

Silkmore Primary Academy

Address: Exeter Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST17 4EG

Unique reference number (URN): 142014

Inspection report: 23 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.

Strong standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have designed a highly effective personal development programme rooted in the school's 'Aim High' values. They review this programme regularly to ensure that all pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences that prepare them well for life beyond school. Visits from professionals, such as police officers and nurses, help pupils understand future jobs and raise aspirations.

Pastoral support is a clear strength. The 'Sea Room' provides a calm and supportive space where pupils talk to trusted adults and learn to manage their emotions. Pupils describe how this support helps them feel safe and ready to learn. Tailored interventions ensure that pupils with emotional or social needs remain engaged in school life and develop increasing confidence. Pupils learn to be responsible and look after themselves. They understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and talk knowledgeably about risks, including online.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They speak respectfully about differences and concepts such as equality and democracy. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs through the curriculum and assemblies. Events such as the 'Everybody shines here' celebration day give pupils and their families opportunities to learn about each other's cultures.

Members of the 'Junior Leadership Team' and 'Sustainability Squad' take their roles seriously and contribute meaningfully to school life. They speak proudly about their work, including fundraising and introducing bird feeders across the school grounds.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of enrichment opportunities that give them the chance to try new things and learn new skills. Pupils take part in activities such as African drumming, visits to the beach, residential stays and musical performances in the local community. Leaders track participation carefully to ensure that disadvantaged pupils participate in the full range of experiences.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Over time, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve securely and are well prepared for their next stage of education. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with national figures. In 2025, there was a dip in the Year 4 multiplication check outcomes. Leaders prioritised this, and current pupils' knowledge of multiplication facts is improving. Pupils achieve consistently well in the Year 1 phonics check. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make steady progress from their starting points.

Across the school, pupils secure appropriate foundational knowledge and skills in reading and mathematics. Improvements in writing are evident, although some pupils still make errors in spelling and handwriting, and this affects the quality and standard of written work. Beyond English and mathematics, pupils' progress is, on occasion, uneven because tasks are not sufficiently adapted to meet pupils' learning needs.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Following a decline in attendance and an increase in persistent absence, leaders strengthened oversight of this area. Regular checks and increased communication with families is enabling them to identify barriers and act more quickly than in the past. Staff offer support such as access to breakfast club, flexible starts and home visits. These strategies are securing regular attendance for most pupils and improving the attendance of the small number who continue to miss too much school. Although leaders are doing the right things, a significant minority of pupils continue to take regular holidays during term time. This affects the overall attendance figures for the school.

Pupils behave generally well and show positive attitudes to learning. In most lessons, they settle quickly and engage with tasks. Occasionally, a few lose focus and need reminders to concentrate. Around school and in the playground, pupils interact sensibly, enjoying organised games and play equipment. Bullying is rare, and pupils are confident that staff deal with concerns quickly. Leaders track incidents of unkind behaviour carefully and respond effectively. Pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their emotions benefit from a designated calm classroom space. These help pupils to regulate before re-engaging in learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and coherent curriculum that is well organised and sequenced. Learning through practical experiences is a central feature. For instance, during the Ancient Egyptian workshop, pupils explore artefacts and take part in a question-and-answer session. This helps to bring learning to life and gives pupils the chance to learn and use the correct historical vocabulary.

Teaching helps pupils secure basic skills in reading, language and mathematics effectively. Younger pupils learn to read confidently, while older pupils discuss vocabulary and texts with fluency. Pupils are helped to speak articulately about their learning and to explain their thinking with clarity. In mathematics, teaching helps pupils to successfully build their understanding of key number facts. Leaders have prioritised pupils' writing and handwriting. Although some inconsistencies remain, pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their writing, and their handwriting, is improving steadily.

Teachers typically present ideas clearly in the wider curriculum. However, tasks and expectations for presentation vary. At times, the tasks for pupils who need extra help are not sufficiently adapted, so pupils do not complete their work. Sometimes, tasks are too simplistic and do not give higher-attaining pupils the chance to deepen their understanding.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders, supported by the trust, have taken appropriate steps to strengthen early years provision following recent staffing changes. Leaders understand children's needs well and ensure that provision is responsive to children's starting points. Children feel safe and settle quickly into routines. This is because staff build positive relationships with families and take time to get to know the children.

Children typically achieve well and are suitably prepared for Year 1. The curriculum is engaging and thoughtfully designed, with a clear emphasis on developing communication and language skills. Children benefit from well-resourced and creative indoor and outdoor environments. In the 'Little Village' role-play areas, they take on real-life responsibilities. They confidently take orders and serve customers in the 'fish and chip shop'. This helps them practise vocabulary, social interaction and early writing in meaningful contexts.

Interactions between adults and children are effective. Adults model language clearly and help children stay focused and engaged. They guide learning carefully as children play and work. This support helps to build children's confidence and resilience. However, at times, independent activities do not build sufficiently on what children already know and can do. When this occurs, it limits learning, particularly for some higher-attaining children.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Silkmore is an inclusive and caring school. Staff know individual pupils well. They identify additional needs early and as soon as children start in the provision for 2-year-olds. Staff work closely with families and external agencies to understand pupils' circumstances. This helps leaders to ensure that pupils receive timely help and are supported to feel safe and ready to learn.

Training for staff and advice from specialists help staff to know how to meet pupils' differing needs. In reading, writing and mathematics, staff make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to practical resources, adapted equipment and technology to complete their work successfully. However, strategies to support pupils with SEND in the wider curriculum are not as closely matched to pupils' needs as they could be. This means that, on occasion, pupils struggle with their tasks.

Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Targeted academic support and a wide range of enrichment opportunities help pupils to build knowledge and widen their experiences. Leaders carefully track pupils' participation and learning, ensuring that support is adjusted to maximise impact further. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to their peers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and those responsible for governance know the Silkmore community well and act in the best interests of all pupils. Leaders have managed a period of staffing changes thoughtfully. They have worked closely with the trust to support staff, while maintaining a focus on the school's areas for development.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have identified appropriate priorities, including improving pupils' writing and strengthening early years provision. They have taken considered action to address these. These actions are leading to improvement, although variation in practice remains.

Governance is effective. Trustees and members of the local governing body ensure that statutory duties are met. The local governing body provides appropriate challenge and support by drawing on a range of activities, including visits to school, reviewing data and speaking directly with pupils. This helps them to check that leaders' actions are improving pupils' education and wellbeing.

Staff value the approachable leadership team and the consideration given to workload and wellbeing. They benefit from a range of professional learning opportunities, including trust-wide training, mentoring and collaboration through cluster groups. These help to develop staff expertise.

Leaders engage well with parents and carers and the wider community through workshops and events. They ensure that families feel included and supported, including through celebrating pupils' achievements and working with external agencies where needed. Parents typically express positive views about their children's time at the school, particularly around care and support.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to Silkmore and feel valued as individuals. They appreciate the positive relationships with staff, who know them well and help them feel safe. Pupils can speak to a trusted adult or use the classroom 'voice box' if they wish to share a concern more discreetly. This helps them feel listened to and supported.

Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and earning book rewards, which encourage them to read regularly. Younger children benefit from a wide range of practical experiences that support their understanding. In the 'allotment', children grow strawberries and tomatoes so that they can learn where food comes from.

Typically, pupils engage well in lessons and enjoy talking about their learning. Pupils walk around the school calmly. At social times, they enjoy playing games and spending time with their friends. Incidents of bullying are rare, and staff respond quickly and fairly when pupils raise any concerns. While most pupils attend regularly, a small number still miss too much learning time. Leaders are working with families to help them attend more regularly.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment experiences. They respond positively to the school's '11 before 11' programme, which ensures they take part in memorable activities by the end of Year 6. Opportunities such as going on a hike and sleeping under the stars broaden pupils' horizons and develop their sense of awe and wonder about the wider world and the universe. Pupils take pride in contributing to the community, for example by

performing in a local residential home and organising fundraising activities that support others. This helps pupils develop empathy and a sense of responsibility towards others.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen consistency in how well learning opportunities are adapted so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported, higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and pupils produce high-quality work across the wider curriculum.
 - Leaders should ensure that independent learning activities in the early years build on children's prior learning and further deepen understanding, particularly for higher-attaining children.
 - Leaders, with support from the trust, should continue to work with families to improve attendance, particularly for those whose attendance remains below national figures and for those taking holidays during term time.
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About this inspection

This school is part of REAch2 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, Cathie Paine, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gavin Robert.

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, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, the trust early years leader and a range of staff and pupils. Inspectors also met with the trust education director and representatives from the local governing body and the board of trustees.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a deputy headteacher and several class teachers.

The school has nursery provision for 2-year olds and pre-school provision for 3-year olds.

The school does not use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Rachael Trickett

Lead inspector:

Usha Devi, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Susan Ray, Ofsted Inspector

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 23 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

197

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

210

Below 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)

50.76%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

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

2.03%

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

15.74%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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	67%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	77%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	60%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	60%	Close to average

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	80%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	87%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	73%	Close to average

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	71%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	75%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	71%	73%	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 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	60%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	67%	47%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	55%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	44%	Above

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	75%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	76%	60%	Above

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	65%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	72%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	59%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	70%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	72%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	59%	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 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	60%	68%	-8 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	69%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	55%	67%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	59%	66%	-8 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	75%	80%	-4 pp
2024/25 (final)	78%	81%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	80%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	76%	78%	-2 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	65%	78%	-13 pp
2024/25 (final)	72%	78%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	59%	78%	-19 pp
2022/23 (final)	65%	77%	-13 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	70%	80%	-10 pp
2024/25 (final)	72%	81%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	79%	-7 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	65%	79%	-14 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)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.1%	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 (3 term)	21.1%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	13.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.4%	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.

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