enact. These expectations do not waiver for pupils who might find this a challenge. Staff support all pupils to behave well. Pupils feel very safe. Leaders deal with any form of bullying behaviour quickly and firmly. The school deals with any unkind behaviour with clear actions that pupils understand. Staff listen to pupils and help them to sort out any problems. Pupils show enthusiastic attitudes to their learning and settle quickly to their work.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have constructed an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. They understand its quality and make thoughtful decisions that continually strengthen it. Leaders refine subjects so the curriculum is well sequenced across all phases. The curriculum blends pupils' learning about their local area with global issues. Leaders ensure it sets out the knowledge pupils need for their next steps. Reading sits at the centre of this. Children in the Reception Year learn the sounds and letters they need to read with confidence.

Leaders make sure teachers have secure subject knowledge. This helps teachers to teach the curriculum effectively. They check what pupils remember before they introduce new ideas. Staff skilfully build pupils' foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics and extend pupils' spoken and written vocabulary. They act quickly when pupils need help to catch up, including in phonics or times tables.

Leaders and staff know pupils' needs well. They adapt teaching for disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use plans for pupils with SEND effectively to shape learning and provide support that meets need. Leaders ensure that all pupils study the full national curriculum and the early years foundation stage.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders take care to understand pupils' individual needs as soon as they arise. They gather insights from families, staff and external professionals so they can build a clear picture of the needs of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those known to children's social care. Staff use this information effectively to plan support that fits pupils' circumstances and reduces any barriers to learning and wellbeing. Teachers modify lessons to help pupils take part fully in everyday classroom routines.

Leaders keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing. They review the impact of extra help and step in when pupils need something different. They check the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND so that they know whether the support in place is making a difference. Training helps staff to respond to pupils' needs with confidence. Leaders work openly with families and professionals so that shared understanding and ambition shape plans for pupils.

Leaders use additional funding to provide help that improves pupils' learning and wellbeing. They work with the local authority to support pupils who are known, or previously known, to children's social care. When pupils attend alternative provision, leaders check that it is right for them. This approach helps pupils feel included and able to take part in school life.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

Pupils benefit from an exciting and well-planned range of experiences that support their personal development. This begins in the early years where children learn to work together, make choices and join in activities that promote curiosity. The plan for pupils' personal development weaves throughout the academic curriculum and beyond.

Pupils show high respect for the values and beliefs of others. They talk about having 'no judgement' and demonstrate a mature understanding when they hear different views. Pupils build effective social skills. They manage conversations well and build on the ideas of others. Pupils use their skills to resolve conflict and to negotiate when adults may not be nearby. This prepares them well for their next steps in education.

Pupils appreciate diversity in their community and across the world. Visitors from a range of faiths help pupils to learn about different beliefs. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to their

local community. They make a positive difference through activities such as litter picking in the local area or carol singing at the library. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit fully and positively from the range of opportunities.

Leaders ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural awareness. Pupils experience outdoor theatre and take part in opera. A professional orchestra performed with pupils in key stage 2, and Year 5 pupils created their own compositions. Pupils learn ukulele, piano and singing, and Year 4 pupils learn stringed instruments. The trust provides experiences to give all pupils an insight into future pathways. Pupils visit a university to see how higher education can be for them. They meet pupils from other schools in the trust through activities such as skiing, water sports and circus skills.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They learn about online safety, fire procedures, healthy eating and hygiene in ways that help them make sensible decisions day to day. Pupils feel safe and cared for.

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## Expected standard

### Early years

Expected standard 

In the early years, children are happy and safe. They play cooperatively. This begins in the Nursery class where staff establish routines quickly. Children benefit from a carefully designed curriculum that develops their vocabulary and supports communication skills. Children enjoy creative and active play. They climb, build with bricks and take part in imaginative activities in the home corner. Staff interact with children and encourage them to take turns.

Leaders set out the order of the curriculum so that children revisit important learning in communication, mathematics and physical development. Staff consider children's starting points and make changes for those who face barriers to learning. This includes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children grow in independence and learn to manage risks and make healthy choices.

Leaders prioritise reading. Staff share books daily and teach phonics well. All children receive the help they need to develop early reading skills. Leaders understand what is working well and areas to strengthen. A renewed focus on developing writing is at an early stage of implementation. Training designed to help staff create more chances for children to develop their writing through the activities they choose is beginning.

Staff work with parents and carers to share information about learning. By the end of the Reception Year, children achieve well and are ready for Year 1.

### Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand what the school does well and where they need to make further improvement. They have an accurate view of strengths, such as the curriculum and staff development, and they identify sensible priorities for development. Recent work to

strengthen handwriting in the early years reflects this self-evaluation, although it is too early to see the full impact.

