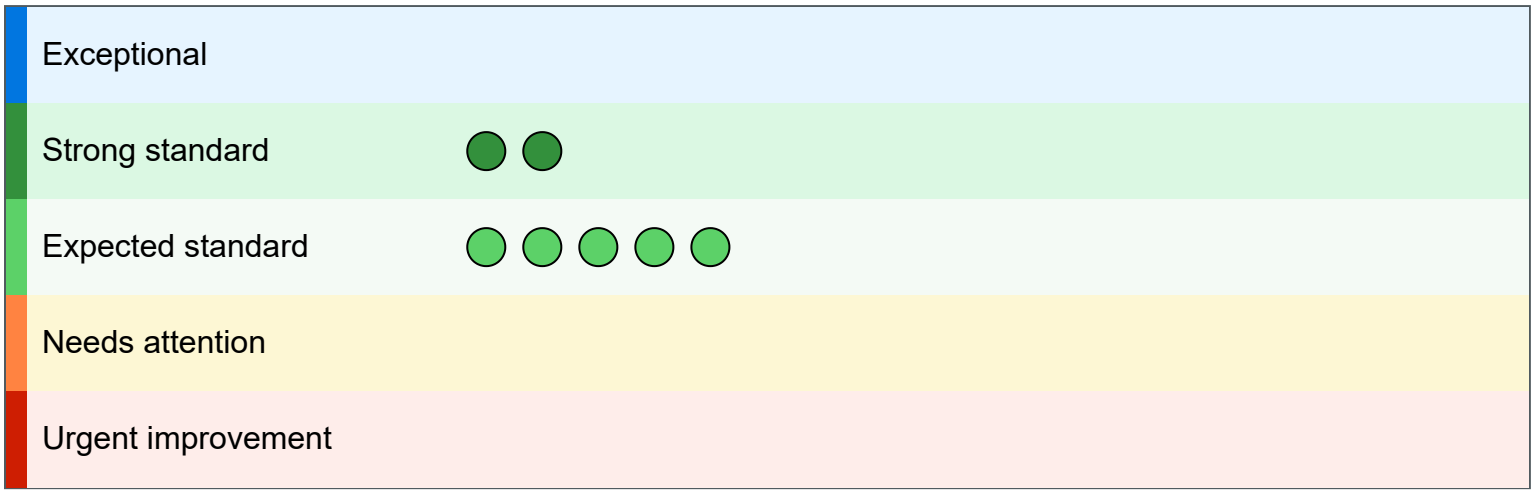
Queens Road Academy

Address: Queens Road, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S71 1AR

Unique reference number (URN): 139230

Inspection report: 13 October 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

Early years

Strong standard

Leaders place a high priority on the early years. They are determined that every child will have a successful start to their school life. Leaders have a deep knowledge and understanding of the early years and how young children learn. Staff invest time in getting to know children and their families. This helps them to identify children's starting points, interests and needs. Staff then provide appropriate support from the outset. They establish clear routines and expectations swiftly, so that children settle quickly into school life. Warm and nurturing relationships help children to feel happy, safe and secure and ready to learn.

Every aspect of the school's ambitious early years curriculum is well considered and deliberate. There is a clear focus on developing language and communication, early reading and writing, and mathematics. Staff model language and use purposeful, high-quality interactions to extend children's learning. Children develop secure foundations for future learning.

Teaching is highly responsive to children's needs. Staff make the most of opportunities throughout the day to engage children, foster curiosity and deepen their learning. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children, achieve well from their starting points.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders ensure that staff know individual pupils well and understand their needs. This helps all pupils to belong at Queens Road Academy and receive the support they need. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and work closely with families and specialists, where appropriate. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known to or previously known to social care receive support that reflects their individual needs and circumstances. Pupils' needs and support plans are checked regularly and adapted as their needs change. Leaders monitor pupils' learning closely, with a particular focus on pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. This helps these pupils to make positive progress from their starting points.

In lessons, staff enable pupils with barriers to their learning to access the curriculum. Teachers adapt the learning environment and resources to meet individual pupils' needs. Some of these adaptations are subtle, but they are carefully matched to individual pupils' needs. This helps pupils to build confidence, resilience and independence.

Leaders ensure that staff are skilled in identifying pupils' needs, providing appropriate support and meeting pupils' social and emotional needs. This, combined with access to wider opportunities, helps disadvantaged pupils to participate fully in school life and succeed.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), generally achieve well. They talk confidently about their learning. Leaders prioritise the important skills of reading, writing, spoken language and mathematics from the early years onwards. Pupils build on this knowledge as they move through the school. Regular checks on learning help teachers to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Across the wider curriculum, pupils generally make appropriate progress and build on what they already know.

The systems and processes introduced by leaders have improved consistency in teaching and learning. Leaders check how well these are working and make changes where needed. This is contributing to improved attainment, with published outcomes improving. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make positive, and sometimes rapid, progress from their starting points. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders understand the barriers that affect some pupils' attendance. They work closely with families to support pupils to attend school as regularly as possible. Clear systems enable leaders to track attendance and analyse patterns of absence. Leaders use incentives to motivate pupils and their families and work with external agencies, where needed, to provide further support. Attendance is generally close to national averages and is improving over time. Persistent absence is also reducing rapidly. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders have established clear routines and expectations for behaviour. These contribute to a consistently calm and purposeful learning environment. Transitions at the start of the day and around the school are managed effectively. Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. Staff implement the school's behaviour systems consistently, and pupils understand what is expected of them. Staff provide additional support for pupils who need help to manage their behaviour while maintaining high expectations. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that trusted adults will deal with concerns when they arise.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is broad and ambitious, with clear and progressive plans for what pupils should learn. These plans build on pupils' prior learning and help teachers to focus on the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to secure. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and identify when pupils need further help. They give pupils opportunities to correct and practise their work. The curriculum is well developed in English and mathematics. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, the tasks pupils complete do not align closely enough with the intended learning. This means that pupils do not consistently secure the knowledge and skills that leaders intend.

