

# Educ8 Southport

**Address:** 197a Sussex Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 6DG

**Unique reference number (URN):** 151208

## Inspection report: 10 March 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.

## Needs attention

### Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

While leaders check attendance regularly, they do not analyse attendance information precisely enough to understand any emerging patterns or to build on early improvements made in this area. Leaders support pupils who previously struggled with attendance to attend school more often. Although many pupils still have further progress to make with attendance, many show clear and steady improvements. This is largely because they feel more settled and supported in school.

Staff at times do not consistently respond to incidents which affect how well some pupils behave in lessons. This also disturbs other pupils' learning. Some staff are not fully clear on what strategies or adaptations they need to support pupils' behaviour. Nevertheless, when pupils receive clear expectations and effective support, they engage more successfully.

Most pupils behave well at social times. They get on positively with their classmates and staff. They understand the school's rules and routines and they usually follow them. In general, pupils respond well to adults' instructions. Incidents of unkind or inappropriate language do occur. Staff deal with them quickly so they do not escalate. Even so, some pupils are still developing the self-awareness to understand why such language is unacceptable and to avoid using it in the first place.

### Inclusion

Needs attention 

Until recently, leaders had not established a clear or consistent process to identify pupils' needs. They had also failed to ensure that staff followed a systematic approach of assessing pupils' needs and adjusting support through regular review. As a result, staff do not meet the needs of some pupils effectively. In many cases, staff set individual targets for pupils that are too broad and that are not appropriate based on their education, health and care plan. Staff also overlook important areas such as pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Although the school is still at an early stage of improvement, leaders have begun to change their approach. They are taking steps to create a clearer and more consistent system for identifying and meeting pupils' needs, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders involve external agencies when needed. However, they sometimes do not use this advice closely enough to shape the provision that pupils receive.

Leaders have started to strengthen staff professional development so that staff gain the skills required to provide appropriate adaptations for pupils. However, this work is still in its early stages, so staff do not consistently provide the adaptations that pupils need to access the curriculum. Pupils have begun to make progress in some areas of their development, including their SEMH needs, but gaps in leaders' understanding of their wider needs continue to slow pupils' academic progress.

## Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

The proprietor and senior leaders have just begun to deal with the significant problems in curriculum and teaching and in pupils' achievement. In other areas, such as attendance, behaviour and inclusion, they are further ahead. The proprietor and governors now have effective systems in place to ensure that they understand the school's strengths and failings. They have introduced a new leadership structure that is helping to promote positive change. This is beginning to ensure that all leaders focus on the right things at the right time. However, this progress is at an early and fragile stage. These new systems are not embedded.

The proprietor and governors do not hold school leaders fully to account for how well pupils are learning and achieving. They do not understand the negative impact that leaders' actions have had on pupils' academic, social and personal development up until more recently. The lack of coherent systems have highlighted that the proprietor and governors do not have sufficiently detailed information from school leaders to challenge underperformance.

There are early signs that staff now receive more focused professional development. However, this is still in its early stages and it does not link closely to what staff actually need. At the moment, staff expertise has not improved as quickly as it should.

Staff report that leaders think carefully about workload and wellbeing and that they receive appropriate support when it is needed.

The proprietor and governors have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently over time. For example, they have not kept a close enough check on the curriculum or on the quality of teaching. In some areas where standards are not met, there is still a significant amount of work required before they will be compliant. While the proprietor and governors have made some small steps forward, the scale of the improvement needed should not be underestimated.

## Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Pupils do not develop a secure understanding of key aspects of the school's personal development programme. Although they treat each other with respect and tolerance, many do not fully understand fundamental British values or the personal characteristics that are protected by law. Pupils have some opportunities to learn about different religions and faiths, but these experiences tend to be ad hoc rather than part of a planned, consistent approach.

Leaders have recently reviewed the school's personal development programme so that it links more closely with personal, social, health and economic education, alongside the school's relationships and sex education provision. Pupils have started to gain a clear understanding of what healthy relationships look like, although this work is still in its early stages. Careers education is more established than previously. For example, pupils write CVs, explore colleges and meet with independent careers advisers. Most pupils move on successfully to college, training or employment when they leave the school.

Pupils also learn practical ways to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about the risks linked to gangs, peer pressure and illegal drugs. This helps some pupils to make sensible choices. Pastoral support is a real strength of the school. Pupils know exactly who they can talk to if they are worried. Staff take time to listen carefully when pupils feel anxious and help them work through their concerns.

Pupils have an increasingly broad set of experiences such as roller skating, rock climbing, museum visits and supporting local charity organisations and the community foodbank. However, these experiences are not planned in a structured way, so they do not fully build on one another to support pupils' wider development.

---

## **Urgent improvement** ●

### **Achievement**

**Urgent improvement** ●

Pupils significantly underachieve. They do not reach the standards that they should, given their starting points. Many have significant gaps in basic English and mathematics. These gaps continue unchecked. For example, too many pupils, especially boys, are not supported to become confident writers. They continue to repeat previous mistakes, such as spelling words incorrectly. Pupils do not have a secure grasp of number facts. This impedes their ability to access more-difficult topics in mathematics. As a result, pupils move through school without the essential knowledge that they need. Too many pupils move on significantly unprepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

In the wider curriculum, pupils' understanding of different topics is weak. They struggle to recall prior learning and find it difficult to make links between the different topics that they have studied. Overall, these significant weaknesses in pupils' learning mean that their achievement is fragile.

