

Wenlock CofE Academy

Address: Beaconsfield Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 0RW

Unique reference number (URN): 149542

Inspection report: 10 February 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.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have highly effective systems to identify pupils' specific needs early. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as other pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Staff respond to pupils' needs with great care and accuracy. Leaders work closely with parents and carers. Consequently, everyone shares a clear understanding of how to support pupils well. Leaders recognise many different types of need. Staff follow clear and well-understood procedures to ensure pupils get exactly the right support at the right time.

Well-trained staff make effective adaptations to the curriculum that match pupils' identified needs precisely. For example, pupils confidently use appropriate resources to help them achieve well in mathematics. These carefully chosen resources mean pupils work alongside their peers successfully.

Staff monitor pupils' progress carefully and regularly. They check pupils are receiving the right support and respond quickly to pupils' changing needs. Leaders ensure that when pupils need specialist support from outside professionals, it is timely and effective. Leaders check the impact of additional funding closely. They make sure the support in place helps disadvantaged pupils achieve well and grow socially, emotionally and in their wider development.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development programme is well designed. It means pupils build secure knowledge about relationships, health, personal safety and future aspirations. Pupils learn about different world religions and reflect on the importance of equality. This makes sure that all pupils feel welcomed.

Pupils have a strong sense of justice and know what is right and wrong. They develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect, and know how to live by them. Leaders ensure the personal development programme reflects the school's context. For example, visitors such as the police talk to pupils about staying safe in local parks. Pupils learn to ride their bikes safely and how to stay safe when online.

Leaders have developed ways to ensure pupils experience a deep sense of belonging. For example, many pupils become ambassadors and make a positive impact on school life. Some ambassadors lead assemblies. Others welcome visitors to the school. Some help pupils in the playground. Others create clubs, such as the British Sign Language club. These roles help pupils develop their self-esteem and social skills.

Pupils are supported effectively to develop their resilience and emotional maturity. Staff help pupils to understand and manage their emotions. They provide effective, targeted support if pupils need it. Pupils who are disadvantaged receive support to build their confidence when this is a barrier to their learning and/or wellbeing.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned approach to support their creative and artistic development. An array of activities at playtime, both indoors and outdoors, supports pupils' wider development effectively. For example, pupils benefit from a calm and relaxed environment indoors when they learn to knit and crochet.

The relationships and health education programme prepares pupils well for their futures. They learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way and the changes they will experience as they get older. This helps pupils feel ready for the next stage in their life.

Expected standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Pupils' attendance has improved over time. This is because leaders check it carefully. They take effective steps when pupils' attendance falls. For example, they work with families to understand the barriers pupils are facing. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is falling. There are many reasons why some pupils cannot attend school regularly. Staff have different ways to support them. Effective pastoral support and positive relationships with families underpin leaders' successful work.

Older pupils are proud to say that behaviour has improved. This is because staff are clear and consistent about the rules and rewards. This helps pupils to understand that staff treat them fairly. Pupils like this improvement because their lessons are calm. This helps them focus on their work. Unkind behaviour is not tolerated. Bullying is rare. Leaders deal with any incidents effectively. Staff support pupils who sometimes find it hard to manage their feelings or behaviour. For example, short learning breaks help some pupils to reflect and then refocus on their work. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen politely to each other and the staff. Pupils really enjoy playtimes. They play happily together and engage well with the many opportunities provided for them.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard ●

Leaders know the quality of the curriculum and teaching well. They make careful decisions to strengthen teaching across the school. The curriculum is broad and designed effectively so that pupils build their knowledge and skills over time. In mathematics, the curriculum gives teachers a clear structure. Teachers use this well and adapt it successfully when pupils need extra practice. In English, teaching approaches are well established. Pupils are supported effectively to develop their writing. For example, teachers focus on phonics, vocabulary and clear modelling to support the quality and accuracy of pupils' writing.

Leaders provide ongoing training so that teaching is typically effective. Teachers use their subject knowledge to present new learning clearly. They revisit important knowledge so that pupils remember it. Staff adapt learning well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers to their learning.

Teaching supports pupils' speaking and communication skills well. For example, teachers use structured sentence starters, oral rehearsal and paired discussions to help pupils

explain their ideas. These routines help pupils to understand their work. Teachers quickly identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Additional sessions in phonics and mathematics help pupils to secure this key knowledge and catch up.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, and since joining the trust, leaders, including those responsible for governance, have united effectively to define the vision for the school. All staff and governors understand this vision. They work together to achieve it. The trust board and local governors fulfil all their statutory duties. This includes making sure pupils are taught a curriculum that meets their needs and prepares them well for the next stage.

Leaders understand the school's context and its strengths. They take purposeful action to improve aspects of the school when this is needed and put pupils' interests first. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. For example, leaders have made improvements to teaching and the curriculum. This is evidenced in how well staff fill gaps in pupils' knowledge, the highly effective support for pupils with SEND and current pupils' progress and achievement. A legacy of inconsistent teaching means this is not reflected in national test results at the end of key stage 2.

Staff training is evidence informed and impactful. Leaders make sure that staff have the skills they need to teach well. Staff value that leaders are considerate of their wellbeing. Leaders prioritise staff workload when they consider the actions that are needed for school improvement.

Leaders have built generally positive relationships with parents, carers and the local community. This supports pupils to be successful.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Outcomes in the national tests at the end of key stage 2 are not high enough. Previously, gaps in pupils' knowledge were not identified accurately or quickly enough and therefore remained. Leaders have developed teaching and improved the curriculum to address this. Leaders now ensure that pupils learn the basics of reading, writing and mathematics more securely. However, there is still more work to do.

Typically, pupils' work and accurate contributions in class show they are progressing well through most subjects. Staff check pupils' gaps quickly and accurately. They provide effective, targeted support that helps pupils to catch up. This is especially true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils facing barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. As a result, current pupils are being better prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Pupils love coming to this caring school. Most attend well. Staff make learning accessible and engaging. They help pupils to feel positive about being at school. Pupils know that having high hopes for their future is exciting and important. This helps them to be well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Pupils benefit from an improved curriculum and effective teaching. They demonstrate their knowledge successfully and recall what they have learned before accurately. If pupils have gaps in their knowledge, teachers identify and address these quickly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff make skilful adjustments to help pupils with SEND learn securely. Pupils typically achieve well from their various starting points.

Pupils focus well and work hard. They walk calmly and sensibly around the school. Bullying is rare. Pupils trust staff to deal with it if it happens. Pupils enjoy playtimes. They enjoy a range of activities that suit all interests. These include sports or exploring the natural world.

Pupils have a voice here. They decide on outside play activities. They learn how to express their feelings and ideas with confidence. Staff use activities like sports leadership to build pupils' resilience, self-esteem and confidence. Pupils learn and can talk about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and democracy. They are respectful to teachers. Pupils have staff who they can talk with if they have any worries. This helps them to feel safe.

Pupils proudly talk about the opportunities they enjoy. These include choosing their own clubs, such as crochet. They run these themselves. This develops their leadership skills. Across the school, various ambassador roles give pupils further chances to take responsibility and help others. Pupils learn that they are an important part of the school community.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge, especially in reading, writing and mathematics, are identified and addressed consistently so that pupils achieve well, particularly in the statutory tests at the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders should further develop teaching across the school to ensure that pupils learn the curriculum, including the wider curriculum, consistently well.

About this inspection

This school is part of The Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy 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), Anna Rogers, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jenny Jenkins.

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.

This school is registered as having a Christian (Church of England) religious character. The last section 48 inspection was in February 2024, and the next is due in the academic year 2030 to 2031.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke with members of the governing body and trust, including the chair of governors, the chair of the trust and the CEO.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new leadership team and joined the Diocese of St Albans multi-academy trust.

Headteacher : Olivia Burke

Lead inspector:

Jessie Linsley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Suzanne Thrower, Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Stevens, His Majesty's Inspector

Kristian Hewitt, 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 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

324

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

360

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)

35.80%

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

4.63%

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

20.37%

Above 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	30%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	33%	61%	Below
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)	65%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	74%	Below
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)	37%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	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)	46%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	41%	73%	Below
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)	23%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	32%	46%	Below
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%	
2024/25 (revised)	63%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52%	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)	30%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	40%	58%	Below
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)	33%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	59%	Below
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)	23%	69%	-46 pp
2023/24 (final)	32%	67%	-35 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)	63%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	80%	-28 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)	30%	78%	-48 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	78%	-38 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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)	33%	81%	-47 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	79%	-35 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)	5.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.8%	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)	15.8%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	19.4%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	28.0%	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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