

Grace Academy Solihull

Address: Chapelhouse Road, Chelmsey Wood, Birmingham, West Midlands, B37 5JS

Unique reference number (URN): 129342

Inspection report: 19 May 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well, including the qualifications which they achieve at the end of Year 11 and Year 13. These show that pupils achieve as well as their peers nationally across a range of subjects. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils achieve especially well in a range of art qualifications in Year 11, and take considerable pride in the work they complete in these subjects. In the sixth form, students' achievement in their vocational courses is positive.

Leaders systematically check if pupils have any gaps in their key knowledge related to English, including reading skills, and mathematics. Teachers provide support to pupils to ensure that their literacy and numeracy knowledge is secure. Most pupils are articulate, although some lack the verbal fluency necessary to communicate effectively in different contexts.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps as they achieve well. They can therefore access a range of opportunities for further study or employment.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum for pupils. They have ensured that the key knowledge which pupils need in each subject is set out in a logical order. Leaders have a very detailed understanding of the strengths of the curriculum and of teaching. This is because they undertake regular and precise reviews. As a result, pupils experience increasingly consistent teaching across the school, which helps them to learn effectively.

Leaders provide significant training for teachers that secures consistent approaches in the classroom and continues to improve the quality of teaching. Typically, teachers select learning tasks which build well on pupils' starting points. They generally identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or misconceptions, although there are inconsistencies in how precisely they address errors in spelling or punctuation. Pupils typically learn the curriculum well, including those who have barriers to their learning. Those who are less fluent readers receive effective support to enable them to develop quickly the fluency they need. However, on occasion, some pupils can struggle to recall key knowledge which they covered some time ago. They also have few opportunities to produce more extended pieces of work which allow them to consolidate prior learning.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Many pupils have barriers to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders take considerable care to identify these pupils' needs and to understand how to overcome or minimise the barriers they face. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify strategies for these pupils and ensure that staff understand and apply them. Teachers typically adopt these strategies in lessons well. This enables pupils to learn the curriculum in line with leaders' intentions.

Leaders also provide a wide range of extra help for pupils who have barriers to their wellbeing or learning, including pupils with SEND. This support is effective and helps selected groups of pupils to attend school more regularly. In addition, leaders use a range of external agencies to further support, for example, with pupils' mental health. These interventions provide effective support for pupils which they appreciate.

Leaders review the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, carefully. They use high-quality evidence to support the selection of strategies which they adopt. The pupil premium funding is having a positive impact for disadvantaged pupils, including on their achievement. Leaders continue to review their strategies to support these pupils to attend more regularly.

Leaders use alternative provision appropriately for a small number of pupils. They regularly review this provision to ensure it meets these pupils' needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders at all levels have a comprehensive and accurate view of the quality of provision in the school. Their improvement priorities are well communicated and shared by staff. These priorities are rooted in leaders' clear knowledge of the school, its pupils and the community they serve. Leaders show deep commitment to the pupils and have a forensic understanding of the challenges which they face. They always take actions in pupils' best interests. Leaders ensure that all their actions follow the school's core values of grace, integrity, potential, excellence and respect.

Those responsible for governance are also deeply committed to the school. They understand leaders' work and the challenges which they face. This is thanks to the precise and evaluative information which leaders give them. Governors and trustees are therefore able to offer effective support and challenge. The trust provides effective review and support for leaders in the school.

Leaders engage very well with the local community. This includes regular communication as well as outreach work, such as the marketplace provision which they offer to families in need. Parents and carers are therefore positive about the school and their children's experiences.

Teachers report that leaders engage with them in a highly professional and constructive way around workload and wellbeing. They appreciate the significant opportunities for them to develop in their roles. This includes the training they receive to help them to continue to develop their teaching practice.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have put in place extensive provision for pupils' personal development. This includes a detailed curriculum which prepares pupils well to lead healthy adult lives. This curriculum includes key learning which pupils need about healthy relationships, different religions and cultures and online safety. Leaders regularly review and adapt the curriculum to respond to pupils' feedback or current issues. This includes giving pupils further information about tolerance, staying safe and political extremism. Pupils understand the

importance of democracy and fundamental British values. While most pupils learn the key knowledge which they need to thrive once they leave school, some pupils struggle to recall this learning in depth.

Leaders offer a significant range of clubs and trips. They carefully monitor which pupils take up these opportunities. They ensure that they support pupils where cost is a challenge. They also help pupils with barriers to their learning or wellbeing to participate. Leaders organise many opportunities for pupils to support the community. They raise money through a popular charity bike ride and donating items to food banks, Christmas meals and hampers. Pupils are proud of how their work supports their locality.

Leaders have put in place significant pastoral support for pupils at many levels of the school. This means that pupils know they have someone who will support them if they are experiencing a difficult time. Pupils value this support significantly.

