

Washington Academy

Address: Spout Lane, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE37 2AA

Unique reference number (URN): 144937

Inspection report: 21 April 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.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders understand what they do well and what needs to improve within the curriculum. A well-constructed curriculum ensures core knowledge and skills build logically throughout school. Specialist staff help pupils at the early stages of learning to read to catch up quickly with their peers. This enables these pupils to move forward in learning across subjects. Leaders invest in ensuring staff have the subject knowledge they need. Staff typically teach the curriculum well. They offer clear explanations and make regular checks on pupils' learning. However, there is more to do to ensure highly effective teaching is embedded across all subjects. In some subjects, pupils need more support to embed learning and apply their knowledge over time.

Staff know the pupils that need extra help in lessons, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers employ general strategies that support these pupils to learn. For example, they often break learning and tasks into smaller, manageable steps. However, in some lessons, staff do not tailor this support closely enough to individual pupils' needs within specific subjects. As a result, the help staff provide does not consistently enable these pupils to secure the subject knowledge they need over time.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately, including the needs of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those known to children's social care. For example, leaders work closely with primary schools, families and partner agencies to identify needs before pupils join the school. Leaders set high expectations for all pupils and generally match support well to their needs. Leaders and staff use specialist advice to inform this support and share it effectively across the school. Pupils describe a supportive school environment where they can ask for and receive help if they need it. Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training to help them provide targeted support in the classroom. This means pupils access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils with an education health and care plan who attend the additionally resourced provision benefit from high-quality experiences. Staff teach these pupils an ambitious curriculum, support them to access mainstream lessons and help them build confidence over time. Staff also support pupils beyond lessons by shaping social activities that promote friendships, safety and belonging. Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to support both academic and social progress. For example, targeted support helps pupils make positive progress in reading.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Pupil-focused leadership is improving the school over time. Leaders have an accurate understanding of their complex context and put effective strategies in place to break down barriers for pupils and their families. This includes pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are disadvantaged or have social care involvement. Leaders know

their school well, recognising strengths and areas for development. A shared vision between trustees, executive trust leaders and school leaders strengthen this drive for excellence. Governors understand their roles clearly and hold leaders to account for pupils’ educational performance.

Staff, including early career teachers, value the school’s professional learning offer. This helps them contribute to school improvement and raise outcomes for pupils. Staff praise leaders for their focus on workload and wellbeing. They enjoy coming to work and feel very well supported in all aspects of their roles. Parents’ views have improved since the last inspection and many more would now recommend the school to others. Parents value the school’s inclusive approach of the school and often comment on how welcome their child feels. Despite some areas needing further attention, leaders are well placed to make the necessary improvements. They remain committed to improving pupils’ life chances and consistently act in their best interests.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders’ work to ensure pupils respect others’ values is evident in the culture of the school. Pupils appreciate and defend diversity. Comments of a discriminatory nature are rare. High-quality pastoral care is a strength of the school. A wide range of thoughtful interventions help pupils thrive in the school. Notably, tutors meet one to one with pupils after each school holiday. During these meetings, staff explore pupils’ ambitions and any challenges they face. This helps staff remove barriers and tailor ongoing support to pupils’ needs. A comprehensive taught personal development curriculum ensures pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils can confidently discuss healthy relationships and risks they may face in the wider world.

Pupils across the school take on leadership responsibilities and the school has plans to develop this further. Pupils enjoy taking part in the school’s ever-evolving ‘super curricular’ offer. They are proud that their voice influences the range and relevance of activities. The offer includes trips to the theatre, beach and iconic local attractions. Pupils discover new talents and interests through a wide range of on-site clubs. They enjoy taking part in the school production and can also explore sports such as cheerleading and darts.

Leaders place a high priority on quality careers provision. They understand the importance of raising pupils’ aspirations and supporting them to achieve these goals. Targeted careers education begins in Year 7 and intensifies by Year 11. Pupils enjoy opportunities to engage with employers and receive regular specialist careers advice. Over time, leaders have reduced the number of pupils who are not in education, employment or training after leaving school. In addition, pupils now access a much more varied range of next steps across the local area.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement in national tests and examinations has been low over time. In the past, this has adversely affected pupils' next steps after Year 11. Since the previous school inspection, the provision for pupils has continued to improve. A comprehensive reading programme helps pupils learn to read with fluency and confidence, including pupils with an education, health and care plan who attend the additionally resourced provision, 'Inspire'.

