

Alcester Academy

Address: Gerard Road, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 6QQ

Unique reference number (URN): 137172

Inspection report: 7 July 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.

Exceptional

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional 

Leaders have created and sustained a rich, diverse and context-specific personal development programme. The school's personal development curriculum is delivered through tutor time, discrete lessons and drop-down days and is also threaded throughout the wider curriculum. Provision is exceptionally well-designed, sequenced and age appropriate. This means that pupils consistently learn about important issues at the right time and have a deep and wide understanding of them. The programme is closely linked to the school's values. Leaders regularly and consistently evaluate its impact and refine the programme so that it is always responsive to pupils' needs. For example, leaders have updated the programme to strengthen its focus on sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion. Pupils are taught about relationships and sex education and health education sensitively. Content is adapted where needed. As a result, all pupils develop deep and lasting knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions, build positive relationships and contribute positively to society.

Leaders ensure careers guidance has a consistently high profile in school. The careers offer in the school is extensive. Pupils benefit from bespoke careers guidance, work experience and local employer engagement. It begins in Year 7 and extends to pupils who have left the school after Year 11. The Gatsby benchmarks are met exceptionally well. Many pupils take up an enterprise programme to develop their business skills and knowledge. Pupils regularly outperform other schools in the associated competition.

Leaders work tirelessly to remove barriers to participation so that all pupils can take part fully. For example, scenario-based learning allows pupils to explore real-life issues. This makes lasting change to their understanding. Leaders offer a broad and transformative range of activities. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, are fully included in enrichment activities, leadership roles, trips and community work. Leaders review these opportunities consistently so that pupils can access a wide range of clubs and activities. Pupils receive meaningful recognition for their achievements. This strengthens their sense of belonging and pride. The provision prepares pupils exceptionally well to thrive in and beyond school life.

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard 

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, consistently produce high-quality work across a wide range of subjects. Leaders prioritise the teaching of subject-specific language. This develops pupils' vocabulary, which they use securely in a wide range of tasks. Pupils who need additional help or resources are identified quickly. As a result, these pupils catch up quickly and achieve well.

Pupils consistently achieve above-average outcomes in examinations. This includes pupils

who are disadvantaged.

Pupils secure foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Any gaps in pupils' knowledge are quickly closed. Leaders identify pupils who need additional support before they join the school. As a result, pupils receive help promptly and secure the knowledge they need.

Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. This helps them become confident, responsible and well-rounded young people.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders make attendance a priority. They analyse attendance information carefully, identify patterns quickly and act early to remove barriers. Leaders liaise with families to understand individual circumstances that impact attendance. They put appropriate action in place. Pupils understand why regular attendance matters and the value of being in school. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils is consistently above the national average.

Pupils consistently show respect, courtesy and consideration for others. Pupils arrive on time, settle quickly and make the most of their learning. These behaviours reflect the school's strong culture of high expectations. Pupils meet these expectations consistently. They stay focused in lessons and rarely require reminders about positive behaviour. As a result, lessons are free from disruption and purposeful. Leaders ensure there are appropriate adaptations to the behaviour policy where needed. This includes personalised support based on the detailed knowledge staff have of pupils. As a result, vulnerable pupils are able to meet the school's high expectations. Bullying and discrimination are rare. When they do occur, staff act swiftly and effectively. Pupils trust leaders to deal with concerns, and they say they feel safe in school.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed an ambitious, well-planned curriculum with clear end points. It is carefully ordered so that pupils build securely on their existing knowledge and what they have learned previously. Super learning days extend the taught curriculum by giving pupils opportunities to study important concepts in greater depth. The curriculum offers meaningful enrichment and real-world links. This includes fieldwork, trips and creative subject experiences. These opportunities help pupils apply their learning beyond the classroom and deepen their engagement.

Staff consistently use assessment to accurately identify gaps and shape next steps. Their clear feedback ensures pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils understand these next steps and act on them. Leaders use this information to adapt the curriculum where needed.

Teachers have a secure understanding of pupils' needs. They make consistently effective adaptations to the curriculum that remove barriers to learning. This leads to high-quality responses from pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Teachers are subject experts who encourage class

discussion and prioritise the teaching of subject-specific language. Leaders identify pupils who need extra support early. As a result, these pupils catch up quickly and achieve well.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Pupils benefit from a highly inclusive school. Leaders know pupils well and have created a culture in which everyone is valued. Inclusion is a clear priority. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils and ensure that staff understand their needs. Staff use this information consistently to adapt teaching, remove barriers to learning and help pupils take part fully in school life.

