

Penruddock Primary School

Address: Penruddock, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0QU

Unique reference number (URN): 112119

Inspection report: 27 January 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 have high expectations for attendance. They monitor attendance carefully and identify pupils who are often absent. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to understand and address any barriers to regular attendance. This effective and timely support has resulted in improved attendance. Pupils typically arrive at school on time and ready to learn.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have created a culture of calm and respect throughout the school. Staff greet pupils warmly at the start of each day, which helps them to settle quickly into learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Routines are well established. Pupils understand the school's expectations. Staff support pupils effectively to meet these expectations, providing extra help when needed. Bullying is rare. When incidents do occur, staff deal with them swiftly. Pupils understand that discrimination is not tolerated. In lessons, pupils are engaged and focused on their learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years make a positive start to their education. The curriculum sets out the knowledge that children should learn. Reading is prioritised from the start. Children in Reception Year learn phonics systematically and effectively. They use their knowledge of sounds to begin reading simple words. This helps them later on to become fluent and accurate readers.

Leaders have recently made thoughtful and effective changes to the early years provision. This helps staff to implement the curriculum more successfully. The interactions between children and adults are warm and positive. Staff listen attentively to children and model new words carefully. This helps children to learn important vocabulary. For example, staff use specific words for shapes when children play. Staff help children to develop their communication and language skills. This supports children to express their ideas clearly and confidently.

Staff work closely with parents and carers. This helps them to understand what children know and can do. Staff use this to build on what children already know. This helps children to be ready for Year 1.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure and well-informed understanding of the school's context. They have identified clear and appropriate priorities for improvement. Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken purposeful action. They have introduced a new curriculum and made positive changes to the early years provision. As a result, pupils are beginning to learn more and remember more.

Leaders pay particular attention to those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or face other barriers to their learning. Leaders have taken

swift and effective action to address weaknesses in the school's inclusive practices. They have prioritised how the school identifies and supports pupils' needs. Leaders are developing more rigorous processes to identify pupils' barriers to learning. They have begun to check more closely on how well vulnerable pupils are progressing. Staff receive targeted training on how to adapt their teaching for pupils with different needs. This professional learning is beginning to help teachers to explain new concepts clearly and spot gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders take appropriate steps to manage staff workload and wellbeing when introducing these changes. This helps staff to feel valued and supported.

Governors understand the school and its community well. They ask well-informed questions to hold leaders to account effectively. Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They make sure that leaders' decisions are made in pupils' best interests, including those pupils who are disadvantaged, have SEND or face other barriers to their learning.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils follow a personal development programme that is generally designed well. Pupils learn about important topics, such as mental health, through dedicated lessons. The relationships, sex and health education curriculum prepares pupils well as they grow up. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They learn about different religions and types of families. This helps them to respect and value differences. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities, such as house captains and librarians. They are proud of these roles. Pupils engage in fundraising for charities, including conservation work for red squirrels. This develops their character and sense of responsibility.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that develop their talents and interests. These opportunities include music and sporting activities. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, benefit from these opportunities. Trips, including a residential visit to York, help to build pupils' character.

Pupils have opportunities to reflect on thought-provoking questions about life and beliefs. For example, they consider what it means to belong to a community. Pupils learn to appreciate moments of awe and wonder, such as when studying nature and the local environment. They understand how to resolve conflicts respectfully and work cooperatively with others. Pupils show respect for different cultures and traditions. They learn about fundamental British values, including democracy and the rule of law. This helps them to understand their role as citizens. Pupils develop an appreciation of creativity through art and music. These experiences help to broaden their understanding of the world.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They understand how to recognise concerns about their safety and know who to talk to if they have worries. Pupils make positive healthy eating choices. Pupils begin to develop an understanding of careers. Visitors with a variety of different jobs help pupils to understand different pathways for their futures.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Across the curriculum, pupils do not consistently make connections between what they are learning now and what they have learned previously. This means that pupils do not develop detailed and well-connected knowledge across subjects. Too few pupils achieve greater depth in their learning over time. Some disadvantaged pupils have gaps in their foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics. These gaps are not identified or addressed. Consequently, some pupils are not as well prepared for their next stage of education as they could be.