The provision for pupils' careers information is well planned. Leaders ensure that pupils learn the key knowledge they need about many different opportunities which are open to them. This includes information about further education, apprenticeships and employment. In this way, leaders support pupils to access ambitious destinations. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Students benefit from the school's personalised sixth form provision. Leaders have put in place a curriculum which includes carefully selected A-level and vocational courses. Changes to the range of subjects on offer ensure that students benefit from a curriculum which is well suited to them. Leaders have a clear vision for the appropriate pathways for each student. They offer supportive help and guidance and closely monitor how well students are progressing. Teaching enables students to learn the curriculum well. This helps students to achieve well in their examinations, especially in vocational qualifications. This includes students with barriers to their learning and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Social activities in the sixth form help students to learn and bond together. Leaders provide many opportunities for students to prepare for future study or employment through the tutor programme and extensive careers provision. They learn the key information they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Leaders provide a number of wider opportunities for students. These include leadership opportunities in the school. All this means that students are well prepared to thrive when they leave the school. They are well supported to secure places at university, college or employment.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Overall rates of attendance have been too low for some time, including those pupils who are regularly absent from school. Leaders have a clear understanding of attendance trends

across different pupil groups. They use this information to review and adjust their approaches to improve pupil attendance. As a result, they have introduced changes to help pupils understand the importance of regular attendance at school. These changes include a restructure of the school day and pupils regularly review their own attendance. These approaches have had some impact and there are some green shoots in the attendance of some groups of pupils. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities now attend more regularly.

Pupils behave very well. This is because they understand leaders' high expectations for their conduct. Pupils know the importance of treating each other with respect. Difference is celebrated and bullying is not tolerated. Pupils understand that if they have a concern about unkind behaviour, then leaders will take rapid and effective action. Pupils also behave well in social times. They typically show positive attitudes to their learning in lessons.

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

Pupils enjoy their experiences at Grace Academy Solihull. They appreciate the consistency with which teachers present new learning and review what they have already covered. This helps pupils to learn effectively. It also means that pupils achieve well in their examinations, as they make good progress from their starting points. Pupils who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing benefit from significant and caring support from the inclusion team. This helps them to overcome the challenges which they might face. In lessons, teachers typically reduce barriers to learning so that pupils achieve well.

Pupils learn about an extensive range of careers and can make informed choices about their future. They value the wide range of trips and enrichment opportunities on offer. These include local visits, trips to the theatre and a Year 7 residential trip. Pupils also value the breakfast club before school. They appreciate the many opportunities to contribute to their community, including the social action projects, the Christmas meal for senior citizens and visits to care homes. Students in the sixth form appreciate the opportunities to lead within the school through the students' guild and volunteering programme. For example, many sixth-form students support younger pupils in their lessons.

Pupils behave very well both around the school and in lessons. They are polite, friendly and engaged in their learning. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and that staff will address any rare instances of unkind behaviour. Pupils feel well supported by staff who provide effective pastoral care when challenges arise. This includes support to improve pupils' mental health. Pupils therefore feel safe, and understand how to keep themselves safe. Although most pupils attend well, there remain too many pupils who are absent too often. These pupils recognise the work the school is putting in to support them to attend more regularly.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to ensure that their attendance strategy enables sustained improvements in pupils' overall attendance and reductions in persistent absence.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to produce extended pieces of work which allow them to consolidate their learning.
 - Leaders should develop pupils' oral communication skills and fluency of response.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Tove Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Jamie Clarke, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Linda Brooks. There is also an executive principal, Darren Gelder.

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 HMI.

During the inspection, inspectors spoke with the executive principal, principal, senior leaders, staff and pupils. They also met with a representative from the board of trustees, representatives from the local governing body, and trust employees, including the CEO. Inspectors considered communication from parents as part of the inspection. One of the alternative provisions used by the school was contacted by telephone.

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 inspector confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses 4 registered alternative provisions.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection with the appointment of a new principal.

Principal: Matthew Godwin

Lead inspector:

Andrew Madden, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nicola Walters, Ofsted Inspector

Peter Bassett, Ofsted Inspector

Jacqui Swindlehurst, Ofsted Inspector

Elizabeth Lawson, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

874

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,100

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)

50.00%

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

2.63%

Close to 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

24.71%

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

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

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)	38.8%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44.8%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43.9%	45.3%	Close to average

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)	44.2	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.9	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46.2	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)	-0.07	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.09	-0.03	Close to average

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)	22.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.0%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	29.3%	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)	35.9	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.8	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	39.8	35.0	Close to average

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)	-0.20	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.41	-0.57	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' 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)	22.7%	53.1%	-30.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	38.0%	53.1%	-15.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	29.3%	52.4%	-23.2 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)	35.9	50.4	-14.5
2023/24 (final)	40.8	50.0	-9.2
2022/23 (final)	39.8	50.3	-10.6

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)	-0.20	0.16	-0.36
2022/23 (final)	-0.41	0.17	-0.57

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)	83%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	85%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	91%	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)	26.39	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.39	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	27.24	34.16	Below

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)	-1.0	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.7	0.0	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 (3 term)	12.6%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	12.3%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	12.4%	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 (3 term)	36.1%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	37.8%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	37.2%	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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