

Wincheap Foundation Primary School

Address: Hollow Lane, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3SD

Unique reference number (URN): 118867

Inspection report: 16 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.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders understand the strengths and areas for improvement in the early years. They review the provision continuously to ensure that children receive high-quality care and purposeful developmental experiences.

Leaders have carefully designed an ambitious early years curriculum. Staff place communication and language at the centre of children's daily experiences. They use new words and sentences throughout the day. This helps children to develop detailed vocabulary.

Staff prioritise learning to read from the start. Children learn the sounds they need to read words accurately and fluently. Children who require additional support receive timely guidance so that they can keep up with the phonics programme.

Staff support children's personal, social and emotional development effectively. Children are safe, secure and happy. Relationships are warm and nurturing. Children progress well from their starting points, and most children reach a secure level of development. By the end of the early years, most children achieve well from their starting points. Transitions from Reception onwards to Year 1 are well thought through. Staff form positive relationships with parents and carers from the outset. As a result, parents are involved in their child's learning and understand how to support their progress.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, including members of the local governing body, know their school well. They have a detailed understanding of the community that they serve and the barriers that many pupils face to their wellbeing. Leaders are focused on the most important priorities for further improvement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities, are at the heart of leaders' decisions and changes that they make. Leaders have taken action to address pupils' attendance and readiness to learn. This work has been built on the supportive and trusting relationships with parents. Leaders know that there is more to do to improve attendance for all pupils.

Leaders have taken action to address weaknesses in the curriculum, teaching and achievement. Some aspects of this work are further on than others. Improvements in the teaching of reading, for example, are beginning to have an impact.

Governors meet their statutory duties. They receive information from leaders about the school's work and provide appropriate support with some challenge. Leaders and governors place an emphasis on staff's wellbeing and workload. They give staff time to complete additional tasks and reduce any unnecessary demands. Leaders place high importance on staff's professional learning. They create opportunities for staff to extend their skills and pursue areas of interest. Staff feel valued and enjoy working at the school.

Leaders build positive relationships with parents, carers and the wider community. Parents appreciate the care and support staff provide for their children. Leaders work with other professionals to support pupils' needs.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide well for pupils' broader development. The personal development programme is well considered and broad. It takes into account the school's context and pupils' individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are successfully supported by the personal development programme, particularly through high-quality pastoral support.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is well structured and appropriate. It helps pupils understand how to stay safe, including online, and how to manage risks to their wellbeing. Pupils develop a secure understanding of relationships and recognise that families and communities can take different forms. Teaching equips pupils to make informed and responsible choices.

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures through the religious education curriculum. Most pupils develop tolerant and respectful attitudes to difference, and they understand that discrimination is wrong. Pupils show a developing understanding of fundamental British values, including, for example, democracy, and they are prepared appropriately for life in modern Britain. They have opportunities to take on responsibility and contribute to the life of the school and wider community.

Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding through a thoughtful programme of experiences. They access clubs and activities that help them develop their interests and talents. These include languages, sports, music, dance and choir. Pupils enjoy learning through the outdoor curriculum in the school grounds. They represent the school in sports fixtures and art competitions. Leaders track participation in clubs and activities and use this information to encourage pupils, who have not yet taken part.

Pastoral support is carefully tailored to each pupils' needs, and supports pupils and their families effectively. This includes referrals to external agencies and signposting to professional services where needed.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should in national tests. Staff are often unclear about the specific barriers these pupils face, and adaptations to teaching do not remove these barriers as effectively as they could. As a result, some disadvantaged pupils are not as well prepared for their next steps as they need to be. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make suitable progress from their starting points.

Pupils generally achieve well in national tests. They build secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics from the early years. Pupils who fall behind in reading catch up quickly. Over time, pupils write with increasing accuracy and confidence.

Across the curriculum, pupils typically recall their previous knowledge and apply it to new learning. At times, pupils' knowledge is not as deeply embedded as it could be. Overall, pupils generally gain the knowledge and skills they need for the next stages of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Many pupils do not attend school as often as they should. Attendance remains low, and persistent absence for some groups is still high. Leaders' actions have not currently secured sustained improvement in pupils' attendance. As a result, pupils miss out on learning and the range of exciting opportunities that the school has to offer. Leaders have strengthened their systems and processes for monitoring attendance, enabling them to target their work more successfully to reduce pupils' absence. This work is still at an early stage, however.

Pupils behave well and support each other's differences, creating a positive environment. Those who need additional help with their behaviour, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive tailored support that meets their needs. Overall, behaviour is positive, therefore. Leaders have established high expectations through a clear behaviour policy. Staff follow this policy and manage pupils' behaviour well. Suspensions are used appropriately and in consultation with appropriate professionals. The school deals with rare instances of bullying and discriminatory behaviour effectively. Pupils conduct themselves well and follow routines effectively. A calm atmosphere exists in school. There is a culture of mutual respect between pupils and adults. Typically pupils show positive attitudes to learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Staff do not consistently check pupils' understanding effectively. As a result, some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not develop the skills they need to write or spell fluently. This limits their ability to build secure knowledge and skills over time. In mathematics, however, pupils are typically secure in their understanding of basic number facts and fluency.

The school has a well-structured curriculum, where new learning builds on previous content. Staff do not always ensure that they support pupils to build knowledge from their starting points. Therefore, gaps in pupils' learning persist. Leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure that teaching consistently supports pupils' learning across the school.

Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. Leaders have focused on developing pupils' vocabulary in the early years and key stage 1. This is helping pupils to offer higher quality verbal responses and more adventurous word choices when writing. The phonics curriculum is established. This ensures that pupils gain the essential knowledge that they need to read

with accuracy and increasing fluency. If needed, there are systems in place to help pupils to catch up quickly.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

The support that some pupils receive in lessons does not always match their needs. Teachers do not consistently adapt learning effectively. As a result, some pupils do not overcome gaps in their learning or barriers to achievement quickly enough. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are typically happy in school and feel included. While there are some positive examples of how individual pupils have benefited from the support the school provides, this is not consistent.

Leaders identify pupils' needs accurately. This includes pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those previously known to social care. Generally, leaders work closely with families and external agencies. They secure additional bespoke support for pupils who need it.

Pupils who are known, or previously known, to social care receive effective support that enables them to access all aspects of school life. Leaders place high priority on pastoral care and ensure that staff respond sensitively to pupils' needs. Leaders use additional funding well to provide disadvantaged pupils with targeted wellbeing support and to ensure that they can participate fully in sporting and musical activities alongside their peers.

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

Pupils receive a warm welcome at the start of each day. This is because staff genuinely care about pupils. In response, pupils trust staff and develop positive relationships with their peers. Leaders have created a school, where everyone is valued. Pupils describe a sense of belonging, respect and kindness, and they are proud to be part of Wincheap Foundation Primary School.

Pupils are polite to staff and helpful to visitors. Pupils benefit from clear expectations for behaviour. Pupils feel safe from the harmful effects of bullying and unkind behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils trust staff to listen and act quickly when concerns arise. This helps pupils to feel safe. Most pupils attend school regularly. However, some pupils are often absent. This affects their learning.

Pupils enjoy learning about the interesting topics that they study. Leaders have designed the curriculum well to ensure that pupils learn all that they should. However, teaching does not deliver this curriculum consistently well across all year groups. In lessons, pupils are motivated to learn. They appreciate how their teachers help them to remember new ideas. Pupils concentrate well and try their best. Most pupils learn well. However, some pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, do not learn as well as they could. As a result, some pupils are not ready for the next stage of their learning.

Pupils benefit from a range of activities beyond the classroom, such as choir, football and computing clubs. They enjoy visits that enrich their learning, including listening to poets and

visiting theatres. Pupils are particularly proud of the Cathedral performances in which they participate. The school offers meaningful leadership opportunities. Pupils take on roles such as school councillor, anti bullying ambassador and sports crew. These responsibilities help pupils understand the importance of contributing to their community and reinforce that their views matter.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure their attendance improvement work reaches all groups of pupils so that they do not miss out on important learning.
 - Leaders should develop staff expertise to adapt their teaching, so that pupils with barriers to learning benefit from high-quality, inclusive provision, which precisely meets their learning needs and supports them to progress well.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff use assessment to consistently adapt the curriculum and teaching methods so that they meet pupils' needs and build effectively on what pupils already know and can do.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, have the key component knowledge to be able to build learning over time.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Reverend Stephen Carter.

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, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, the chair and vice chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This caters for 15 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Nicola Dawson

Lead inspector:

Jody Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Graham Chisnell, Ofsted Inspector

Catherine Hylands, Ofsted Inspector

Jo Hygate, 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

429

Above 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: 272

School capacity

440

Above 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)

35.66%

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: 26.3%

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

4.20%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12.12%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	66%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	54%	60%	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	78%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	85%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	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	72%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	71%	Close to average

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	69%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	68%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	73%	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 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	23%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	17%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	12%	44%	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	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	70%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	35%	60%	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	35%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	18%	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	45%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	55%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	41%	59%	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 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	23%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	17%	67%	-50 pp
2022/23 (final)	12%	66%	-55 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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	43%	80%	-36 pp
2022/23 (final)	35%	78%	-43 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	35%	78%	-43 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	35%	78%	-43 pp
2022/23 (final)	18%	77%	-60 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	45%	80%	-35 pp
2024/25 (final)	55%	81%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	39%	79%	-40 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	41%	79%	-38 pp

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)	6.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.5%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	5.9%	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
2024/25 (3 term)	17.6%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	20.4%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	20.0%	16.2%	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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