

Gaywood Primary School

Address: Field Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4AY

Unique reference number (URN): 144532

Inspection report: 27 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils progress appropriately through the curriculum from the early years to Year 6. Their work shows a development in their knowledge and skills across subjects and year groups. Older pupils demonstrate their depth of understanding when talking about their learning. For example, they confidently describe and compare the periods in history they have studied.

Published outcomes demonstrate that pupils achieve well, particularly at the expected levels of achievement. On the rare occasions when achievement falls below expectation, such as the multiplication tables check in 2025, leaders take effective action. Leaders now recognise the need to support pupils to achieve even more highly and to help a greater number of pupils reach the higher standards of which they are capable.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those eligible for pupil premium, access the full curriculum and receive effective, targeted support. This helps them to secure the basic knowledge they need to succeed. Pupils are suitably prepared for their next steps in education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders know the importance of pupils attending school regularly. They monitor and check closely how well pupils attend. Most pupils attend school well. Staff take a 'support first' approach to help families when attendance falls below expectations. They build strong relationships with parents and carers and seek to remove barriers to pupils attending school. This is starting to have an impact, with recent improvements. However, there is more work to do to support some pupils to attend more regularly, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

The school has a clear and consistent approach to managing behaviour. This is based on the school values and is well understood by staff and pupils. For example, respect is one of the school's core values. This is taught explicitly in class and as part of the assembly programme. This leads to a shared understanding and clear expectations across the school. On occasions where behaviour does not meet expectations, pupils are supported to reflect and learn. Pupils talk through challenges, and staff support them to find solutions. This approach works well. Overall, behaviour around the school is calm and orderly. Learning proceeds without disruption in the different classes.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school has a carefully sequenced and planned curriculum which starts in the early years and is built on year-on-year. This identifies the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils are intended to learn across the different subjects. Leaders recognise the importance of supporting teachers in knowing what to teach and when to teach it.

The curriculum places a high priority on pupils gaining key foundations in learning. For example, early reading and writing are clear priorities. Pupils read books matched to the

sounds they know and successfully use strategies to read and spell unfamiliar words. The phonics programme is systematic and consistent. Daily handwriting practice also supports pupils to develop strong habits in their letter formation and in the way they present their work.

Teaching across the curriculum is generally very effective. Teachers explain learning tasks clearly and break them down into smaller steps. This supports pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to access tasks successfully. Teachers skilfully question pupils and check their understanding in lessons. On occasion, however, opportunities for pupils to be further challenged and to think more deeply are missed. Sometimes, pupils could be moved on to more complex tasks more quickly in lessons.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years benefit from a warm, friendly environment that helps them feel safe and ready to learn. Staff work closely with parents and carers and get to know the children well. They provide support tailored to children's needs, including those with additional barriers such as special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.

The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that children progress well across all areas of learning. There is a strong focus on developing communication and language. Teachers model subject-specific vocabulary effectively during focused teaching, helping children to develop their language skills. Children have many opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning in the well-designed learning environment. During this time, adults interact with children meaningfully, and most interactions are of sufficient quality to support children to further develop their learning.

Reading is a clear priority. Phonics teaching is systematic, sequenced and typically effective. This ensures that children secure early reading and writing skills. Equally, children engage in early counting songs and hands-on activities to help them gain strong early number knowledge.

Overall, children in early years make a positive start to their schooling and are well prepared for Year 1 and beyond.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders know their disadvantaged pupils well and make them a priority. They have a clear vision for all pupils to access their ambitious curriculum successfully. This vision is typically realised.

Across the school, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately by staff. Leaders responsible for SEND provision are knowledgeable. They ensure that staff access the training they need to put the right adaptations in place in the classroom. Regular checks on pupils' learning successfully inform adjustments and next steps. Effective liaison with external agencies provides the school with the additional advice it needs to act in the best interests of each pupil.

The school's plan for their pupil premium funding is firmly in place. The targeted provision is particularly effective in supporting disadvantaged pupils to feel safe and secure in school. It also supports disadvantaged pupils to access the wider enrichment opportunities available to them. The school continues to develop how this funding can further support its disadvantaged pupils to achieve still more highly across the curriculum.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

School and trust leaders know their school well when considering the quality of teaching, learning and achievement. They know where the school is strong and what they need to focus on next. They have rightly prioritised supporting new staff in developing their practice. This has helped new teachers to quickly understand how the school operates.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable and passionate about the school. They are proud of the pupils' achievements. They know the school well and provide appropriate expertise and challenge to ensure the school continues to improve.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the caring and nurturing approach of staff and feel they can approach the school with concerns and be listened to.

Teachers appreciate the professional learning provided by the school and trust, and how this helps them to develop in their roles. They value the close-knit networks between staff across different trust schools, as well as the focused training they receive within school. Staff generally feel well supported and listened to by leaders. They recognise the steps taken to reduce workload, such as the systems for checking pupil progress and planning lessons.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils benefit from a rich and varied personal development programme that prepares them well for life in modern Britain. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is well planned and sequenced. It ensures that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they will need for their futures. Pupils learn about consent, different types of families and healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils talk confidently about how to act safely and protect themselves when using modern technology.

The school's assembly programme is well thought out and supplements the curriculum offer. It focuses on the things that leaders have identified their pupils need most. For example, a strong focus on diversity means pupils learn to respect a wide range of different cultures and beliefs. They recognise and value differences within their school and the wider world. Pupils are also taught how to keep safe in their community. For example, there is a specific focus on water safety because of the school's location near the river.

Leaders plan curriculum enhancements and trips that build up pupils' wider experiences. These include visits to museums, farms and residential trips which align with the school curriculum. Pupils enjoy a range of leadership roles, such as the school and eco council, which give them an active voice in school life. School leaders have plans to further develop these leadership roles and responsibilities. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of after-school

activities, including choir and sports. Leaders track how well different groups of pupils engage with these additional experiences. However, current systems do not ensure that as many disadvantaged pupils benefit from the full range of opportunities as they could.

The school provides strong pastoral support for pupils. Staff know the pupils well and act quickly to support those who require extra help with their wellbeing.

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

There are warm, kind and caring relationships between staff and pupils at Gaywood Primary School. Pupils are greeted warmly each morning as they arrive for school. They start the day positively, eager to learn.

Pupils thrive on the exciting learning opportunities available to them. They talk confidently about their favourite subjects and the engaging learning they do both in and outside the classroom. Pupils follow a well-planned curriculum and achieve well. They typically acquire the skills and knowledge they need to be ready for the next stage of their education.

The school has high expectations for behaviour, and pupils typically rise to meet these. Staff step in swiftly to provide support or guidance to any pupil who needs it. Playtimes are happy and harmonious occasions when pupils interact respectfully and show care for one another. Bullying is rare, and relationships throughout the school are positive.

Pupils and their families are readily supported by the school's well-trained pastoral team. The school works closely with families to identify barriers to pupils' readiness to learn and to attending school. Most pupils attend well. Leaders continue to focus strongly on raising attendance for some of the school's disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. The school recognises the need to broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils visit places of cultural significance, such as the Tower of London and the Houses of Parliament. Aspirations are raised through the school's work to share different career paths and professions as part of its 'dreams and goals' programme. Pupils take part eagerly in public speaking events to develop their confidence and oracy skills. This means pupils are well equipped for their futures and life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should work to embed and further strengthen the school's agreed approaches to improve attendance, so attendance continues to improve, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and aligns more closely with national expectations.
 - Leaders should continue to support staff to deepen pupils' thinking and build on their strong foundations in learning, giving pupils further opportunity to reach the higher standards of achievement by the time they move on to secondary school.
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About this inspection

This school is part of West Norfolk Academies 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 Johnson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Livesey.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders during the inspection. They also spoke with representatives from the local governing body, the chair of trustees, other leaders within the trust and the CEO from the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Neil Mindham

Lead inspector:

Jonny Wallace, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Duncan Ramsey, Ofsted Inspector

Imran Khan, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

380

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

420

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)

18.42%

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

1.58%

Below 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

18.42%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs 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	68%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	69%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	62%	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	75%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	72%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	66%	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	81%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	79%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	81%	71%	Above

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	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	78%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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	36%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	10%	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	53%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	57%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30%	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	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average

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	61%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	57%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

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	36%	68%	-32 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	42%	67%	-26 pp
2022/23 (final)	10%	66%	-56 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	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	78%	-48 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	53%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	78%	-19 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 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	61%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	79%	-4 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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 (2 term)	5.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	5.8%	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 (2 term)	15.6%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	16.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.6%	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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