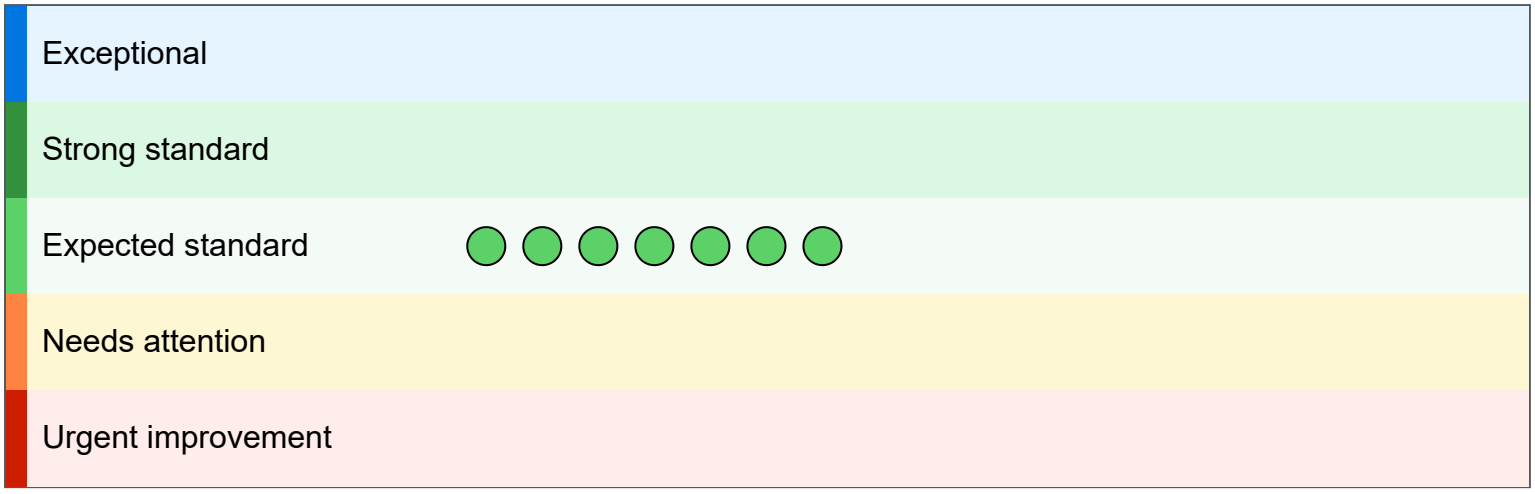
Orford Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Address: Orford, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2LU

Unique reference number (URN): 150252

Inspection report: 15 September 2026



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

In 2025, pupils' achievement in key stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with the national averages. However, this information is not compelling in isolation because cohorts are small. Additionally, in 2023 and 2024, no published outcomes were available because the number of eligible pupils was too low.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face additional barriers to learning typically achieve well from their starting points. They are proud of their work and recall key knowledge securely. For example, pupils speak confidently about the aerodynamics of different objects when investigating air resistance.

Pupils typically learn the core skills they need in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because leaders have ensured that pupils follow a curriculum that helps them build knowledge and skills in a logical sequence. This begins in the early years and supports pupils in developing secure understanding over time.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise attendance and take consistent action to improve it. They monitor attendance frequently and identify patterns that may cause concern. When needed, leaders work with families to provide effective support that helps pupils attend more regularly. Pupils arrive at school on time. Leaders ensure that the start of the school day helps pupils settle calmly before learning begins. They promote the view that attendance is everyone's responsibility. This high-profile and shared approach supports continued improvement.

Behaviour across the school is positive because pupils understand and follow the school's expectations. Pupils, including the youngest children in the Nursery, learn routines quickly. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally positive. Occasionally, some pupils become distracted and need reminders to stay on task. Staff respond with clear and consistent guidance. They have established caring relationships with pupils. Pupils speak confidently about the support they receive when they have concerns. Pupils understand what bullying is and say that incidents are rare. Leaders respond promptly to concerns that are raised. Staff provide supportive interventions when pupils struggle with their behaviour. These actions contribute to a respectful and safe culture that supports pupils' wellbeing and learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality and intent of the curriculum. They review and refine it regularly when needed. This work has strengthened what pupils learn. Learning is sequenced clearly. Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should remember over time. However, leaders now need to ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to teach the curriculum consistently well. For example, leaders are developing staff's use of strategies such as 'I do, we do, you do' to help children become more independent and resilient learners.