Leaders have effective systems to support disadvantaged pupils. They carefully monitor pupils' progress, attendance and participation in enrichment activities to identify when further help is needed. Support is well targeted and personalised. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well, attend regularly and participate fully in school life. Pupils value the support they receive and say that staff know them well. Staff care about pupils' success and wellbeing.

Staff receive regular training and clear guidance. This has led to consistent adaptive teaching across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and develop increasing independence. This is because support is carefully matched to their needs.

Leaders also make effective use of alternative provision. They carefully check pupils' attendance, progress and welfare. Leaders ensure that pupils continue to learn, remain safe and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders understand the school very well. They are determined to provide pupils with the best care and support while also providing high-quality education. They are highly visible around school. They know the pupils and their families extremely well. Leaders work closely with the local community. As a result, the school is a trusted and valued part of the local community. Leaders have a clear vision for all aspects of the school. They understand the school's strengths and identify the right priorities for further improvement.

Governors know the school very well. They use their knowledge and expertise to provide consistent support and robust challenge to leaders across all aspects of the school's work. They visit the school regularly and work alongside leaders to evaluate the quality of education. Governors take an active role in the life of the school, acting promptly when improvement is needed.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school. They feel privileged to work here. Staff feel fully supported by the senior leadership team and their line managers. They appreciate the flexibility and understanding around personal commitments. Staff appreciate leaders' actions to reduce workload and support wellbeing. They value the professional learning opportunities they receive. This includes early career teachers, who develop their

practice with confidence. Staff feel listened to. They trust leaders to act in the best interests of both staff and school.

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

Pupils benefit from a highly inclusive school where they feel safe, valued and well supported. Pupils see their school as a genuine community where everyone belongs. They are proud of their school.

Pupils achieve well because leaders have created the conditions for them to succeed. They learn in calm, focused and purposeful classrooms, where teachers make the most of learning time. Pupils have access to high-quality resources that support their learning. Staff quickly identify pupils who face barriers to their learning and provide the support they need to make progress from their starting points. Pupils are well prepared for future learning and life in modern Britain.

An inclusive approach is central to the school. Pupils receive a warm welcome from staff, who know them exceptionally well. They take part fully in school life. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who are disadvantaged take part in a wide range of experiences and opportunities. Pupils are known well by staff and receive tailored support. This helps them flourish. Pupils take part in extensive enrichment activities. These include the arts, sports and life skills. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with teachers and their peers. Pupils trust that their teachers will support them.

Pupils consistently show self-discipline and commitment to learning. They learn without disruption. Pupils consistently treat others with respect. They open doors for others and greet each other warmly. Pupils understand and meet the school's high expectations consistently. They feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including online. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, attend regularly and benefit from supportive, pastoral care.

Next steps

- Senior leaders should strengthen the contribution of leaders at all levels to strategic improvement so the quality of the school's work continues to improve.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mike Dean.

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 headteacher and other leaders, the chair and other governors, as well as groups of staff and pupils, during the inspection.

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 school uses two registered alternative providers.

Headteacher: Sarah Mellors

Lead inspector:

Debbie Tremble, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Robert Bourdon-Pierre, Ofsted Inspector

Elizabeth Lawson, Ofsted Inspector

Michael Stoppard, 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 7 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

632

Well 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

650

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

21.99%

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: 28.9%

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

3.64%

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

13.61%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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 (final)	68.5%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	64.0%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	58.5%	45.3%	Above

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)	54.0	46.1	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	54.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	55.0	46.3	Above

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)	0.65	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.76	-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)	57.1%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	28.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45.0%	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)	45.2	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	38.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	48.0	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)	0.12	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.49	-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)	57.1%	53.1%	4.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	28.6%	53.1%	-24.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	45.0%	52.4%	-7.4 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)	45.2	50.4	-5.2
2023/24 (final)	38.5	50.0	-11.5
2022/23 (final)	48.0	50.3	-2.4

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)	0.12	0.16	-0.04
2022/23 (final)	0.49	0.17	0.32

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)	94%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	94%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	94%	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 (3 term)	6.0%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.9%	9.0%	Below

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)	14.7%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	16.3%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	16.5%	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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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