

Trinity Academy Cathedral

Address: Thornes Road, Wakefield, WF2 8QF

Unique reference number (URN): 145579

Inspection report: 2 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils achieve well across the curriculum in lessons and in national examinations. Over time, pupils' progress has been above average in many subjects. This is particularly evident for those who are disadvantaged. Pupils with the lowest starting points also achieve particularly well. In recent years, the progress of these pupils has been consistently above the national average. This reflects the high aspirations that leaders and staff have for all pupils.

Leaders carefully identify any gaps in pupils' foundational skills, such as in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils receive specific support to quickly close these gaps. Pupils build detailed knowledge across the curriculum. They develop skills which set them up for success, such as sustaining focus and working independently.

The 'work-related pathway' supports pupils with barriers to their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables them to develop skills for the workplace and adult life. As a result, pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training which matches their interests and abilities.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a focus on pupils' sense of belonging. This underpins their strategic approach to improving attendance. Leaders forensically analyse attendance information. Working collaboratively with pastoral staff and other staff who support pupils with SEND, leaders identify the barriers to attendance. Staff intervene as early as possible to reduce these barriers. As a result, pupils' attendance is high and rates of persistent absence are low. Leaders are keen for this to improve further.

Leaders have established a positive culture where pupils flourish. High expectations are understood and clear routines are well embedded. In lessons, pupils are engaged and respond quickly to their teachers. Pupils rarely need reminders about their behaviour. Leaders' commitment to developing a positive culture has led to a recent reduction in the number of suspensions and permanent exclusions. Leaders provide proactive support for pupils who need help to improve their behaviour. Pastoral support plans and a tiered approach to intervention mean the vast majority of pupils remain engaged in school.

Leaders are responsive to pupils' views; for example, agreeing expectations to establish calm corridors. As a result, pupils take responsibility for their actions and follow expectations relentlessly throughout the school day. Pupils are respectful of their peers. Incidents of bullying and the use of derogatory language are rare. When these do occur, leaders respond quickly and appropriately.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a precisely planned curriculum. Staff carefully consider its structure and make adjustments to meet the needs of each pupil group. For example, the nurture

group curriculum is adapted to ensure that there is a focus on foundational skills such as reading and numeracy in key stage 3. This is refined further each year to respond to the specific needs of the pupils in the group.

Teachers know their subjects well. They take great care in designing lessons that allow pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers receive regular training on the school's approach to teaching and learning, focusing on the 'mechanisms' and 'elements' that they have identified for lessons to be successful. Teachers skilfully modify their approaches to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, receive effective support in lessons to reduce their barriers to learning. They are able to learn well alongside their peers.

In lessons, teachers use a range of approaches to ensure that pupils understand what they have been taught. They quickly and consistently identify misconceptions and gaps in knowledge. Teachers revisit or clarify information to help pupils to secure learning over time. Teachers routinely use their knowledge of pupils and checks on their learning to extend and deepen pupils' understanding.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders place inclusion at the heart of their work. There is a deep commitment to supporting all pupils to thrive. Pupils benefit from consistent routines and whole-class approaches that reduce barriers to learning.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of individual pupils. They involve parents early in discussions and seek specialist advice when needed. Leaders use alternative provision sparingly. Careful consideration ensures that where this is used, it is done so in the best interests of individual pupils.

Leaders share important information about pupils with teachers so they know how to best support pupils in lessons. This information informs teachers' approaches in lessons. As a result, pupils engage in learning effectively. Leaders rigorously track pupils' progress, providing swift and effective support when needed.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged consistently benefit from the wide range of opportunities available to them.

Support for children in care is effective. There is robust tracking of this support and the progress that these pupils make. Leaders' proactive work with the Virtual School is valued. As a result, the learning and wellbeing needs of children in care are thoughtfully considered.

Leaders use extra funding judiciously. They closely match extra support to the needs of pupils. Leaders monitor this closely to ensure that the support makes the intended difference.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders and those responsible for governance share a clear vision for the school. Governors are knowledgeable about their statutory duties. They are well placed to provide robust challenge and support of school leaders. Leaders welcome this.

Leaders' commitment to the school's Church of England character permeates through all aspects of the schools' work. Leaders know the school's strengths and quickly identify where change is needed. Through meaningful collaboration they take highly-effective action to bring about improvements. The deep-rooted commitment to understand and respond to pupils' concerns has brought about changes to the school environment. This includes, for example, a redesign of the toilets and outdoor spaces. This helps to establish a positive experience for pupils.

Teachers, including those early in their career, benefit from a coherent professional learning programme that builds expertise. This is carefully tailored to address the needs of the school. For example, to support the school's work on behaviour, staff benefited from professional learning linked to the science of belonging. Staff speak highly of how this informs their practice. There are further opportunities for staff to develop their own interests and personalise their professional learning, through access to national qualifications and collaboration within the trust.

