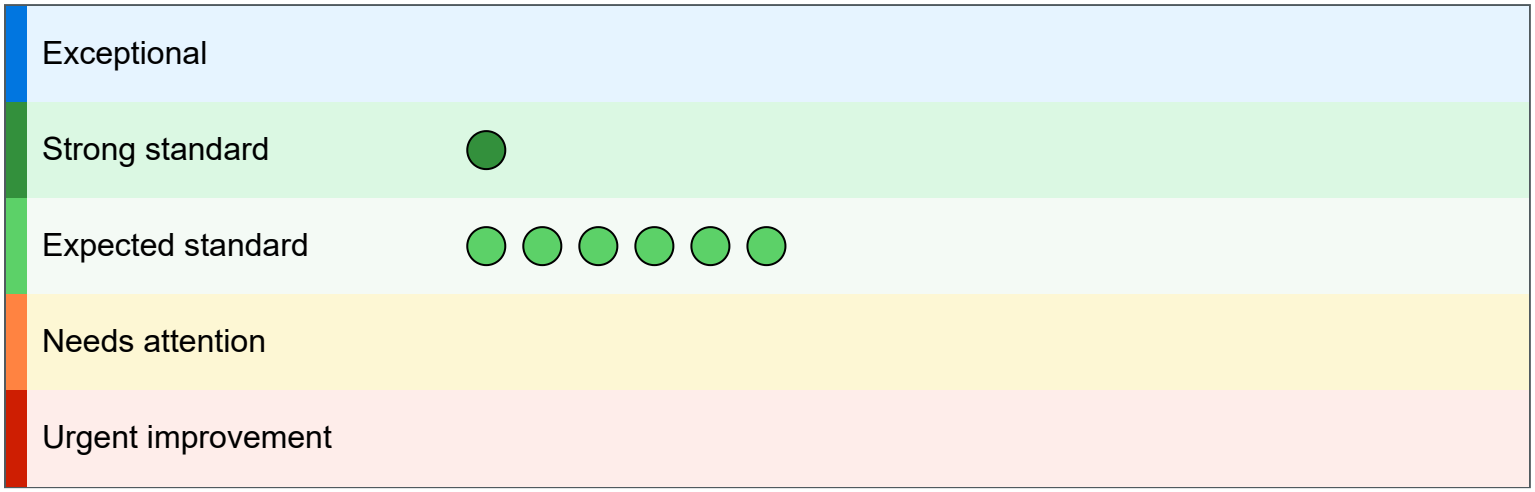
Bollington Cross CofE Primary School

Address: Bollington Road, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 5EG

Unique reference number (URN): 111252

Inspection report: 6 October 2026



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

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to inclusion that is highly successful. It is at the heart of the school's work. Staff know pupils and their families extremely well. They provide pupils with effective, targeted support from the very start. Leaders have an unwavering determination to tackle and overcome any academic, social and emotional barriers that pupils may face. They accurately identify pupils' needs and know how to best support them. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who experience other barriers are safe, well and ready to learn. Pupil premium funding is effectively used to provide support for disadvantaged pupils.

Staff are well trained to support pupils to access the full curriculum as well as the school's wider enrichment offer. Teaching is adapted effectively to meet the needs of pupils. Staff support pupils to talk about their feelings and help them to navigate any challenges that they may face. Deliberate actions by leaders support pupils to develop independence and emotional security. Leaders meticulously check the impact of the support that they put in place. They ensure that pupils' make progress through the curriculum from their varied starting points. Leaders are proactive in their work with parents, carers and external agencies to inform this work.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Published data demonstrates that pupils' attainment in Year 6 in national reading, writing and mathematics tests is typically above or close to national averages over time. Disadvantaged pupils also achieve well. Leaders have identified the reasons for the lower attainment rates in the Year 4 multiplication tables check and the numbers of pupils' attaining the higher standard in writing by the end of key stage 2. Leaders are in the process of refining the systematic teaching of these key skills across the school. Currently, gaps in this important knowledge hinder some pupils from achieving all that they could.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically progress well through the curriculum from their starting points. They gain an understanding of a range of subjects. Pupils speak confidently about scientific concepts and locational knowledge from their recent and earlier learning. At times, they are less confident in connecting current learning with key knowledge they have previously learned.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders promote the importance of attending school regularly. Positive relationships with pupils and their families help leaders to understand barriers to pupils' regular attendance. Some pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. Leaders have a clear understanding of the reasons for this. They work in close partnership with parents, carers

and external agencies to improve pupils' attendance. Timely and suitable support is provided for these pupils and their families.

From the moment children enter the early years, staff model positive relationships, respect and kindness. Children learn in a calm and purposeful environment. Leaders establish clear routines. Staff remind pupils of the school's expectations for everyone to be happy, safe and able to learn. This helps pupils throughout the school to make successful behaviour choices. Typically, behaviour around the school is positive. Most pupils behave very well in their lessons and at social times. They usually approach their learning eagerly. Pupils value the care provided by staff for their wellbeing. The culture of respect and pupils' acceptance of difference mean that unkind incidents, for example bullying or discrimination, are rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge and skills and is designed to provide pupils with the knowledge that they need for their future learning. They have refined the curriculum to prioritise basic knowledge and skills in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders have a secure understanding of how effectively the curriculum is taught. They use this insight to inform improvement work. Most recently, they have prioritised the teaching of the most important knowledge and skills in early writing and number fluency from the start. Beyond English and mathematics, this work is further on in some subjects than in others. Leaders recognise that further refinement in the teaching of these subjects is required to embed strategies for pupils to apply and connect their learning in these remaining subject areas.

Typically, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They revisit previous learning to help secure pupils' knowledge and present new information clearly. Staff are responsive in enabling pupils to access the curriculum. Adaptations for pupils who face barriers to their learning support them to learn alongside their peers. Where necessary, this is tailored to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.

Early years

Expected standard

Children make a positive start to their schooling in the early years. Leaders ensure that arrangements are in place to promote children's safety and wellbeing. At the heart of these arrangements are warm, caring relationships with children. Staff get to know families and children well before they join the school. They know each child's needs and starting points. Leaders use this information to ensure that the right help is provided to support children with gaps in their skills and learning.

Children benefit from a calm, purposeful environment with clear routines. This helps children to settle quickly. The curriculum enables children to access meaningful experiences across each area of learning. Reading is a priority from the start. Phonics lessons follow consistent routines. Staff check that children know their sounds securely. Children who struggle to learn this important knowledge receive well-matched support.

Staff use high-quality interactions to build children's understanding and confidence. Adults model language, extend play and support children to communicate in different social situations. Activities build fine motor skills, personal and social development and early number knowledge. This helps children to gain confidence in forming letters and understanding early mathematical concepts. Most children are ready for Year 1 by the end of the Reception Year.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, including governors, know their school and community very well. They ensure that every decision that they make is made with pupils' best interests at heart. Governors fulfil their roles effectively. Their well-informed knowledge of the school helps them to ensure that their statutory duties are met, for example in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. They provide support and challenge in equal measure. This ensures that pupils, particularly those who face barriers in their learning and/or wellbeing, benefit from an educational and wider offer that meets their individual needs.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. The school's inclusive ethos is built on high ambition for all pupils. This is particularly effective. Leaders have successfully improved other aspects of the school's work, for example with regards to pupils' phonics attainment and refinements to the wider curriculum. Leaders recognise that there is further work to do to develop and embed some aspects of this work. For example, with regards to securing pupils' early writing and number fluency skills and pupils' connected learning in some subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Staff benefit from professional learning matched to school improvement priorities. They speak very positively about the support that they receive to do their jobs well. Staff are proud of their work and feel valued. Parents and carers are equally positive about the work of the school. The vast majority of parents are complementary about the support, care and experiences provided for their children.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils' confidence and self-esteem is built through the school's wider development offer. Leaders prioritise supporting pupils' wellbeing. Pupils benefit from effective and timely guidance to help them with their social and emotional development. This support is well matched to individual needs. Pupils learn to look after themselves, including their mental health. Relationships and health education is age-appropriate. Pupils learn how to keep friendships positive and the importance of respecting personal boundaries. In the early years, children share, listen to each other and take turns. Older pupils explore pertinent issues such as consent and their changing bodies.

