

Clutton Church of England Primary School

Address: Broxton Road, Clutton, Chester, Cheshire, CH3 9ER

Unique reference number (URN): 145076

Inspection report: 30 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 

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They arrive on time and attend regularly. Leaders track and monitor patterns in absence carefully. They reward pupils for attending well. This helps pupils to value the importance of regular attendance. Leaders build strong relationships with pupils and their families. This means that where there are issues leaders address them swiftly. As a result, pupils' attendance rates are broadly in line with national averages. Disadvantaged pupils and those with a history of persistent absence continue to show improvement in their attendance over time.

Behaviour across school is highly positive. Pupils, including those in the early years, engage purposefully with learning. They listen carefully, build independence and collaborate effectively with others. As a result, classrooms are calm and there is little disruption to learning. Pupils move around the school safely and with polite consideration for others. They make productive use of social time to catch up with friends or play games as a group. Pupils are positive and caring. They do not tolerate unkind words or acts. Pupils very rarely experience bullying. Even so, staff are vigilant and respond quickly to any issues that occur.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The school has recently been through a period of significant instability and uncertainty. Nevertheless, the school is now benefitting from being part of a new trust, with new leaders in post. Despite the many changes, trustees, governors and leaders have quickly developed a detailed understanding of the school's context and the needs of its pupils. They are united in their ambition to move the school forward and secure better outcomes for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.

Leaders have acted decisively to build on existing strengths and drive continued improvement. They are reflective and evaluate the impact of their work carefully. This helps to ensure that improvement work remains focused on what will have the greatest impact for pupils.

Governors are well informed. They understand the priorities for improvement and monitor the impact of leaders' actions carefully. Collaboration between school leaders, governors and trust leaders contributes positively to the school's ongoing development. Governors receive the training that they need to offer support and challenge to the school. Governors ensure that their statutory duties are met.

Staff benefit from a range of opportunities for training and development. This includes working with colleagues in the other primary schools within the trust. This cross-school work is helping teachers to develop expertise and confidence. Staff speak highly of leaders' consideration for their wellbeing. They feel included and valued. Leaders consider staff workload, when making decisions to improve the school.

Parents appreciate the way that the school deals with any concerns. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school and recognise leaders' visibility, compassion and commitment to the community.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils learn a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. It is underpinned by an ambition to help all pupils to develop into responsible, informed citizens of modern Britain.

Pupils learn how to take care of themselves. They understand how to stay safe, including online, and how to care for their physical and mental health. Pupils know what healthy relationships look like and how to deal with issues, such as peer pressure.

Pastoral support is tailored to pupils' personal, social and emotional needs. Pupils receive the support that they need in a timely manner. Pupils' different circumstances and needs are well understood. When necessary, the support from the school extends beyond pupils to include families. This helps to secure improved engagement, and wellbeing for pupils.

Pupils think carefully about the world beyond school. Pupils show respect for diversity. They develop a secure understanding of the fundamental British values. Pupils can explain right and wrong and understand the reasons for rules and laws. They speak confidently about valuing and protecting difference. Pupils are clear that everyone is welcome at their school and that no one should be discriminated against.

The school nurtures pupils' talents and interests. Pupils benefit from a wide-ranging enrichment offer. This includes cultural projects, sports clubs, mindfulness and pupil-led initiatives that encourage pupils to contribute to the wider community. Activities such as fundraising for the RSPCA and campaigning on local road safety help pupils to develop social responsibility and community awareness. Pupils take on leadership roles that contribute to the smooth running of the school. Pupils understand their leadership responsibilities and act as positive role models for younger children.

Leaders are committed to equality. They encourage all pupils to engage with extra-curricular activities. Leaders monitor the participation of disadvantaged pupils and ensure that funding is not a barrier to participation.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement varies across the school. Pupils do not consistently develop the essential knowledge and skills they need in reading, writing and mathematics. Weaknesses in these subjects continue to limit the quality of their learning. Some pupils do not progress as well as they could from their starting points. Too few pupils perform well enough in the national tests. This means that some pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have gaps in their knowledge. This limits their understanding and confidence in their work. This is particularly the case in writing. Across other subjects, pupils do not remember enough of what they have been taught. This hinders their ability to learn the curriculum well and to achieve as well as they should. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to ensure gaps are swiftly addressed, but it is too soon to see the impact of this work.

Younger pupils make a positive start in reading. They learn the important knowledge that they need to help them to become confident readers. This is reflected in the high proportion of pupils who pass the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The curriculum is not taught consistently well across the school. At times, staff do not take effective action to address gaps in pupils' basic reading, writing and number skills. As a result, some learning does not match pupils' needs. This limits how securely pupils learn over time. Additionally, staff do not check on learning with enough precision. This means some pupils repeat errors and make slower progress than they could.

