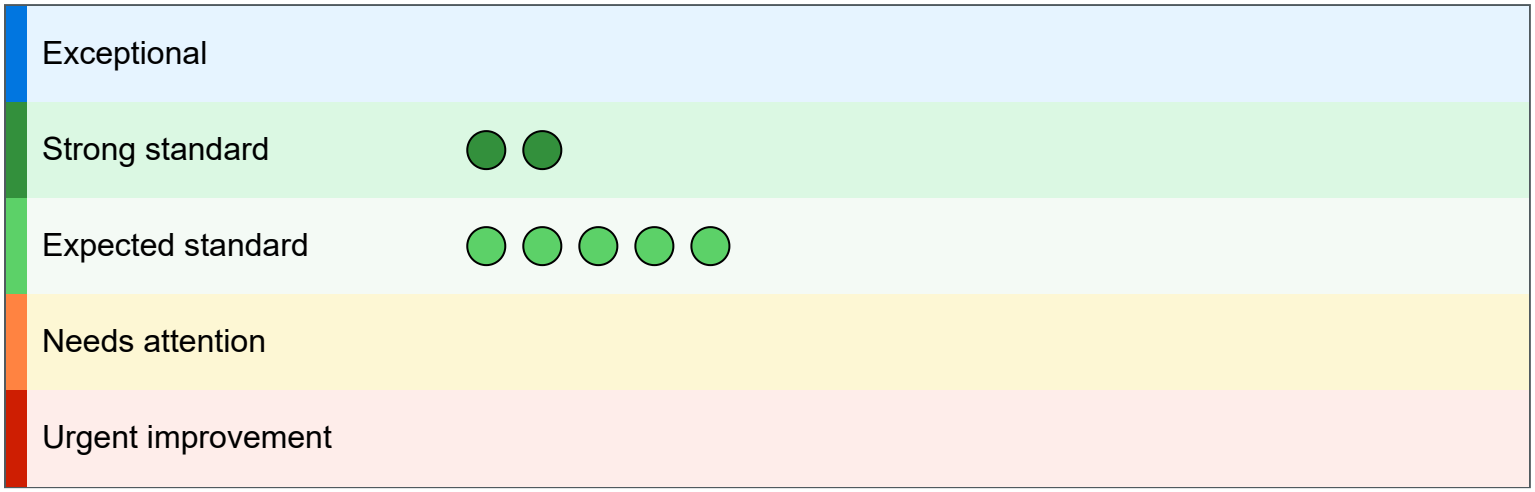
The Halifax Academy

Address: Gibbet Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 0BA

Unique reference number (URN): 140326

Inspection report: 15 September 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

Early years

Strong standard

Leaders are highly knowledgeable of the needs of children in the early years. The curriculum is highly ambitious and enables children to quickly develop and learn the skills they need for their next steps. Children quickly settle into well-established routines when they first join the school. They enjoy singing nursery rhymes and playing music. Staff engage in consistently high-quality interactions with children, encouraging them to develop their independence. Children learn to read through effective phonics teaching. They quickly develop a rich vocabulary and build on their language and communication skills.

Children benefit from the calm, nurturing environment in the early years. Staff provide a high quality of care for children and look after their wellbeing. They quickly identify the needs of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Staff provide any extra help that children need so that they can learn alongside their peers. As a result, children are happy and confident. They make the most of learning activities such as using water, paint and dough structures to learn alongside their peers. This helps them to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Children achieve very well from their starting points and are well prepared for their next steps.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders quickly identify pupils' needs and make sure they have the provision and support in place to fully support them. Leaders work closely with external professionals, where appropriate, to make sure pupils have the help that they need. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from curriculum pathways which have been carefully designed to reduce their barriers to learning and wellbeing. These pupils thrive because of this support. A small number of pupils with SEND access a specially resourced provision for some of their learning. This provision effectively supports these pupils to fully access their education alongside their peers.

Staff have the important information that they need to fully support pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Staff are highly skilled and make precise adaptations to make sure all pupils can fully access their learning and wider school life. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are very well supported to quickly develop their knowledge and skills. Leaders use additional funding effectively to make sure pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those known or previously known to social care, have the resources and support that they need in school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, develop their knowledge and skills in reading and writing from the earliest

stage. Pupils typically progress well through the curriculum, particularly in subjects such as art and design.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils typically attain close to their peers nationally in reading and writing. Pupils who are disadvantaged often attain higher than their peers nationally. However, previous weaknesses in the curriculum and in the teaching of mathematics mean that pupils have not attained as well in this subject over time. Leaders have taken action to improve this and this work is starting to have a positive impact. Pupils develop a range of knowledge across wider curriculum subjects which prepares them well as they move into the secondary phase.

