

Gladstone Primary Academy

Address: Anchor Road, Sandford Hill, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 5EW

Unique reference number (URN): 142991

Inspection report: 9 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Overall, pupils make suitable progress across the curriculum from their starting points. Pupils learn important foundations for learning in English and mathematics. They generally secure this knowledge and skills early. Pupils then build successfully on these foundations when they are older, enabling them to carry out more complicated pieces of work. Those pupils who still have gaps in foundational knowledge receive support to close these gaps.

Pupils are far better prepared for their next stages of education than they have been previously. More Year 6 pupils are achieving well in national tests. Evidence of work seen during the inspection demonstrates that these levels of achievement are being secured and built upon further.

Through 'challenge meetings' leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are known (or previously known) to social care typically have barriers to learning reduced. This enables these pupils to catch up with their peers where necessary.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that the importance of positive attendance is understood by all. Well-embedded practice ensures that attendance is celebrated and expected. As a result, pupils attend typically well here. Leaders provide positive and effective support to pupils and families where pupils are too regularly absent from school. Families appreciate this help. As a result, fewer pupils are persistently absent from school.

There is a well-established culture of positive behaviour at school. Pupils engage enthusiastically in lessons. They treat adults and each other with respect. Pupils develop resilience and are keen to learn. They learn to cooperate and understand each other's feelings. These behaviours support them in class and socially. Adults are positive role models for pupils both in lessons and at social times. They typically apply the school's behaviour systems well.

Leaders carefully monitor behaviour across the school and respond to any issues which may occur, for example providing more equipment at playtimes in order to engage pupils. Any discriminatory behaviour or bullying is never tolerated and quickly addressed. Pupils who need specific support with regard to their behaviour receive tailored help. As a result of the consistency of approach, incidents of negative behaviour and the need for suspensions have reduced over time.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have further refined and improved the school's curriculum. It is well sequenced from the early years. The curriculum builds logically over time. Leaders tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils who attend the school.

There is a clear focus on ensuring that pupils become confident and fluent readers. Staff deliver phonics consistently well. They choose books for pupils to read which are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to secure their learning. Staff teach older pupils to read out loud, perform and reflect when reading.

Leaders have worked hard with staff to ensure that they focus on important foundations for learning in writing. This starts early. Staff teach pupils to form letters accurately, spell words and punctuate sentences consistently. In mathematics, staff focus on ensuring pupils master important number knowledge. This enables them to reason mathematically and solve problems.

Overall, staff deliver the curriculum as intended. They endeavour to include all pupils in lessons. That said, there remain some inconsistencies in relation to how well some staff focus on the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in subjects and ensure that pupils respond to the feedback they provide so as they make the best progress.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise the early years. They ensure that children build learning well from their starting points both socially and educationally. From the start of the day children settle into familiar routines and learn to become independent and inquisitive learners. Leaders have further developed the early years curriculum so that all areas of learning are well considered. There is a specific focus on children developing important communication, social and physical skills. Leaders know that these skills underpin all learning. For example, children manipulate small objects such as pegs and matchsticks. This enables them to confidently hold a pencil when writing.

Staff ensure that children practise what has previously been taught in their learning activities. For example, they count and sort toy animals into groups and match them to numerals confidently when playing independently. Staff are skilled at ensuring that children who need further practice in a particular area of learning receive extra support by including them in further group activities. Overall, staff positively interact well with children, developing and extending their language, questioning and explaining clearly. The work that leaders have carried out in the early years is building consistency across the provision. Consequently, children are well prepared and ready to learn in Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have created a warm and inclusive school culture. They identify pupils' barriers to learning early. Often this is in the early years. Therefore support is prompt and pupils' needs are well understood.

Staff are trained to meet pupils' needs effectively. Leaders monitor progress through regular 'challenge meetings'. They check on how well pupils are doing and refine support if needed. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically achieve well from their starting points. Staff have received training on making adaptations to pupils' learning in lessons to remove barriers to learning. However, not all staff are adept at ensuring that these adaptations are as effective as possible.

Leaders work effectively with professional and external agencies. Pupils known (or previously known) to social care receive coordinated and well-targeted support. Therefore these pupils' needs are effectively considered and addressed.

Disadvantaged pupils are a priority. Leaders use evidence to inform decisions about the use of additional funding. Strategies used contribute positively to pupils' academic progress and wider development. Leaders monitor the impact of this work closely.

Staff address pupils' specific needs well in 'the den'. As a result, many pupils confidently return to learn with their peers in class.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

New leaders have invigorated the school. They have taken staff and parents with them on this journey. Leaders prioritise the right aspects of the school to improve. Although some of these actions are relatively new, they are already having an impact. Leaders are present and lead from the front.

Trustees and Governors have a highly accurate overview of the school's strengths and area for development, summarised in 'on the page' documents for each aspect of school life. They check their understanding through regular visits to school. They know what needs improving and how they will support leaders in doing so.

Leaders and the trust make sure that staff receive suitable professional learning in line with the school's priorities. They invest in support from the trust and external experts such as the local English and mathematics specialist hubs. Leaders and trust leads ensure that staff benefit from learning that is research led and informed.

Leaders are always conscious of any possible impact on staff workload or wellbeing. Staff feel fairly treated here and know that leaders put pupils at the centre of decision-making. One member of staff's comment summed up the views of many when they stated, 'The school is exceptionally well led by a management team that prioritises inclusion and student success.'

Parents are for the most part positive about the school. They know that leaders care about families and the local community. One comment was typical of many when the parent stated, 'It's a lovely learning environment for my child.'

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils benefit from a well-sequenced and coherent personal, social, health and economic education programme. Recent changes to the programme are helping pupils to secure their knowledge of relationships and how to understand and navigate friendships. Pupils have an effective understanding of how to stay safe online as this is discussed whenever they use relevant technology. If any issues arise online at home, leaders work with pupils and families to ensure these are addressed.

Visits from the police help to raise pupils' awareness of keeping safe in the community. Also, visitors from a local bank promote financial management. This enhances pupils'

understanding of how to look after themselves beyond the school gate.

Leaders help to raise pupils' aspirations for later life. For example, visits from engineers, designers and dentists mean that pupils learn about different careers that are available to them when they are older. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to become police cadets.

Pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law, which align with the school's values. The school motto of 'We are equally different' reflects the school's approach to treating each other with respect. Cultural opportunities, such as the celebration of Chinese New Year and Ramadan, along with the exploration of different religions including Islam and Judaism, enable pupils to have an awareness of different faiths and cultures.

The school's wider offer is broad and accessible to all pupils. There are clubs, trips and charitable activities available. These extend pupils' experiences, enhance the curriculum and teach them to be active citizens. Pupils' participation is closely monitored so that leaders know who benefits from these opportunities.

Leaders provide effective guidance support for pupils and their families. The wellbeing of families is a priority here. This develops a real sense of community.

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

Pupils at Gladstone Primary Academy know their 'SMARTS'. The school's values of supportive, motivated, aim high, respectful, team player and safe underpin school life. From these, pupils understand and celebrate their own 'smart' such as being 'body smart', 'self smart' or 'number smart'. In this way, pupils recognise their own strengths and those of others. Pupils feel valued and enjoy school.

Leaders have established a culture of high expectations. Pupils rise to these high expectations and are now achieving well. Leaders ensure that staff understand any barriers to learning which pupils may have. On the whole, staff remove these wherever possible. Pupils make positive progress from their starting points. This prepares them well for their next stage of education.

Pupils form positive relationships with staff and each other. From the very beginning of the school day, effective routines enable them to settle in to learning. Pupils are attentive in lessons and play cooperatively together at social times. On the rare occasions that bullying takes place, leaders take effective steps to stop it from happening again. Pupils have trusted adults who they can rely on to support them and keep them safe. Pupils attend school regularly because leaders have established a culture where this is the norm.

Pupils learn about and discuss the wider world. They regularly discuss 'big questions' such as the environment or cultural awareness. Pupils say 'we are all equally different'. They understand that it is important to treat others fairly no matter what. In this way they learn to become tolerant and respectful of views different to their own. Leaders ensure that pupils

gain a range of experiences that they otherwise may not receive. For example, pupils visit the seaside or go skiing. This enables pupils to be aspirational for later life.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff consistently deliver the school's curriculum effectively, focusing on the important learning that pupils need to remember over time and making sure that pupils respond to any feedback given.
 - Leaders should support staff so that they draw from the training provided to ensure that adaptations to learning are carefully tailored to pupils' needs in order to successfully reduce any barriers.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Societas 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), Jon Lovatt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carol Dudson.

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 school leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and other leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with trustees and members of the local governing board, including the chair of the board. The lead inspector held a meeting with the CEO of the trust and other trust leaders.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken up post.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Claire Annese

Lead inspector:

Barry Yeardsley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Susan Ray, Ofsted Inspector

Amanda Green, Ofsted Inspector

Nina Sangha, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

458

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

480

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

40.87%

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

1.97%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.38%

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

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	48%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	40%	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	66%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	62%	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	67%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	59%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	71%	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	57%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	72%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	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	28%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	32%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	32%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	20%	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	55%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	59%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	47%	60%	Below

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	56%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	58%	Close to average

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	36%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	46%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	20%	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	28%	68%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	32%	69%	-37 pp
2023/24 (final)	32%	67%	-35 pp
2022/23 (final)	20%	66%	-46 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	55%	80%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	59%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	80%	-19 pp
2022/23 (final)	47%	78%	-32 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	56%	78%	-22 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	78%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	60%	77%	-17 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	36%	80%	-43 pp
2024/25 (final)	45%	81%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	79%	-33 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	20%	79%	-59 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 (3 term)	4.7%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	5.9%	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
2024/25 (3 term)	10.1%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	18.1%	16.2%	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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