Leaders organise staffing carefully despite the challenges of operating a small school. They ensure that staff adapt teaching and make appropriate adjustments to learning when pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), need additional support. Staff also check regularly what pupils know and understand and adjust the curriculum where necessary. These adaptations help pupils access learning successfully and ensure that they develop the intended knowledge and skills.

Reading is a cornerstone of the curriculum. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Staff quickly identify pupils who need help and provide additional support promptly. This helps pupils become fluent readers. Across English and mathematics lessons, pupils revisit important learning regularly. These opportunities strengthen pupils' understanding and build their confidence.

Early years

Expected standard

Staff welcome children and their families to school each day. This gives parents opportunities to share important information. Children arrive on time and quickly settle. They are very keen to get busy! This helps children start the day positively. Leaders have established clear expectations, which staff apply consistently. Children know what staff expect. Staff provide a caring and secure environment. Well-established routines help children to feel safe. As a result, children as young as 2 years old are typically ready to engage in their learning.

Leaders have designed an early years curriculum that covers a wide range of learning. Learning usually builds in a logical sequence. Staff incorporate children's interests to support engagement and participation. Children take part in a variety of activities. However, opportunities in the outdoor area are more limited. As a result, children have fewer opportunities for high-quality interactions and discussion.

Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities appropriately. They adapt learning to meet children's needs. Staff maintain regular contact with parents. This helps families remain involved in their children's learning. Most children achieve well from their starting points. Reading has a high profile. Staff begin teaching phonics as soon as children enter the Reception Year. This helps children develop accuracy and confidence in reading. Children are generally ready for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Pupils feel welcome and valued because leaders ensure that everyone is recognised and supported. Staff understand pupils' needs well and respond with care. Leaders have a clear, strategic overview of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who face additional barriers to learning. They help staff recognise the different barriers that pupils may face. This shared understanding helps teachers provide practical step-by-step support in lessons. As a result, pupils learn alongside their peers successfully.

Classrooms are calm and welcoming places where pupils can focus. Leaders think carefully about the adaptations that make learning manageable. For example, teachers use clear resources and provide step-by-step support so that pupils succeed. Staff make good use of extra adult support when pupils find aspects of learning difficult.

Leaders work closely with parents, carers and external professionals so that support for pupils with SEND is tailored to individual needs. When pupils fall behind, leaders act quickly. Timely support, including additional phonics teaching, helps pupils catch up and gain confidence.

Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils carefully. Disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care receive effective support and equal access to wider opportunities.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's work. They use this knowledge to set priorities that reflect the needs of pupils, including those who face barriers to learning or their wellbeing. Staff feel well informed and confident about what is expected of them. They describe leaders as supportive and approachable. The professional culture reinforces the shared belief that all pupils can achieve well when routines and systems are applied consistently.

Governance is effective because those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties. They review key aspects of the school's work regularly. Governors check areas such as safeguarding, attendance, achievement, finance and the curriculum. They use this information to support and challenge leaders throughout the year effectively. Governors and the trust promote equality by ensuring that policies support an inclusive vision and ethos for the school.

Leaders support staff wellbeing through regular systems and procedures. This enables staff to raise any concerns easily. Leaders, including in the trust, follow up concerns with purposeful action that helps maintain a positive morale. Governors review staff wellbeing through surveys and regular discussions with staff. They act on findings and help staff feel valued and listened to.

Leaders ensure that staff access regular training. This includes external support and coaching when needed. As a result, staff develop their skills and confidence over time. Leaders work positively with parents, carers and the local community. They do this by sharing regular updates and creating opportunities for families to be involved in school life. For example, weekly celebration assemblies are accessible to parents. These provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' weekly achievements.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders place a high priority on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. They ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to teach the programme effectively. Leaders have established a carefully planned programme that is reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets pupils' needs. Through the school's personal, social and health education curriculum pupils learn about safe relationships, personal safety and healthy lifestyles. Pupils gain age-appropriate knowledge about online and offline risks. This helps them make informed decisions about keeping themselves safe.