At the end of key stage 4, pupils typically attain close to their peers nationally. However, they do not attain highly enough in some subjects, such as mathematics and science. Pupils who are disadvantaged often attain higher than their peers nationally.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Attendance

Leaders have a thorough approach to attendance. They know their pupils and their families well. All staff promote the importance of regular school attendance. Pupils' attendance over time is similar to the national average. Leaders make frequent contact with pupils and their families when pupils do not attend school. Pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly receive appropriate support which is tailored to their individual needs. This helps to reduce their barriers and improve their attendance. As a result, persistent absence is reducing but it remains too high.

Behaviour and attitudes

Leaders create a calm, productive learning environment that helps pupils to focus on their learning. Pupils respond well to clear rules and expectations. They typically have positive attitudes towards their learning. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils have positive relationships with staff. When pupils need some extra help to manage their behaviour, they receive it. As a result, the use of suspensions has reduced. Pupils generally socialise well with their peers during unstructured times. They show respect towards others. However, a minority of pupils experience bullying or derogatory language from other pupils. Leaders respond effectively when this happens.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders understand the strengths of their curriculum and take effective action to make improvements where they are needed. The curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils' learning builds over time. Leaders have identified what they want pupils to know by the end of each phase of their education. They focus on making sure that pupils can secure the knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics from the earliest opportunity. Pupils develop their language and communication skills quickly and become confident speakers.

Leaders use the skills of their teachers, across phases, to support all pupils. Teachers know how to teach the curriculum well. They make adaptations to make sure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can fully access their learning. Most teachers understand what their pupils know and what they need to know next. Leaders have introduced strategies to support pupils to learn more and remember more in lessons. However, some of these strategies are not fully embedded across the school.

Leaders know when pupils need some extra help with their learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils typically receive the support they need in a timely manner. However, a significant minority of pupils do not receive the support they need to fully develop their handwriting skills.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders know their school and the community it serves well. They are committed to providing a high quality of education for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders understand the strengths of the school and accurately identify priority areas for improvement. They take appropriate action to improve outcomes.

Trustees and governors understand the school and its context. They work closely with leaders to make sure their work has a positive impact on pupils. Governors are a part of the school community. Trustees and governors, alongside trust leaders, typically provide appropriate support and challenge. However, systems and processes to enable trustees to evaluate the school's progress towards fulfilling its equality objectives are not rigorous enough.

Most staff feel that leaders care about their workload and wellbeing. Leaders provide staff with flexibility to balance their work and home life. Staff value the high-quality professional development and training that they receive. Training is informed by research and closely linked to priority areas for improvement. Leaders provide the time and resources for staff to continue to learn and develop. Staff are encouraged and supported to engage in further study to enhance their knowledge and skills. Leaders and staff collaborate and share learning with colleagues from across the trust and beyond.

Leaders engage positively with the local community. Leaders regularly invite members of the local community into school to visit the community kitchen and garden. They encourage parents and carers to engage with the school. Many parents speak positively about the experiences of their children in school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have designed a personal development programme that meets pupils' needs and reflects the school's core values. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They have opportunities to engage with external agencies, such as the police and fire service, and to learn about risks in their local community. Pupils learn about relationships at an age-appropriate level and explore different beliefs and cultures. Although pupils are generally well prepared for life in modern Britain, some pupils do not deepen their knowledge of equality and diversity well enough.

Pupils learn how to positively engage in their community through the community action group or by fundraising for local charities. Leaders have developed links with local mosques and a scouting group to enhance the opportunities and experiences for pupils beyond the school day. Some pupils take on leadership roles as prefects or junior wardens. These pupils are positive role models for their peers. Pupils have opportunities to engage in a range of extra-curricular activities, including epic experiment club, gardening, baking or yoga. Leaders are embedding these into the school day so that more pupils can benefit from them.

Staff care about the wellbeing of their pupils. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils learn how to look after their mental health. Staff work closely with external agencies to make sure pupils and their families have access to any further support they need.