Many pupils achieve well in national tests, such as those in reading. Some pupils are beginning to remember more of what they have learned. Pupils use the sounds they learn to read words. This helps younger pupils to read fluently. Since leaders introduced a new curriculum, pupils can explain new ideas with greater accuracy.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention ●

Teachers do not routinely check what pupils know and can do before introducing new learning. Gaps in pupils' prior knowledge are not identified or addressed. This limits pupils' ability to build secure knowledge and skills over time.

In some classes, teachers do not explain new ideas clearly. Activities do not consistently help pupils learn and remember what they need to know. Additionally, tasks are not consistently adapted to help pupils with barriers to their learning. Sometimes, teachers do not notice when some pupils have gaps in vocabulary. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Leaders have designed an ambitious and broad curriculum. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Some use this effectively to help pupils to fill in the gaps in their learning. In particular, younger pupils are beginning to develop deeper and more connected knowledge.

Reading is a high priority across the school. Since the previous inspection, leaders have introduced a new reading curriculum. This helps pupils to read accurately and fluently. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive timely and well-targeted support. This helps them to catch up quickly and become fluent readers.

Inclusion

Needs attention ●

Leaders do not identify some pupils' needs precisely. The school's step-by-step approach to identify and help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) lacks rigour. This means that teachers do not get clear guidance about how to help pupils overcome their difficulties.

Teachers are not confident in how to adapt their lessons for pupils who need extra help. This affects how well these pupils learn. Leaders make training a priority to help teachers teach

all pupils more effectively. Some pupils receive extra support. This is beginning to help these pupils read more fluently.

The school knows families well. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from targeted help and the school's additional funding that enables them to take part in activities such as sports. Leaders have appointed a new special educational needs coordinator and are prioritising how the school helps pupils. They are beginning to check more closely on how well pupils with SEND, who are disadvantaged or who face other barriers to their learning are progressing. However, leaders do not check carefully whether the extra help that pupils receive is working as well as it could.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to Penruddock Primary School. They appreciate seeing their friends each day. They value the opportunities that the school provides. Pupils take part enthusiastically in activities such as football, clubs and debating. This helps them to develop their social skills and make new friends.

The school wants the best for its pupils. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils do not consistently make connections between what they are learning now and what they have previously learned. This limits their ability to develop secure knowledge across subjects. Some pupils have gaps in their foundational skills in reading, writing and number that affect how well they learn. There is variation in how effectively pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported. Sometimes, the barriers to learning that these pupils face are not identified quickly enough.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know they can talk to adults if they have worries or concerns. Staff greet pupils warmly at the start of each day. This helps pupils to settle quickly into learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils learn about different religions and types of families. This helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils welcome new pupils and help them to feel part of the school community.

Pupils behave well and attend regularly. They understand the school's expectations and follow routines. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning begin in the early years, where children are curious, engaged and motivated to learn. Bullying is rare. When incidents do occur, staff deal with them swiftly. Pupils know that discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils value opportunities to take on responsibilities such as being house captains. These roles help them to develop confidence and make a contribution to school life.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the graduated approach provides teachers with clear and precise guidance to adapt their teaching so that pupils with barriers to their learning achieve well.

- Leaders should ensure that teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge so that pupils build secure knowledge over time.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers design activities to help pupils learn new knowledge securely and make connections with what they have learned previously.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Claire Hebdige.

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 the head of school during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke to representatives of the governing body, including the chair.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

A new leadership team, including the executive headteacher and head of school, has been appointed since the previous inspection.

Executive Headteacher: Carol Sharp

Lead inspector:

Mark Hazzard, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Anna Carroll, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

60

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

56

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)

5.88%

Well 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

1.67%

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

13.33%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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	48%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	38%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	56%	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	83%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	88%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	65%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	74%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	73%	Close to 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)	3.6%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.0%	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 (2 term)	6.5%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	15.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	17.8%	16.2%	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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