The curriculum and wider school culture promote respect, inclusion and tolerance. Pupils learn about diversity, protected characteristics and fundamental British values. The school's values of self-belief, equality, resilience and aspiration are reflected in lessons, assemblies and whole-school events. As a result, pupils develop a secure understanding of these important concepts. They are prepared to contribute positively to modern British society.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities that enrich pupils' experiences and support their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils take part in clubs, outdoor learning, music performances, cooking activities and community events. They benefit from visits, visitors and partnerships that develop their knowledge. This helps them discover new interests and talents. Leaders monitor participation carefully and remove barriers so that disadvantaged pupils and other vulnerable groups can access the full range of opportunities. Pupils speak enthusiastically about these experiences. They recall how they have helped others, for example by raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Pastoral support is provided skilfully. All staff play an active role in supporting pupils' wellbeing. Staff identify concerns quickly and provide timely support that is generally well matched to pupils' needs. Additional support is available for vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

Pupils are recognised as unique individuals here. They enjoy being part of this caring school community. They benefit from leaders' ambition for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face additional barriers to learning, to flourish and develop into caring, compassionate and confident young people. The school's vision, 'sowing faith, growing learners, inspiring futures', supports leaders' approach to education.

Pupils learn in a calm environment. Positive relationships help them feel safe and supported. Staff know pupils well. They establish trusting relationships and identify additional needs quickly. Support is then tailored carefully. This helps pupils to access learning across the curriculum successfully.

Pupils achieve well from their various starting points. Achievement in national assessments is broadly in line with the national averages. Children learn essential knowledge. For example, they read confidently through the consistent use of the school's phonics programme. Staff identify gaps in learning and provide timely support. This helps pupils move through the curriculum with increasing confidence.

Pupils receive a broad range of experiences beyond the classroom. They take part in outdoor learning, cook meals for the Aldeburgh Food Festival in the school's teaching kitchen, attend musical performances at Snape Maltings concert hall and participate in clubs and residential visits. These experiences help pupils develop resilience and confidence. Pupils also learn about relationships, diversity, fundamental British values and how to stay safe, including online and when visiting the coast.

Pupils follow the school routines and expectations. They usually approach learning positively. During social times, pupils enjoy playing safely on the Orford Castle-themed play equipment. Staff address behaviour concerns promptly. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils say that they feel safe and know that staff will help them if they are worried. Attendance is close to the national figures. Leaders work closely with families to remove barriers and encourage frequent attendance.

Next steps

- Leaders should enhance continuous provision in the early years by developing the outdoor learning environment and ensuring that staff use purposeful interactions to extend and deepen children's learning.
- Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to teach the curriculum consistently well, including through effective modelling strategies that help pupils become more independent and resilient learners.

About this inspection

This school is part of The Tilian Partnership trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Andrew Berry, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Yapp.

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 school leaders including the headteacher, pupils and parents. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, including the CEO, and governors during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Matthew Head

Lead inspector:
Benjamin Axon, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Julie Winyard, 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 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

34
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: 268

School capacity

105
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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

32.35%
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: 26.5%

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

5.88%
Above 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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.76%
Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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

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		61%	
2024/25 (final)	56%	62%	Close to average
2023/24		61%	
2022/23		60%	

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		74%	
2024/25 (final)	78%	75%	Close to average
2023/24		74%	
2022/23		73%	

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%	
2024/25 (final)	56%	72%	Below
2023/24		72%	
2022/23		71%	

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		73%	
2024/25 (final)	67%	74%	Below
2023/24		73%	
2022/23		73%	

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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24		46%	
2022/23		44%	

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%	
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24		62%	
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24		58%	
2022/23		58%	

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		60%	
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24		59%	
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24		67%	
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		80%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		78%	

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		78%	
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24		78%	
2022/23		77%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		79%	
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.4%	5.5%	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)	11.4%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.9%	14.6%	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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