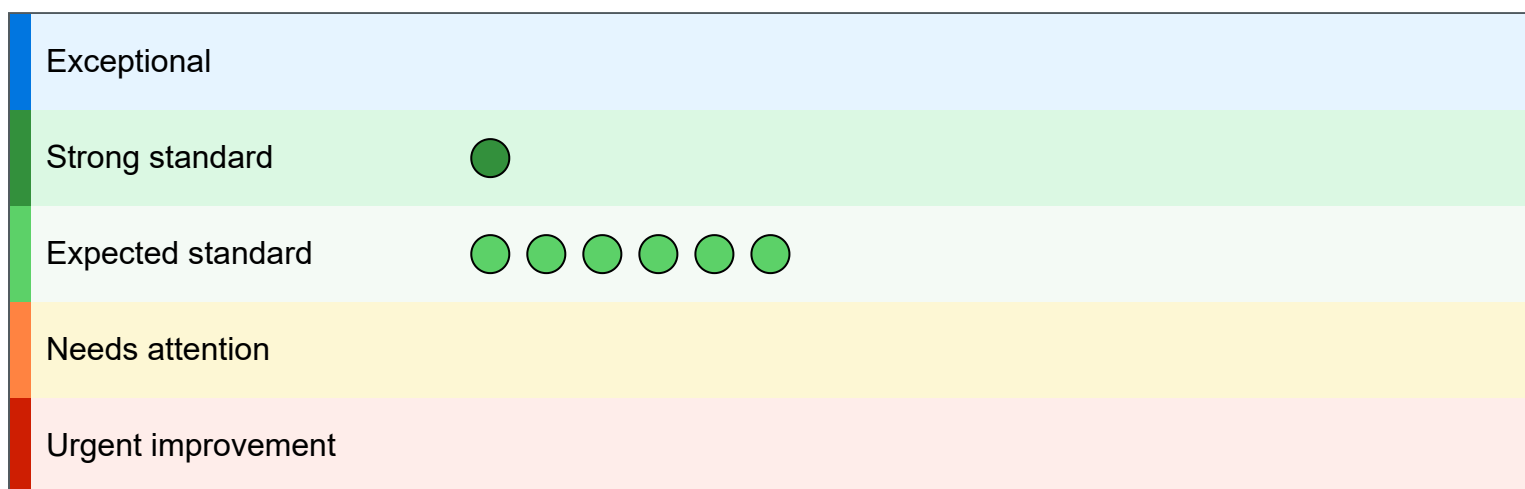


Petteril Bank School

Address: Burnett Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 3BX

Unique reference number (URN): 149410

Inspection report: 10 March 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

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard 

Leaders have eradicated a culture of poor attendance. Pupils' attendance last year, including those who are disadvantaged, was above the national average. Current attendance data reflects that leaders are maintaining these high standards. Only a few years ago, over a third of pupils were persistently absent. Leaders have reduced this proportion significantly over time. They have achieved this turnaround through rigorous tracking, consistent expectations and processes and personalised support when circumstances might prevent pupils from attending.

Leaders have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Alongside staff, they take a consistent, caring approach to uphold these unwavering standards. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them and rise to leaders' expectations. Across all year groups, pupils conduct themselves with high levels of self-discipline throughout the school day. They have developed excellent attitudes to their learning and are fully focused during lesson time. Pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their feelings receive well-considered support. This helps to equip pupils with their own strategies to manage their emotions so that they too can flourish at school.

Pupils are consistently caring and respectful towards one another. This means that any forms of bullying are very rare. Nonetheless, when such issues do arise, leaders are quick to tackle them.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, typically achieve well across many curriculum subjects. Some pupils previously had numerous gaps in their knowledge. This is generally reflected in the school's key stage 2 published results. Leaders have ensured that these gaps are closing quickly.

Importantly, these published results do not accurately reflect that current pupils are generally being well prepared for their next stages. Most children in the early years reach a good level of development, phonics standards are on the rise and pupils perform well above national averages in the Year 4 multiplication check. Overall, pupils also demonstrate an improving knowledge across wider curriculum subjects. That said, some residual knowledge gaps do remain, which leaders are still working to identify or address.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have taken effective steps to improve the school's curriculum offer, ensuring that it is well designed and taught effectively. Each subject is underpinned by detailed teacher guidance on the content pupils should learn and how to deliver it. This has helped teachers

to develop their subject knowledge. Nonetheless, teachers' assessment strategies are not fully sharpened. This sometimes means that pupils are not supported to address misconceptions or close their knowledge gaps quickly.

Leaders have appropriate insight into the quality of curriculum delivery and take suitable actions to continually improve it. Pupils are learning increasingly well thanks to leaders' improvements.

Pupils are supported well to acquire crucial skills in English and mathematics. However, previous curriculum weaknesses have left some pupils in need of intensive forms of support to fully secure these skills. Leaders are addressing many gaps successfully. They take appropriate action to prioritise pupils who most urgently need support. However, residual issues in pupils' writing and spelling skills are proving more stubborn. This prevents pupils from expressing themselves clearly in their written work and hinders their success in some areas.

Leaders and staff have a robust knowledge of pupils' individual needs, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables them to make suitable adaptations for these pupils to cater for their specific needs. As a result, these pupils access their learning successfully.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. They progress well through a suitable curriculum that prioritises the development of vocabulary and communication skills. Staff deliver this curriculum well. As a result, many children reach a good level of development by the time that they leave the Reception Year.

Staff are mindful to model language and introduce new words wherever they can. They have warm and positive interactions with children, which supports them in their learning. Staff often engage well with children when they are interacting with various activities around the classroom. However, there are occasions when staff do not maximise opportunities to extend children's thinking or check their understanding. This sometimes hinders children from addressing some misconceptions or deepening their understanding.

Leaders have made early reading a priority at the school. They have introduced a new phonics programme that is delivered effectively. Leaders have also made sure that children in nursery classes develop a suitable awareness of sounds in readiness for the school's phonics programme. They have effective partnerships with parents and carers that help children to read at home. As a result, children generally develop a secure knowledge of phonics in order to read. However, like elsewhere in the school, some children are taking longer to form the basic skills they need to write well.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have made substantial improvements to the systems and processes that identify and assess pupils' individual needs. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has resulted in many pupils now getting

better support to overcome a range of barriers that would otherwise negatively impact on their education.

Leaders take a staged approach to ensure pupils receive appropriate support to suit their level of need. Staff are well informed of this approach and play their part in its success. They use classroom practices that benefit all pupils and make tailored adaptations where needed. Leaders regularly check that these strategies are used consistently and effectively. Where pupils need more specialised support, leaders work closely with families and external professionals to ensure this happens.

Overall, leaders, including those responsible for governance, have appropriate insight into the impact of the pupil premium strategy as well as other forms of support for disadvantaged pupils. The impact of specific aspects of the pupil premium strategy can clearly be seen. For example, leaders' targeted support for families during times of difficulty has had a major impact on pupils' attendance. School-based wellbeing support has also made a big difference to pupils' behaviour.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have completely turned around the fortunes of this school and have built positive relationships with parents, carers and the community. Leaders have worked methodically to secure effective improvements across the school. They largely have an accurate insight into the school's strengths and which aspects of the school still need further work. As a result, the school is a place that operates well and where pupils can thrive.

Leaders, including at trust level, ensure that staff access suitable professional development opportunities to improve their general teaching practices. They also support early career teachers well through appropriate induction support that builds their expertise. Staff are wholly positive about working at this school. They consistently report that leaders care about their wellbeing and act quickly to ensure their workload remains manageable.

Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Their oversight has played a significant part in enabling the school's recent journey of improvement. They set a clear vision and values for the school and make appropriate strategic decisions in the best interests of pupils. They manage resources well and generally ensure that this work benefits disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The way that staff nurture and care for pupils is a standout feature of the school's work. In particular, pupils who are experiencing difficult situations in their own lives receive extensive packages of support that are highly tailored to their needs. The school's considerate approach to pupils' welfare helps pupils to access their learning successfully and engage positively with the school's personal development offer. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged.

Leaders have implemented a well-designed personal development programme that begins in the early years. This programme equips pupils with a range of important knowledge, such as how to look after themselves and how to form positive relationships with others. They

learn to manage conflicts in a respectful manner, which enables them to cooperate well with their classmates. Pupils learn how to maintain their mental wellbeing and manage their emotions successfully. They also learn how to look after their bodies to stay physically healthy. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet.

Pupils develop some knowledge of fundamental British values, such as democracy. They also develop respect and tolerance for the different beliefs of others. For instance, they are aware of some differences and similarities between religions. However, like in a few areas of the curriculum, pupils still have some knowledge gaps in these aspects of the school's personal development programme. This sometimes limits their appreciation of the diverse backgrounds of people in modern Britain.

Leaders have introduced a range of new opportunities for pupils to explore wider talents and interests. Leaders ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, access this improved offer. Where needed, they remove barriers that might prevent pupils' access to these experiences. As of this year, more pupils fulfil school leadership roles, such as the new eco-councillors. These extra roles help pupils to develop their confidence and sense of responsibility.

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

Leaders work tirelessly to create a place in which pupils thrive. Although leaders' whole-scale improvements are not reflected in national end of key stage 2 assessment results, pupils generally achieve well across much of the curriculum, including in the early years. They are now better prepared for their next steps in education.

Pupils have dedicated attitudes to their learning. Their attendance has significantly improved in recent years. Very few pupils now miss out on their schooling. They are fully focused during their lessons. Pupils rise to leaders' consistently high expectations of behaviour. They show high levels of self-discipline throughout the day. Pupils are also respectful towards others and get along harmoniously. This means that bullying is rare. When such concerns do arise, leaders are swift to deal with them.

Pupils receive high levels of nurture and support while at school. They are safe in leaders' care. Staff greet them with a warm welcome as soon as they arrive in the mornings. Throughout the day, pupils are looked after well by staff who understand their needs, strengths and interests.

Pupils who are disadvantaged, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported effectively. Leaders ensure that their barriers to learning are quickly identified and reduced. This helps pupils from the nursery classes onwards to make positive progress through the curriculum from their individual starting points.

Pupils contribute well to daily life at the school. For example, some pupils give up some of their social time to pick litter around the school while others help with the upkeep of the school library. Pupils also benefit from other personal development opportunities, such as

the enhanced extra-curricular offer, which includes family baking, craft and sports clubs, as well as curriculum trips.

Next steps

- Leaders and staff should further develop their assessment strategies to swiftly identify and address pupils' misconceptions and knowledge gaps. This includes in the early years and aspects of the personal development programme.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils acquire the fundamental writing and spelling skills that they need to express their thinking well throughout the curriculum.
 - Staff in the early years should maximise their opportunities to engage with children to deepen their learning and build their communication skills.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of Cumbria Education 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), Lorraine Hughes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by George Beveridge.

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 the headteacher, who is also an executive headteacher across 3 other schools within the trust. Inspectors also spoke to the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) and other senior leaders, including the CEO. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority.

The lead inspector spoke with members of the local governing body, including its chair. He also met with a group of trustees that included the chair of the trust board.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school converted to become an academy in November 2022 and joined Cumbria Education Trust at the same time. This inspection was the school's first inspection since its predecessor school of the same name was inspected in July 2016.

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

The majority of staff have been appointed to their positions since the school converted to an academy. This includes the headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENDCo and the early years leader.

Lead inspector:

David Spruce, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Craig Dewar-Willox, Ofsted Inspector

Kathryn Pym, His Majesty's 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 10 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

160

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: 272

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)

61.54%

Well above 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

7.50%

Well above 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

11.88%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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	32%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	19%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	25%	60%	Below

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	44%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	55%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	29%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	73%	Below

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	51%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	64%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	35%	71%	Below

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	54%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	55%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	57%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	73%	Below

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	26%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	8%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	17%	44%	Below

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	46%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	57%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	23%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	60%	Close to average

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	38%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	57%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	17%	58%	Below

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	46%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	33%	59%	Below

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	26%	68%	-42 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	8%	67%	-60 pp
2022/23 (final)	17%	66%	-50 pp

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	46%	80%	-33 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	23%	80%	-57 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	78%	-20 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.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	38%	78%	-39 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	78%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	38%	78%	-39 pp
2022/23 (final)	17%	77%	-61 pp

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	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	79%	-26 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	33%	79%	-46 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)	4.0%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.9%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.6%	5.9%	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 (2 term)	5.3%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	21.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	37.1%	16.2%	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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