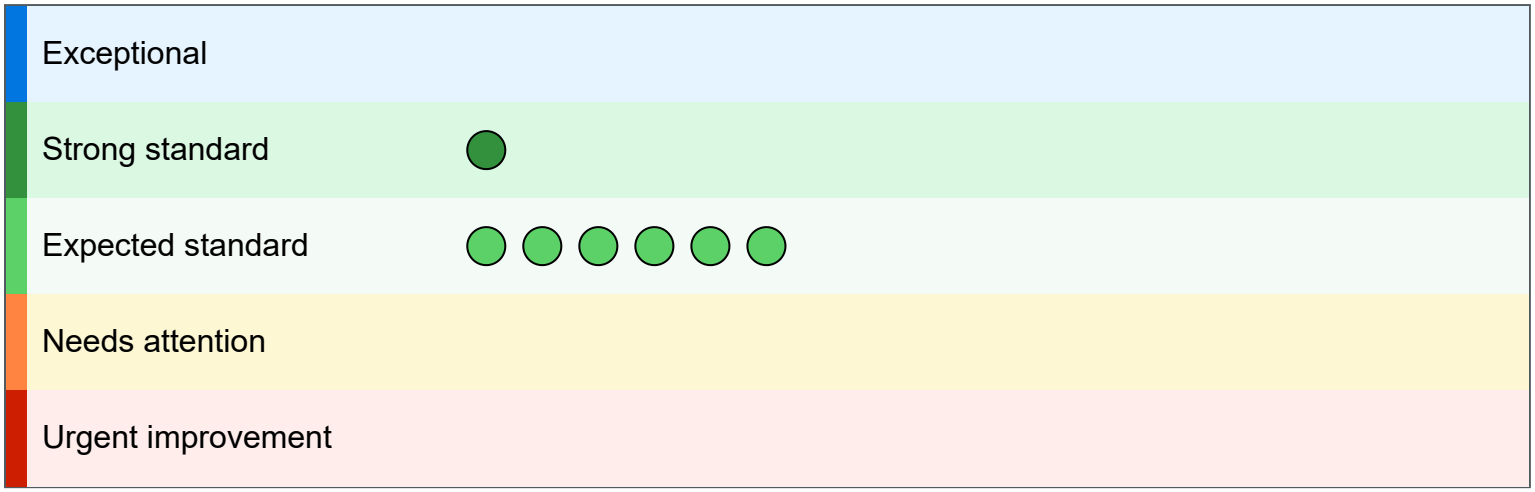
Morley Primary School

Address: Main Road, Morley, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 6DF

Unique reference number (URN): 150727

Inspection report: 20 January 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

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Pupils enjoy school and value their education. They want to attend regularly and they do. The attendance of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is significantly above national averages. On the rare occasion when pupils find attending school difficult, leaders work well with parents and carers to put effective measures in place to make the necessary improvements.

Leaders have in place an impressive programme that ensures that the school's values remain deeply embedded. Pupils and staff forge highly positive and secure relationships. Staff routinely teach the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour. These clear routines around the school and in lessons support a calm and orderly environment in which pupils can learn and play. Children in the early years learn how to take turns and share. As a result of their learning in the curriculum, pupils know how to be kind. They communicate positively with others when online and using mobile phones. It is rare that pupils misbehave. When this does happen, staff quickly and clearly address this to prevent it from continuing. Leaders provide effective support for pupils who sometimes find managing their emotions difficult. Consequently, these pupils build positive relationships with their peers and staff.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils learn the curriculum well. This is noticeable in what pupils know and can do in school and in their outcomes in published data. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils have attained significantly above national averages over time. The achievement of children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 demonstrates that they are ready for their next steps in education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged achieve similarly well.

Pupils' knowledge and skills in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are generally positive. However, at times, pupils do not learn as well as they could. They are not consistently well supported to secure some important learning in some subjects. In these subjects, pupils sometimes struggle to recall their learning and speak less fluently about what they have learned.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have adopted an ambitious curriculum with the breadth and balance needed to prepare pupils for the challenges of the secondary curriculum. The curriculum is organised so that, starting in the early years, pupils build knowledge with sophistication over time.

In response to their evaluations of the effectiveness of the curriculum, leaders changed the structure of classes within the school. In preparation for the change, leaders put in place

effective staff training. This helps staff to teach the curriculum confidently. When necessary, they adapt learning activities well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The effective teaching of reading, writing and mathematics ensures that pupils learn these key skills very well. Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 learn the knowledge that they need to read fluently. Teachers routinely check what pupils know and can do. When pupils are struggling or misunderstand something, teachers typically take swift and effective action so that pupils keep up and learn what they should. Pupils who struggle to secure these key skills receive the support that they need to catch up.

In some areas of the curriculum beyond reading, writing and mathematics, pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to review and revisit what they have previously been taught. This means that they struggle to secure some key learning and forget some important knowledge.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders establish effective partnerships with families. They work closely with parents and carers to help children to join the Reception Year happily and be ready to learn. Children, including those who are disadvantaged, make a positive start to their early education. They quickly develop their independence and confidence by exploring the learning opportunities made available to them.

Reading, writing and mathematics are fundamental parts of the curriculum. Staff in this mixed-age class carefully ensure that learning of these important skills builds on what children already know. Children enthusiastically listen to many stories, rhymes and poems. They are eager to show how well they read. Staff teach children important vocabulary to enrich their understanding of the curriculum. They model how to use more sophisticated sentences with ‘powerful’ words. Children are keen to speak about their thoughts and experiences with others and do so capably. Leaders have identified that children's spoken language could be further developed to help them to make more progress through the curriculum. This work is ongoing. Staff support children to move from mark making to accurate letter formation as they develop their writing skills. They help children to begin communicating their thoughts in writing. Children are typically well prepared for their learning in key stage 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Starting in the early years, leaders work with parents and carers to identify children’s specific needs. They successfully support pupils who have barriers to their learning or wellbeing. When necessary, leaders work in partnership with external experts and parents to design appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have the training and experience that they need to support pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that they provide the necessary information to staff to adapt learning activities appropriately. Typically, this enables pupils to access and learn the curriculum successfully. Leaders routinely check the impact of the support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. When aspects of the provision are not working, leaders make any necessary adjustments. Staff provide bespoke support groups to address any specific areas of need, preventing pupils from falling behind.

Leaders have put in place research-informed approaches to support disadvantaged pupils. They use additional funding to support these pupils to thrive in their education. Leaders also target financial support to enable disadvantaged pupils to take part in enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities provided at the school. These pupils follow the full curriculum and achieve as well as their peers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders precisely evaluate the quality of the school's work. They quickly notice and improve any areas of the provision that are not working as well as they intend. Decisions and changes are made in the best interests of pupils.

The recently formed multi-academy trust has in place effective governance that supports and challenges leaders to provide the best possible education. Directors receive the information that they need to understand how well the school is doing. They hold leaders to account for the quality of the school's provision and ensure that improvements are made when necessary. The trust ensures that statutory duties are met.

Leaders provide staff with effective, research-informed professional development. As a result, staff have the knowledge and skills they need to teach the curriculum well. Staff appreciate opportunities to share expertise across the trust. Staff morale is high. Leaders have built an effective team that shares high ambitions for pupils. Staff appreciate the way that leaders support them to maintain reasonable workloads. While leaders have in place a programme of continuous development, leaders prioritise development work so that staff do not get overloaded.

The school has a long history of delivering high-quality education and is an important part of the local community. Parents and carers are proud of the school. They are highly complimentary of its work. The school's partnerships with the local community give pupils enriching experiences. For example, local professionals and business leaders take part in the school's wider offer, which aims to help pupils to explore a range of career opportunities.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

An important pillar of leaders' ambition for pupils is their work to create 'leaders of tomorrow'. Towards that aim, pupils learn how to take responsibility for themselves and make positive contributions to those around them and their communities. For example, some pupils have leadership roles on the student council and as house captains. Pupils also enthusiastically carry out leadership projects at school and in the local community.

Pupils learn how to maintain positive physical and mental health. In the early years, for example, children know the importance of brushing their teeth. Staff teach pupils how to reflect on, communicate and manage their emotions. Pupils develop sophisticated vocabulary relating to emotions. This enables them to understand and discuss their feelings thoughtfully with their peers and staff.

Leaders ensure that pupils know about and value the different beliefs and lifestyles in society. Trips to different places of worship help pupils to experience first hand what they learn in lessons about different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are taught about local history and

the contributions made to British society by different communities in the local area. They are well prepared to live alongside people from diverse backgrounds.

The personal development programme includes opportunities for pupils to learn about key changes experienced by children and young people as they grow. Pupils maturely discuss sensitive topics regarding the changes in their bodies. They also understand how to build positive relationships and learn about signs of an unhealthy relationship.

Leaders provide extra-curricular opportunities that enable pupils to further develop their interests and talents. They seek the views of pupils when creating the clubs that they offer. Many pupils enjoy these activities. Leaders have in place effective support so that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit fully from the personal development programme.

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

With remarkable unity, pupils and staff embrace the passion and sense of togetherness within 'the Morley Feeling'. Pupils love their school and, as a result, attend regularly. They care for their peers. Older pupils serve as excellent role models. As playground buddies, they look out for younger pupils and teach them the school's values. Pupils know how to build positive relationships. When disagreements arise, they sensibly find solutions. On the rare occasions when bullying happens, staff support pupils effectively and it stops and does not continue. Because 'the Morley Feeling' is so well established, pupils feel safe.

Pupils show a passion for learning. They enthusiastically explore new ideas and work hard in lessons. When learning something tricky, pupils encourage and support each other and celebrate success. Children in the early years know that learning is important. They develop positive learning habits. For example, they maintain their concentration and listen to others during class discussions.

Leaders and staff know pupils' specific needs. They support pupils effectively to overcome barriers to learning that they may face. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged, learn successfully. This is particularly noticeable in the results that pupils achieve in published outcomes. Leaders prepare pupils well for their next steps in life after primary school.

Pupils enjoy lots of opportunities to engage with the world around them. These include chances for pupils to apply the curriculum in real-world situations. For example, through partnerships with local scientists, pupils piece together horse skeletons using real bones to enhance their understanding of biology. Pupils particularly value educational visits to places of local, national and international interest. They speak confidently about their local heritage in Morley, Derby and Derbyshire.

Next steps

• Leaders should ensure that teachers provide pupils with further opportunities to review prior learning so that they are supported to remember key knowledge in the long term.
• Leaders should provide appropriate training and support for staff in the early years to further develop children's spoken language, to ensure that children achieve all that they are capable of.

About this inspection

This school is part of Ace Derbyshire Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nicola Foulds, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alison Cresswell.

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

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. In September 2024, the school joined the Ace Derbyshire Trust.

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

Anthony Taylor: Headteacher

Lead inspector:
Al Mistrano, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Donna Moulds, 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

79
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: 272

School capacity

70
Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

12.66%
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: 26.3%

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

0.00%
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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

1.27%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	92%	62%	Above
2023/24		61%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	92%	75%	Above
2023/24		74%	
2022/23		73%	

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%	
2024/25 (revised)	92%	72%	Above
2023/24		72%	
2022/23		71%	

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		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	100%	74%	Above
2023/24		73%	
2022/23		73%	

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)	2.6%	5.2%	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 (2 term)	4.2%	13.3%	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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