

Murray Park Community School

Address: Murray Road, Mickleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE3 9LL

Unique reference number (URN): 112991

Inspection report: 30 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.

Strong standard ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a purposeful and well-designed personal development and wellbeing programme. Pupils know and understand fundamental British values and the importance of respecting people's differences and backgrounds. They can explain the relevance of these ideas to their own lives. Leaders have prioritised supporting pupils to understand the viewpoints of others. They provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils develop their spiritual understanding, as well as their appreciation of different cultures and societies. This has created a community school where pupils feel that they belong.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe both online and in the physical world. Leaders have implemented a curriculum that means pupils know what makes a safe and healthy relationship. Leaders are alert to emerging issues for pupils. Where appropriate, leaders ensure that the personal development programme covers these issues in a sensitive and effective manner. Pupils are provided with timely and relevant knowledge about the world beyond school.

The school's comprehensive careers programme is beneficial to pupils and is personalised to support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. This helps pupils to understand the options available to them after school and make informed choices. The school continues to support pupils in securing an appropriate next step, even after they have left Year 11. Leaders identify and overcome barriers that prevent some pupils from accessing the school's broad, comprehensive extra-curricular programme. Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged now access these opportunities in greater numbers as a result. Leaders provide caring pastoral support for pupils. This is highly responsive. The systems that leaders have implemented enable emerging issues to be identified and addressed quickly. Leaders consistently act in the best interests of pupils' wellbeing.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

The achievement of pupils in external examinations has typically been close to national averages. This is also true for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. Where published outcomes have not been as high, pupils have still progressed well from their starting points. Pupils' work and their responses to questions in lessons show that they learn the curriculum well. They know more and remember more over time. Some pupils have gaps in their essential knowledge, including in relation to writing. However, pupils who have the biggest gaps in reading and handwriting are provided with impactful support to improve.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This includes pupils who have significant barriers to their learning. Leaders have put in place additional

support, including more meaningful opportunities to practise in English and mathematics, for pupils who need it. Leaders have increased the range of subjects available at key stage 4 to better support pupils to prepare for their lives beyond school. Pupils are typically well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. This is demonstrated by the greater number of pupils who now secure and sustain appropriate next steps after leaving the school.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders closely monitor pupil attendance and punctuality. They identify the challenges that some pupils face and develop strategies to address them. The support that leaders have put in place has resulted in improvements in attendance, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work well with families to break down barriers to attending and personalise support, including for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' actions have improved attendance overall and reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent. There are occasions when leaders do not act as swiftly as they could to review and adapt the strategies that they have put in place to help pupils improve their attendance and behaviour. On these occasions, pupils do not make the rapid improvements that they could.

Pupils behave well in lessons and take pride in their work. They are polite and well mannered. Where pupils' behaviour falls below leaders' high expectations, pupils are supported to do better. The number of pupils who engage in repeatedly poor behaviour is very small. When pupils continue to struggle, leaders continually seek ways to help them to manage their emotions and behaviour. Leaders do this in such a way that it does not impact on the learning of pupils who do not need additional support. Leaders make reasonable adjustments to support those pupils with SEND when necessary. Leaders reward positive behaviour and support pupils to build positive relationships with their teachers.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. It is well sequenced and sets out where useful links can be made between different subjects. Teachers typically design lessons that support pupils to build on their prior learning. Leaders have provided impactful professional development that has improved teaching over time. They have detailed knowledge of the most effective teaching and aspects of the curriculum, as well as areas for further development. Leaders provide support and challenge, so that in subject areas where teaching is not as consistently well focused on the important knowledge that pupils need to learn, there has been improvement. It remains the case that teaching is not consistently high quality across each subject.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and generally check pupils' understanding well, including through their use of questioning. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils who have some gaps in their reading and handwriting knowledge consistently receive the support that they need. This means that pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills in these areas as quickly as they could.

Leaders consider carefully the curriculum they offer to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are flexible and adaptive to these pupils' changing needs.

This supports pupils to be able to move between different levels of support so that they get the right help at the right time. Pupils are well supported by teachers in lessons, including pupils with SEND.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise inclusion. They identify quickly the needs of their pupils and take the time to understand how to best respond to those needs. Leaders recognise the barriers that disadvantaged pupils can face. They use additional funding to provide pupils with the support that they need to overcome these barriers. This helps disadvantaged pupils to achieve well.

Leaders ensure that necessary adaptations are in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including in relation to the curriculum. They provide staff with clear guidance about how to best support pupils with SEND in terms of their social and emotional, as well as academic, needs. Leaders work well with families and external specialists to design support plans that take account of pupils' individual needs and interests.

Leaders' ambition is for all pupils to experience the full curriculum. Where this is not in a pupil's best interests, they use appropriate alternative provision. There are occasions when leaders do not check carefully enough the impact of alternative provision on pupils. This means pupils do not receive the precise support that they need or make progress towards their next steps as quickly as they could.

The school runs several internal support centres for pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils in these centres are taught the school's curriculum, as well as receiving the support they need. They take great care to ensure that their most vulnerable pupils are ready for their next steps after school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school. They are unrelenting in their passion for creating a school that is inclusive and community-focused. Leaders typically have a comprehensive understanding of their school's strengths and weaknesses. They have identified the areas of improvement, such as teaching and pupil attendance, where their work will be of greatest benefit to pupils. Typically, the strategies that leaders use bring about improvements to pupils' experiences of school. Sometimes, leaders do not robustly analyse the impact of their actions. This means that strategies for improvement are not consistently well focused or achieve rapid impact.

When starting new initiatives, leaders fully consider the potential impact on staff workload and wellbeing. Leaders communicate clearly with staff the reasons behind the decisions they make. Staff appreciate this and engage well with the professional learning programme. Teaching has improved over time. Pupils' progress through the curriculum has improved as a result.

Governors support leaders in promoting an inclusive ethos at the school and its community. Leaders share this vision, and they work constructively with governors to deliver it.

Governors challenge and support school leaders effectively to bring about improvements. Governors have recruited the expertise they need to be able to do this. Governors and leaders value increasing parental and community engagement. They seek opportunities to work with professional organisations to better support the pupils who attend the school. Leaders share their knowledge with other schools to benefit the wider community. They also seek opportunities to learn from others for the benefit of their pupils.

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

Pupils typically enjoy coming to school. They experience a welcoming environment, and staff know pupils as individuals. Teachers are attuned to any barriers that pupils may face to their learning and taking part in school life. They use this knowledge to support pupils to learn well. Pupils generally progress well from their starting points. They experience teaching that helps them to progress through the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. Some pupils with SEND benefit from adjustments to the start of the school day to help them feel comfortable, get off to a positive start and attend more regularly.

Pupils receive a range of experiences within and beyond the main school curriculum. This helps them to understand their place within the community and the wider world. Leaders have ensured that pupils broaden their horizons and go on trips locally, nationally and abroad. Pupils who face barriers to accessing these opportunities are supported to overcome them. Pupils feel safe and attend well. This is particularly true for pupils with SEND.

Pupils' behaviour is generally positive and they learn well. When pupils struggle to meet the school's high expectations, they are given extra support, which helps them to improve their behaviour and engage more successfully with school life. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. Pupils involved in bullying are well supported. This means that there is very little repetition of hurtful behaviour. Pupils feel recognised when they do well. This encourages them to try their best. Leaders help pupils to become more confident, and many pupils take on leadership roles within the school. Through these leadership roles, pupils have been able to work with leaders to bring about positive changes to pupils' experiences of school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they carefully evaluate the impact of their work, so that the strategies for improvement that they identify are closely focused on the aspects of the school's provision where they will have the greatest impact.
- Leaders should ensure that they carefully and thoroughly check on the impact of alternative provision so that pupils benefit consistently well over time.
- Leaders should provide teachers with the support they need so that they implement the curriculum consistently well, including the checking of pupils' understanding, and pupils build their knowledge securely across the subjects that they study.

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' essential knowledge are addressed consistently to allow pupils to progress through the curriculum and achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure that when pupils receive additional support to improve their attendance and behaviour, this support is reviewed for impact and adapted as necessary.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mrs Jacqueline Fowler.

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.

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 currently uses three registered and one unregistered alternative provisions.

At the time of the inspection, an Acting Headteacher, George Hagen, was in post.

Headteacher: Nicola Caley

Lead inspector:

Stephen Whitney, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Vasey, Ofsted Inspector

Julie Sheppard, Ofsted Inspector

Damian Painton, Ofsted Inspector

Kathryn Hobbs, 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,210

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

1,400

Above 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)

35.54%

Close to 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

3.72%

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

28.68%

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

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

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)	33.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.7%	45.9%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	35.3%	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)	40.6	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	44.0	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40.5	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)	0.03	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.21	-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)	16.9%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	27.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	19.0%	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)	31.8	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.9	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.9	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)	-0.28	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.74	-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)	16.9%	53.1%	-36.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	27.2%	53.1%	-26.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	19.0%	52.4%	-33.4 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)	31.8	50.4	-18.6
2023/24 (final)	36.9	50.0	-13.1
2022/23 (final)	31.9	50.3	-18.4

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)	-0.28	0.16	-0.45
2022/23 (final)	-0.74	0.17	-0.90

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)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	88%	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 (3 term)	9.0%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.9%	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)	25.1%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	28.5%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	29.6%	26.5%	Close to average

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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