

Adventure Wellbeing School

Address: Sherwood House, Gadbrook Road, Rudheath, Northwich, CW9 7TN

Unique reference number (URN): 151622

Inspection report: 21 April 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.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically make progress from their starting points. They achieve well. Leaders monitor pupils' achievement in precise detail. They look carefully at each aspect of pupils' progress, such as their social and emotional development as well as their academic achievements. Pupils' success within their personal development has a positive impact on their lives outside of school. For example, pupils participate more successfully in daily activities or gain increased independence.

Leaders prioritise pupils' communication and language development. They recognise that this aspect of pupils' development sets them up well for the next stage of their education and for life outside of school. Leaders carefully monitor pupils' progress in this area. They use purposeful strategies from specialists to make sure that pupils have all that they need to learn and communicate well.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Most pupils attend school well. Leaders make it clear that attendance is a whole-school responsibility. They share information with parents and carers about pupils' attendance. This helps parents to understand leaders' focus on the importance of regular attendance. Where pupils do not attend school regularly enough, they receive well-placed support to secure improvement. Staff build relationships with parents that help them to overcome any barriers to pupils' regular attendance. They celebrate improvements to develop effective relationships between home and school.

Pupils' emotional development is of paramount importance to leaders. Some pupils join the school following periods of disrupted education. Most pupils settle quickly into school routines and develop positive attitudes to their learning. They build supportive relationships with staff. Pupils learn to manage their emotions, including how to calm themselves down. Staff make use of the wide range of sensory resources in the school to support pupils to regulate. Pupils learn to do this for themselves. Staff know pupils well. They identify where pupils need extra help to understand situations or deal with their frustrations. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and supports their emotional wellbeing.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders make regular checks on the quality of the curriculum and teaching. This enables them to make sure that the intended curriculum is generally being taught well. However, there is some inconsistent teaching in some parts of the school. Where this is the case, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils follow one of 3 curriculum pathways. Staff design learning for each pathway that captures pupils' interest and builds on what they already know. Pupils learn key content in an order that makes sense to them. They have many opportunities to revisit previous learning to deepen their understanding. Staff make regular checks on how well pupils secure key knowledge or other aspects of their development, such as their communication

and language. Staff use this information to decide what to teach next and to recognise the progress that pupils make.

Staff receive the training that they need to understand how to adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs. Pupils have a variety of complex needs. Staff work closely with a range of professionals and external agencies to support each pupil's learning journey. Staff know how to celebrate pupils' learning in a way that helps them to understand their achievements. This helps pupils to feel proud of their development and enjoy learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years get off to a great start. This is because leaders know that the early stage of children's development is important. Staff plan learning opportunities that ignite children's interest and engagement. Children have plenty of opportunities to explore and be inquisitive. Staff understand the range of experiences that children need to build new knowledge and skills. They delicately balance letting children have a go for themselves with guiding and showing them ways of learning.

Staff use clear and precise language in their explanations. They model new language to support children's communication development. Children in the early years benefit from staff who understand how young children learn. Staff are sensitive to children's needs while being ambitious for what they can achieve. They understand children's care needs and make sure that routines respect children's privacy while promoting independence where possible.

Staff teach early reading consistently through a phonics approach, where this is appropriate to children's stage of development. Children benefit from regular stories and rhymes. This helps them to recognise the routines of the school day, such as lunchtime, or when it is time to go home.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Staff know pupils well as individuals. They take the time to get to know pupils when they first join the school. Alongside this, they use information from a range of professionals to understand pupils' needs well, including speech and language therapists and occupational therapists. Staff use this information to design learning that ensures pupils make progress. Pupils' learning targets address their personal development as well as their academic development. This prepares pupils well for their next stage of education. Leaders regularly review pupils' learning targets to make sure they are fit for purpose. They make sure that the support on offer helps pupils to make progress from their starting points.

Leaders effectively communicate information about pupils' needs to relevant staff. Staff receive the training that they need to understand how to reduce barriers to learning or wellbeing. This helps staff to understand the additional consideration that pupils who are more vulnerable may need, for example those pupils who are known to children's social care. Staff share meaningful information with parents and carers about their child's progress. Alongside this, they help parents to know how to support their child's development outside of school.

