

# Bacup Nursery School

Address: Cowtoot Lane, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 8EF

Unique reference number (URN): 119097

## Inspection report: 9 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 ●

Leaders focus sharply on ensuring that children secure the important knowledge and skills they need, particularly in communication, physical and personal development. Children make quick gains in their learning from their starting points across the curriculum. Staff swiftly address any gaps in children's knowledge. Children develop a detailed understanding of early mathematics knowledge and readily use this in their independent play. For example, from a young age, children gain high levels of confidence in counting. Children quickly secure the skills that they will need for later learning in reading and writing when they start primary school. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit widely from individual support that consistently reduces the barriers to learning that they face. Many children achieve beyond what would be expected for their age across the different areas of learning. Leaders ensure that children are consistently very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders are tenacious in their approach to ensuring that parents and carers understand the importance of children attending school regularly. They communicate clearly to parents about the negative impact that absence has on children's learning. Leaders take carefully considered actions to support families in resolving any challenges to regular attendance they experience. They have a clear insight into the absence patterns of children who do not attend as regularly as they should. Leaders consistently take swift and appropriate steps to address this. Their actions make a significant difference to improving the attendance of individual children.

Leaders have created a consistently calm learning environment that is highly conducive to learning. They have placed the needs of children at the heart of the decisions they make about the design of the classrooms. For example, staff have created cosy areas in each room with access to resources that help to meet children's emotional needs. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, use these areas independently. This helps them to gain confidence in managing their own feelings. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. They consistently promote this. Leaders have created a culture in which any form of bullying or discrimination is not tolerated. Children's behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are highly positive.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders draw upon their knowledge of the school's context, alongside their understanding of how young children learn, to design a rich and progressive curriculum. They continually review and strengthen the curriculum. For example, since the last inspection, leaders have defined the key developmental goals that children typically secure prior to turning 2 years old. This enables staff to provide consistent support to children at school who have not yet developed those skills so that they catch up quickly. Staff make carefully considered adaptations to their teaching to ensure that all children successfully access the curriculum.

For example, they use visual prompts and actions effectively to support children's communication and language skills.

Staff are highly skilled in their delivery of the curriculum. They make clear links between what children already know and the new information they learn. Staff design activities that evoke children's curiosity about the world around them and specifically develop the important physical and mathematical skills they need. They also expertly develop children's language and early reading skills. For example, staff immerse children in an environment that is full of stories, rhymes and quality conversations. The ambitious design of the curriculum, together with high-quality teaching, consistently builds on children's knowledge. This includes children with additional needs and those who are disadvantaged or face other challenges in their lives.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Staff hold detailed discussions with parents and carers about their children's development prior to them starting school. This process, alongside careful collaboration with external professionals, means that children's needs are identified very quickly. Staff and leaders maintain this detailed understanding of children's unique and changing needs as they progress through the school. Leaders ensure that staff consistently meet these needs. Leaders have developed specific areas to reduce the sensory barriers to learning that some children face. This helps children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to access the curriculum successfully and to thrive at school.

Leaders use well-matched approaches to address the barriers that some children face in their learning and wellbeing. Staff deliver programmes effectively to target specific areas of children's development, such as speech and language. Staff ensure that children, including those who face long- or short-term difficulties in their lives, quickly achieve their developmental goals. Leaders have developed rigorous processes for monitoring the impact of support for children. They use this information to decide what further support to offer. Leaders use additional funding to make a measurable difference to the experiences of children who are disadvantaged.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders and governors aspire for all children to achieve highly across the curriculum. Leaders are knowledgeable, reflective and committed to continually developing the school. They have a precise picture of the school's strengths and aspects of their work that they are seeking to improve further. Leaders prioritise actions that will have the biggest impact on children. They proactively seek out opportunities to work in partnership with other professionals and with parents and carers. Leaders' actions have resulted in consistently high standards across all aspects of the school's provision.

