

Trentham Academy

Address: Allerton Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 8PQ

Unique reference number (URN): 144558

Inspection report: 10 February 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 ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders take a diligent approach to inclusion. They identify, share and monitor pupils' individual needs very effectively. Through staff training and clear systems, staff are vigilant to pupils' needs and barriers changing. Leaders rigorously check on pupils' evolving needs and the effectiveness of provision. They adapt their approaches confidently where necessary. This means that the support for pupils meets their needs very well.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work very effectively with families and external agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support they need. Extra adult support in the classroom is delivered very effectively by staff who understand pupils' precise needs and can help to meet them. The school makes reasonable adjustments, where pupils need these to thrive. This includes where pupils need slightly different courses so that they have the time to catch up, variations in uniform or support for pupils to manage their feelings and behaviour. As a result, pupils with additional needs are rarely suspended because they get the support they need to meet the school's expectations.

Leaders' focus on disadvantaged pupils means that these pupils play a full part in the life of the school. Leaders use research-informed interventions to make sure that any barriers to learning are addressed.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school's programme for pupils' personal development is considered, coherent and extensive. Leaders take account of feedback from pupils and families to adapt and refine their offer. The school has musical, artistic, cultural, community and leadership opportunities. It has pupil elections, and an active student council, which helps pupils to understand democratic processes, having their voice heard in school. Pupils develop confidence to express themselves, share their views and contribute to their school community. They talk in detail about how the curriculum helps them to keep safe, develop strong friendships and be active, healthy citizens, for example.

Leaders see pupils' character development as high priority. They are passionate about pupils leaving the school ready for their next steps, both academically and personally. Leaders carefully support more vulnerable pupils to take up opportunities with confidence. They do this by working with, and providing targeted support for, pupils and their families, breaking down barriers to participation. Pupils speak highly of what the school offers, saying, for example, that they develop the ability to stay healthy, be safe online, speak confidently in front of groups of their peers and take an ever-more active part in school life.

The school has introduced 'The Trentham Doctorate'. This is a system for pupils to record and reflect on their personal development. The impact of this is that all pupils undertake a wide range of activities, clubs, visits, volunteering opportunities and leadership roles. Pupils' reflections on their experiences help to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world around them. The school's curriculum helps pupils to develop their wellbeing and understanding of healthy relationships.

The school's work on careers is well developed and effective. Encounters with the world of work are meaningful and a range of real employers come into school. The vast majority of pupils take part in out-of-school work experience. A small number of pupils undertake an appropriate virtual experience instead. Pupils are very well prepared to make informed choices about their next steps. Leaders listen to pupils to develop a clear understanding of their needs and aspirations in this area.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Generally, pupils achieve well at Trentham Academy. Their attainment and progress is broadly in line with national averages over time. Disadvantaged pupils already achieve in line with their peers nationally. Leaders are ambitious to further narrow the gap between them and their non-disadvantaged peers.

Some pupils arrive in school with gaps in their reading, writing or mathematics knowledge. Those who do not read as well as they should, have the help that they need to catch up quickly. This support is effective and means that pupils can make more progress across subjects as their reading improves. Pupils practise reading regularly so that they develop their fluency well. Many pupils are confident readers and use their skills well in lessons. Where pupils struggle with writing, teachers help them to catch up so that they can write more sustained responses in all of their subjects. This is supported by teachers' focus on key vocabulary in all subjects.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps. In recent years, the proportion going on to post-16 education, employment or training has been above the national average.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils generally attend school well and have done so over time. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Persistent absence is low and has been for some time. Where pupils find it hard to attend, the school has well-established, effective systems to support them. The positive school environment encourages pupils to attend well. Leaders have spotted some recent patterns of weaker attendance. They have analysed these carefully and taken actions to further improve attendance.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and engagement in lessons. Pupils behave well in lessons. They settle to tasks well and demonstrate positive attitudes. Pupils and staff agree that in-lesson disruption is rare so that everyone can get on with their work. Staff use the behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Generally, pupils behave well in social times, in and out of school.

Pupils know who to speak to if they have a worry. They are confident to share any issues they have, such as bullying. Leaders carefully record all incidents of negative behaviour, no

matter how small. They look at trends and take effective action where they need to. This means that any incidents of unkindness between pupils are addressed swiftly.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a curriculum that clearly lays out what pupils need to know and when. In addition, they have looked carefully at all subjects and made sure that each one has the teaching time it needs so that pupils can do well.

