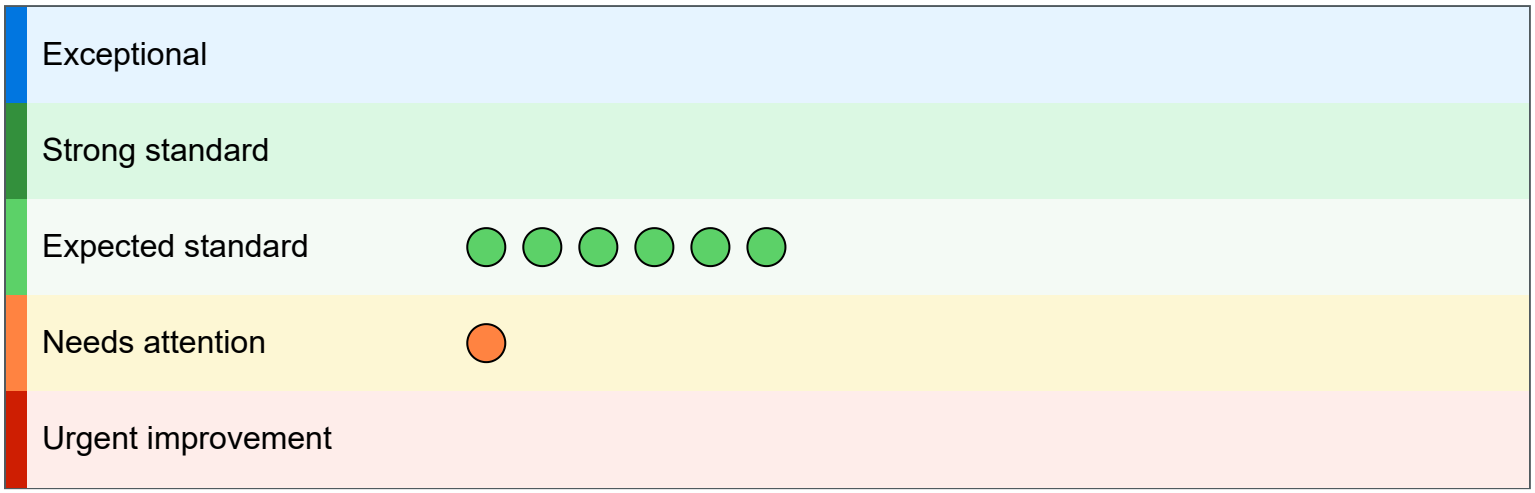
# Wharton Primary School

**Address:** Rothwell Lane, Little Hulton, Worsley, Salford, Greater Manchester, M38 9XA

**Unique reference number (URN):** 150185

# Inspection report: 13 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.

# Expected standard

## Achievement

**Expected standard**

Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are typically in line with national figures. Pupils apply their knowledge across the curriculum. Older pupils confidently recall prior learning. For example, they describe the significance of the River Nile when learning about Ancient Egypt. Pupils take pride in their work.

Most pupils secure the basic skills needed in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. In a small number of cases, some pupils continue to make errors in spelling or letter formation. These inconsistencies contribute to variation in outcomes, including in the phonics screening and multiplication tables check.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities develop the knowledge and skills matched carefully to their needs. By the end of Year 6, pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Expected standard**

Leaders have designed a curriculum that identifies the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn over time. The curriculum is organised so that new learning builds on what pupils already know.

Most teachers deliver the curriculum with secure subject knowledge. They explain new learning clearly. They adapt activities so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers work closely with support staff to help pupils participate fully in lessons. They use assessment information to identify what pupils need to learn next. Through questioning and discussion, teachers check pupils' understanding and help them connect new learning to prior knowledge.

The teaching of phonics is taught consistently well. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps them develop confidence and fluency in reading. Teachers give priority to reading, writing and mathematics. However, in a small number of classes, teaching is not as effective as it could be. Some staff do not teach key skills with accurate precision, in particular correct letter formation and spelling. They do not always correct misconceptions. In addition, missed learning through absence is not always addressed. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

## Early years

**Expected standard**

Children settle quickly into the early years and become familiar with daily routines. Staff build positive relationships with children and their families. These relationships help children feel safe and ready to learn. Staff identify children's needs when they join the setting and use this information to provide appropriate support. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure that statutory responsibilities are met.

Leaders have planned a curriculum that supports children to develop knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. Learning builds on what children already know and prepares them for the next stage of their education. Staff place an emphasis on developing children's language and communication. Through conversations, stories, songs and structured activities, children extend their vocabulary and express their ideas with increasing confidence. They engage enthusiastically in imaginative play and outdoor learning.

Staff give priority to the development of early reading, writing and mathematics. Children in Reception learn phonics through daily teaching and apply their knowledge, when reading and writing. However, some staff do not consistently demonstrate accurate letter formation and spelling. As a result, a small number of children develop misconceptions that are not corrected quickly enough. This limits how securely they develop the knowledge and skills needed for future learning.

## Inclusion

**Expected standard**

Leaders have established an inclusive culture. They are ambitious for every pupil. When pupils join the school, leaders identify their learning, social and emotional needs. Leaders use this information to put appropriate support in place. They review its impact regularly. Staff pay close attention to the wellbeing and mental health of pupils who face additional challenges. This helps pupils feel safe, valued and ready to learn.

Leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, including those known to children’s social care. Pupils receive help to secure the knowledge and skills they need to access the curriculum. Leaders also ensure that financial circumstances do not prevent pupils from taking part in opportunities, including educational visits and residential experiences.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities promptly. They use this to accurately provide the support that pupils need most. Leaders work with external agencies, when specialist expertise is needed. A small number of pupils are given support to prepare them for learning with their peers in the classroom. This is highly effective. Staff are trained to adapt learning activities so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the full curriculum. This helps pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take part in school life.

## Leadership and governance

**Expected standard**

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require further development. They use this understanding to identify priorities and bring about improvements. Recent work to strengthen the teaching of reading and phonics has improved pupils' learning in these areas. Leaders have also maintained focus on meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who face disadvantage. However, leaders have not yet secured sustained improvements in attendance. Too many pupils continue to miss learning because they do not attend school regularly.

Trustees, governors and school leaders work together to support the school's development. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined through the scheme of delegation. Trustees

maintain oversight of the work of the school and fulfil their statutory duties. Local governors know the school well and use their knowledge to support and challenge leaders. Their work helps leaders remain focused on the priorities that matter most for pupils.

Staff work collaboratively and share a commitment to improving pupils' experiences. Leaders consider staff workload and wellbeing, when making decisions. Staff value the professional development opportunities available to them. These strengthen their practice.

Parents and carers appreciate the education, care and support that their children receive. Leaders work closely with schools within the trust, the local authority and other professional partners. These partnerships support school improvement and help leaders meet the needs of pupils, particularly those with SEND. The school plays an important role within its community and maintains strong relationships with local families.

## Personal development and wellbeing

**Expected standard** 

Leaders give priority to pupils' personal development and wellbeing. Through the personal, social, health and economic curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in school, in the community and online. They develop their understanding of risks through learning about first aid, water safety, road safety and fire safety. Pupils learn how to maintain their physical and mental health. As pupils move through the school, they learn about healthy relationships and how to seek help when needed. Pupils access support for their wellbeing when needed. They value this support and apply the strategies they learn to manage their emotional wellbeing.

Enterprise activities help pupils develop an understanding of money and the wider world of work. Leaders adapt this provision so that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can participate fully.

Pupils learn about life in modern Britain. They understand the importance of fundamental British values, such as respect, tolerance and democracy. Pupils value diversity and recognise that people may have different beliefs, cultures and backgrounds. Most pupils explain how people from different communities and faiths can live and work together positively. Pupils welcome opportunities to contribute to the school and the wider community. They take part in activities, such as litter picking and tree planting. Some pupils undertake leadership responsibilities, including roles on the school council and as eco-leaders.

Leaders provide a range of experiences that broaden pupils' interests and aspirations. Educational visits help pupils learn about places beyond their local area, including the countryside and the coast. Extra-curricular activities allow pupils to develop new skills through opportunities, such as cooking, chess, music and languages. Some pupils also take part in activities beyond the school day, including hiking, which helps them build confidence, independence and resilience.

## Needs attention

### Attendance and behaviour

**Needs attention**

Pupils' attendance is below the national average. Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. As a result, some pupils miss important learning and develop gaps in their knowledge over time. Leaders understand the barriers that prevent some pupils from attending regularly. They analyse attendance information. Leaders work with external agencies and engage with families to address these barriers. They challenge absence when necessary. Some pupils have improved their attendance because of this support. However, leaders' strategies have not been in place long enough for them to demonstrate sustained improvement in attendance across the school.

Leaders have established clear expectations for behaviour. Pupils understand the routines that help the school day run smoothly. Lessons and social times are typically calm and orderly. Staff respond to behaviour incidents consistently. They address bullying and friendship issues promptly and effectively. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions used in school and can explain the reasons for them. Pupils play well together and include others in their games, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They treat one another with respect and value differences. In lessons, pupils engage positively with learning and persevere when work becomes challenging. They know that staff will support them when they need help.

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

The school is a calm and safe place, where pupils are happy. Staff greet pupils each morning and know them well. Pupils build positive relationships with adults and trust them to help when needed. Clear routines help pupils settle quickly and move confidently through the school day. Children begin to develop independence from the moment they join the nursery.

Pupils behave positively. They are polite and respectful towards each other, staff and visitors. Pupils play cooperatively at social times and enjoy activities, such as skipping and dodgeball. Younger pupils learn to share, take turns and care for one another. When disagreements occur, staff resolve them promptly and deal with bullying effectively.

Most pupils focus carefully on their learning in lessons. They persevere when they find work challenging and seek support when they need it. Pupils take pride in presenting their work. They remember important knowledge and enjoy discussing what they have learned. For example, they talk confidently about biomes in geography and the human body in science.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to children's social care, access learning alongside their peers. Staff adapt learning activities to meet their needs. This helps these pupils build knowledge and skills from their starting points.

Many pupils who face disadvantage benefit from the support that staff provide and engage positively with school life. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a

result, they miss learning and do not take full advantage of the opportunities that the school offers.

Pupils value the experiences available to them. Visits to theatres, cinemas and museums help bring their learning to life. Pupils also enjoy developing new interests through sports, crafts and music clubs. They willingly take on responsibilities, such as serving as classroom monitors. Pupils contribute positively to the life of the school.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that their attendance strategy secures improvements in pupils' attendance, particularly those who are disadvantaged
- Leaders should ensure that staff identify and address pupils' errors and misconceptions, including in their written work, so that gaps in pupils' knowledge close quickly.

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## About this inspection

The school is part of the Link Education Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chris Moore, and is overseen by the board of trustees, chaired by Paul Daly.

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.

This inspection took place on 13 and 14 October 2026.

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher. They also spoke with the CEO and other leaders and staff during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke with the chair of the board of trustees and the local governing body. An inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Helen Fielding

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**Lead inspector:**
Kathryn Pym, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**
Dawn Davies, Ofsted Inspector
David Lobodzinski, 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 13 October 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**378**
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: 268

### School capacity

**460**
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)

## 56.90%
Well above 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**

## 5.56%
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**

## 23.54%
Well above average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

**Location deprivation**

## Well above 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)** | 62% | 62% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | | 61% | |

### 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)** | 64% | 75% | Below |
| **2023/24** | | 74% | |

### 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** | | 72% | |

### 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)** | 78% | 74% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | | 73% | |

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)** | 55% | 47% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | | 46% | |

**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)** | 58% | 63% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | | 62% | |

**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 |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25 (final)** | 63% | 59% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | | 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 74% | 61% | Above |
| **2023/24** | | 59% | |

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## 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)** | 55% | 69% | -14 pp |
| **2023/24** | | 67% | |

### 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)** | 58% | 81% | -23 pp |
| **2023/24** | | 80% | |

### 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 |

| Year | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 63% | 78% | -15 pp |
| **2023/24** | | 78% | |

### 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)** | 74% | 81% | -7 pp |
| **2023/24** | | 79% | |

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.

## 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)** | 7.5% | 5.1% | Above |
| **2024/25 (3 term)** | 6.8% | 5.2% | Above |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 8.7% | 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2025/26 (1 term)** | 22.4% | 14.4% | Above |
| **2024/25 (3 term)** | 23.5% | 13.0% | Above |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 28.6% | 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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