Positive changes to the teaching of mathematics are also helping pupils build firm foundations in numeracy. Across academic subjects, many pupils now write at length and articulate their knowledge well, particularly when recalling recently learned material. As a result of these improvements, the number of pupils not in education, employment or training after leaving school has reduced significantly. However, although some outcomes in national tests and examinations have started to improve, leaders still need to do more to bring these outcomes in line with national benchmarks.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Leaders have a detailed and accurate understanding of barriers to positive attendance in the school. They work with families and external agencies to break down these barriers and raise attendance. This, and other work, is showing impact. Rates of persistent absence are coming down. Everyone in the school focuses on promoting high attendance. Pupils know where they need to make improvements. They enjoy earning rewards for attendance 'streaks'. Despite this, too many pupils currently miss lessons. They cannot benefit fully from the offer the school provides. Recent improvements need more time to fully embed.

Leaders have created a caring and supportive school culture, where compassion is at the heart of daily life. Unkind comments are not tolerated, which helps everyone feel safe to be themselves. Staff and pupils understand the school's clear behaviour systems. Leaders' actions focus on helping pupils to turnaround their behaviour and get back into class. Through this targeted work, leaders are reducing the rates of suspension which have been historically high. A peer mentoring programme helps older pupils support their younger peers. Pupils enjoy taking part and form positive, supportive relationships. This contributes to the clear sense of community that spreads throughout the school.

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

Washington Academy is a happy school. Pupils and staff enjoy warm, respectful relationships. The school's value to 'care about every child' is lived out in practice. It helps pupils develop a deep sense of belonging.

Over time, pupils have not achieved as well as they should in national tests and examinations. Historically weaker teaching and low attendance has impacted negatively on pupils' success. However, pupils now benefit from a curriculum that is well-designed and

typically well taught. Pupils enjoy their learning and want to do well. Pupils' attendance is also improving. The positive culture in the school means more pupils want to be there. However, there is more to do to ensure pupils' attendance and achievement meets leaders' high expectations and national benchmarks.

Pupils from all backgrounds and those who face barriers to learning have a place in the school. Pupils' strengths, worries and challenges are known to staff. Pupils feel confident turning to one of the adults if they need help. Bullying is rare and pupils appreciate the tolerant environment that exists around them.

Pupils' behaviour typically meets the schools high and clear expectations. Staff's calm approach helps pupils feel welcome and safe. Within lessons and around school, there is a settled and focused atmosphere. Pupils are polite and keen to talk to visitors. If pupils do make mistakes, the school helps them to learn from this. They infrequently make the same mistakes again.

Pupils have a broad range of opportunities to experience activities beyond the classroom. They undertake trips as part of 'cultural capital Saturday'. This includes visits to larger cities such as Liverpool and London. Pupils also participate actively in shaping the extra-curricular offer. Many enjoy attending clubs including sports, Korean and the unique, but highly popular, cheese club.

Next steps

- Leaders should build upon and sustain improvements in pupils' attendance over time, ensuring more pupils consistently benefit from the high-quality provision in school.
- Leaders should ensure that highly effective teaching is consistent across all subjects and embeds pupils' learning over time, helping them to achieve as well as their peers nationally.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers make carefully chosen, subject-specific adaptations to learning activities that meet the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

About this inspection

This school is part of Consilium Academies, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michael McCarthy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Fleetwood.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, vice-principals, assistant principals, trust leaders, chief executive officer, chair of the trust board and a member of the local academy board during the inspection.

The school includes provision for 27 pupils with an education health and care plan. These pupils have a primary special educational need and/or disability of cognition and learning.

The school makes use of 2 registered alternative provisions.

Principal: Victoria Carter

Lead inspector:

Hannah Millett, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Bernard Clark, Ofsted Inspector

Christina Jones, Ofsted Inspector

Katie Spurr, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

594

Well below 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

900

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

55.72%

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: 28.9%

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

6.90%

Well 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

23.06%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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 (revised)	22.2%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	16.2%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	11.5%	45.3%	Below

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 (revised)	33.1	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.9	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	33.3	46.3	Below

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)	-0.99	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.91	-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.

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 (revised)	17.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	9.8%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	6.0%	25.2%	Below

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 (revised)	28.6	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	26.7	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	28.6	35.0	Below

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)	-1.17	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.12	-0.57	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' 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 (revised)	17.6%	53.1%	-35.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	9.8%	53.1%	-43.4 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	6.0%	52.4%	-46.5 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 (revised)	28.6	50.4	-21.8
2023/24 (final)	26.7	50.0	-23.3
2022/23 (final)	28.6	50.3	-21.7

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)	-1.17	0.16	-1.34
2022/23 (final)	-1.12	0.17	-1.29

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 (provisional)	73%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	89%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	87%	94%	Below

Absence

Overall absence

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	12.5%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	14.6%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	11.7%	9.0%	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)	35.2%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	43.0%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	32.8%	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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



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