The majority of pupils undertake the full curriculum that the school offers. Some pupils have an adapted curriculum, which includes intensive mathematics and literacy teaching. This curriculum adaptation is effective and helps pupils who are behind to catch up. It is done in the best interests of pupils.

On a foundation of positive behaviour, teaching in the school is typically effective. Teachers plan lessons that move from simpler concepts to more challenging ones, so that pupils can keep up and develop their knowledge well. Teachers know their subjects well enough to make adaptations in lessons, spot misconceptions and make sure that, broadly, pupils in all groups keep up. Teachers have the information they need to support pupils and meet their particular needs. They use assessment information well to adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders at Trentham Academy have continued to improve the school over time. They understand the school's strengths and have prioritised the right things for improvement. Leaders rightly identify that their next step is to further improve pupils' achievement. Leaders and governors have not taken shortcuts, but have built a culture of listening to staff and pupils. This means that relationships between leaders, staff and pupils across the school are warm and constructive. Leaders make decisions in the best interests of pupils. They think through how their decisions will affect pupils and make bold moves, where they feel this is needed. These bold decisions mean that, across the school, pupils' needs are met well.

Those responsible for local and trust governance understand their roles well. They work together to ensure that the school has the resources it needs for continuous improvement.

School staff feel a sense of camaraderie and are proud to work at the school. They feel cared for. The school's investment in professional learning develops staff effectively and enhances their confidence. Staff feel that their voice can be heard and the vast majority feel that school is well led and managed. Staff find leaders approachable. Leaders have taken steps to reduce workload effectively. Staff appreciate this.

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

At Trentham Academy teachers and pupils build warm, respectful relationships with one another. Staff get to know pupils very well. This means that pupils get the support they need,

when they need it. Leaders identify any potential barriers to pupils' success and help pupils overcome them.

Pupils respect the freedom they have to express themselves at school. Pupils say that they enjoy learning. Their attitude to work in lessons is consistently positive. Pupils attend well at Trentham Academy. Where pupils have barriers to attendance, the school successfully supports them to improve.

Pupils behave well. They feel listened to and know that there is someone to help them if they need it. They feel safe at school and are confident that the school deals well with any bullying.

The school makes sure that everyone can take part in the exciting opportunities on offer. All pupils benefit from the school's work on personal growth by undertaking the 'Trentham Doctorate' programme that maps and develops pupils' respect, optimism, integrity and responsibility. Pupils value this programme highly.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well. Staff identify these pupils' particular needs and consistently review support so that it meets their needs.

Trentham Academy pupils are well prepared for life after school. They leave school having achieved well, regardless of their background.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to improve pupils' achievement, particularly narrowing the gap between disadvantaged pupils' achievement and that of their non-disadvantaged peers.

About this inspection

This school is part of the City Learning Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Carl Ward.

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 pupils, school leaders, other leaders, teachers and other staff during the inspection. They also held discussion with trust leaders, local governors and trustees.

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 uses no alternative provision.

Principal: Emma Wagg

Lead inspector:

Dan Owen, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Gail Peyton, Ofsted Inspector

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, Ofsted Inspector

Michael Scott, 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 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

782

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

750

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

18.29%

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

2.43%

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

18.16%

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 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 (revised)	43.5%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52.9%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43.4%	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 (revised)	46.6	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50.8	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	49.1	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)	0.21	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.02	-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 (revised)	27.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	28.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	14.3%	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)	35.0	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	37.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30.8	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)	-0.53	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.88	-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)	27.0%	53.1%	-26.1 pp
2023/24 (final)	28.6%	53.1%	-24.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	14.3%	52.4%	-38.1 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)	35.0	50.4	-15.4
2023/24 (final)	37.5	50.0	-12.5
2022/23 (final)	30.8	50.3	-19.5

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)	-0.53	0.16	-0.69
2022/23 (final)	-0.88	0.17	-1.04

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)	87%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	94%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	94%	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 (2 term)	6.1%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.3%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	8.8%	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 (2 term)	14.2%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	18.1%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	21.5%	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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright