

# Twelve Apostles Catholic Primary School

Address: Nel Pan Lane, Leigh, Select, Select, Lancashire, WN7 5JS

Unique reference number (URN): 106503

## Inspection report: 13 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.

## Strong standard ●

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' rates of attendance are close to the national average and continue to improve quickly. Leaders are unwavering in their focus on prioritising pupils' attendance. They work closely with individual families and, where necessary, external agencies, to identify and remove any specific barriers to pupils attending school. Leaders are systematic and highly effective in taking swift action to provide support for these pupils and their families.

Pupils' behaviour is praiseworthy. They are excellent ambassadors for their school. From the start of the early years, routines are well established. Children are taught to be polite and caring towards each other. Pupils treat each other with respect and feel valued for who they are. Pupils who sometimes struggle to regulate their own behaviour benefit from sensitive support from staff. They are helped to manage their emotions. Staff provide gentle reminders of the school rules where needed. On the rare occasion that behaviour falls short of leaders' high expectations, leaders take prompt and effective action. Pupils develop confidence throughout their time at the school. They gain a thirst for knowledge. They learn to use their 'powers' of learning to build belief in themselves and not give up. These positive, responsible attitudes contribute considerably to pupils' readiness to learn.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders' incisive knowledge of the school's context is expertly used to inform an impressive and ambitious curriculum offer. Leaders place communication and language at the centre of the school's work. Pupils who struggle to read, including those who speak English as an additional language, benefit from well-matched additional support to help them catch up.

Leaders have high expectations and challenge pupils to achieve their best. They regularly review how well staff deliver the curriculum. They are swift to identify ways to further enhance pupils' experiences in lessons. No opportunity is lost to improve learning for pupils. Teaching is highly effective and based on educational research. Staff provide pupils with learning that is engaging and exciting and helps to build understanding progressively. They have considerable subject expertise.

Staff are united in their view that additional needs should not be a barrier to learning. When necessary, they skilfully adapt resources so that these pupils can learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Staff use careful checks to identify whether pupils have any missing knowledge. Teachers ensure that pupils have secure foundations in their learning before moving on to more difficult concepts. Pupils are consistently supported to make meaningful connections in their learning. They build on their understanding of important concepts, such as chronology and tooth decay and how this links to healthy eating. They speak about what they know already and their current learning with confidence and genuine interest.

### Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders are firm in their commitment to prioritising children getting off to a flying start. They are highly knowledgeable about child development. Leaders ensure that considerable care

is taken to understand each child's individual starting points. Particularly effective partnerships with previous settings and parents and carers enable staff to swiftly identify any additional support children may require. These strengths support each child's successful progression through the curriculum.

The early years curriculum is designed with the school's context in mind. Leaders are mindful of the increasing number of children who join the school who speak English as an additional language or who have barriers in their speech and language. Staff seize every opportunity to model carefully selected words and sounds matched to children's learning. Staff are experts in their use of the school's phonics and mathematics programmes. They use this expertise to immerse children in the skills that they need to become fluent readers and mathematicians. Deliberate thought is given to the development of children's physical skills to support their mark-making and early writing. Incisive knowledge of children's barriers to learning enables staff to expertly support children who struggle to secure these key skills. Children are very well prepared for their next stages in learning.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Inclusion is at the centre of all that the school does. Leaders have an unwavering determination to tackle and overcome any academic, social or emotional barriers that pupils may face. Leaders ensure that staff have the right knowledge and support to quickly identify and help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that staff training is matched to the needs of pupils. For example, leaders have responded swiftly to the increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language. They have ensured that staff are supported to develop expert understanding of how to help these pupils to access and learn the curriculum well.

Leaders ensure that extra funding, such as for disadvantaged pupils, is used effectively. They meticulously check the impact of the support that they put in place. Leaders work effectively with parents and carers, as well as with external agencies, such as speech therapists and counsellors, to shape tailored support. Staff have a precise understanding of the barriers faced by pupils, including those who are known or previously known to social care. They work systematically to remove any barriers to learning or wellbeing through carefully designed support that is provided with high levels of expertise. Leaders' highly successful and comprehensive approach to this aspect of the school's work ensures that all pupils thrive and are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Governors use their expertise to provide the school with extensive support and challenge. They ensure that pupils are kept safe, receive the support that they need and flourish. Leaders act in the best interests of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. They are remarkably reflective and diligent in their commitment to overcoming barriers that prevent pupils from achieving the school's extremely high aspirations. Governors are proactive and comprehensive in their checks on the school's work to achieve this ambition.

Leaders are never complacent. Despite the school's many notable strengths, leaders continually look to further improve. They are relentless in their pursuit to ensure that pupils flourish, socially, emotionally and academically. Leaders are highly effective and forensic in

their approach to driving continual school improvement. This ensures that they are strategic in swiftly responding to any aspect of the school's work that needs to be prioritised. Leaders' extensive knowledge of pupils' barriers informs deliberate and carefully considered strategies. Individual, group and whole-school priorities are identified and addressed in an astute and well-informed manner.