The school's values are threaded through the personal development programme. Consequently, pupils develop and appreciate important characteristics, such as treating others with respect. Pupils know these values well and can explain how they guide their behaviour and attitudes both within and beyond school. From the early years to Year 6, pupils learn about different faiths, beliefs and equalities. They also learn about fundamental British values. For example, they know that democracy is linked to voting and that this is fair.

While pupils know what these values are called, they sometimes struggle to connect these to life beyond school.

Pupils' personal development is further supported by a programme of assemblies and teaching in other subjects such as computing, religious education and science. Pupils learn about a range of topics. This incudes personal safety. Pupils understand how to keep safe when crossing the road and when playing or working online. They learn about healthy eating, and the importance of regular exercise. Pupils enjoy the range of sporting and other clubs that they can take part in. Leaders check that pupils who will benefit most from this offer beyond the academic can do so. They provide practical or financial support for families so that pupils, including whose who are disadvantaged, are supported to develop their interests and talents.

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

Bollington Cross is a happy and welcoming school. Highly positive relationships with staff help pupils to feel secure and part of a caring community. Pupils feel safe and confidently put their trust in staff to deal effectively with any worries that they might have. Pupils understand why it is important to be kind and caring towards others. They appreciate that everyone is made welcome and included. This supports pupils to attend school regularly and to be ready for learning. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with this quickly and effectively when it does occur.

Pupils enjoy learning. They know that their teachers want them to try hard, and they do. Pupils look forward to finding out who will receive prestigious headteacher awards in weekly celebration assemblies. In lessons, pupils share their ideas and consider others' viewpoints. When pupils join the school, staff get to know them well. They successfully break down barriers, ensuring that pupils benefit from all that the school has to offer. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very effectively to succeed. Overall, pupils progress well through the curriculum from their varied starting points. Typically, by the time pupils leave for high school, they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils are keen to make a positive difference to school life. For example, members of the 'light up' committee gather ideas to make their school even better. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the outdoor learning that they experience. Growing vegetables in the allotment and looking after the tadpoles and frogs in the school's pond builds pupils' teamwork skills and understanding of the world around them. Pupils eagerly look forward to residential visits as well as trips to museums and zoos. They are proud to showcase their musical talents as part of the choir and through performances at the Bridgewater Hall.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the systems, routines and strategies in place to develop pupils' foundational writing and multiplication knowledge and skills secure sustained

improvements in pupils' achievement and that these gains are reflected in published outcomes.
- Leaders should continue to further refine their work to ensure that teaching supports pupils to apply and connect their learning to the same high standard in some areas of the wider curriculum as they do in other subjects.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Fraser Penny.

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

This inspection took place on 6 and 7 October 2026.

Following our updated inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders and staff during the inspection. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school is voluntary controlled and is part of the Diocese of Chester. The last section 48 inspection took place in May 2026.

The school provides a breakfast and after-school club provision for pupils.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Yenson Donbavand

Lead inspector:
Rebecca Jewitt, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Jill Caunce, His Majesty's 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 6 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

167
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

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)

16.77%
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

5.39%
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

13.17%

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	71%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	61%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	94%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	72%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	73%	Above

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	44%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	89%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	44%	59%	Below
2023/24 (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	R	R	R

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	78%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S

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‘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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	44%	69%	-25 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	89%	81%	8 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	44%	78%	-34 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	78%	81%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

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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
2025/26 (1 term)	4.3%	5.1%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average

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
2025/26 (1 term)	7.1%	14.4%	Below
2024/25 (3 term)	9.6%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	12.1%	14.6%	Close to average

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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