

Lancaster Royal Grammar School

Address: East Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 3EF

Unique reference number (URN): 136742

Inspection report: 9 June 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.

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional ●

Leaders have created a culture where they spot attendance and behaviour issues early and act before they affect pupils' education or wellbeing. They draw on insights from the local community to understand emerging risks to pupils' attendance, behaviour or wellbeing. This ensures effective support is in place before concerns, such as harmful online trends, escalate. Leaders place relationships and a deep understanding of pupils' individual needs at the heart of their work. They have implemented systems that ensure behaviour is managed in a way that reflects the school's inclusive values. Pupils appreciate this approach and consistently meet leaders' extremely high expectations.

Pupils' attendance is above the national average. This has been the case over time. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also better than that seen nationally for similar groups of pupils. Leaders' actions contribute successfully to rapid improvements for pupils who have previously experienced barriers to attending school regularly.

Pupils flourish in a calm, warm and respectful environment, across all areas of school life. Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-regulation and are self-motivated. They manage their own behaviour remarkably well, which contributes to classrooms being highly conducive to learning. Leaders analyse behaviour information meticulously and identify patterns at an early stage. Their early response to any minor incidents ensures that bullying, discrimination and abusive behaviour are exceptionally rare.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional ●

Leaders are highly proactive in designing the programme to promote personal development. Leaders ensure that pupils understand how to respond appropriately to risks in the community. For example, pupils learn about the dangers associated with vaping and the safe use of artificial intelligence. This contributes significantly to pupils making informed decisions to keep themselves and others safe. Leaders provide effective pastoral support to pupils, which enables them to flourish.

The school's 'Values' programme covers statutory requirements, including relationships and sex education and health education and fundamental British values. Pupils develop detailed knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe and contribute successfully to society. This shapes their attitudes towards others. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils thrive in, and beyond, school. They develop the confidence and sense of responsibility that they need to play an active role in their communities.

An extensive extra-curricular programme is built around pupils' interests and aspirations. Leaders go above and beyond to ensure that all pupils can access this programme. For example, leaders provide specialist support that enables pupils with physical disabilities to participate successfully in activities such as rowing and skiing.

Pupils access opportunities that are unusual and distinctive, such as the aeronautical society. Some clubs and societies are led successfully by pupils themselves. Participation in

these activities frequently inspires pupils to pursue further opportunities beyond school in their chosen areas of interest.

Students in the post-16 provision participate in activities that have a meaningful impact on others. For example, they lead programmes that broaden opportunities for pupils in local primary schools. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of local, national and international visits that help them to develop resilience and independence.

Leaders provide highly effective careers guidance. Pupils understand the variety of options available to them and receive personalised advice that reflects their aspirations. This supports all pupils to move on to ambitious destinations.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Leaders' success in creating a culture of academic engagement helps pupils to achieve well. This is reflected in consistently above-average attainment in national tests at the end of key stage 4. Areas of the curriculum that leaders have prioritised are improving rapidly. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) progress well through the curriculum in line with their peers.

Leaders act swiftly to address gaps in pupils' literacy and mathematics knowledge. This enables them to access learning successfully across the curriculum. Pupils develop a secure understanding of subject-specific vocabulary and use it with confidence. Their work is detailed and thoughtful, and it demonstrates that secure knowledge is built over time across the curriculum subjects.

All pupils, including those with SEND, are well prepared to pursue their ambitious next steps in education, employment or training.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced curriculum that enables pupils to build on their knowledge extremely well over time. They have identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils' learning builds effectively on prior learning and helps them to deepen their understanding. As a result, pupils are able to draw on what they already know when discussing their learning.

Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to enrich classroom activities. They break learning into manageable steps and provide regular opportunities for pupils to discuss their thinking. Respectful relationships between pupils and staff help to create positive levels of engagement. Teachers routinely check pupils' understanding and adapt teaching when necessary. In a minority of lessons, staff do not adapt their practice as effectively as leaders expect.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive highly effective support to overcome barriers to learning. This helps disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to thrive. Consequently, these pupils access learning at the same rate as their peers.

Leaders identify gaps in reading, writing and mathematics at an early stage. Their response is highly personalised. For example, pupils who are reluctant readers receive tailored support with reading materials linked to their interests. This contributes to pupils developing their fluency in reading and writing and achieving increasingly well across the curriculum subjects. Leaders' work in, and development of, mathematics is shared with other schools as best practice.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders' determination to ensure that all pupils access the full breadth of the school's provision underpins their decision-making. Well-embedded systems help leaders to identify pupils' needs early. Leaders provide carefully tailored support that meets pupils' needs. This helps pupils to develop their independence and confidence. Leaders monitor attendance, behaviour and achievement closely and review data regularly. For example, pupils with education, health and care plans benefit from weekly reviews with parents and carers. This enables leaders to respond quickly to pupils' changing needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully in school life.

Leaders use additional funding to support their ambition for all pupils. Staff receive high-quality training that helps them to remove barriers for vulnerable pupils in their learning or wellbeing including those known to social care. Consequently, these pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences.

Leaders maintain highly positive relationships with the virtual school. They welcome external expertise to adapt their support for pupils known, or previously known, to social care. The use of alternative provision is in pupils' best interests. When used, it contributes to a rapid increase in pupils' engagement with learning.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Pupils are at the centre of leaders' decision-making. Leaders are relentless in their determination to remove barriers and ensure that pupils participate fully in all aspects of school life. They continuously evaluate their work and take swift action to improve provision. As a result, recent improvements in pastoral care and inclusion are contributing positively to pupils' achievement and wellbeing.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. They have clear plans to address priorities, and they monitor their implementation rigorously. Leaders anticipate challenges and respond before issues affect pupils. This proactive approach contributes to the school's culture of high achievement and mutual respect.