Staff training and development are high quality and grounded in educational research. The highly skilled staff team has a shared passion and dedication to providing the best opportunities and education to their pupils. They are proud to be part of the school and appreciative of the careful consideration that is taken of their workload. Parent and carer partnerships are prioritised. Parents value the opportunities that they have to share learning and afternoon teas with their children's classes.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders have a sharp focus on broadening pupils' experiences and aspirations. High priority is given to ensuring that pupils understand what it means to belong to the school, their locality and their role in the world. Leaders ensure that optimum use is made of opportunities to equip pupils with the confidence and independence that they need to become responsible members of their school and wider community. Pupils learn about potential future careers. This is expertly enhanced by visits and visitors that inspire pupils to 'dream big'. Pupils also learn about important skills for their future lives, such as managing finances and budgeting.

Leaders ensure the school's context is considered in the design and content of this personal development programme. Pupils are taught to be safe online, near water and when crossing the road. They learn about the importance of making informed and safe decisions. Pupils understand the changes that will happen to them as they grow up. They know what makes a healthy relationship. Pupils also learn about diversity among people and families. They speak knowledgeably about the importance of fundamental British values. Pupils learn in an environment where there is respect for all.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the impressive range of experiences on offer. For example, pupils spoke confidently about being members of the choir and their work with community projects and fundraising to make a difference to others. They are keen to attend the range of clubs available. Participation rates are high. Leaders are innovative in their work to ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, participate in and benefit fully from this wider offer.

Staff's sensitive and carefully crafted strategies to prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing ensure that pupils are empowered to have a voice. Pupils know that their ideas and thoughts are heard and acted on. Pupils have a particularly mature understanding of strategies to help them to feel calm and how to use these.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

### Expected standard

Published data shows that pupils' progress is above national averages. They progress well in reading, writing and mathematics from their individual starting points. Over time, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was close to national averages at the end of Year 6. However, in 2025, pupils' attainment in reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and in the Year 4 multiplication tables check was below national averages. Leaders understand the reasons for this and have taken effective and swift action to improve pupils' learning in these areas. They have strengthened approaches to precisely identify and address any gaps in learning that pupils may have. Leaders are continuing to embed and refine the support that pupils receive, including those who are disadvantaged, so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes by the time they leave the school. Pupils are proud of the high-quality work that they produce across the curriculum. Typically, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.

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

Pupils benefit from an environment where they feel welcomed and happy. They enthusiastically describe their school as a place where 'everyone is unique and cared for'. Pupils benefit greatly from the remarkable levels of care on offer. They thrive in their wider development.

Pupils value the excellent relationships that they have with staff at the school. They enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. A range of highly effective strategies help pupils to settle at the start of each day. This enhances pupils' sense of belonging.

Pupils relish the praise that they receive for their impressive attitudes to school life. They are proud to receive the prestigious 'star of the week' awards and to share marshmallows with their headteacher. Pupils are taught to be polite and kind towards others. They behave extremely well. Pupils trust adults to keep them safe from any harm. If bullying should occur, it is dealt with effectively.

Leaders set high aspirations for pupils' achievement. Staff understand the barriers and challenges that some pupils face in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively to succeed. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Pupils relish many opportunities to take on responsibilities in school, including helping in the school office and by being dining hall helpers and school councillors. Older pupils take pride in being positive role models for younger children in their roles as play leaders. Pupils' talents and interests are broadened through an extensive range of clubs, such as crochet, Spanish and art. They are proud to represent their school in sporting events such as boccia, curling and rugby. Pupils are also well prepared for life in modern Britain through visits to museums, cities and art galleries that broaden their cultural understanding.

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## Next steps

- To further strengthen pupils' preparedness for their next steps in education, leaders should continue to further embed their work on raising the attainment of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes by the time they leave the school.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Paula Crawley.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our updated inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders and staff during the inspection. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and of the archdiocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Catholic religious character. The school is voluntary aided and is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection took place in September 2019.

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. The headteacher was previously the school's deputy headteacher.

Headteacher: Tracey Whitton

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### Lead inspector:

Rebecca Jewitt, His Majesty's Inspector


### Team inspectors:

Mike Tonge, Ofsted Inspector

Phil Dickson, 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 13 January 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**211**

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)

**33.18%**

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**

**5.21%**

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**

**14.22%**

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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	63%	61%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	60%	62%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	63%	61%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	67%	60%	Close to average

### **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>	73%	74%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	67%	75%	Below
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	77%	74%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	77%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	70%	72%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	67%	72%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	70%	72%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	73%	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	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	70%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	83%	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.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	55%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	55%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	44%	Close to average

### 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>	64%	62%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	64%	63%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	75%	62%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	50%	60%	Close to average

### **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>	58%	59%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	59%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	58%	58%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	60%	58%	Close to average

### **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>	64%	60%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	61%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	67%	59%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	70%	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	55%	68%	-13 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	69%	-15 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	58%	67%	-9 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	50%	66%	-16 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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	64%	80%	-16 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	64%	81%	-17 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	75%	80%	-5 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	50%	78%	-28 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>	58%	78%	-20 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	78%	-24 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	58%	78%	-19 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	60%	77%	-17 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>	64%	80%	-16 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	81%	-26 pp
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	67%	79%	-13 pp
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	70%	79%	-9 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>	4.9%	5.2%	Close to average
<b>2023/24 (3 term)</b>	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
<b>2022/23 (3 term)</b>	5.2%	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 (2 term)	8.2%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	10.5%	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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