

Fordbridge Community Primary School

Address: Crabtree Drive, B37 5BU

Unique reference number (URN): 149492

Inspection report: 6 January 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.

Strong standard ●

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum that reflects its high expectations for all pupils. Subjects are well designed and sequenced so that pupils build knowledge step by step. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school's curriculum and teaching. There is a sharp focus on pupils' securing the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and on developing their vocabulary and speaking and listening skills. Pupils use and apply these skills very well to their written work. Across all subjects, staff focus on the key knowledge, skills and subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. Pupils produce high-quality work across the curriculum and build their knowledge and skills progressively over time. For example, in art and design, pupils study a range of artists and develop practical skills over time. In history, pupils make links to their prior learning and show a strong understanding of chronology over time.

Leaders ensure that teachers have strong subject knowledge and know their subjects well. They deliver consistently high-quality lessons that engage pupils and deepen their understanding. If any pupil falls behind, they are given the support they need to catch up quickly.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Pupils learn phonics from the start in Reception, and most secure the skills they need to read confidently. Leaders adapt teaching expertly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The school creates a highly inclusive culture where every pupil feels valued and well supported. Staff swiftly identify pupils' needs and take highly effective action to remove any barriers to learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality, tailored support that helps them to access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff receive relevant and useful training. This ensures they use clear and consistent strategies and make helpful adaptations so that pupils can take part fully in lessons and wider enrichment opportunities. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to provide the right help at the right time.

Leaders have a sharp focus on identifying and supporting disadvantaged pupils, young carers, those who are known, or previously known, to social care and those who face other barriers to their learning. Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively, and they meticulously track how well these pupils are achieving and thriving in all aspects of school life. Leaders track interventions closely and use data to target help where it matters most. They use this information well to ensure that all pupils receive the high-quality pastoral care and academic support that they need to flourish. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well and benefit highly from the extensive wider personal development offer.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leadership is ambitious and strategic. Leaders have an astute understanding of the school's strengths and a relentless drive for ongoing improvements. They have identified clearly where any minor improvements are needed and have a robust plan of action to raise attendance, provide targeted staff training, and ensure that pupils have the support and challenge they need to reach the highest outcomes. Leaders have set a clear vision and focus persistently on improving the experiences and outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Leaders analyse information meticulously to monitor provision and adapt strategies quickly when needed. They have created a culture of collaboration and high expectations, underpinned by a strong moral purpose to always act in the best interests of pupils.

Staff value the professional development on offer. This is a clear strength of the school's work, and the effective coaching and mentoring programme benefits all staff, including those in the early stages of their careers. This leads to highly consistent practice across the school. Staff report high consideration for their workload and wellbeing.

Governance provides strong challenge and support. Trustees and the local academy board hold leaders to account through clear systems and insightful analysis of performance. Trustees use data effectively to celebrate success and ask further questions that drive improvement.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school offers an extensive personal development programme that helps pupils grow in confidence and character. Leaders are determined for every pupil to thrive, and this ambition is clear in the opportunities provided. Pupils can choose from a vast number of clubs and enjoy many hours of enrichment beyond lessons. These activities include sports, arts, educational visits and creative projects that build teamwork and resilience.

Careers education is a real strength. Through the careers programme, pupils experience a variety of 'career tasters' before leaving school. They meet employers and learn about different jobs. This raises aspirations and helps them plan for their future. Pupils also benefit from undertaking a wide range of pupil leader roles. This helps them to develop their leadership skills and contribute their ideas.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum. Pupils learn to respect others' beliefs and values, understand right and wrong and take part in community activities. Relationships, sex and health education is taught effectively. Pupils know how to stay safe online and offline. Leaders respond to local risks and involve parents and carers in this work.

The school actively promotes the fundamental British values through daily routines, assemblies and curriculum activities. Pupils learn about democracy, respect and tolerance and live out these values in their highly positive behaviour towards one another. They celebrate cultural diversity by exploring different traditions and perspectives. This fosters inclusion and understanding. Pupils' highly positive attitudes towards each other

demonstrate how deeply they live out these values and create a respectful and harmonious school community.

Inclusion is central to the school's approach. Leaders meticulously track the engagement and impact of its personal development programme to ensure that all pupils benefit highly. They adapt provision when needed to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit highly.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well at this school. The school prioritises building strong foundations. For example, pupils develop secure phonics knowledge. They quickly grasp effective letter formation and handwriting skills, which helps them to write with accuracy and fluency. Pupils' work is of a high quality and they build their knowledge and skills across the curriculum over time. Leaders' work on improving oracy has helped pupils to articulate and write with greater confidence, fluency and accuracy.