Leaders and governors are highly committed to ensuring that staff feel supported and valued. They consider the workload of staff and take deliberate actions to ensure that staff are helped with this. Governors make deliberate decisions about staffing and leadership roles to ensure that the quality of provision at this school remains consistently high. Governors and leaders utilise a collaboration with another school to develop staff expertise. Staff benefit considerably from leaders' commitment to their professional development.

Governors have a range of skills that enable them to carry out their roles successfully. They understand their responsibilities and meet their statutory duties consistently well. Governors have established clear monitoring processes that enable them to understand the quality of the provision. They provide robust challenge to leaders about ongoing improvements to the school.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** 

Leaders prioritise children's personal, social and emotional development. This permeates through the daily life of the school. Leaders have developed an extensive and highly effective personal development programme. It is tailored to the needs of children and to the local context of the school. Leaders and staff make adaptations so that all children benefit from the experiences on offer. Staff offer a wide range of personal support to children and families who are facing challenges in their lives. This makes a significant, positive difference to children's wellbeing.

Children develop high levels of independence and resilience. They keep trying when things prove difficult and are determined to succeed. Children develop a sophisticated understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they recognise the importance of wearing a helmet when riding a bike and know the risks involved in climbing trees and balancing on beams. Under the close supervision of adults, children learn to take part in these activities confidently and safely. Children are also taught, at an age-appropriate level, about the importance of being safe when online. For example, they know that they should be close to an adult when using an online device.

Staff teach children about the importance of having positive relationships with others and what to do if they do not feel safe. They help children to understand the positive difference they can make to the lives of others. Children demonstrate this through the help they offer each other as they interact. They have opportunities to take part in activities such as sponsored bike rides. This extends children's understanding of how their actions can contribute to the development of the school through raising money for new resources.

Children demonstrate a detailed understanding of the importance of eating a range of healthy food. At snack times, they discuss which foods will build their strength. Children also broaden their understanding of the world around them. They enjoy learning about different celebrations linked to different cultures. Children are highly prepared for life beyond school.

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

Children love attending this school. They are eager to join in with the enticing activities that are on offer. For example, in the woodland area, children cherish the opportunity to climb trees, fly through the air on a tyre-rope swing and explore different leaves. Children regularly broaden their experiences through activities such as cooking, dance and sports. Through these, children discover and develop their talents and interests early. Children benefit from visitors, including farmers, police officers and firefighters. These opportunities develop children's confidence to engage with others and instil positive attitudes towards the roles

these people play in society. Leaders ensure that all children participate in these experiences.

Children flourish from the moment they join the school. They quickly forge trusting relationships with staff, which helps them to feel safe and secure. Children build highly positive, supportive friendships. They beam with happiness as they see their friends arrive at school. Children look out for each other and actively welcome others into their play. On rare occasions when children become upset, such as after a fall, other children show genuine care and concern. Children develop a mature understanding of what makes them and others unique. They celebrate this and embrace the many opportunities they have to learn about diversity. Children strive to live up to the school's rules of 'kind hands, kind words and kind feet'. They know that staff will help them if they struggle with this. Staff are alert to any potential bullying or unkind behaviour between children. They deal with it rapidly.

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress quickly from their starting points and achieve very well. They benefit from consistently high-quality teaching and an engaging curriculum. Children who face barriers to their learning get the right support, at the right time, from staff. This helps to quickly close gaps in children's knowledge and skills.

---

## **Next steps**

- Leaders and governors should ensure continued improvement to teaching so that this has a transformational and sustained impact on children's achievement across all areas of learning and aspects of school life.
- 

## **About this inspection**

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jayne Turner.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with parents, carers and children.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

At the time of the inspection, there were 73 children on roll.

**Lead inspector:**

Liz Dayton, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspector:**

Nicola Howard, 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 9 June 2026

## School and pupil context

**Total pupils**

**77**

**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.

**Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)**

**0.0%**

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

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

**0.00%**

**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.

### **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**11.69%**

#### **What does this mean?**

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

### **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.

---

## **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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)  
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright