

Colne Park High School

Address: Venables Avenue, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 7DP

Unique reference number (URN): 146228

Inspection report: 21 April 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Recently, leaders have taken effective action to improve the attendance of all pupils. Most pupils now attend school regularly. Attendance is improving and is now in line with national averages. Pupils who may have barriers to their attendance receive individualised support to enable them to attend school regularly. Over time, the percentage of pupils who are persistently or severely absent from school is reducing.

Leaders' actions to improve behaviour have been highly impactful. Pupils and staff share warm and positive relationships. Consequently, the number of suspensions and exclusions has reduced significantly. There is a shared understanding of the importance of routines. For example, leaders have introduced a clear structure to the start of lessons. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils who are late to lessons. Pupils arrive promptly to lessons and make the most of their learning time.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils are keen to learn. Staff work closely with pupils, their families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the help that they need to behave well. Generally, pupils rise to the expectations that the school has for their conduct.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that inclusion is at the heart of their decisions. Their vision and compassion are shared by all members of staff. There are effective systems in place to identify any pupils who may need help with their learning. These are particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers provide individualised support for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those who may face barriers to their learning in lessons. These pupils are prioritised. However, the impact of this strengthened support is not yet evident in the achievement of these pupils in national examinations at the end of key stage 4.

Pupils who are known to social care, or who have previously been known, are well supported. The systems for identifying these pupils are sharp and effective. This allows leaders to work closely with external agencies to ensure help is timely and productive. In turn, these pupils are thriving in school.

Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide equal access to a wide range of opportunities. For example, all pupils have access to the Duke of Edinburgh Award in Year 9. These pupils make the most of opportunities to volunteer in their community.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders are very keen for pupils to understand the wider world. They prioritise the development of pupils' understanding of wider issues in the community and further afield. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and trips. For example, many pupils enjoy STEM

club, debate club and LGBTQ+ club. Pupils value the house system. They say this helps them to feel like they are part of a team.

There is a well-sequenced personal, social and health education curriculum in place. This is generally taught well. This means that pupils typically have a secure understanding of fundamental British values and protected characteristics. They value the differences that may exist between people. Pupils demonstrate this understanding in the care and respect that they display towards their peers. Most pupils know what it means to have healthy relationships, including the importance of consent. Older pupils have some knowledge of misogyny and how it can impact everyday life. Their understanding of democracy and how to manage their money is less secure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who may face other barriers receive enhanced support to access all aspects of school life. Leaders swiftly spot any financial barriers to pupils' participation in activities and offer support. This ensures that pupils have equal access to the opportunities that the school provides.

Pastoral support is highly effective. Staff take the time to get to know pupils as individuals. Pupils know that support for their wellbeing is available if they need it. They appreciate this help.

Leaders have embedded a varied careers programme at the school. Pupils receive a personalised package of advice and guidance, which helps them to make decisions about their futures. They benefit from a multitude of visits from local employers and colleges. Most pupils go on to suitable further education, employment or training when they leave school.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Many pupils do not achieve in line with their peers in national examinations at key stage 4. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. That said, pupils' progress compared to their starting points has remained slightly below national averages. Some pupils are not as well prepared as they could be for the next stage of their education.

In some subjects, there has been an improvement in what pupils achieve. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that pupils often do not make the progress they are capable of.

Staff are becoming more efficient at identifying pupils who have gaps in their foundational knowledge. Leaders have embedded effective reading support for pupils who may need help to access their learning. However, their actions to support pupils who need help with their writing and number skills are at an early stage. It is too early to see the impact of this help.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The curriculum is well thought out and follows a coherent structure. Leaders make changes to the programme of study when appropriate. However, teaching is not of a consistently high quality. In many cases, teachers do not routinely check what pupils know. This means that they often do not spot misconceptions. As a result, pupils do not routinely have the chance to make improvements to their work and build on their prior learning. In turn, gaps in some pupils' knowledge are increasing. This is particularly the case for pupils with lower academic starting points.

Teachers receive training to ensure that they have a concrete knowledge of their subject. Teachers generally design suitable tasks to enable pupils to learn the curriculum successfully. They use their knowledge of their subject to explain difficult concepts.

Recently, leaders have prioritised improvements to the quality of teaching. However, the strategies they have put in place have not had the time to have a consistent impact across all subjects.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify pupils who need help with their reading, writing and number skills. The support in place for those who need help with their reading is increasingly effective. However, this help is at an early stage of its development for writing and number skills.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders, including trustees and governors, sometimes lack clarity about what steps should be taken to drive improvements at the school. Over time, leaders' strategies to improve pupils' achievement in national examinations at the end of key stage 4 have not had leaders' desired impact. This means that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not learn as well as they should from their starting points.

Some of the actions that leaders have taken have resulted in sustained improvements. This is true with regard to the improvements that they have secured in the attendance and behaviour of pupils and inclusion. The enhanced identification and support for pupils with barriers to their learning enables more pupils to receive appropriate help in the classroom. However, it is too early to see if this will result in an improvement in their achievement in national examinations.

Staff value the support that leaders provide. They feel valued and know that leaders take thoughtful steps to improve their workload and wellbeing. There is a family feel at Colne Park. Most parents and carers state that the school keeps them well informed about the progress of their children. They appreciate the recent improvements that leaders have made to behaviour.

Staff benefit from a well-designed programme of professional development. They value the feedback that leaders give them about their teaching. Typically, this helps them to improve their practice in the classroom. That said, leaders do not always evaluate the effectiveness of their work to improve teaching.

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

Pupils are proud to attend Colne Park High School. They appreciate staff's high expectations of them. Pupils say they feel safe and well-cared for. This is true. Pupils feel safe because staff take their wellbeing seriously and quickly provide support if it is needed. They rightly say it is a school where 'nobody gets left behind'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, increasingly so. More pupils are attending school regularly. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the wide range of opportunities available to them. The clubs on offer cater for all pupils, including sports clubs, journalism club and business club.

Pupils with an interest in leadership have lots of chances to become form leaders or house leaders. They enjoy being part of their house and say it helps them to feel part of a community. These opportunities help pupils to develop their confidence.

Bullying and discrimination of any kind are not tolerated here. Pupils know they can trust staff to resolve any issues they have. They feel confident to share their worries, safe in the knowledge that they will be dealt with.

Pupils behave well. They follow structured routines that have been designed to support their learning. Lessons are calm and pupils are ready to learn. Older pupils value the improvements that have been made to the behaviour of pupils in recent years. They say this helps them to concentrate.

Pupils' experience of learning in school is varied. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that pupils do not receive high-quality teaching as a matter of routine. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not currently being addressed. Typically, pupils' achievement in national examinations at the end of key stage 4 is below the national average.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers receive the necessary training and support to ensure that lessons are of a consistently high standard across all year groups and subjects.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. They should ensure that gaps in learning are identified and addressed effectively. Leaders should ensure this enables pupils to achieve their potential.
 - Leaders, including trustees and governors, should improve the systems for monitoring the impact of their actions to drive improvements across the school.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Apex Collaborative 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), John Tarbox, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Marie Burnham.

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, the executive headteacher, the CEO, 2 trustees and 2 members of the local governing committee, including the chair, during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Headteacher: Catherine Eulert

Lead inspector:

Helen Fowler, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Thomas Fay, Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Cox, Ofsted Inspector

Andy Burton, Ofsted Inspector

Zoe enser Enser, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,031

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,075

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

31.43%

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: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.26%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.77%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	37.8%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.0%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.0%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	38.0	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.2	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.0	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.25	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.29	-0.03	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	14.3%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	16.9%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	26.9	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.6	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.7	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.88	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.73	-0.57	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	14.3%	53.1%	-38.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	16.9%	53.1%	-36.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	52.4%	-27.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	26.9	50.4	-23.5
2023/24 (final)	29.6	50.0	-20.4
2022/23 (final)	31.7	50.3	-18.6

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.88	0.16	-1.04
2022/23 (final)	-0.73	0.17	-0.90

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	85%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	94%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	94%	Average

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)	10.4%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.9%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.0%	9.0%	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 (2 term)	28.3%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	31.8%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.2%	26.5%	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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