

Furzeham Primary School

Address: Higher Furzeham Road, Brixham, Devon, TQ5 8BL

Unique reference number (URN): 149412

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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils enjoy school immensely and, as a result, attendance has improved significantly over time. Leaders are tenacious in their efforts to improve attendance for all pupils. They focus on ensuring that pupils and families understand the connection between regular attendance and future achievement. Leaders remain vigilant in sustaining this improvement and work closely with families to ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend fully and benefit from the education provided.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are kind, thoughtful and respectful of the needs and views of others. In lessons, they engage very well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. These attitudes enable them to achieve well and contribute to the calm, purposeful atmosphere across the school.

Staff implement the school's behaviour policy with consistency and fidelity. Transition times between lessons are calm, reflecting pupils' clear understanding of expectations. Pupils know what constitutes bullying, and although incidents are very rare, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Pupils forge warm, meaningful friendships and greatly value the care and support provided by staff. These relationships contribute to their sense of belonging and wellbeing in school.

Early years

Strong standard ●

The early years curriculum is highly effective. Through a carefully crafted programme, children thrive and develop a firm foundation for future learning. The high expectations for language development enable children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children, to access the curriculum with success. Staff skilfully support children's acquisition of vocabulary and grammar through rich conversations and sharing exciting texts. Children are encouraged to speak in full sentences. They learn to communicate their ideas and feelings about the world around them with confidence and flair. They are very well prepared for learning in key stage 1.

Children are introduced to early reading and phonics when they start. They learn to read very well and are enthused by the texts that staff read to them. Children learn about mathematics through a breadth of purposeful activities. Through play, children develop their imagination, supported to enact their interpretations of the world around them.

Children flourish in their personal, social and emotional development. Through the well-structured curriculum, they learn to build friendships and develop kindness, respect and thoughtfulness towards one another. Children learn the routines of school very well and move calmly between activities. Parents are welcomed as partners in the school's work.

The school's work to develop pupils' character is highly effective. Through the curriculum, pupils become members of a caring and inclusive community. The school prepares them to be compassionate citizens of the future. Pupils deepen their understanding of democracy through elections to the student council. They benefit from a wide range of leadership opportunities, which enable them to contribute meaningfully to the development of the school. Through well-planned opportunities across the curriculum, pupils develop a deep understanding of the rule of law, freedom of speech and respect for different beliefs. This prepares them very well to contribute positively as law-abiding citizens in modern Britain.

Through the skilfully planned curriculum, pupils learn about both Brixham and the wider world. They are inspired by the significant role Brixham has played in national history, which strengthens their sense of identity and belonging. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, relish the many trips and visits that broaden their cultural and social knowledge of the world around them. For example, they take immense pride in singing at national events, which enhances their confidence and deepens their cultural awareness.

Pupils' physical health is prioritised. They love learning to swim and participate in team sports within the school grounds. They develop a very informed understanding of how to stay safe online. The personal, social and health education curriculum enriches pupils' emotional and social development very well. For example, they develop an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. This supports their personal development and equips them to make positive choices.

Pupils take on meaningful leadership roles. As play leaders, they nurture the social and emotional development of younger pupils, while digital leaders support their peers in using technology to strengthen their learning.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils make secure progress from their starting points. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well, which is reflected in published outcomes for reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils acquire the key knowledge they need to access the next stage of their education with confidence. They are relentless in their determination to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), thrive in their learning and succeed.

Overall, pupils benefit from a well-designed curriculum that enables them to revisit prior knowledge so that they can learn new concepts with confidence. This structured approach helps them to deepen their understanding and be successful in many subjects. This enables most pupils to strengthen their early knowledge in reading and mathematics. Pupils in key stage 1 excel in their early reading development. This prepares them very well for learning other subjects in the curriculum. However, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and

pupils with SEND, do not write well. Some pupils struggle to use punctuation and grammar accurately. This impedes their ability to write fluently and extensively.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. It enables pupils to build incrementally on their prior knowledge. Pupils review what they know before moving on to more complex concepts. This helps them to secure and deepen their understanding. They thoroughly enjoy the subjects they study. In lessons, pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive effective support that enables them to engage confidently with new learning in most areas and achieve well. However, staff do not consistently use information about gaps in pupils' writing skills to adapt the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not write accurately about the subjects they study.

Reading is prioritised across the curriculum. Pupils read regularly for pleasure and develop a love of books. They learn to read with great success, which enables them to access the wider curriculum confidently. High-quality texts underpin learning in all subject areas, enriching pupils' knowledge and vocabulary.

