


George Eliot Academy

Address: Raveloe Drive, CV11 4QP

Unique reference number (URN): 137079

Inspection report: 18 November 2025

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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Across the curriculum, pupils generally develop the knowledge and skills they need to move on to their next steps. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND make suitable progress from their individual starting points.

Pupils' overall achievement has improved over time. Improvements in disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are a particular strength. For example, the 'attainment 8' and 'progress 8' of disadvantaged pupils are now close to that of their disadvantaged peers nationally.

Pupils achieve well in most subjects, for example English, vocational and creative subjects. Pupils' achievements in a few subjects, such as mathematics and science are not as consistently secure. Overall, most pupils have built up the knowledge and skills that they need to move on to further education, employment or training at the end of Year 11.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance is everyone's responsibility at this school. As a result of the highly effective work around attendance, it has improved significantly. Whole school attendance is now at least in line with, and beginning to exceed, national averages. This includes the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders work skilfully to remove any barriers that pupils may have to attending regularly.

Everyone at the school understands the behaviour expectations and routines. As a result, behaviour has improved and suspensions have fallen sharply. Pupils know what conduct staff expect and staff consistently apply the behaviour policy. The school is a calm and orderly environment, where respectful relationships are commonplace. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive on the whole. They respect their teachers and know that bullying or the use of derogatory language are not tolerated and will be dealt with effectively, should they occur.

There remains a small number of pupils who find it challenging to meet the school's high expectations of their conduct. Leaders are working effectively with pupils and their families to support pupils to improve their behaviour.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate and informed view of the quality of teaching. Through effective monitoring, leaders swiftly identify any inconsistencies in the expected delivery of the curriculum. This enables the school to take quick action to support staff to improve aspects of their teaching, for example, through effective professional learning.

The school has carefully designed the curriculum. Key knowledge and skills are broken down thoughtfully. Consequently, teachers know exactly what to teach and when. Pupils

learn the curriculum well and teachers regularly check how well pupils remember it.

The school has implemented consistent and well-practised teaching methods. Learning follows clear teaching routines and methods, for example 'STAR' activities provide concise help in lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and routinely adapt their teaching effectively. This supports all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to learn well. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain ideas clearly and model responses effectively. At times, pupils have limited opportunities to independently deepen or practise their learning when they are ready to do so. This means that they sometimes become reliant on staff input or can give up easily.

The school quickly identifies any gaps that pupils have in their literacy and numeracy knowledge. Staff support pupils to catch up and to close these gaps. On the whole, pupils secure the important knowledge they need in order to be successful.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have inclusion at the heart of their provision. They know that more pupils are now joining the school with barriers to their learning. The school has high expectations for vulnerable pupils. Staff accurately identify pupils' needs, including special educational needs and/or disabilities. They review support often and involve parents and carers as appropriate. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of their inclusion work and act decisively to improve their provision.

The school works constructively with external agencies to support pupils and remove the barriers they face. Teachers receive useful information and effective training about how best to support pupils in lessons. Typically, the help pupils get is well matched to their needs. The school tracks pupils' learning very well so staff can understand the effectiveness of the support that pupils receive. This enables staff to identify emerging or changing needs. The school also carefully evaluates the impact of the pupil premium spending. As a result of this work, many disadvantaged pupils overcome their barriers to learning and achieve well.

The school uses alternative provision appropriately. For the small number of pupils who attend, placements are well matched to their needs and kept under frequent review.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Some aspects of the school's leadership are impressive. For example, leaders' forensic and accurate understanding of what works and what does not work in their school. They use this knowledge to set improvement priorities and evaluate these for their effectiveness. Leaders take decisive actions with pupils' best interests at heart.

Since the school joined the trust, leaders at all levels have brought about significant change. Through their determined actions, they have established an environment where pupils feel safe, cared for and able to learn.

The trust and local governing body fully meet their statutory duties. The support provided by the trust has been highly effective in bringing about many improvements in a short period of

time. For example, improved attendance and rising pupil achievement. Trust leaders work efficiently with governors to ensure that leaders have a clear strategy and the support they need to succeed. Consequently, leaders at all levels understand the trust's vision and are motivated to make it a reality.

Staff feel valued and involved in the work of the school. When changes are made, such as to the curriculum and behaviour routines, staff feel included. This is because leaders listen to their views.

The school is working hard to engage with parents and carers and the local community. This is beginning to pay off as more parents are now supportive of the school and involved in social activities, such as the recent firework display. Leaders know that more efforts are needed to connect with some parents and work is underway to achieve this.

Personal development and well-being

Expected standard 

The school prioritises pastoral support and pupils' personal development. Pupils feel cared for and part of the 'George Eliot family'.