The impact of teaching varies across the school and across subjects. Leaders recognise this and are prioritising action to ensure that staff receive the precise support and training they need to improve the quality of delivery across the curriculum. This work is at an early stage of development and needs more time to embed fully.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It reflects the high expectations that staff have for pupils. Knowledge is clearly mapped out alongside the skills that pupils need for each stage of their learning. Generally, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the support they need to access learning and make progress. Bespoke adaptations enhance pupils' learning effectively.

Early years

Needs attention 

Leaders prioritise children getting off to a positive start in the early years. The curriculum is ambitious and clearly maps the progress that children are expected to make in Nursery and then how this is built on in the Reception class. Despite this, staff do not consistently design learning from children's individual and varied starting points. This means that some children find planned activities too challenging or not stimulating enough. As a result, children disengage with planned learning.

Children learn in an environment that promotes curiosity, creativity and independence. However, leaders have not ensured that children benefit fully from access to learning beyond the classroom. Consequently, this limits children's choices about where they can access learning, explore and play.

Leaders prioritise high-quality interactions between staff and children. Staff typically use effective questioning to explore children's thinking. This helps children to engage confidently in conversations. However, important opportunities to build further on children's responses and deepen learning are sometimes missed.

Typically, children learn to read well. Teachers ensure that children have the skills they need to form letters and spell accurately. Many children apply these skills and write sentences independently.

Children feel safe and cared for. They quickly develop warm relationships with staff and peers. Staff work closely with parents and carers. This helps children, including those with barriers to their learning or wellbeing, to settle quickly into school life.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders prioritise a sense of belonging. They understand that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, face different barriers to learning and wellbeing. Leaders are at an early stage of embedding a coherent approach to inclusion. Systems for identifying and assessing pupils' needs are not fully secure. Leaders know that early identification of pupils' needs is inconsistent and have prioritised training to ensure that staff are equipped and confident with this process. Leaders acknowledge that staff do not determine quickly whether pupils require additional support for learning. As a result, some pupils do not receive the help that they need, when they need it.

Leaders recognise that support for pupils sometimes lacks precise assessment or sharply defined targets. Where support is well matched, pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff, who understand their needs and manage complex situations effectively. In addition to pastoral support adaptations, such as visual timetables and prompts, help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to access learning more successfully. Leaders ensure that they use additional funding wisely to enable disadvantaged pupils to access appropriate support and participate in enrichment activities.

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

Clutton Church of England Primary School provides a warm welcome to pupils and their families each day. Pupils are proud to be part of the school. They show kindness to one another and treat visitors with courtesy and respect.

Pupils are safe, well cared for and ready to learn. They are keen to come to school and they attend well. This is because of the trusting relationships that exist with the caring staff who look after them. Pupils know who to talk to if they have concerns. Bullying and discrimination are rare. If incidents do occur, they are treated seriously by staff and resolved quickly.

Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge, particularly in writing. Not all pupils achieve as well as they could in national tests. Leaders have begun to take appropriate steps to address this so that a greater proportion of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, are better prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils enjoy chatting and playing together at social times. They are creative and make good use of the school's outdoor space. Pupils support each other, behave well and endeavour to demonstrate the school's Christian values. Pupils enjoy learning. They benefit from

classroom environments that are calm and purposeful. This helps them to focus on their learning.

Pupils enjoy attending extra-curricular activities. These range from yoga to puzzle-based clubs, there is something for everyone. Leaders track attendance at clubs carefully to ensure that no pupil misses out.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen systems for identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities alongside identifying the best processes and systems to ensure they get the right help at the right time and in the right way.
 - Leaders should ensure that they develop staff's expertise in using assessment to address gaps in pupils' learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff have access to high-quality training to enable them to design the most effective ways of delivering lessons.
 - Leaders should strengthen their work to ensure all pupils, including those in the early years, make consistent progress from their starting points, so that outcomes across subjects and phases improve.
 - Leaders should continue to develop expertise in the early years, ensuring that high-quality interactions are consistent across the setting.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Chester Diocesan Academies 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), Neil Dixon, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Mason.

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 executive headteacher and other staff. The lead inspector also spoke with the trust CEO, a member of the board of trustees, the school's link trustee and members of the local governing committee, including the chair, during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes no use of alternative provision.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Chester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in April 2026.

The school joined the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust in December 2025.

The executive headteacher took up post in February 2026.

Executive headteacher: Nicola Badger

Lead inspector:

Nichola Tomkow, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Andrew Scholz, His Majesty's 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

38

Well 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: 272

School capacity

84

Well 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)

13.16%

Below 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

10.53%

Well above 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

7.89%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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	54%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	62%	S
2023/24 (final)	75%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	45%	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	71%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	82%	73%	Above

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	54%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45%	71%	Below

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	67%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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	S	46%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	S	62%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	S	59%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	S	60%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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	S	68%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	S	80%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	S	78%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	S	80%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	5.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	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)	9.5%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	23.4%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.2%	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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