Trustees are well experienced and bring a wealth of expertise to their roles. They are highly committed to the school's success. Trustees support leaders in the key areas of improvement. This ensures that they remain closely involved in shaping the school's future.

Leaders place considerable importance on staff wellbeing. They listen carefully to staff views and introduce change at a manageable pace. This allows them to manage staff workload efficiently. Leaders provide professional development that aligns with school priorities while supporting individual career aspirations. As a result, staff contribute effectively to school improvement.

Leaders work effectively with parents and carers and external partners. They welcome external reviews to strengthen their practice. Leaders share their effective practice with other schools through formal networks. As a result, leaders contribute to school improvement in other schools in their local area.

Post 16 provision

Strong standard ●

Leaders hold high expectations for what students in the post-16 provision can achieve. Students benefit from an ambitious curriculum that enables them to excel academically as well as personally. Leaders monitor all aspects of the post-16 provision carefully. They understand its strengths and areas for development. They take effective action when required, which allows them to maintain consistently high standards.

Teachers use their secure subject expertise to shape learning with precision. They build positive relationships with students and use what they know about each student's starting point to adapt teaching. This deepens students' understanding and enables them to produce work of a high standard. Students' attainment at the end of key stage 5 is consistently above national averages. Disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve outcomes at the end of key stage 5 that are in line with their peers.

Students benefit from a highly personalised programme that broadens their horizons and nurtures their personal growth. Through initiatives such as 'InspirUS', where students raise aspirations among pupils from local primary schools, they make a meaningful and lasting contribution to their wider community.

Students are very well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. Leaders monitor students' destinations carefully and adapt careers guidance accordingly. This supports students to progress to ambitious destinations that reflect their talents and strengths.

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

Pupils flourish in a culture where expectations of academic success and character building are high and unwavering. Leaders champion pupils' whole development, not just their academic achievement. They benefit from a distinctive personal development programme that nurtures their interests and talents. An extensive programme of extra-curricular activities ensures that all pupils can participate in enriching experiences. For many pupils, these opportunities are transformational. For instance, students in the post-16 provision have relished the skills that they have developed through the school's rowing programme, with opportunities to then participate in a world-renowned rowing event. Leaders remove barriers to participation so that all pupils can benefit.

These character-building experiences positively shape pupils' attitudes. Pupils are responsible, self-motivated and ambitious. They greet one another warmly, and this contributes to a vibrant atmosphere around the school. Pupils express their views thoughtfully and respectfully. Older pupils lead by example. They form part of a support network that advocates for others. Consequently, pupils develop a mature sense of social responsibility. This culture extends beyond the school gates. Members of the 'Old Lancastrians' alumni group regularly return to school to support current pupils and contribute to school life.

Pupils bring aspirational attitudes into the classroom. They contribute confidently in safe and supportive learning environments. Positive relationships with teachers help pupils to succeed. Leaders ensure that staff make effective adaptations for pupils with barriers to learning. Pupils' behaviour supports learning. They engage in high levels of debate and read widely for pleasure. As a result, pupils enjoy learning, attend regularly and achieve highly. This includes pupils with vulnerabilities.

Pupils are safe. They have several ways to raise concerns. For example, pupil leaders act as 'upstanders' and help others report worries when needed. Leaders respond proactively to concerns. Consequently, bullying is very rare and dealt with effectively.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to build on the school's strengths in areas such as curriculum and teaching, while sustaining the exceptionally high-quality provision in attendance and behaviour and personal development and wellbeing.
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About this inspection

This school is the only school in a single academy trust, Lancaster Royal Grammar School. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Howard Roberts.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. They held discussions with the special educational needs coordinator, teachers, staff and pupils. They also met with representatives from the trust board, including the chair of the trust, 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.

This is a school registered to admit boys in Years 7 to 11. The sixth form is co-educational.

Headteacher: Dr Christopher Pyle

Lead inspector:

Usman Kothia, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Kevin Sexton, Ofsted Inspector

Marc Heron, Ofsted Inspector

Alison Rigby, Ofsted Inspector

Andy Cunningham, His Majesty's 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,290

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,165

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)

8.07%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

1.09%

Well 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.40%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to 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

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)	98.8%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	94.8%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	96.5%	45.3%	Above

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)	74.1	46.1	Above
2023/24 (final)	72.0	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	72.2	46.3	Above

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)	0.59	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.67	-0.03	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' 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)	100.0%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77.8%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	25.2%	S

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)	70.6	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	64.3	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	35.0	S

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)	0.26	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	-0.57	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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' 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)	100.0%	53.1%	46.9 pp
2023/24 (final)	77.8%	53.1%	24.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	S	52.4%	S

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)	70.6	50.4	20.2

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	64.3	50.0	14.3
2022/23 (final)	S	50.3	S

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)	0.26	0.16	0.09
2022/23 (final)	S	0.17	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	99%	92%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	99%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	42.25	35.00	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.26	34.38	Above
2022/23 (final)	41.91	34.16	Above

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	6.1%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.5%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.9%	9.0%	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 (3 term)	18.0%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	21.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	17.3%	26.5%	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.

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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