The school makes appropriate use of alternative provision for a small number of pupils. They make the relevant checks on how pupils are kept safe as well as their curriculum offer.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and the proprietor know the school well. They make regular checks on how the school complies with the independent school standards (ISS) both now and how the ISS will continue to be met over time. Leaders and the proprietor have the knowledge and expertise that they need to fulfil their responsibilities well. The proprietor has taken care to appoint a range of leaders with experience of the specific needs of pupils at this school. This means that staff are well equipped to support pupils' needs and help them to learn well. Leaders' gather useful information about what is working well and what needs to improve. However, at times, the information that they get is not the most helpful in pinpointing precise steps for improvement.

Staff receive a professional learning programme that helps them to understand their roles and responsibilities. Leaders ensure that training opportunities directly relate to the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of pupils who attend the school. For example, safeguarding training includes consideration for pupils who may find it hard to communicate their worries verbally.

Staff feel well supported in their roles. They benefit from the time they receive to understand and embed new ideas. Staff comment about the positive school culture and how this helps them to feel part of a supportive team acting in the best interests of pupils.

Parents and carers typically praise the school for the impact on their children's personal development. They recognise how the school supports their children to build confidence and independence and how this impacts positively on wider family life.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils' personal development is important to leaders. Leaders recognise the challenges that some pupils faced in their previous experience of education. Where this is the case, they support pupils and their families to build positive relationships with school. Pupils learn to face challenges with confidence, as well as coping strategies when things do not go well.

Staff support pupils to understand their emotions and how to respond in different situations. This important work enables pupils to engage in wider activities across the curriculum, such as visits to the local farm. Through the range of activities on offer, and within the curriculum, pupils learn to value what makes them unique and special. As pupils learn more about themselves, they also build an understanding of the range of ways people can be different.

Staff make sure that pupils know how to keep safe online. They take care to model safe use of the internet with pupils, as well as helping pupils to recognise unsafe situations. Leaders provide pupils with accessible ways to share their worries. They build pupils' understanding of safe and unsafe situations alongside ways for pupils to communicate, such as by using picture icons. When they are ready to, pupils learn how to build and maintain relationships. Staff support older pupils to build independence ready for the next stage of their education journey.

Staff know pupils well as individuals. Pupils receive well-considered pastoral support that effectively reduces any additional barriers to learning or wellbeing. Staff are alert to any changes in pupils that may indicate that a new approach to supporting their wellbeing is needed.

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

Pupils arrive at school eager to start each day. Staff know pupils well. They provide the support that pupils need to move calmly into school and begin learning. Where pupils struggle with this transition, staff provide the necessary reassurance and guidance to make a positive start to the day. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure. Some pupils who attend the school have significant gaps in their previous education. At this school, they develop secure learning habits, including regular attendance. This sets them up well for future learning.

Staff skilfully recognise when pupils need additional help to manage their emotions. Over time this helps pupils to remain calm and engage in learning. Pupils benefit from well-thought-out systems and routines. Staff value these while recognising that, for some pupils, additional flexibility is required. Bullying is very rare. Staff help them to form warm relationships with other pupils and to recognise what it means to be a good friend.

Most pupils enjoy learning. From the early years, they build appropriate knowledge over time and make secure progress from their starting points. Pupils develop socially and emotionally, as well as academically. Staff prioritise each aspect of pupils' development to prepare them well for their next steps. Pupils develop their communication skills effectively. The school uses a range of strategies to support pupils to develop their understanding of language. Consequently, pupils learn to make choices, share opinions and make their voice heard.

Most parents and carers comment positively about their child's experience at the school. Parents are particularly proud of how the school supports their child to be able to cope in different situations. For example, pupils regulate their emotions more effectively during family activities outside of school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to teaching the curriculum across the school to positively impact on outcomes for pupils.
 - Leaders should ensure that monitoring processes are effective so they identify the most precise and meaningful information that will further improve the school.
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About this inspection

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school uses 2 unregistered alternative providers.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The executive headteacher and several other leaders have joined the school.

The school was registered by the Department for Education in May 2025. This is the school's first standard inspection.

Information about this inspection:

The proprietor is Adventure Wellbeing Schools Limited. The chair of the proprietor body is Nicola Sothern.

The fees currently charged are £50,000 to £68,000.

The school's email address is nicola.sothern@awschools.com

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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.

Inspectors spoke with representatives of the proprietor body, the executive headteacher, head of school, deputy headteacher and school business manager during the inspection. They also spoke with other staff and pupils about what it is like to be part of the school.

Executive headteacher : Emma Colley

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided	Standards met
All standards have been met.	

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:

Jane Dennis, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Kevin Sexton, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 21 April 2026

Total pupils

46

School capacity

98

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

46

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0

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.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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