Pupils learn about their future career options from an early stage. They visit local businesses to sample the world of work. Older pupils receive suitable advice and guidance to inform their next steps. Pupils value opportunities, such as work experience, as they prepare for their next steps. The vast majority of pupils move on to suitable education, employment or training.

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

Pupils benefit from a calm, productive learning environment at The Halifax Academy. Most pupils enjoy school and engage positively in all aspects of school life. They behave well in lessons and when socialising with their peers during unstructured times. Although bullying and discriminatory language can happen, leaders deal with it effectively. Most pupils attend school regularly.

Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They receive high-quality care and support to reach their goals. Children are well prepared for their next steps. Pupils benefit from being taught by skilled teachers. This helps pupils to secure their knowledge across a range of subjects. Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well and they achieve well from their starting points. Pupils are typically ready for their next stage of learning by the end of key stage 2. Older pupils make suitable progress across most subject areas. Pupils are particularly proud of their work in creative subjects. Overall, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are ready for life beyond school when they leave at the end of key stage 4. They typically attain close to their peers nationally. In some subjects, pupils who are disadvantaged attain higher than their peers nationally.

All pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, are fully included in wider school life. They enjoy a range of visits to local museums and heritage sites. Some pupils become pupil leaders and provide support for their peers. Older pupils benefit from opportunities to engage with employers and receive suitable careers advice. The vast majority of pupils move on to education, employment or training.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they continue to enhance their work in preventing and dealing with discriminatory behaviour so that incidents of such behaviour reduce.
- Trustees should ensure that they oversee the setting of equality objectives that are specific to the school's context and evaluate progress towards these objectives in a rigorous and systematic manner.
- Leaders should continue to embed strategies to further strengthen teaching, across all subjects and phases, so that pupils achieve as highly as they should, particularly at the end of key stage 4.
- Leaders should continue to work closely with pupils and their families to reduce persistent absence.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils gain a secure and detailed knowledge about equality and diversity so that they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

About this inspection

This school is part of Impact Education Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mick Kay, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jo Kaye.

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

The inspection started on 15 September 2026. Inspectors returned on 13 October to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

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 headteacher, senior leaders, trustees, governors, representatives from the trust and the school's school improvement partner during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes a specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Matt Perry

Lead inspector:
Ian Rawstorne, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Nikki Heron, His Majesty's Inspector
Ian Clennan, Ofsted Inspector
Natasha Greenough, Ofsted Inspector
Richard Wood, Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Crossley, Ofsted Inspector
Kerry Partington, Ofsted Inspector
Amina Modan, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,461
Above 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: 1,063

School capacity

1,320
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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

41.20%
Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 30.4%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.72%
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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.74%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 14.0%

Location deprivation

Well 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

Key stage 2

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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	52%	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	75%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	75%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	72%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	74%	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	67%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	65%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	73%	Below

Key stage 4

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	32.2%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.2%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	32.2%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	44.1	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.9	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	44.7	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.20	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.30	-0.03	Above
2021/22 (final)	-0.79	-0.03	Below

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.

Key stage 2

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	52%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	56%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	58%	44%	Above

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	75%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	84%	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	67%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	72%	59%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	54%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	58%	Above

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	61%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average

Key stage 4

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	23.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.1%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	27.7%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	41.0	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	40.8	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	44.1	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.23	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.13	-0.57	Above
2021/22 (final)	-1.17	-0.55	Below

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	52%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	56%	69%	-14 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	46%	67%	-22 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	66%	-8 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	75%	80%	-4 pp
2024/25 (final)	78%	81%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	84%	78%	6 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	67%	78%	-11 pp
2024/25 (final)	72%	78%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	78%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	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.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	61%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25 (final)	61%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	79%	-21 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	79%	-16 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	23.6%	53.1%	-29.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	31.1%	53.1%	-22.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	27.7%	52.4%	-24.7 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	41.0	50.4	-9.4
2023/24 (final)	40.8	50.0	-9.2
2022/23 (final)	44.1	50.3	-6.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.23	0.16	-0.40
2022/23 (final)	0.13	0.17	-0.03
2021/22 (final)	-1.17	0.15	-1.32

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	92%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	89%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	93%	94%	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 (3 term)	8.5%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.0%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.3%	9.0%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	27.9%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	34.1%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	37.9%	26.5%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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