### **Curriculum and teaching**

**Urgent improvement** ●

Leaders' recent response to the serious, long-standing problems in the school's curriculum and teaching is not having the impact required. There are critical and substantial shortcomings in how well staff deliver the curriculum. For example, many staff do not have the subject-specific knowledge that they need. In addition, teachers give tasks to pupils which do not routinely match the school's curriculum aims or help pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils often experience lessons that are disjointed or confusing because staff do not consistently follow the planned curriculum. This makes it difficult for pupils to link ideas and to build their learning over time. Teaching also does not tackle important gaps in pupils' essential knowledge in English and mathematics. As a result, these gaps persist.

Leaders have only recently started to focus more closely on pupils' reading and writing knowledge. Pupils struggle with key skills such as spelling. Staff do not use assessment well enough to check what pupils have understood or to plan what they should learn next.

Support for pupils who need extra help is also not used effectively. Although leaders have started to make improvements, these changes are still at a very early stage.

Leaders now have a clear picture of what works well and where to focus their efforts to improve the curriculum and teaching. They have raised the ambition of the curriculum so that pupils can work towards GCSEs and other recognised qualifications. Leaders have set out what they want pupils to learn but it is too early to see any impact.

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

Leaders have not ensured that pupils receive an acceptable standard of education. There are substantial deficiencies in the curriculum and teaching that pupils receive. Pupils make insufficient progress across the curriculum. Substantial gaps in their knowledge and understanding remain across the curriculum. Staff do not take effective action at times to overcome obstacles that impede pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils face more difficulties in their learning than they should. The curriculum is poorly implemented. It does not support pupils to learn well, with teaching that falls short of what pupils need to secure rapid progress. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

On occasion, pupils behave well. However, staff's management of pupils' behaviour is inconsistent. This means that lessons are sometimes not calm. Some pupils struggle to learn because of the actions of others. Nonetheless, pupils feel safe from bullying and are confident that staff manage any issues decisively.

Many pupils have positive experiences in school. Those who have been out of education for a long time often find here the stability that they crave. Positive relationships with staff help pupils to feel safe and they have a sense of belonging. However, pupils have a weak understanding of differences people may have, including the protected characteristics as set out in law. Although they show respect for others, they do not learn enough to be fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

---

## **Next steps**

- The proprietor and leaders must ensure that they strengthen teachers' subject-specific expertise to secure consistently high-quality curriculum delivery, resulting in improved teaching and better pupil outcomes.
- The proprietor and leaders must ensure that they develop a robust and consistent approach to assessment so that teachers can pinpoint gaps in pupils' knowledge with accuracy to ensure that pupils build a more secure knowledge base.
- The proprietor and leaders must ensure that they support teachers to improve the design of learning tasks to ensure that teaching systematically builds and reinforces pupils' essential knowledge.
- The proprietor and leaders must ensure that they implement rapid, targeted action to close gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge. This is to ensure that all pupils achieve well.

- The proprietor and leaders should ensure that they embed the new leadership structure with governors and senior leaders to ensure that improvements are sustained over time and the independent school standards are met consistently.
  - The proprietor and leaders should ensure that they strengthen how well teachers identify, assess and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling pupils with additional needs to access learning more effectively.
  - The proprietor and leaders should ensure that they enhance their analysis of behaviour and attendance to develop more-targeted attendance interventions and a better climate for learning.
- 

## About this inspection

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 the proprietor, representatives of the executive board, executive headteachers and the headteacher. Inspectors also spoke with staff during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the schools who primarily send their pupils to the school.

The name of the proprietor is Educ8 Liverpool Limited.

The school is based in a single-storey building located at 197a Sussex Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 6DG.

The fees are £25,000 to £45,000.

The school's email address is [enquiries@educ8group.com](mailto:enquiries@educ8group.com).

Inspectors visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at curriculum information and examples of pupils' work. They reviewed school documents that included: the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan, and other documents that allowed inspectors to check compliance with the independent school standards.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a special school that caters for pupils with education, health and care plans, with their primary identified need as social, emotional and mental health.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

This is the school's first standard inspection since the school was registered with the Department for Education on 24 October 2024.

The school is registered to admit 25 pupils. At the time of the inspection, 15 pupils were on roll at the school.

Since the school's pre-registration inspection, a new headteacher and executive headteachers have been appointed. There are other new members of staff who have joined the school since the pre-registration inspection.

Headteacher: Leanne Booth

---

## Independent school standards

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

---

### 1. Quality of education provided

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

#### Paragraph 2(1)

The standard in this paragraph is met if–

- (a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
- (b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
  - (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and

#### Paragraph 2(2)

For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–

- (b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;

#### Paragraph 3

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–

- (a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- (b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;

**(c)** involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;

**(d)** shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

**(e)** demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;

**(f)** utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

**(g)** demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;

**(h)** utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;

---

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

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

### Paragraph 5

The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–

**(a)** actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;

**(b)** ensures that principles are actively promoted which–

**(i)** enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;

**(ii)** enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;

**(iii)** encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;

**(iv)** enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;

**(v)** further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;

**(vi)** encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and

**(d)** takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils–

**(iii)** in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere,

they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

---

**3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

**Standards not met**

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 9

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–

**(b)** the policy is implemented effectively; and

---

**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 not met**

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 34(1)

The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–

- (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and

**Lead inspector:**

Stuart Perkins, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspector:**

Mark Cocker, 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 10 March 2026

**Total pupils**

**15**

**School capacity**

**25**

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

**5**

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

**10**

---

# 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.

---

**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