Leaders create an environment in which staff feel valued. They make judicious decisions with staff workload in mind. Leaders build constructive relationships with parents through ongoing communication and a range of events including open days and personal development programme events.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

There is a thoughtful personal development programme which ensures pupils develop a secure understanding of the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Leaders regularly engage with partners such as the emergency services and local businesses, to make sure the offer is relevant to the local context. Pupils learn what makes a healthy relationship. There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep safe, including online.

Leaders ensure pupils are able to 'call for support' and access help when they need it. Staff provide a warm, caring approach to help pupils to resolve any issues they have. Pupils value this support. Pupils understand and apply the British values and respect protected characteristics. This is evident in their conduct and interactions with others in school. They know how to be responsible citizens.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from a range of experiences across their time at the school. This includes visits to an art and sculpture park, the theatre, local universities and a village in the Yorkshire Dales. Pupils are encouraged to participate in after school clubs and trips both in the local area and further afield, including a sports tour to Barcelona. Pupils in younger year groups enjoy the compulsory 'involve' offer which includes activities such as 3D printing, netball and chess. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to develop their skills and engage in leadership.

Opportunities include student leaders, 'next gen' leaders, the 'Earthshot' committee and Cathedral citizens. These groups engage positively with the local community.

There is a well-planned careers programme that provides pupils with advice and guidance when making decisions for their future. Pupils have opportunities to engage with employers, colleges, apprenticeship providers and universities. The offer is tailored, where necessary, for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils become confident, resilient and independent as a result of their experiences of school. They leave ready for their next steps with the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful.

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

Everyone is welcome at Trinity Academy Cathedral. The school's 'no lost sheep' ethos, helps to ensure that all pupils feel seen and supported. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They enjoy the positive relationships they have with staff and each other. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and the support they receive.

Pupils' individual needs are accurately understood. They receive expert support which, where necessary, helps to reduce barriers to learning. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) value this support. Leaders make decisions that are routinely in pupils' best interests.

Pupils attend well. They engage well in lessons and consistently demonstrate focus and high levels of concentration. Clear routines throughout the school day support pupils to show self-discipline. The school's 'base' provides a vibrant space where pupils, such as those with SEND, can go to take part in supported activities. Leaders have high expectations of pupils. Pupils meet these and have the same expectations of each other.

Pupils benefit from a well thought out and high-quality personal development programme. They take on meaningful leadership roles. They contribute to their community through activities, such as donations to the nearby food bank and hosting celebrations for local elderly residents. Pupils develop confidence, resilience and independence because of their experiences in school.

The school welcomes pupils from a wide range of faiths and cultures. Pupils celebrate this diversity and develop a deep understanding of fundamental British Values. Bullying and derogatory language are rare. If this does happen, pupils are confident to 'call it out' using the online reporting system or through conversation with a trusted adult.

Pupils achieve well. Pupils who are disadvantaged perform particularly well. Pupils take pride in their learning. They are keen to ask questions and seek clarification to deepen their understanding. They leave school ready for their next steps with the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to rigorously identify and tackle barriers to attendance to further improve attendance for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to strengthen the implementation of the school's curriculum, to establish and sustain exceptional standards of teaching which have a transformational impact on the achievement of all pupils, particularly those with high prior attainment.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Trinity Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michael Gosling, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Baker.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the executive principal, the principal and other leaders during the inspection. In addition, the lead inspector spoke with the chief executive officer, the chair of the board of directors and members of the local governing body.

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:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Leeds. Its most recent section 48 inspection was in February 2020.

The school currently makes use of five alternative provisions, including three that are unregistered.

Principal: Anna Gillinder

Lead inspector:

Lyndsey Reed, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Penny Green-Harding, Ofsted Inspector

Ed Hall, Ofsted Inspector

Nikki Heron, His Majesty's Inspector

Katrina Gueli, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,037

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

1,050

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)

41.47%

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

5.98%

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

10.80%

Close to 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)	49.0%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46.2%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46.3%	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)	48.7	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.0	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50.4	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)	0.34	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.74	-0.03	Above

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)	37.5%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	35.5%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	36.1%	25.2%	Above

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)	40.4	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.5	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	45.0	35.0	Above

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)	-0.09	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.43	-0.57	Above

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)	37.5%	53.1%	-15.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	35.5%	53.1%	-17.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	36.1%	52.4%	-16.3 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)	40.4	50.4	-10.0
2023/24 (final)	41.5	50.0	-8.5
2022/23 (final)	45.0	50.3	-5.3

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)	-0.09	0.16	-0.25
2022/23 (final)	0.43	0.17	0.26

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)	87%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	83%	93%	Below
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)	8.0%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.3%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.1%	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)	20.3%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	32.0%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	31.4%	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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