

Great Hockham Primary School and Nursery

Address: Watton Road, Great Hockham, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 1PB

Unique reference number (URN): 145209

Inspection report: 17 March 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 ●

Leaders have high expectations for attendance. They prioritise making school a safe, welcoming place where pupils want to be. Pupils arrive each morning full of energy and enthusiasm for the day ahead. Leaders promote attendance widely and ensure that pupils, parents and carers understand the importance of attending school regularly. Well-considered systems enable leaders to monitor attendance closely. As a result, on the rare occasions when a pupil's attendance falls below expectations, leaders act quickly and effectively to identify barriers and put suitable support in place. This approach works extremely well. Pupils' attendance, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, is above the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is very low.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is excellent. A culture of high expectations and well-established routines ensures that pupils learn in calm, purposeful classrooms. For example, pupils enter classrooms each morning in a calm and orderly manner and begin learning straight away. No learning time is lost. From early years onwards, children show high levels of engagement and positive attitudes to their learning. When pupils need a reminder, staff give it promptly and pupils return to their learning without delay. Pupils understand what bullying is but are clear that it does not occur in their school.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a precise and insightful understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They use this knowledge to make well-judged decisions that drive continuous improvement. They construct and refine an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum that equips pupils with the knowledge they need for their next steps. Leaders ensure that teachers develop deep subject knowledge. They provide high-quality professional learning so staff can implement the curriculum with confidence and clarity.

Leaders design and order the content of the curriculum thoughtfully across subjects and phases. From early years onwards, they ensure that pupils build knowledge securely over time. Teachers deliver sharply focused teaching that supports pupils to secure key foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, phonics teaching is precise and well targeted, enabling pupils to develop these important skills right from the start. Staff extend pupils' spoken and written language effectively and weave carefully selected words through different curriculum subjects.

Leaders and staff understand pupils' needs well. They adapt teaching skilfully to support disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, pupils who need additional support attend sessions that introduce key knowledge to them before a lesson. This means they enter the classroom ready to apply their learning with renewed confidence.

Early years

Strong standard 

The early years is a hive of joyous learning. Nurturing relationships between staff and children create a warm, trusting environment where children feel safe to explore and learn. Staff know children's needs and interests well and use this knowledge to shape the curriculum and adapt their teaching so that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are successful. The school builds very positive, trusting relationships with parents and carers and ensures they play an active role in their child's early education.

Communication and language sit at the heart of the curriculum. Staff model and extend children's knowledge of important words with precision. As a result, the youngest children confidently use words such as 'full' and 'empty' when experimenting with the capacity of different containers. Staff ask carefully constructed questions that prompt children to explain their thinking and use important language. High-quality interactions give staff valuable insights into what children know and can do.

Teachers have the expertise to teach early reading effectively. Children segment and blend with growing confidence, demonstrating a secure understanding of the sounds that letters make. This strong phonics knowledge supports children's early writing, where they begin to construct simple sentences with increasing independence. By the end of the Reception Year, children are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion sits at the heart of the school's work. Staff identify pupils' needs swiftly and accurately through well-established, carefully considered systems. Leaders actively seek and value the contributions of parents and carers. This ensures that the school holds a well-rounded understanding of each pupil's needs. They make sure staff receive the right training to understand and meet these needs. As a result, teachers make effective changes to teaching that enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the ambitious curriculum alongside their peers.

Clear and knowledgeable leadership drives the school's improvement of its provision for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those facing additional challenges. The school has created a culture that supports the full range of learners. Staff adapt learning for pupils who require something more specific. Well-trained staff provide targeted support to help these pupils to succeed. Leaders check pupils' progress thoroughly and evaluate the impact of the support in place. They use this information to match provision precisely to pupils' needs.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The school identified that social and emotional needs were a key barrier for some pupils. In response, leaders have employed a range of professionals to provide specialist support. This approach forms a highly effective part of the school's provision for its most vulnerable pupils.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders at both school and trust level are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers to their learning. Leaders reflect, review and work skilfully to ensure the school continues to improve and develop year on year.

Staff are incredibly proud to work here. They work hard because they know that leaders make decisions in pupils' best interests. Staff value the targeted, precise professional learning and support they receive to fulfil their roles. They appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from other trust schools.

