

Asterdale Primary School

Address: Borrowash Road, Spondon, Derby, Derbyshire, DE21 7PH

Unique reference number (URN): 146855

Inspection report: 17 March 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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have clear systems in place to secure improvements in attendance. They set ambitious expectations and work proactively with families to remove barriers to regular attendance. The impact of this work is demonstrable for individual pupils and across groups. Pupils understand why attending school matters. They want to be in school. Persistent absence is low, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff have the expertise to support pupils and families, when attending school regularly is a challenge.

Leaders have established a calm, orderly and supportive environment in which pupils behave consistently well. Behaviour in lessons and during social times is positive. At lunchtimes, pupils are independent and follow clear routines. These routines are taught clearly and reinforced across the school so that pupils understand what is expected of them. Staff apply the behaviour curriculum with consistency. They model positive and respectful interactions. Pupils show courtesy towards one another and towards adults. Pupils with additional needs are supported well and benefit from consistent expectations. Leaders monitor behaviour patterns judiciously and respond with effective support when needed.

Bullying and any form of discrimination are not tolerated. Pupils say that these rarely happen and that staff take any concerns seriously.

Early years

Strong standard ●

From the day that children start in the Nursery, they benefit from an ambitious and coherently sequenced curriculum. They learn in a vibrant and engaging environment, where they thrive, achieve well and, at the end of Reception, are prepared for Year 1.

Partnerships with parents and carers are prioritised. Staff work quickly to get to know every child well. They swiftly and accurately identify children who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing. They ensure that children get the support they need. Leaders review children's progress frequently and make thoughtful changes to provision to ensure that all children achieve well.

Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of how children develop. Adults use high-quality interactions to extend children's thinking. Adults model language carefully. As a result, children, including those who are disadvantaged, those who speak English as an additional language or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop the early skills they need for future learning.

Early reading, writing and mathematics are taught daily, with opportunities for children to practise what they have learned through play. For example, pupils create shape rockets so that they can 'fly to the moon'. Children quickly learn the sounds they need to begin reading. Children practise their early writing and develop secure letter formation through well-designed activities.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have high aspiration for pupils with additional needs. They are committed to meeting the needs of every pupil through the 'Together we can' approach. As a result, pupils develop independence and have the skills and knowledge to achieve well.

Staff benefit from purposeful training that develops their understanding of additional needs and strengthens the consistency of provision. Leaders work effectively with external specialists and secure additional expertise when required. They work closely with parents and carers.

Pupils' individual needs are identified and assessed swiftly. Leaders support pupils very well through highly effective practice. Pupils who find learning the hardest benefit from high-quality, inclusive teaching. This is particularly evident when supporting pupils to catch up with reading. It is also apparent through the forest schools activities, when pupils develop their confidence, resilience and self-esteem.

Across all groups, leaders monitor pupils' progress rigorously and assess the impact of interventions and support strategies. This considered, proactive approach ensures that pupils who face barriers to their learning are well supported and able to succeed.

Leaders use pupil premium funding strategically. The strategy is informed by research. It supports pupils' academic progress as well as aiding emotional, social and communication development.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a positive and inclusive culture in the school. They have established a clear and ambitious vision to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils. They have worked swiftly and energetically to ensure rapid improvement since the last inspection.

Leaders demonstrate an astute understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. They meticulously monitor the curriculum, teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes. They use this knowledge to make well-informed decisions that improve pupils' experiences. This results in consistent practice and effective deployment of staff, where improvement is needed.

Leaders are driven to ensure that all pupils succeed. They carefully monitor the provision for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. They carefully monitor these pupils' progress to ensure that any gaps in learning are identified and acted upon.

Governors and trustees carry out their statutory duties effectively. They hold leaders to account and are focused on pupils' needs, experiences and outcomes. They understand the school's context and ensure that resources, including pupil premium funding, are used in pupils' best interests. This partnership between leaders and governors continues to support the school's sustained improvement.

Staff benefit from a coherent programme of professional development that builds expertise across subjects and phases. The programme is informed by leaders' monitoring, school improvement priorities and findings from external research.

Leaders make well-informed decisions to support staff workload and wellbeing. Staff appreciate the clarity and consistency of expectations. They are kept well informed.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, pupils achieve well from their starting points. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' outcomes in some national tests are above national, including those of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils make notable progress in their reading and writing. Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well. Most pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils recall prior learning with accuracy and can talk confidently about what they have learned. This is particularly evident when pupils are talking about their learning in writing. Pupils' growing knowledge is also evident in their work in these subjects. Pupils have the foundational knowledge that they need to make secure progress through the majority of the school's wider curriculum. For instance, in Year 2, pupils explained how they develop skills and techniques in art. However, in some subjects, pupils struggle to talk about their learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. It is coherently planned and sequenced, providing opportunities to revisit previous learning and gradually build pupils' knowledge over time. The focus on communication skills and developing vocabulary is consistently evident across the curriculum.

Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. They use this information to inform decisions about school improvement and staff's professional development programme. Leaders ensure that staff teach the curriculum well, using their secure subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn.

Teachers adapt learning opportunities well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language.

Leaders and teachers are alert to pupils, who have not secured essential knowledge and skills in reading, writing or mathematics. They provide a range of support for pupils to help them to catch up, including, for example, through small-group teaching, individualised support and targeted strategies in the classroom. In many subjects, teachers check pupils' understanding and provide them with helpful advice about how to improve. However, there

are occasions when teachers do not support pupils as well as they could to deepen their knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The personal development curriculum is well sequenced and reflects the context of the school. It ensures that pupils revisit learning to embed their knowledge, particularly those linked with contextual challenges. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn about safety, fairness and the importance of positive relationships.

Relationships and sex education and health education are delivered in line with statutory requirements. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, personal safety and online risks. Pupils learn how to look after their physical and mental health. They know that they should be positive about what they have achieved. Pupils reflect on their beliefs and consider the perspectives of others.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment opportunities that broaden their experiences. Leaders provide opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests, including, for example, through a girls' football team and through the crochet club.

Leaders ensure that trips and residential activities provide memorable experiences for pupils. Pupils say that some trips develop their learning, including, for example, the trip to the Holocaust Centre. Disadvantaged pupils are supported to participate fully, and leaders ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged by cost or access.

Staff provide targeted pastoral support for pupils who need additional help, including those facing emotional or social barriers.

Pupils value their leadership roles. They take them seriously. 'Wellbeing Champions' know that it is important to support younger pupils to feel better by listening and providing them with a different activity.

The school's values underpin pupils' behaviours and actions. Pupils value being part of a team. They demonstrate a deep understanding of respect. Although assemblies and curriculum themes introduce the importance of the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law and individual liberty, pupils do not consistently explain or apply this knowledge in depth. Pupils are not clear how these values link with the school's values. Pupils also show limited knowledge of world faiths.

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

Pupils are valued, respected and known well by staff at Asterdale. This leads to a strong sense of belonging, where pupils achieve well. This begins when the youngest children start in early years.

Pupils thrive in a culture underpinned by the school's values. They live out the values of aspiration, self-belief and empathy. They show resilience and they understand the

importance of teamwork. Pupils show respect and care for one another. They have warm and positive relationships with staff.

Pupils enjoy enrichment activities, including clubs, trips, residential visits and wider opportunities, to broaden their experiences. Leaders ensure that all pupils, particularly those who may otherwise miss out, can take part fully in these activities. Pupils say that they are proud of their school. School is a fun and enjoyable place to be. As a result, most pupils attend well.

Leaders and staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour. Consequently, pupils behave very well. Bullying is rare, but when concerns arise, staff act swiftly to provide the right support. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.

The older pupils support the younger ones through their leadership roles, including reading ambassadors and when supporting at lunchtimes. These roles help them to prepare to be a positive member of the community.

Pupils engage enthusiastically with an ambitious curriculum that has been well planned out. They enjoy their learning. Teachers use the 'Asterdale toolkit' well to ensure a consistency across school. Most teachers make sure that pupils understand what they are learning. Most pupils are prepared for the next stage.

Staff swiftly identify barriers to learning for pupils and work together effectively to provide the best possible support for pupils. They want all children to achieve 'everyday excellence'. Staff provide highly effective, tailored support. As a result, pupils achieve well, including those who are disadvantaged, speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Next steps

- Leaders need to ensure that the well-designed curriculum is taught consistently well in all subjects and year groups, so that pupils secure the knowledge and skills they need for their next steps.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils understand how the school's values that they follow in their behaviour and conduct link with fundamental British values. They should also ensure that pupils deepen their understanding of different world faiths.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Odyssey Collaborative Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ian Dewes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Storer.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, trustees and governors, including the chairs of the trust and local governing body. They also spoke to a range of teaching and non-teaching staff and a wide range of pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of alternative provision.

The school offers before- and after-school care.

The headteacher and senior leaders have all taken up new posts at the school since the last inspection.

Headteacher: John O'Leary

Lead inspector:

Donna Chambers, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Katie Towers, Ofsted Inspector

Sally Wicken, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

225

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)

27.92%

Close to 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

1.78%

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

16.44%

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

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	60%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	61%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	66%	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	87%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	84%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	87%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	65%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	73%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	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	46%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	44%	Close to average

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	78%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	69%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	91%	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	59%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	46%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	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 (revised)	62%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	82%	59%	Above

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	46%	68%	-22 pp
2024/25 (revised)	54%	69%	-15 pp
2023/24 (final)	31%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	55%	66%	-12 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	78%	80%	-1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	69%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	77%	80%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	91%	78%	13 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	59%	78%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	77%	78%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	78%	-31 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	55%	77%	-23 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%	-9 pp
2024/25 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	69%	79%	-10 pp
2022/23 (final)	82%	79%	3 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 (2 term)	4.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.4%	5.5%	Below
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)	11.9%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	8.0%	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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