Phonics is taught consistently well. This helps pupils to develop the knowledge and skills they need for early reading. From the early years onwards, pupils develop important skills in letter formation and spelling. Teachers use questions to encourage pupils to think and explain their ideas. Teachers make adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can access the curriculum alongside their peers wherever possible.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders at all levels are committed to pupils at Queens Road and know pupils and their families well. Leaders understand the barriers that can affect pupils' learning and wellbeing and take action to reduce them. They put appropriate support in place and evaluate its impact. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for further development. Their actions are securing improvements for all pupils.

Leaders have embedded systems and procedures that are applied consistently across different areas of the school's work. They check the impact of their actions and adapt them where necessary. This has led to rapid improvement in some aspects of the school's work.

Leaders work closely with the trust to provide clear strategic direction and maintain a focus on improving outcomes for pupils. Self-evaluation and monitoring inform improvement planning. Leaders provide staff with a comprehensive programme of professional learning that develops their expertise in meeting pupils' academic and pastoral needs. Leaders consider staff workload and wellbeing when making decisions. Staff feel supported and proud to work at the school. Parents are largely positive about the changes made at the school and have confidence in its leadership.

Those responsible for governance support and challenge leaders and hold them to account for the quality of education, pupils' outcomes, safeguarding and the effective use of resources. They ensure that statutory responsibilities are fulfilled and maintain a clear focus on safeguarding. Leaders ensure that pupils are included in all aspects of school life and receive appropriate support to overcome barriers and succeed.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders use their knowledge of pupils and the local community to shape the personal development curriculum. Pupils develop a secure understanding of respect and difference, although their knowledge of different faiths and cultures is less secure. The curriculum is coherent and well sequenced and reflects statutory guidance. Leaders ensure that assemblies, visits and additional resources support the curriculum and respond to emerging needs. These help pupils to understand what it means to live in a diverse, modern Britain. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and the importance of treating others equally. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including online, understand what makes a healthy relationship and know where to seek help when they need it.

Pupils develop qualities such as kindness, empathy and leadership through the school's approach to character development. A progressive programme from the early years to Year 6 builds these qualities over time. Older pupils act as role models for younger pupils, including through their roles as sports leaders. Pupils help to shape wider opportunities,

including clubs, trips and visits. Leaders track participation and take action to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and others who face barriers can take part.

Pastoral support responds to the needs of vulnerable pupils and their families. Staff provide targeted support and involve external agencies where appropriate. Pastoral support plans are shared with staff so that pupils receive consistent support. This shared approach helps vulnerable pupils to belong and thrive at Queens Road.

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

Pupils have a strong sense of belonging at Queens Road Academy. They are valued as individuals and included in all aspects of school life. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending. They have positive and respectful relationships with staff and one another. Pupils are safe and receive support when they need it.

Pupils work hard and want to achieve well. They take pride in their work. The curriculum and teaching help pupils to build their knowledge and address gaps in their learning. Staff identify difficulties that pupils face and provide appropriate support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are supported to succeed. Pupils make positive progress from their starting points, enjoy their learning and are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

Pupils behave well in lessons and engage purposefully with their learning. Around school and at social times, they play cooperatively with one another. Bullying is rare, and adults deal effectively with concerns when they arise. Pupils take part in a range of clubs and activities and help to shape the opportunities available to them. For example, they grow produce in the school allotment and sell it at the local farmers' market.

The school’s vision, ‘Be Kind, Aim High and Discover’, is reflected in pupils’ experiences. Pupils learn how to make positive choices and respect others. They understand right and wrong and respect differences between people. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and understand what makes a healthy relationship. The school’s character development programme reinforces these aspects of pupils’ personal development.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that across the wider curriculum, the tasks and activities pupils complete enable them to achieve the intended learning.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of different faiths, cultures and beliefs so that they are better prepared for the diversity of life in modern Britain.

- Leaders should build on the positive improvement in published outcomes so that all pupils achieve well from their starting points.

About this inspection

This school is part of HCAT 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 (CEO), Tom Banham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Knight. The executive headteacher is Rebecca Paddock.

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

This inspection took place on 13 and 14 October 2026.

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 the head of school and other senior leaders during the inspection. They also met with members of the trust board, associate trustees, as well as the CEO. Inspectors spoke with some pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. It joined the HCAT Multi-Academy Trust in September 2025. A new leadership team is in place.

Head of School: Jon Smith

Lead inspector:
Lorraine Bamforth, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Karen Smith, Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Rowett, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 13 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

208
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: 268

School capacity

216
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)

28.50%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

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

1.92%
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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.10%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

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

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	54%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	61%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	64%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	69%	74%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	72%	Below

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	11%	46%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	71%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44%	62%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	64%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	22%	58%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	50%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44%	59%	Below

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	11%	67%	-56 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	80%	-35 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	64%	78%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	22%	78%	-55 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	79%	-35 pp

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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
2025/26 (1 term)	5.0%	5.1%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	12.7%	14.4%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	14.5%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.6%	14.6%	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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