

Felix House School

Address: Felix House, 201 Nidderdale, Kingston-upon-Hull, East Yorkshire, HU7 4BS

Unique reference number (URN): 151200

Inspection report: 24 February 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils join the school with significant gaps in their knowledge, often because of time out of education. The impact of the school's curriculum is multifaceted. In particular, the school supports pupils to manage their social, emotional and mental health needs effectively. This helps to prepare them more fully for their next phase in education, employment or training. Gaps in pupils' basic skills, such as reading, are addressed effectively. This helps pupils to access future learning with increased success and confidence. Over time, they learn to apply knowledge and skills, such as those learned in mathematics or art, in a new context and their work develops in complexity.

Pupils complete qualifications, including functional skills and vocational qualifications and GCSEs, as appropriate to their curriculum pathway. Pupils make secure progress through the curriculum from their starting points. They are appropriately prepared for their next steps.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

The school supports pupils to quickly improve their attendance, often markedly, from previously low levels. Effective communication with pupils' previous settings ensures that barriers to regular attendance are identified early and addressed. Where pupils have ongoing considerations, such as medical needs, the school works well with parents and carers and other professionals to support them. Pupils' improved attendance is a reflection of their enjoyment of school.

There is a consistent and well-understood approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils' positive and professional relationships with staff and friendships with peers are significant factors in their changed outlook and attitudes to school. Staff know pupils well and have their best interests at heart. They recognise when individual pupils may require additional support to manage their behaviour and provide this skilfully and effectively. Incidents of serious misbehaviour or bullying are relatively uncommon and are declining. When these do happen, the school addresses them appropriately, including making consideration for pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities and any future support that might be required. Leaders and staff continue to help pupils to develop their resilience to setbacks and their ability to regulate their own behaviours independently.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious, meeting the requirements of the independent school standards. Each pupil studies a personalised pathway tailored to their aspirations and reflecting the requirements of their education, health and care plans. Academic study is combined with therapeutic support and enrichment to ensure that pupils receive the provision that they need.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They use effective teaching strategies and know how to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers rightly focus on ensuring pupils develop their knowledge

in reading, writing and mathematics. They ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are addressed effectively so that these do not impede future learning. In some subjects, however, the intended knowledge that the school expects pupils to learn is not defined precisely enough. Where this is the case, learning activities sometimes lack focus on the most important knowledge or concepts and do not support pupils' learning as well as they could.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of the school's curriculum. When needed, they act swiftly to make changes that strengthen the school's offer and pupils' learning. This includes providing further training to staff, such as in relation to the school's phonics scheme or around the school's approach to supporting pupils social, emotional and mental health needs.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Pupils join the school at various stages, often following gaps in their education. The school works with families and other professionals to quickly establish what support pupils will require. It supplements this through assessments, such as those to identify gaps in pupils' reading knowledge, so that targeted support can be put in place. Leaders are currently strengthening procedures to establish swifter support for pupils' academic gaps more widely. Staff are trained to understand pupils' needs and how to use the school systems to secure additional support for pupils when needed. Where appropriate, the school works with external agencies, including speech and language therapists, to complement pupils' bespoke curriculums and overcome barriers to learning. Leaders monitor any additional support provided, ensuring that it has a typically positive impact on pupils' education and wellbeing. The school's work is particularly effective in supporting pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school uses alternative provision sparingly but effectively. In these limited instances, it is used to enhance the experience and outcomes of pupils, providing them with access to facilities and qualifications that the school could not otherwise offer.

Leaders work effectively alongside external agencies, such as the virtual school, to provide high-quality support for children in care. The school uses funding carefully to support and improve the outcomes of these pupils, such as through accessing additional interventions or therapeutic services.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have continually developed the school since it opened as they accurately identify the strengths and areas to further improve. As the number of pupils who attend has increased, the school has recruited and trained its expanding staff team. All staff, including early career teachers, benefit from an induction programme and ongoing professional learning suited to their role and experience. This ensures that they have a shared understanding of the school's vision as well as its policies and procedures. School leaders and the proprietor take steps to ensure that staff workload is sustainable and that their wellbeing is prioritised. As a result, staff feel well supported.

The proprietor has established structures to maintain oversight of the school and its performance. Members of the proprietor body and the school's advisory board are experienced and suitably qualified for their roles. They work effectively with the company's compliance team to ensure that the school meets the independent school standards consistently and that pupils receive a high-quality education. Where issues are identified, these are tackled quickly and effectively.

Some approaches to analysing the impact of the school's work, such as for behaviour or assessment information, are not as refined as they could be. Current systems are appropriate but do not support leaders' strategic decision-making or the ability of the proprietor to support and challenge school leaders as effectively as it could.