Leaders routinely monitor the quality of the curriculum and teaching to secure improvement. They prioritise the professional learning of staff. Consequently, staff have a deep understanding of the subjects they teach. They deliver these subjects clearly and engagingly to ensure that pupils learn well in most areas.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders are thorough and vigilant in identifying and addressing pupils' needs. The school places great importance on creating a fully inclusive culture in which pupils are welcomed, nurtured and cared for. Pastoral support is very effective, ensuring that pupils feel safe and well supported. Pupils value the care and protection provided by staff, which underpins their confidence, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Leaders work closely with staff to ensure the curriculum is adapted appropriately. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their learning in depth, which helps them to secure their understanding. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care achieve well in most subjects.

Leaders and staff work effectively with external agencies to ensure pupils receive timely and appropriate support. They routinely monitor pupils' progress to evaluate the impact of interventions, adapting provision where necessary, striving to secure the best outcomes.

Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Leaders have a clear and informed understanding of the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. They have established well-considered strategies that enable these pupils to succeed in most areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school. They have worked diligently to secure improvements across many areas, resulting in a harmonious and caring school. They identify areas for improvement with clarity, maintaining a firm focus on enhancing the education of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. High aspirations and clear expectations underpin their work, driving sustained improvement and ensuring that pupils thrive both academically and personally. Consequently, staff benefit from a high-quality programme of continuous professional learning that is guided by the latest research. This strengthens classroom practice.

Staff are unanimous in their positivity about the school. They greatly value the support provided for their wellbeing and workload. As a result, staff feel respected and motivated, which contributes to the sustained improvements across the school.

Trustees and governors know the school well. They provide appropriate challenge and support in equal measure, which strengthens leadership and drives continued improvement across the school.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's role in helping their children to succeed, both academically and socially. Their confidence in the school reflects the successful partnership established between home and school, which further supports pupils' achievement and personal development.

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

Pupils thrive in this small, inclusive school, where close, caring and nurturing relationships with staff and peers are highly valued. They relish learning and benefit from the wide range of enrichment opportunities the school provides. Parents greatly appreciate the support and communication they receive, recognising the school's commitment to both academic progress and personal wellbeing. This partnership between pupils, staff and families ensures that pupils feel safe and motivated to achieve their very best. Pupils attend well. One parent commented, 'We feel incredibly privileged to be part of this school community,' a view that echoes the sentiments of many others.

Pupils embrace the school's motto, 'inspired to learn, inspired for life'. They are curious about the subjects they study and work hard to achieve. Through a well-structured and carefully sequenced curriculum, pupils build their knowledge securely over time. Reading is taught very effectively, enabling pupils to access the wider curriculum successfully. They achieve well and are prepared for the next stage of their education. However, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not learn to write as effectively as they could. This limits their ability to demonstrate fully what they know and can do.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy playing on the equipment in the school playground and value the friendships they forge. Bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly. Pupils are enthused by the many trips the school provides. For example, they regularly go swimming in the local pool

and learn about the history of Brixham, which strengthens their sense of belonging. A wide range of clubs, such as board games and football, broadens pupils' interests. Leadership skills are nurtured through roles such as school councillor and digital leaders. Pupils also engage in a breadth of cultural events, such as singing in choirs.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure the teaching of writing builds securely on what pupils already know and make effective adaptations to teaching, so that pupils write accurately and fluently in all subjects.
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About this inspection

The school is part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Stuart Gardner, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gerard Newman.

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 headteacher, senior leaders and some staff. The lead inspector also spoke with the chief executive officer, the chair of trustees, the chair of governors, governors and senior staff from the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Paul Adams

Lead inspector:

Susan Aykin, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Kevin Martin, Ofsted Inspector

Anna Mills, 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

248

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

280

Close to 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)

26.01%

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

1.61%

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

11.29%

Below 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	63%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	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 (revised)	70%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	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 (revised)	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	72%	Above
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 (revised)	85%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	89%	73%	Above
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 (revised)	46%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	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%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	62%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	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 (revised)	46%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	75%	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 (revised)	62%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	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 (revised)	46%	69%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	67%	-5 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 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	88%	80%	8 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 (revised)	46%	78%	-32 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp
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 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	79%	-4 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 term)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.5%	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 (2 term)	12.9%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	22.6%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	23.0%	16.2%	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.

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