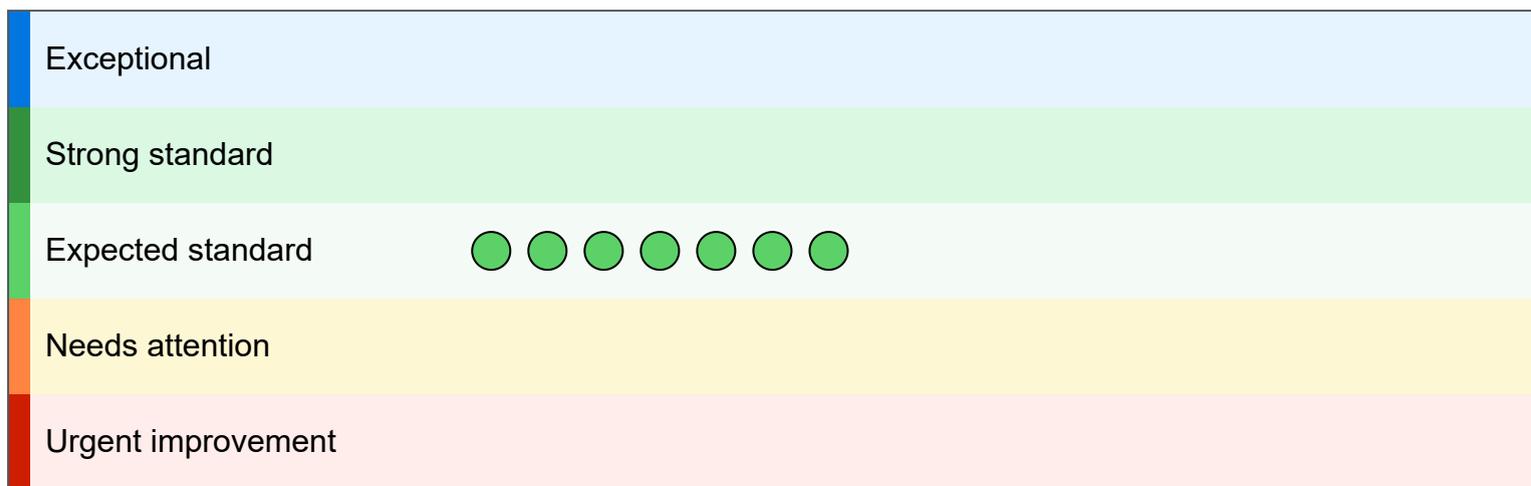


Buckton Vale Primary School

Address: Swallow Lane, Carrbrook, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 3NU

Unique reference number (URN): 149349

Inspection report: 13 January 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 

Typically, pupils achieve well. They are developing the foundational knowledge that they need in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils struggle with fluency in their writing. Leaders know that there is inconsistency in the quality of writing and are addressing this. Pupils read well. The proportion of pupils who meet the standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is broadly in line with the national average. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain well in national tests and assessments. Notably, the school's most recent published data shows that pupils attain significantly above the national average in mathematics. Pupils also build their knowledge securely in other subjects. For example, pupils understand and use subject-specific vocabulary in science.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are supported well. Leaders' recent actions to improve provision for these pupils mean they have clearer next steps in learning.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders make pupils' attendance and punctuality a high priority. Leaders check attendance each day and follow up any concerns assiduously. They identify pupils who miss too much school or who frequently arrive late, and learn the reasons for these instances. Where needed, leaders support families to remove barriers to attendance and help them to build effective daily routines. This encourages pupils to come to school more often and to arrive on time. Leaders' concerted actions mean that attendance is above the national average and that the proportion of pupils who miss large amounts of school is relatively small.