In national tests, pupils typically achieve close to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the most recent outcomes show above average attainment in some areas, this is not sustained over time across all subjects. Leaders have also rightly identified that pupils' attainment, at the higher standard in published outcomes at key stage 2 in mathematics, is an area of focus, and actions taken by the school to address this are having a positive impact. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because barriers to learning are removed effectively. This means that pupils at all stages are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' work to improve attendance is having a positive impact. Overall attendance is improving. However, there is still further work to be done to ensure that all pupils attend well. Leaders analyse attendance data carefully and use this to plan specific, targeted pastoral support for pupils and to increase family engagement. These actions are starting to make a difference, but improvements are not yet consistent for all pupils.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is highly positive. They are consistently respectful towards staff and each other, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere. Classrooms are calm and purposeful, enabling uninterrupted learning and fostering high levels of engagement. Lunchtimes are harmonious, and pupils demonstrate strong self-control and take pride in meeting the school's clear expectations. Pupils have highly positive attitudes towards their learning and take great pride in the work that they produce. Staff apply behaviour policies with consistency and fairness, which pupils value and understand. Relationships between pupils are positive, and they show kindness and consideration in

their interactions. Bullying is extremely rare, and pupils are confident that any concerns would be addressed swiftly and effectively.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years make a positive start to their education. Provision for the 2- and 3-year-olds is effective and ensures that children receive the support and care they need. Children's personal, social and emotional development is prioritised and pupils learn to interact well with each other. Across the early years provision and in partnership with parents and carers, staff create a safe and welcoming environment where children settle quickly and are ready to learn.

The curriculum is carefully designed to provide children with the foundations they need to be ready for their next stages in learning. There is a strong focus on children's language and communication development. In most cases, high-quality interactions between staff and children maximise language learning. However, this is not always consistent. Leaders have effective systems in place through coaching to support staff to develop the skills needed to ensure that every learning opportunity is maximised.

Staff prioritise reading and teach phonics well. Songs, rhymes and interactive storytelling are in abundance. This instils a love of reading from an early age. Children access a range of activities that encourage curiosity and develop their social and emotional development. Children quickly learn the routines of the day and this creates a calm and purposeful learning environment.

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

Pupils at Fordbridge experience a calm, nurturing environment where they feel safe, valued and well supported. From the moment they arrive they are greeted with a smile, and the popular breakfast club and 'ready to learn' sessions help pupils to settle and prepare for the day.

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their learning. They describe school as a safe space and know who to turn to if worried. Bullying happens rarely, and the school stops it quickly and effectively. Pupils understand the importance of kindness and respect and demonstrate this through their highly positive behaviour in lessons and at social times. They try hard with their learning and always strive to do their best. Pupils' attendance is improving, supported by proactive strategies, though it remains a priority for further improvement.

Learning is engaging and inclusive. The curriculum is broad and ambitious, with a strong focus on reading, oracy and vocabulary development. Teachers set high expectations and adapt lessons so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged backgrounds, access learning successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils typically achieve well. This is reflected in the most recent published outcomes where the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics is above national average. Pupils take pride in their work, respond positively to feedback and strive to improve further.

Beyond the classroom, pupils thrive through a rich personal development offer. They benefit highly from an aspirational careers programme that broadens their awareness of future opportunities. They enjoy a wide range of clubs, residential trips and leadership roles. This helps them to develop their talents and interests, try something new and learn to take responsibility. Pupils receive highly effective wellbeing support, such as counselling and mentoring. This ensures that pupils are well cared for and ready to learn.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to strengthen their work to support pupils' learning so that their achievement is consistently reflected in the school's published outcomes over time.
 - Leaders should sharpen their analysis of attendance patterns and act swiftly to secure strong attendance for all groups, including the most vulnerable.
 - Leaders should continue to ensure that all staff in the early years maximise opportunities to develop children's language learning.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of the Prosper Together Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Selina Timmins, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Maurice Malone.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school also, under the same registration, runs a nursery including provision for 2- and 3-year olds.

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mrs Harriett Simcox

Lead inspector:

Catherine Young, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Martin Spoor, Ofsted Inspector

Pete Hines OBE, Ofsted Inspector

Gary Richards, 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 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

522

Well 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

600

Well 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)

62.58%

Well 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

3.64%

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

21.84%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above 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	74%	62%	Above
2023/24	69%	61%	Above
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	84%	75%	Above
2023/24	83%	74%	Above
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	78%	72%	Close to average
2023/24	79%	72%	Close to average
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	81%	74%	Close to average
2023/24	79%	73%	Close to average
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	65%	47%	Above
2023/24	62%	46%	Above
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	78%	63%	Above
2023/24	81%	62%	Above
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	70%	59%	Close to average
2023/24	74%	58%	Above
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	73%	61%	Above
2023/24	74%	59%	Above
2022/23		59%	

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	65%	69%	-4 pp
2023/24	62%	67%	-6 pp
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	78%	81%	-2 pp
2023/24	81%	80%	1 pp
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	70%	78%	-8 pp
2023/24	74%	78%	-3 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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	73%	81%	-8 pp
2023/24	74%	79%	-5 pp
2022/23		79%	

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 (2 terms)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24	6.5%	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 (2 terms)	15.1%	13.3%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	18.8%	14.6%	Above

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.

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