Leaders ensure staff receive high-quality training that helps them to develop their practice. Leaders consider staff workload and wellbeing carefully when they make decisions. Staff say they feel supported and able to raise concerns when needed.

Leaders make decisions that place pupils' needs at the centre. They review the needs of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils known to children's social care. They provide academic and pastoral support that helps these pupils take part in school life. Leaders adapt approaches in lessons so pupils with SEND can access learning.

Governors know their statutory duties and carry them out appropriately. They check how leaders use resources, including additional funding, and they talk with leaders about the impact of decisions on pupils. Although leaders use the information they have well, they do not use it precisely to check engagement in some areas of school life. Governors support leaders and hold them to account. However, they recognise that deeper scrutiny would strengthen leaders' work.

Leaders and governors engage well with parents and carers so pupils benefit from shared understanding and support.

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

Pupils are proud to belong to the St Wilfrid's family. From the Nursery class onwards, staff know children well and include them fully in all aspects of school life. Pupils know that everyone is welcome here. They attend well. Behaviour in lessons and around school is thoughtful and considerate. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to one another. They value friendships and feel well cared for by staff.

Pupils achieve well. They progress securely through the curriculum. Outcomes are typically well above national figures, including for disadvantaged pupils. By the time they leave, pupils are very well prepared for secondary education. Leaders remove barriers to learning so that all pupils can succeed. Enrichment deepens learning. Staff weave visits to a farm, an aquarium and a Roman museum purposefully into the curriculum. Pupils confidently link these experiences to their learning in history, geography and science.

Pupils benefit from the school's emphasis on sport and mental wellbeing. Weekly swimming lessons, yoga sessions and competitive sport help pupils to thrive. Extra-curricular clubs, such as science, choir, drama and computing, enable pupils to explore new interests and develop talents. Residential trips for older pupils build independence and resilience. Staff use additional funding effectively to ensure that no child misses out on these opportunities.

Pupils' leadership roles build their confidence and self-belief. The pupil leadership team plays a central role in improving the school. Recently, the team led a sustainability project after attending a climate summit. Pupils receive effective support to understand the wider world beyond their local community. Well-chosen books, assemblies and classroom

discussions help pupils learn about global issues such as deforestation. This learning prompts action, such as raising money for charity. Pupils understand right and wrong, the rule of law and fundamental British values. They use this knowledge to contribute positively to school life.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should make sure that training develops the expertise of staff to support children in developing their early writing skills securely so that children have regular planned opportunities to practise writing across the early years provision.
  - Leaders should analyse the systems and data they have about the school's work more closely so that they can act with precision for continued improvement.
  - Governors should strengthen how they hold leaders to account so that they can support further improvement across the school.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of The Learning Together Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the co-chief executive officers (CEOs), Stuart Colothan and Jennifer Woodcock, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jillian Hyde-Baron.

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 one of the CEOs, the interim headteacher and other leaders. They spoke to trustees, including the chair, and some members of the local governing board. They also spoke to representatives from the diocese and the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in March 2026.

The school makes use of one alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. There is an interim headteacher in post, as the substantive headteacher is serving temporarily as a full-time CEO of the trust. The interim headteacher is Kate Newman.

Executive Headteacher: Stuart Colothan

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**Lead inspector:**

Frith Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**

Schelene Ferris, Ofsted Inspector

Liz Davidson, Ofsted Inspector

Lee Comber, 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 17 March 2026

## School and pupil context

**Total pupils**

**586**

Well above 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**

**500**

Well above 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)**

**12.27%**

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**

**1.19%**

Below 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**

**9.73%**

Below 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	85%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	84%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	91%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	93%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	95%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	72%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	93%	72%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	92%	72%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	91%	71%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	93%	73%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	89%	74%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	96%	73%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	95%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	83%	46%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	89%	47%	Above

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	46%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	82%	44%	Above

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	62%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	100%	63%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	62%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	91%	60%	Above

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	59%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	100%	59%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	58%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	91%	58%	Above

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	60%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	89%	61%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	86%	59%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	100%	59%	Above

## **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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	83%	68%	16 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	89%	69%	20 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	67%	4 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	82%	66%	15 pp

## **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	80%	12 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	100%	81%	19 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	80%	-8 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	91%	78%	13 pp

### **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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	78%	14 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	100%	78%	22 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	71%	78%	-6 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	91%	77%	14 pp

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	92%	80%	12 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	89%	81%	8 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	86%	79%	6 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	100%	79%	21 pp

## 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)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.6%	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)	5.7%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	8.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.7%	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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