Leaders have created a calm environment where pupils feel safe and supported throughout the day. Pupils are kind to each other. Incidents of bullying are exceptionally rare and dealt with decisively so that they do not recur. Pupils know that they are expected to be ready, respectful and responsible. Those pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are supported gently and sensitively. In the main, lessons run smoothly because staff use clear and consistent routines that help pupils to focus and feel secure. Pupils are eager to learn. They take pride in their work and work well with others.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have put in place an ambitious and relevant curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge in a well-ordered way from early years to Year 6. Leaders use a range of activities to check where the curriculum is working well and what improvements are needed. In the main, they are swift to bring about improvement. For example, leaders have been successful in strengthening pupils' mathematical knowledge.

Leaders draw on research and advice from a range of experts to make sure that teachers know how to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers understand pupils' needs with increasing accuracy. They adapt the way they deliver lessons when needed, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders focus on building secure

foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. From the early years, the curriculum helps children to develop their language and vocabulary. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. However, on occasion, some staff do not pick up on pupils' mistakes and misconceptions as quickly as they could. Work to address pupils' handwriting and spelling is starting to have an impact. At times, however, this is not always in line with leaders' expectations.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders are determined to ensure that children make a successful start to school life. They have designed a well-ordered curriculum that builds children's knowledge well in all areas of learning. Leaders work closely with curriculum leaders across the school to ensure that children are well prepared for Year 1.

Staff focus on building secure relationships with children and their parents and carers. This helps children to feel safe in school. Staff get to know the children well, including any additional needs that they may have. Staff typically adapt the curriculum carefully to match these needs and children's interests. They make sure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities can learn happily alongside their classmates.

Children develop their knowledge and skills well across all areas of learning. Communication, language and reading are a high priority. Children learn about phonics as soon as they join the school. They learn new letters and sounds every day. Children practise their reading with books that include the sounds that they already know. Staff link high-quality texts to learning areas with a clear sense of purpose. Children develop a keen interest in stories. They enjoy taking on the roles of story characters from much-loved books.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders make sure pupils feel they belong. Leaders' actions to identify and overcome obstacles to learning are usually successful. For example, pupils gain from support that builds their emotional wellbeing so that they are ready to learn. Leaders and staff are particularly adept at removing any barriers to learning that pupils may face. This ensures pupils get the help they need to take part in lessons.

Leaders make sure staff are well trained and know how to make helpful changes to the way they teach the curriculum. A recent effort to match support more closely to each pupil's needs has worked well. This means staff are better prepared to meet pupils' individual needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders check this support often to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum with growing independence as they move through the school.

Leaders work closely with families and outside agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND, and those who are disadvantaged, receive the correct support. This includes careful use of funding to make sure disadvantaged pupils can take a full part in all school activities. Leaders ensure every pupil has access to rich opportunities.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders at all levels make a clear difference to the school. They are right to acknowledge the school's effective culture of safeguarding and to celebrate their success in fostering pupils' wellbeing. Leaders ensure that, alongside pupils, staff also thrive. Staff have the time and resources that they need to succeed. They appreciate leaders' care for their wellbeing and their actions to reduce their workload. Teachers, including those at the early stages of their careers, value the support that they receive to teach the curriculum well. Curriculum leaders play an important role in this. They know their subjects in depth and use their expertise to build and oversee ambitious subject curriculums.

Leaders know what is working well and where further improvement is needed. The actions of the relatively new senior leadership team have led to notable improvements in curriculum design. Equally, their clear and consistent expectations have led to better behaviour from pupils. They have also strengthened provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Trustees and members of the local governing board understand their respective roles and responsibilities well. Together, they check whole-school curriculum priorities intently. Members of the local governing board are invested in the school's success. They take pride in their roles and, alongside trustees, fulfil their delegated duties effectively, including in relation to safeguarding.

Leaders build positive working relationships with parents, carers and the school community. Responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey were broadly positive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a well-thought-out programme for pupils' personal development. They have placed pupils' wellbeing at the heart of this programme. Pupils learn how to express their emotions. They develop a sense of self-worth and security.

Pupils' personal development is underpinned by well-ordered and age-appropriate curriculums, including for relationships and sex education and health education. Pupils develop the knowledge and skills that they need to make informed decisions. They know what makes a healthy relationship and how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider community. Pupils also learn about healthy lifestyles. They make well-informed choices, including the healthy snacks they bring to school.

Pupils understand fundamental British values. The school's broad religious education curriculum helps them to develop spiritually. Pupils enjoy opportunities to visit places of worship and to meet people from different faiths. They learn that belief is a personal choice and know that it is important to respect the beliefs of others.

Leaders are keen to ensure that pupils experience a wide range of enrichment activities that broaden their horizons and nurture their talents. These include music tuition and cultural and adventurous trips and visits. Leaders check closely that as many pupils as possible benefit from these opportunities. Leaders make careful adaptations to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to take part fully.

Pupils develop leadership skills through roles such as wellbeing ambassadors, play leaders and prefects. They gain insight into the world of work through meeting people from different occupations. This helps to raise pupils' ambitions and aspirations further.

Parents and carers value the breadth of experiences offered by the school. This includes events that they can take part in alongside their children, such as craft making. These shared experiences help pupils to take an active part in their school and local community.

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

Pupils are keen learners. Those who are disadvantaged, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn successfully alongside their classmates. Leaders make sure that their needs are met well. Pupils learn to read quickly and accurately, supported by an inviting and well-resourced library and engaging texts. Pupils also become confident mathematicians.

Pupils relish taking part in a wide variety of activities, such as musical theatre and sports clubs. Starting in early years, pupils learn useful skills such as how to ride a bicycle. They embrace the opportunities that they have to take on responsibilities, including acting as peer mediators or school councillors. Leaders check carefully that all pupils can and do take part in these activities.

Children in early years make a confident and happy start to school. Across the school, pupils show respect for staff and each other. Older pupils relish playing energetic games or just chatting with their friends at breaktimes. Clear routines and expectations mean classrooms are generally calm. Bullying is uncommon. On the rare occasions when bullying does happen, leaders deal with it without delay. Pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils know that it is important to attend school regularly. They attend well. Leaders' recent initiatives to improve punctuality mean that fewer pupils arrive late to school.

Pupils are well informed about the challenges and decisions that they will face as they grow. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils enjoy taking part in the school's expanding range of community events. This includes coffee and cake mornings for parents and carers. These experiences help pupils to gain a secure sense of their place in the local community.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to ensure that teachers explicitly teach and reinforce handwriting and spelling at the early stages of writing so that pupils secure these foundational skills.
 - Leaders should continue to ensure that teachers address pupils' misconceptions as they arise so that mistakes and insecure knowledge do not persist and affect pupils' future learning.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Victorious Academies 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), Karen Burns, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Hodgkinson.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, school business manager, other school leaders and staff during the inspection. Inspectors also met with senior members of the trust, including the CEO and an executive headteacher.

The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing board, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with representatives of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

There have been several changes to the school's leadership team since the school converted to become an academy school. These include the appointment of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and early years/key stage 1 leader.

The inspection started on Tuesday 13 January 2026. Inspectors returned on Wednesday 11 February 2026 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

Headteacher : Kelly Quinn

Lead inspector:

Emma Gater, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jackie Stillings, His Majesty's Inspector

Cleo Cunningham, Ofsted Inspector

Mark Ward, Ofsted Inspector

Rob Hackfath, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

213

Close to 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

315

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

21.13%

Close to 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

3.29%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

27.23%

Well above 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	60%	61%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	86%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	72%	Below
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	89%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	29%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	43%	46%	Close to average
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	57%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	62%	Close to average
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	43%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	71%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2022/23		59%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference

between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	29%	69%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	43%	67%	-25 pp
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	80%	-15 pp
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	43%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp
2022/23		79%	

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	3.5%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.9%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	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)	4.7%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.7%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.1%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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