Leaders have quickly forged positive relationships with other stakeholders and professionals, including parents and carers, local authorities and virtual schools. These strengthen the school's work, enabling it to work effectively in partnership for the benefit of pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils experience a range of opportunities that enrich their curriculum and strengthen their cultural awareness. Visits to places of local, religious or historical significance enhance pupils' understanding of the world around them, while swimming lessons enhance their life skills, safety and independence. Pupils develop their talents, such as through music tuition or their personal interest projects. These experiences combine to strengthen pupils' preparation for future learning and adulthood.

The school provides pupils with appropriate personal, social and health education and relationships, health and sex education. It adapts the content of these curriculums to fill gaps in pupils' previous learning as well as to reflect any needs that pupils have. Leaders have rightly prioritised those areas of the curriculum of greatest importance to pupils. For example, emphasis is given to teaching pupils how to keep safe in the community and online, how to manage their own health and hygiene needs and ensuring that they understand about consent. This learning is regularly reinforced, such as through the school's daily oral health sessions.

Pupils develop an understanding of difference in the world. They recognise and respect the right of others to be different. For example, pupils display respect for other people's special educational needs and/or disabilities or beliefs. Sometimes, this knowledge is not as detailed as it might be. At times, it relies on broader concepts, such as fairness and equality, rather than a detailed understanding, such as of the fundamental British values or other religions.

Pupils' future aspirations are considered and integrated into their personalised curriculums and qualifications. However, other areas of the school's careers offer are still becoming embedded. Pupils have accessed independent careers advice, and the school provide opportunities to meet with employers or to visit local colleges. Despite this, leaders recognise the need to strengthen the programme further so that it is more cohesive and

pupils develop a detailed awareness of opportunities available to them and how to achieve these.

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

Pupils join Felix House School at different stages in their education. The number of pupils has increased gradually since the school opened in November 2024. Pupils, alongside staff, have quickly formed a friendly and welcoming community. Despite many pupils previously experiencing a fragmented education and having held negative views of school, they enjoy their time here and achieve well. Pupils benefit from the care and support of staff, which helps them to succeed. Pupils rise to the school's high expectations which typically leads to improved outcomes for pupils, both academically and in their personal development. Pupils are well supported to make a positive contribution to their community.

Pupils learn to build positive relationships with their peers and with staff. Staff provide them with patient and effective guidance. They help pupils to learn from times when they do not reach the school's expectations for behaviour. As a result, pupils are generally respectful and considerate of the needs of others. They feel secure in school and confident to be themselves. This contributes to their improved rates of attendance. Bullying and other prejudicial acts are not tolerated and dealt with effectively.

The school provides pupils with a highly personalised education. Leaders build pupils' programmes around the requirements of their education, health and care plan, as well as their interests and aspirations. This helps to reduce any barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. The school has prioritised enriching each pupil's curriculum using educational visits and opportunities for learning in the community. These strengthen pupils' understanding, independence and their enjoyment of learning. These opportunities also help pupils to see a clear purpose in the work that they are doing and a connection with their future ambitions. As appropriate, pupils benefit from therapeutic support that helps them, such as in understanding how to manage their own mental health needs.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum more precisely identifies the most important knowledge across all subjects so that teachers are able to make highly effective choices about what to teach and to strengthen the assessment of what pupils have learned.
- Leaders should ensure that the school's careers provision is strengthened, providing pupils with a cohesive programme so that they develop a detailed understanding of available opportunities and how to achieve their ambitions.
- Leaders should refine the teaching of the fundamental British values and other religions to ensure that pupils develop a more detailed understanding.

- Leaders and the proprietor should ensure that all systems for evaluating the school's work, such those to analyse behaviour data or compliance with the independent school standards, provide detailed insights that support the school's ongoing improvement work.
-

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 headteacher and other senior leaders from the school. The lead inspector spoke with the members of the proprietor body. Inspectors discussed the school's work with representatives of local authorities, who commission places at the school and the virtual school. During the inspection, inspectors visited lessons across a range of subjects and year groups. They spoke with pupils and reviewed samples of their work. Inspectors also spoke with other members of the school's teaching and non-teaching staff.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

All pupils who attend this school have an education, health and care plan. Their places are commissioned by one of 4 local authorities. The school primarily provides education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

This is the school's first standard inspection since it was registered by the Department for Education on 19 November 2024.

The chair of the proprietor body is Mr Peter Stillings.

The fees currently charged are £75,000.

The school's email address is: office@felixhouse.school.

Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Smithson

Independent school standards

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

1. Quality of education provided

Standards met

All standards have been met.

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

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

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 met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:

Thomas Wraith, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Suzette Garland-Grimes, 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 24 February 2026

Total pupils

13

School capacity

15

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

13

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0

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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright