

Westgate Community Primary School and Nursery

Address: Brooklands Close, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3JX

Unique reference number (URN): 124552

Inspection report: 23 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have applied a consistent approach to behaviour. This means that pupils are calm and respectful. They typically behave with purpose in their classes and at play time. Leaders have introduced new reward systems to recognise positive behaviour. Pupils say these have had an impact and they enjoy this approach. Bullying is rare. Pupils say that if it occurs that it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils recognise the importance of 'being kind' as the key to this cohesive and friendly community.

Leaders work closely with pupils and their families to promote the importance of consistent attendance. This means that they are able to identify any barriers and act upon them quickly. They also work with external agencies upon recognising patterns in absences. As a result, attendance is improving. However, a small group of pupils remain absent too often. Leaders recognise this and have put steps in place to improve this.

Staff relationships with pupils are open, friendly and caring. This means that pupils feel supported in their work and with any issues that they may face. Consequently, pupils benefit from a positive, caring climate. This means that they enjoy coming to school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a curriculum that is tailored to pupils' needs and starting points. It has been improved quickly and efficiently. Staff use secure subject knowledge to model new learning. They develop tasks that build on and enhance pupils' existing knowledge. Pupils are actively involved in their learning through the use of talk partners. This collaborative work allows pupils to justify their reasoning and develop their oracy skills.

The curriculum is suitably adapted for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some pupils benefit from a bespoke curriculum, aligned to their specific needs and gaps in their learning. Pupils in the deaf resource base benefit from specialist support and high-quality interventions. These include the use of adaptive strategies and technology. As a result, these pupils feel well equipped to respond to skilful questioning.

The development of mathematics and writing remains a priority for leaders across the school. Leaders have developed staff knowledge through a bespoke programme of professional development. This has allowed them to prioritise subject-specific vocabulary and mathematical concepts within their teaching. This helps pupils to build their skills in these areas effectively. Typically, staff ensure that pupils have understood these concepts before introducing new learning. Leaders continue to develop the school's work in writing to ensure that pupils are ready for the next stage in their development.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure all pupils feel welcome and valued. They prioritise developing supportive relationships with parents, carers and external agencies. This helps leaders to identify and overcome pupils' barriers to learning quickly. The impact of this is that pupils progress

through the curriculum well. Staff are effective in ensuring that pupils' misconceptions are addressed swiftly through adaptations. These include emotional regulation interventions, the use of hearing devices and the use of British Sign Language. This well-structured support integrates pupils seamlessly. Staff work closely with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils in all aspects of their learning. Those who require additional support in the deaf resource base receive appropriate specialist teaching and care. They develop their 'deaf identity' through bespoke intervention and support. All staff involved in this provision receive precise ongoing training from highly trained specialist staff and external services, where appropriate.

Pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and with special educational needs and/or disabilities, speak openly about how staff support them and help remove any barriers to learning. Leaders make informed decisions regarding the use of additional funding such as the pupil premium grant. This includes additional support for families with uniform, extra-curricular activities and wraparound care.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a well-sequenced programme for personal development and wellbeing. As a result of this work, pupils benefit from a high-quality curriculum appropriate to their age and stage of development. Pupils can talk about the importance of being kind and accepting of each other. They learn these skills from a curriculum that has been developed with their context in mind. They can speak confidently about fundamental British values, the importance of democracy and the importance of everybody being welcomed into the school community. Pupils are clear about the importance of healthy relationships. They are knowledgeable about how to report their concerns about bullying and unkind comments.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills beyond the academic curriculum. These opportunities have been thoughtfully scheduled to ensure that all groups of pupils can attend. These opportunities include sporting clubs, musical opportunities and visits to local parks and farms. Leaders use the pupil premium grant to ensure that these are accessible to disadvantaged pupils.

Social times are cheerful and enjoyable for pupils. This is further enhanced by the work that leaders have done to improve the school site. These developments include bee areas, vegetable gardens and a forest area. Pupils comment that they are proud of having helped staff to develop their school.

Leaders have developed an effective structure of pastoral support. They have provided adequate training and capacity for staff in this area. Consequently, staff are aware of the barriers that their pupils face and they assist pupils effectively in overcoming them.

There are various opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of future pathways and careers. This includes opportunities through the curriculum for discussion and research, as well as meaningful employer visits and careers fairs. Subsequently, pupils are well informed about potential opportunities in the local area and for their next stage of education.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning continue to positively impact the knowledge that pupils gain through the curriculum. Across key stage 1, increasing numbers of pupils are securing their knowledge and skills in handwriting, spelling, reading and mathematics.

Leaders prioritise the development of children's speech and language in the early years provision. However, staff do not intervene quickly enough to support children with letter formation. This leaves gaps in this area of their knowledge when moving on to the next key stage.

In the past, pupils have not achieved as well as they should at the end of key stage 2. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. Outcomes in some areas remain below national averages. Consequently, not enough pupils have been academically prepared for their next stage of education. Leaders have implemented staff training to address the consistency of internal assessments. As a result, assessments are now more focused and accurate.

Early years

Needs attention 

Children in the early years benefit from established routines and a friendly environment. Interactions between staff and children are caring and nurturing. However, some areas of the early years curriculum does not consistently allow children to develop and embed their writing skills over time. Some children do not make the progress that they should. Consequently, some are not ready for Year 1, particularly in the area of writing. In response, leaders have established positive links with feeder nurseries to develop and adapt their practice. Leaders need to embed this work more precisely to ensure that it has the desired impact.

Children benefit from positive interactions with staff. Staff introduce new words and encourage children to develop their ideas through a creative and varied curriculum. Children learn through a phonics programme. Leaders must now ensure that this programme aids the transition to the key stage 1 curriculum.

Children appreciate the variety of activities on offer. They develop social skills and confidence in a familiar and welcoming setting. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate interventions and support. For example, staff have implemented the use of British Sign Language and hearing devices. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and other pre-schools to ensure that children are supported when joining the school.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders have a sharp focus on continually listening and adapting to the needs of their community. They have taken clear actions to improve several areas of the school's practice.

For example, they have improved the curriculum, quality of teaching and attendance. Staff speak highly of how improvements and initiatives are well thought out alongside their workload and wellbeing. Teachers in the early stages of their career are well supported. They commend the approachability and transparency of leaders and those responsible for governance.

Leaders have not responded quickly enough to some elements of the school's work that require further development. Consequently, some systems for monitoring and tracking are not precise enough. This means that some areas of their work lack precision.

Governors continue to challenge leaders appropriately on aspects of the school's performance. They also support leaders with staff wellbeing, work with the wider community and achievement. However, historically, their capacity has been limited. Leaders and the local authority have recently taken steps to address this.

Leaders work closely with external agencies and other schools in a culture of mutual challenge. Consequently, they have identified areas for improvement and share effective practice locally.

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

Pupils are proud to attend this welcoming community primary school. They appreciate the respectful, warm and caring relationships that they have with adults. This helps them overcome barriers to learning and feel valued. Pupils are clear about their learning and achievements. The whistle sounds at break time and pupils transition into class in a settled manner. Consequently, classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils are clear about 'what makes Westgate special'. This creates an inclusive environment where pupils respect each other. Pupils in the deaf resource base receive effective support. As a result, they progress well through the well-designed and sequenced curriculum.

The wellbeing and pastoral care of pupils are the cornerstones of this school. Staff know their pupils and their families well. Relationships are friendly and supportive. Pupils are afforded opportunities to contribute to school life through the school council. This helps them feel valued in shaping and building their school community. Pupils enjoy designing new areas of the school's outside space alongside local organisations and school staff. This fosters a sense of pride and belonging among pupils. Pupils' enrichment is prioritised through a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. These experiences are structured to ensure that all pupils can attend. These include a sewing club, the school choir and ballet classes. There is also a British Sign Language club. This supports the school's commitment to embedding inclusion throughout its approach.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards school life. They trust that adults will help them appropriately should they have an issue. Bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively. Playtimes are sociable and happy. Pupils enjoy the well-equipped outside space. The school's ethos of 'be kind in what you do and say' is well embedded among the school community.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that systems for monitoring, tracking and evaluating key aspects of the school's work are more robust and precise, enabling leaders to identify priorities swiftly, target support effectively and accelerate improvement in outcomes for pupils.
 - Leaders should work alongside the local authority to further develop the governing body, ensuring that governance is stable, rigorous and sustainable.
 - Leaders should refine the early years curriculum, particularly in writing, so that children develop the core knowledge to transition well to key stage 1.
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About this inspection

The chair of governors in this school is Gareth Russell.

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 governing body, representatives from the local authority, the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. Inspectors reviewed the findings of the parent, staff and pupil Ofsted online surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The headteacher took up their position in January 2023. Since the last inspection there have also been significant changes to other members of the senior leadership team.

The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with specific special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It is known as the deaf resource base.

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Rhonda Kidd

Lead inspector:

Ross Marks, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Luke Wildig, Ofsted Inspector

Debonair Brown, 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 23 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

292

Close to 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

446

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)

29.45%

Close to 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

4.79%

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

11.30%

Below 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)

HI - Hearing Impairment

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	41%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	39%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	45%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	37%	60%	Below

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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	70%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	73%	Below

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	53%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	54%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	57%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	46%	71%	Below

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	56%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	54%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	61%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	51%	73%	Below

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	26%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	20%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	39%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	11%	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	62%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	53%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	56%	60%	Close to average

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	31%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	27%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	11%	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)	40%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	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	26%	68%	-41 pp
2024/25 (final)	20%	69%	-49 pp
2023/24 (final)	39%	67%	-29 pp
2022/23 (final)	11%	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	62%	80%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	53%	81%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	72%	80%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	56%	78%	-23 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	31%	78%	-47 pp
2024/25 (final)	27%	78%	-52 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	78%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	11%	77%	-66 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%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	44%	79%	-35 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)	6.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.8%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.7%	5.9%	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 (3 term)	17.3%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.8%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	15.8%	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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