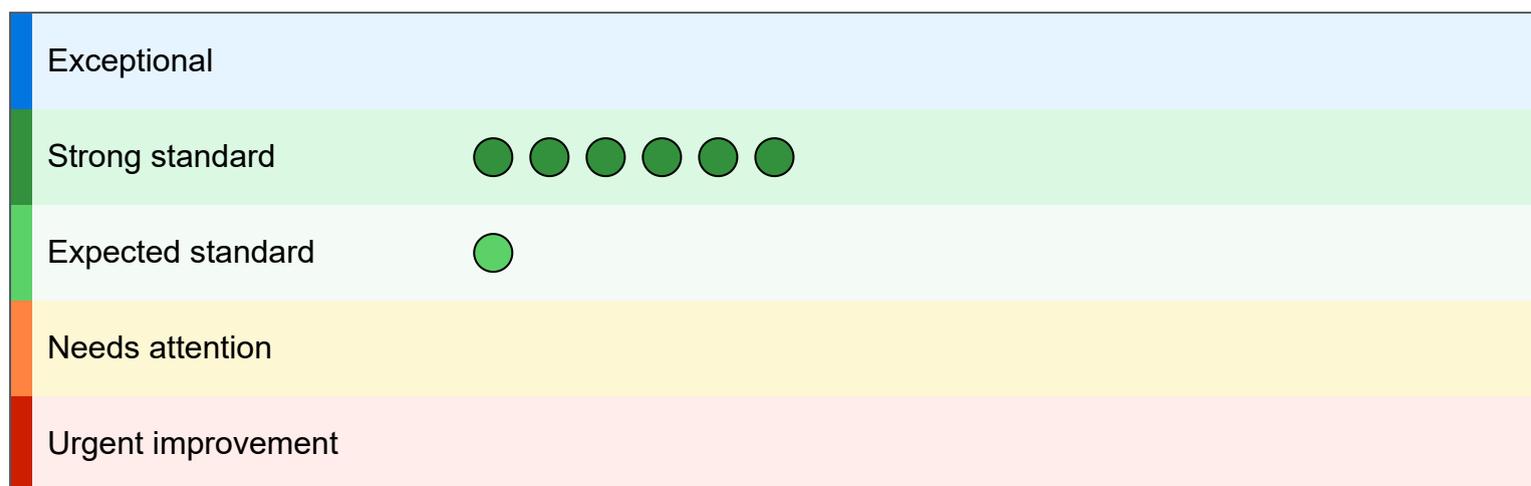


# Bankfields Primary School

**Address:** Mansfield Road, Eston, Middlesbrough, TS6 0RZ

**Unique reference number (URN):** 147392

## Inspection report: 3 February 2026



### **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 ●

### Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils at Bankfields Primary achieve highly. From what are often very low starting points, children in the early years and those in key stages 1 and 2 make substantial progress in their learning. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is consistently higher than that of other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils achieve very highly indeed. They consistently outperform non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Other pupils at earlier stages of their education also achieve well. They produce high-quality work. Pupils talk about their work with insight and awareness.

Leaders have robust systems in place to track pupils' progress. As pupils move up through school, staff monitor their progress in line with the school's robust systems. This means that any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills are identified and addressed swiftly and effectively. Pupils develop a secure base of foundational knowledge. This prepares them very well for the next stage of their education.

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance has a highly positive impact. School is a place where pupils love to be. Their attendance is positive. Over time, the impact of the school's work to address areas of concern around attendance is clear. For example, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are persistently absent from school has more than halved. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent has also been heavily reduced.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is highly positive. A strong foundation of personal, social and emotional development in the early years provides the bedrock for children to quickly understand rules, routines and the school's high expectations. Pupils apply themselves to their work well. For older pupils, these attitudes to learning are often exemplary. Leaders seek to identify where improvements to provision can be made to further improve behaviours. The recent introduction of playground zones to help focus pupils' play has had demonstrable impact, for example. Pupils, parents and staff know that bullying is rare. Instances of derogatory language are also rare. Where instances have occurred, leaders have taken effective action to address these. Where adjustments to behaviour management are necessary for some pupils, these are sensitive and appropriate.

### Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders across school are highly knowledgeable about the early years. They use this expertise to design a high-quality curriculum. This gives children the experiences, knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for key stage 1. The curriculum is further personalised to children's emerging needs over time. This includes disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children quickly develop strong foundations for communication and language. As a result, they get maximum benefit from highly positive and effective interactions with staff. These well-trained staff have a keen

understanding of child development. They model vocabulary accurately. Children then use this language in their own play.

In classrooms, children investigate with clear reasoning, for example, using appropriate vocabulary to explain whether objects will float or sink. They learn about and develop simple tools to analyse information, including collecting information on a tally chart to contribute to a class pictogram of 'favourite' and 'least favourite' fruits. The school's promotion of reading allows children at the pre-reading stage of development to secure a real love of books. This then builds into increasingly secure phonics knowledge. Staff give children numerous opportunities to write for a purpose. Children achieve exceptionally well from what are often low starting points.

The school's partnership work with parents is highly effective.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Bankfields Primary School is a highly inclusive school. Leaders and staff welcome pupils of all backgrounds and levels of need. All staff are instrumental in creating and maintaining the positive and affirming environment in the school. Disadvantaged pupils, those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the wider school population benefit from highly effective pastoral provision. This provision enables pupils to thrive. There is a tangible sense of belonging across the school.

The school has embedded processes for identifying pupils' needs. Well-trained staff consistently implement these processes. Leaders ensure that any additional funding is targeted for the benefit of pupils. For example, the precision with which pupil premium funding is spent has notable impact on disadvantaged pupils' academic and pastoral progress. Pupils benefit from staff's swift action to address any barriers to learning. Staff make adaptations and adjustments to teaching. This ensures pupils are able to make progress across all areas of the school's work.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, monitor the impact of support for pupils effectively and robustly. Close liaison with parents, carers and external agencies means that support can be tailored and amended to adapt to changing needs over time.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders at all levels have established an environment in school that allows pupils to thrive, achieve and succeed. Their work makes a significant difference to the education and care of the pupils at Bankfields Primary School. Leaders, including governors and the trust, have crafted a rigorous monitoring programme. This gives leaders meaningful insight into the school's strengths and any areas for further development. Where provision needs to be improved, leaders take action to ensure that these improvements are rapid and notable in their impact. Leaders are rightfully proud of the impact their work has in school.

Leaders ensure that staff have access to a well-planned and appropriate programme of professional development. They also ensure that staff workload and wellbeing are priorities. As a result, staff morale is high. Staff are proud to be members of the Bankfields team. Parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school.

Governors and trustees meet all of their statutory obligations. They fulfil their roles with diligence. Governors and trustees are well informed about all aspects of the school's performance. They use this information to hold leaders to account. Governors make their own visits to school to verify the information they are given. They also ensure that they seek additional validation on the impact of the school's work. The local governing body and the board of trustees ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of pupils. For example, they carefully monitor the impact of the pupil premium strategy on disadvantaged pupils.

## Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school has developed a coherent, effective and appropriate programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils swiftly develop a keen sense of right and wrong. As they grow older, their moral compass strengthens. Older pupils understand how individual liberty should not interfere with the rule of law. Pupils learn to cooperate and work together to avoid conflict.

Leaders take swift and effective action to ensure that pupils get the knowledge and skills that they need to develop a commendable level of respect, tolerance and appreciation for difference. There are numerous opportunities for the predominantly white British school population to develop its respect for other cultures, religions or ethnicities. Opportunities for different faith leaders to visit school help to further strengthen this element of pupils' development. A wider programme of educational visits further embeds pupils' understanding of spirituality. Pupils talk positively about a visit to a mosque, a Hindu temple or a church, for example. Pupils understand discrimination and do not tolerate it. For example, they make insightful links to prior learning about Rosa Parks or Nelson Mandela.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of healthy relationships and the changes that will happen as they enter adolescence. Character development is key to the school's work. Older pupils take on a number of roles across school. They are proud to have this level of responsibility. Prefects help to maintain the calm and orderly atmosphere throughout school. The librarians and sports leaders also make telling contributions to the school community. 'Headstart ambassadors' help their peers with their mental health and self-esteem.

The personal development programme is an entitlement for all. Pupils benefit significantly from this high-quality offer, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are otherwise disadvantaged.

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## Expected standard

### Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

As a result of leaders using expertise from within the school and across the trust, the school's broad and ambitious curriculum has been further strengthened since the last inspection. Across multiple subjects, there is a clear and effective sequence of learning that is tailored to the local area. This includes Eston's rich heritage linked to the ironstone mining

and steel industries. Leaders monitor the implementation of the curriculum closely. This allows them to take action to make improvements where necessary.

Teachers have the subject knowledge they need. They implement the curriculum with typically effective teaching in most subjects. Staff adapt task design to enable pupils to succeed. Pupils develop a secure and detailed bank of knowledge and skills. They gain the key foundational knowledge they need to read, write and use mathematics at an age-appropriate level. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Younger pupils talk excitedly about the habitat of a crab. Older pupils make insightful links between Anglo-Saxon and Roman civilisations. Staff astutely identify gaps in pupils' learning. Appropriate support ensures that these gaps close quickly. That said, at times in a small number of subjects, teaching and task design varies more and is therefore not as highly effective.

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

The motto of this vibrant, nurturing and welcoming school is 'be happy, be successful, be proud, be Bankfields'. Pupils of all ages embody these characteristics. They have a genuine sense of belonging. As a result of being safe, happy and valued, pupils at Bankfields Primary School thrive and achieve.

Through a consistent approach to behaviour across school, pupils understand the rules and the high expectations of staff. They strive to live up to these high expectations. Pupils' relationships with staff and other pupils are highly positive. Older pupils act as excellent role models for their younger peers. The feeling of 'family' throughout the school helps pupils get along together. As a result, bullying is rare but is dealt with effectively. Pupils' attendance also reflects their love of the school. Attendance is very positive. Those pupils who have been persistently absent in the past are now far fewer in number.

Pupils have a clear thirst for knowledge. Their enjoyment and focus in lessons are impressive. Teaching is typically engaging. It promotes pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills. Additional support from well-trained staff is targeted well to remove any barriers to learning. This means that pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are otherwise disadvantaged, achieve highly. Pupils make excellent progress through the curriculum from their starting points.

As well as achieving strong academic outcomes, pupils benefit from being very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders plan educational visits to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world, such as a visit to a local Hindu temple. Pupils enjoy opportunities to contribute to the school community as well as that beyond the school gates. These opportunities include roles in school such as the 'eco-warriors'. Pupils also make contributions to a local food bank.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching and task design is improved in a small number of subjects so that highly effective teaching is embedded across all year groups and subjects.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of Steel River Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officers (CEOs), Patsy Petrie and Jason Murgatroyd, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jane Powell.

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.

During this inspection, the headteacher was not able to be in school, so inspectors spoke with the headteacher remotely. Inspectors spoke to the deputy headteacher, other school staff, one of the CEOs, members of the local governing body and a representative of the trust during the inspection.

Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils, visited a sample of lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work across a number of curriculum subjects. Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers.

Information about this school:

Since the last inspection, the on-site provision for 2-year-old children that was operated by a third party has closed.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Emma Gatenby

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### Lead inspector:

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Rhian Williams, Ofsted Inspector

Sue Richardson, 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 3 February 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**268**

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

**297**

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)

**55.04%**

Well 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

**1.12%**

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**

**22.39%**

Well 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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	82%	61%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	85%	62%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	83%	61%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	76%	60%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	74%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	75%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	88%	74%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	89%	73%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	84%	72%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	85%	72%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	85%	72%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	82%	71%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	90%	73%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	74%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	88%	73%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	92%	73%	Above

## **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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	79%	46%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	81%	47%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	46%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	79%	44%	Above

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	87%	62%	Above

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	63%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	62%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	89%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	81%	59%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	81%	59%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	85%	58%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	79%	58%	Above

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	85%	60%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	61%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	59%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	84%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	79%	68%	12 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	81%	69%	12 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	67%	10 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	79%	66%	13 pp

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	87%	80%	7 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	81%	10 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	80%	-3 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	89%	78%	11 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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	81%	78%	3 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	81%	78%	3 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	85%	78%	7 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	79%	77%	2 pp

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	85%	80%	5 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	90%	81%	10 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	79%	-3 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	84%	79%	5 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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (2 term)</b>	5.2%	5.2%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (3 term)</b>	5.9%	5.5%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (3 term)</b>	6.8%	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)	14.0%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	15.2%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	23.3%	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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