

Colne Primet Academy

Address: Dent Street, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 8JF

Unique reference number (URN): 139130

Inspection report: 16 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' strategic approach to improving pupils' attendance has had a positive impact. As a result, overall rates of attendance are improving towards the national average. This includes all groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who are persistently or severely absent from school has reduced considerably over time. Pupils who struggle to attend school regularly receive carefully tailored support, which helps them to overcome the barriers they face. Published attendance data does not fully capture the positive impact of leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance. This is because it does not fully reflect the considerable proportion of pupils who leave the school but remain on its roll until leaders are assured that these pupils are accessing different schools in this country or in other countries.

Leaders have been highly successful in securing improvements in standards of behaviour. Recently, the number of suspensions issued for breaches of the school's behaviour policy has reduced considerably. Pupils are confident that any incidents of discriminatory behaviour will be dealt with appropriately. Strong routines each morning help to set the tone for the day. Pupils know and understand staff's high expectations of their conduct. Staff forge warm and supportive relationships with pupils and their families. Leaders use their strong links with an array of external agencies to ensure that pupils, who struggle to manage their emotions, receive the support that they need. As a result, classrooms are calm spaces, where pupils can learn, and pupils behave well at social times.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have fostered an accepting community. Many pupils join the school partway through the academic year, some of these pupils have only recently arrived in the country. These pupils receive a warm welcome from their peers and the support they need. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate interventions to help them to learn the curriculum.

Staff are adept at recognising the hurdles that pupils may need to overcome. The additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified swiftly. Leaders ensure that teachers know how best to support pupils with SEND in classrooms. Typically, staff provide these pupils with suitable resources and appropriate support. Pupils who are disadvantaged are helped to embrace a wide range of opportunities, such as residential trips and extra-curricular clubs. Additional funding is used appropriately to support pupils' development. For example, some disadvantaged pupils benefit from bespoke support to raise their self-esteem and build their resilience.

Leaders make appropriate use of alternative providers to support pupils who struggle to engage with education. Leaders have secure links with both feeder primary schools and a multitude of external agencies. This means that pupils who are known or previously known to social care receive the help that they need. For these pupils, the school is a haven, where staff care deeply about improving their hopes for the future.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders demonstrate a sharp understanding of their local context. They use this to carefully prioritise and shape the support and interventions they provide for pupils. This helps pupils who are disadvantaged, who are known or previously known to children's social care and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to overcome numerous barriers to learning.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, accurately identify and prioritise weaknesses, and take appropriate action to address them. Their actions have secured improvements across many aspects of the school, including attendance, behaviour and how well some disadvantaged pupils achieve. However, their work to improve the quality of curriculum and teaching is still ongoing and has not had time to secure sufficient improvements in pupils' achievement.

Trust leaders and those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties and they are deeply aware of the barriers that pupils may face. They keep pupils' best interests at the centre of their decision-making and the challenge they provide to leaders. Staff are highly positive about the support that they receive from leaders to maintain respectful behaviour from pupils, manage their workload and to further develop their teaching. Early career teachers value the help, advice and subject-specific expertise they gain from their more experienced colleagues.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Through the thoughtfully designed personal development programme, staff inspire pupils to be the best version of themselves. Pupils are afforded a wealth of opportunities they might not otherwise experience. Leaders check regularly whether their offer continues to meet pupils' diverse needs in an ever-changing world. Pupils appreciate being consulted about their views on the suitability of opportunities on offer, such as fundraising events, cultural experiences, trips and enrichment activities.

Leaders have designed the religious and citizenship studies curriculum to ensure that pupils develop their understanding of different religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Sikhism. Typically, pupils are knowledgeable about the importance of respect for the different protected characteristics, equality and the law. They value the differences that exist between people and they are proud to be part of a multicultural community.

The high-quality pastoral support that staff afford pupils, alongside a wide-ranging offer of early help, means that pupils are assured that an adult in school will help them if they have a problem. Pupils benefit from a well-designed and age-appropriate personal, social and health education curriculum. Leaders have prioritised training for staff, and they make judicious use of external agencies to ensure content is delivered skilfully. For example, specialist outside agencies teach pupils about different forms of contraception, how to build and sustain healthy relationships with others and the dangers of open water.

Pupils receive a wealth of appropriate guidance that helps to inform decisions about their next steps. A range of well-sequenced events and opportunities support pupils to consider the options available to them when they leave the school. For example, they value

supportive discussions with staff about the GCSE options process. Pupils also appreciate college taster days as well as careers fairs, where they can meet and engage with local employers.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement is inconsistent across classrooms. In some cases, pupils progress successfully through subject content, building securely on earlier learning. However, in other instances, pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not supported well to overcome gaps in learning or to rectify errors in their work. This hinders how well some pupils achieve and prevents some pupils from meeting the entry requirements for possible next steps in further education, employment or training.

Leaders ensure that the pupils who have not secured the essential foundational knowledge in early reading and spelling receive suitable support. These targeted and effective interventions, combined with leaders' ongoing improvements to the quality of teaching, mean that pupils' achievement is improving. For instance, disadvantaged pupils' attainment is now more broadly in line with their peers nationally. Even so, rates of attainment for all pupils, including some pupils with SEND, remain below national averages. This is reflected in the school's published GCSE results.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

While leaders have ensured that the curriculum is designed coherently, there remains some variability in the quality of teaching. This is predominantly in relation to how well teachers identify pupils' misconceptions and address the gaps in pupils' prior knowledge. This hinders some pupils when they come to build on earlier learning and apply what they have been taught to new concepts.

Leaders have prioritised their actions to improve the quality of teaching appropriately. Teachers frequently use their strong subject knowledge to provide clear explanations to pupils. Following leaders' investment in professional learning opportunities for staff, teachers are now better equipped to deliver the curriculum with confidence. Increasingly, teachers design suitable activities that support pupils to learn curriculum content. However, leaders' actions have not had the time to embed fully and have a sustained positive impact across the curriculum.

Pupils who have gaps in their early reading and spelling knowledge are supported well. This is especially the case for pupils who join the school part way through the year and those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders ensure that these pupils receive bespoke, highly effective interventions to catch up quickly. However, the help for pupils who have gaps in their early mathematical knowledge or those who struggle with handwriting is not as effective at supporting them to overcome these barriers as swiftly.

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

Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, are proud to belong to the 'Primet family'. They appreciate the attentive care shown to them by staff and being a member of a community that celebrates diversity. The warm relationships that staff forge with pupils, alongside carefully tailored pastoral interventions, help pupils to feel safe and protected, overcome barriers and believe in themselves.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities, such as science, performance and sports clubs. Pupils are also supported by staff to engage in a range of more unique experiences, such as trips to the theatre, fundraising for local charities and taking part in sustainability projects.

Pupils are keen to apply for leadership roles in the school, such as being part of the senior prefect team. Others enjoy supporting younger pupils with reading. The thoughtfully designed personal development programme helps pupils to deepen their understanding of wide-ranging religious and non-religious beliefs. Pupils enjoy learning about issues related to social justice, and engaging in moral and ethical debates.

Typically, pupils enjoy learning, and more pupils are attending school regularly. Even so, there are discrepancies in how well staff support pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to overcome misconceptions and address gaps in their knowledge. This prevents some pupils from achieving well.

Pupils, especially those in older year groups, are assured that standards of behaviour have improved considerably. For the most part, this means that during lessons they can focus on learning. Staff deal with any incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying quickly. The pastoral support that pupils receive helps them to handle their emotions more successfully, make positive behaviour choices and improve their conduct.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their focus on increasing pupils' rates of attendance.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils with gaps in aspects of their foundational knowledge and skills receive the targeted and bespoke support they need to catch up quickly.
 - Leaders should ensure their mechanisms to support teachers to identify pupils' gaps in learning and address misconceptions are used consistently well across the school to enable pupils to make stronger progress.
 - Leaders should ensure teaching improvements are embedded consistently to raise GCSE attainment and better prepare all pupils, including the vulnerable, for their next steps.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Pendle Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have a responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Anita Ghidotti-Gibson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alison Chambers.

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 principal, other senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with the CEO of the trust, 2 other members of the trust's executive team, members of both the local academy council and the board of trustees and a representative from the local authority. A team inspector spoke with the headteacher of the virtual school at the local authority.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 2 registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.

Principal : Julia Pilkington

Lead inspector:

Emma Gregory, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Emma Jackson, Ofsted Inspector

Sally Kenyon, Ofsted Inspector

Zoe Enser, Ofsted Inspector

Erin Wheeler, 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

858

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,050

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

37.88%

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: 28.9%

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

3.38%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.50%

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

Close to 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 (final)	24.2%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	18.1%	45.9%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	22.8%	45.3%	Below

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 (final)	35.4	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.2	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	36.0	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)	-0.77	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.64	-0.03	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' 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 (final)	19.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	5.5%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	16.3%	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 (final)	31.0	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	23.8	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	27.8	35.0	Below

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)	-1.49	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.00	-0.57	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' 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 (final)	19.0%	53.1%	-34.2 pp
2023/24 (final)	5.5%	53.1%	-47.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	16.3%	52.4%	-36.2 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 (final)	31.0	50.4	-19.4
2023/24 (final)	23.8	50.0	-26.3
2022/23 (final)	27.8	50.3	-22.5

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)	-1.49	0.16	-1.65
2022/23 (final)	-1.00	0.17	-1.17

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 (revised)	83%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	88%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	91%	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 (3 term)	13.2%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	13.2%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	13.3%	9.0%	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 (3 term)	41.8%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	42.2%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	43.9%	26.5%	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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