Those responsible for governance have the expertise and well-considered ways of working needed to review the impact of the school's work. They rigorously quality assure the school's practice to ensure leaders' actions are well informed and purposeful. Trustees check, for example, that safeguarding arrangements are enacted effectively and that pupil premium funding is used appropriately to support disadvantaged pupils.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work and the wide-ranging, positive impact it has on their children. Staff praise leaders for the support they receive to manage their workload and maintain their wellbeing. Leaders, staff and the wider school community work closely together to ensure that pupils flourish and thrive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school has ensured a well-developed and effectively delivered programme of personal, social and health education, including relationships and health education. Pupils recall their learning with confidence. For example, older pupils clearly explain how to look after their bodies in a range of ways, reflecting their cumulative learning over time. They talk about the importance of sleep and describe strategies to support their mental health.

Pupils demonstrate an increasingly secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Younger pupils confidently describe what makes a healthy diet, while older pupils show a well-developed understanding of how to behave safely online and protect themselves.

Leaders recognise the limited diversity in the school community and take deliberate steps to ensure pupils develop understanding and tolerance of different cultures and beliefs. A wide range of visitors come into school to broaden pupils' experiences beyond the local area. These experiences expose pupils to things they might not otherwise encounter, such as Indian dancing. Such opportunities broaden pupils' horizons and help them respect and understand differences.

The school has worked creatively to provide pupils with a rich range of enrichment opportunities. In addition to well-planned trips, including residential visits, the school organises experience days that give pupils the chance to try activities they may not encounter elsewhere. Where disadvantaged pupils face barriers to accessing these opportunities, the school works closely with families to help remove barriers to pupils' participation. As a result, all pupils benefit from the same broad offer of wider experiences.

Pupils receive highly effective support. They confidently identify trusted staff they can talk to if they feel worried or anxious. Pupils have discreet ways to share concerns. For example, they use worry boxes in classrooms to communicate their worries in an alternative, more private way.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Their success is evident both in the quality of their work and in the knowledgeable way they talk about their learning in different subjects. For example, pupils explain their learning about volcanoes and earthquakes in geography with clarity and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also achieve well. They progress effectively from their individual starting points because staff adapt learning carefully to meet their needs.

Published outcomes reflect children's successful achievement seen across the school. Outcomes for younger pupils are particularly positive. For example, pupils consistently attain above national averages in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils leaving Year 6 also achieve well in national tests, especially at the expected standard. Leaders are working hard to increase opportunities for pupils to be challenged further, so that more pupils reach the higher standards of attainment.

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

Pupils are known, understood and well cared for at Great Hockham Primary School and Nursery. Highly positive relationships flow through the school. Pupils arrive each morning enthusiastic for the day ahead. Pupils demonstrate their love of school through their very high attendance rates. This includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In lessons, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. This begins in early years, where children start to learn the key knowledge they need. As pupils move through the school, they build on their strong start. They successfully learn a wide range of knowledge across different subjects. They show a real thirst for learning. They enjoy sharing what they know with visitors. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well.

Behaviour across the school is calm and respectful. Pupils get along well with each other. Staff build caring relationships with pupils. Pupils are keen to meet the school's high expectations. This helps to create classrooms where learning takes place without disruption. Outside, pupils play positively together and enjoy a range of active games. Staff trust pupils to meet the school's clear and consistent expectations.

Pupils have many opportunities to enrich their learning beyond the classroom. Older pupils take on roles of responsibility with pride. They lead weekly assemblies, develop their

presentation skills and contribute actively to school life. For example, pupils recently requested a new friendship bench to help make playtimes even more inclusive. They eagerly await its agreed arrival.

The school stands at the heart of the village community. Strong links with the church and the local care home give pupils meaningful opportunities to contribute positively to village life. When pupils move on to secondary school, they travel through the village on a tractor and trailer, cheered on by the community as they begin their next stage of education.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to support staff to provide a range of opportunities for pupils to be stretched and to deepen their learning so they can reach the higher standards of achievement more consistently.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Sapientia Education 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), Jonathan Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Rout.

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, the assistant headteacher and other school leaders during the inspection. They also spoke to a group of trustees, including the chair of trustees, leaders in the trust and the CEO.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Lisa Hazard

Lead inspector:

Jonny Wallace, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Jo Nutbeam, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

109

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: 272

School capacity

117

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)

14.14%

Below 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

4.59%

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

18.35%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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	60%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	81%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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	63%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	64%	71%	Below

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	77%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	76%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
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	50%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	83%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	50%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	67%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘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	50%	68%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	83%	80%	4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	50%	78%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	67%	80%	-13 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘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 (2 term)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.5%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	3.7%	5.9%	Below

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)	8.1%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	14.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	4.6%	16.2%	Below

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.

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