The school has designed an effective personal development programme that provides pupils with a range of experiences to prepare them well for adult life. Pupils learn about risks and how to keep themselves safe, including online safety and knife crime. The health education provided, including work about relationships and mental health, is age-appropriate. It is supported by carefully structured pastoral support which helps pupils with any additional concerns they may have.

The school's programme of character development ensures that pupils learn about the importance of respecting others and appreciating diversity. Some pupils join the school with limited understanding of life in modern British society. The school's work is effective in closing those knowledge gaps. Generally, pupils understand fundamental British values and what they mean for their own lives. Pupils understand the importance of following rules, which creates a calm environment for all.

Pupils develop their leadership skills through activities, such as running 'The Hive' pupil centre or creating the 'Harmony Garden'. The Junior Leadership Team work alongside school leaders to share pupils' views so that together they can improve the school. Pupils take part in a wide offer of extra-curricular activities, such as film club, sports and music club. Generally, these clubs are well attended.

The school is effective in raising aspirations and supporting pupils to consider their next steps through the careers education curriculum. Events such as employer workshops, careers fair and guest speakers enable pupils to make informed decisions about their future destinations. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.

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

There have been significant improvements in the school since it joined the United Learning Trust in December 2023. For example, pupils now attend more frequently.

‘The George Eliot family’ is what many staff and pupils now call this school. Pupils are proud of their school. They benefit from a strong culture of care and inclusion, which helps them to feel safe and valued. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are common and a pleasure to observe. All staff and pupils clearly understand the school's high expectations. Commonly, pupils follow the school rules and support the school’s ‘STAR’ values. As a result, classrooms are calm and learning-focused environments.

Pupils enjoy being rewarded for meeting the school’s expectations with incentives, such as ‘golden tickets’ and weekly prize draws. They want to come to school, which is evident in the significantly improved attendance figures. Pupils trust that staff will deal with any incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively.

Pupils who may face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing know that the school will help them. Staff quickly get to know their pupils and use this information to make sure that pupils can access their learning. They do this by making small but effective adaptations to lessons, such as speaking to vulnerable pupils first.

Considering their context, the school has thought carefully about how to best prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Through the character and personal development offer, pupils learn about different cultures, world religions and respect for all people. The broad range of enrichment activities include things, like ukulele club, Spanish film club and trips to Belgium and Iceland, which many pupils attend. In careers education, pupils receive relevant information about future career paths and options. As a result of this work, pupils are well prepared for their futures.

Next steps

- The school should ensure that staff provide more opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their learning, helping to build their confidence to independently tackle activities.
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About this inspection

This school is part of United Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Jon Coles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mr Christian Brodie.

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 principal, senior leaders, other leaders and staff at the school, including early career teachers. Inspectors held a telephone conversation with a trustee and spoke on the telephone to a member 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:

The school joined the United Learning Trust in December 2023.

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

Principal: Mrs Homeira Zakary

Lead inspector:

Bianka Zemke, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stuart Clarkson, His Majesty's Inspector


James Oldham, His Majesty's Inspector

Sara Berry, His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Washbourne, His Majesty's 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 18 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

848

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

950

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: 1,152

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

36.56%

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

2.48%

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

18.16%
Above 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	41.7%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24	41.9%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23	40.7%	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	45.5	45.9	Close to average
2023/24	44.2	45.9	Close to average
2022/23	43.9	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	-0.05	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23	-0.14	-0.03	Close to average
2021/22	-0.28	-0.03	Close to average

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	12.2%	25.6%	Below
2023/24	36.7%	25.8%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23	9.8%	25.2%	Below

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	35.3	34.9	Close to average
2023/24	38.2	34.6	Close to average
2022/23	29.9	35.0	Below

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	-0.35	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23	-0.78	-0.57	Close to average
2021/22	-1.00	-0.55	Below

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	12.2%	52.8%	-40.6 pp
2023/24	36.7%	53.1%	-16.4 pp
2022/23	9.8%	52.4%	-42.6 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	35.3	50.3	-15.0
2023/24	38.2	50.0	-11.9
2022/23	29.9	50.3	-20.4

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	-0.35	0.16	-0.51
2022/23	-0.78	0.17	-0.94
2021/22	-1.00	0.15	-1.16

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
2022 leavers	89%	93%	Below
2021 leavers	90%	94%	Below
2020 leavers	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 (1 term)	8.3%	7.7%	Close to average
2023/24	11.1%	8.9%	Above
2022/23	11.5%	9.0%	Above

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 (1 term)	19.7%	21.1%	Close to average
2023/24	29.3%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23	32.9%	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 standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards 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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