

Great Yarmouth Primary Academy and Nursery

Address: Dickens Avenue, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR30 3DT

Unique reference number (URN): 138793

Inspection report: 20 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 ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

This is a highly inclusive school. Many pupils have additional needs, gaps in their knowledge and understanding, or social and emotional barriers to learning. Staff are skilled at identifying and supporting these needs. They track and review the impact of support at an individual and strategic level carefully. This helps leaders to respond swiftly and make adjustments and changes to provision when needed.

The school makes effective use of pupil premium funding to help close gaps in learning and development and to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the support they need. The school sources other support and funding to extend their offer, for example providing coats and a Christmas present for every pupil. The '11 before 11' is an entitlement of every pupil to a set of experiences before they leave the school, including a trip to London.

The school fully includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in every aspect of school life. Staff work closely with parents and carers and other agencies, including social care, to provide effective, appropriate support. This ensures pupils get the help that they need to make progress from their various starting points. 'The Lighthouse' offers a safe place for pupils to go if they need support. Leaders have developed an extensive range of training and support for staff so that they can meet the wide-ranging and diverse needs of the pupils in their care.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development programme is intentionally designed to be sequential and coherent. It is shaped by the school's core values of courage, kindness and respect. These values are lived and breathed across the school. They feature in assemblies, celebrations and day-to-day interactions. Pupils receive rewards linked explicitly to them. Staff consistently reinforce these values, helping pupils develop identity, belonging and a shared language for positive behaviour.

The house system further strengthens pupils' sense of identity. It provides pupils with a clear sense of community through house points, competitions, attendance rewards and sporting events. Weekly celebration assemblies spotlight pupils who exemplify the school's values, reinforcing expectations and celebrating success. Singing assemblies also contribute to building confidence, joy and community. Pupils celebrate the cultural diversity of their community. They develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values. Disadvantaged pupils take full advantage of all the school has to offer, including the wide range of clubs, which are free, and music lessons.

The school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum is wide ranging. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the community. They learn about the importance of physical and emotional health. The school is proactive and responsive to pupils' emerging needs. It is also sensitive to the life experiences of pupils. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of positive and safe relationships, and they know when to seek help from a trusted adult.

The school's wider offer is coherently mapped through the '11 before 11' programme. Every pupil has a passport of experiences designed to broaden horizons and increase their awareness of the world around them. Each activity is well placed to link with the curriculum, enriching and enhancing classroom learning and pupils' lived experiences. It prepares pupils well for future learning and life beyond school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

A considerable proportion of children start school with language and communication levels significantly below what would be expected for their age and stage. However, increasingly, children achieve well in the Reception Year, and outcomes in phonics are improving and are close to national averages. Typically, the school has high numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals and high levels of pupils starting school at different points in the year. Despite the challenges this can present, pupils progress successfully from their starting points and achieve well across a range of subjects. The number of pupils achieving expectations in line with their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave school is close to the national averages. The impact of leaders' work closes gaps in pupils' attainment.

Older pupils are able to talk about their learning across the breadth of the curriculum. They develop a deepening understanding of the subjects they learn. The school prepares pupils well for the demands of the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have taken effective steps and renewed and refreshed their strategy to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. This is having a positive impact on pupils' attendance, particularly for more vulnerable groups of pupils. Staff identify reasons and patterns for absence. They provide useful support to families, for example helping with establishing routines. Leaders' work ensures that pupils and their families increasingly understand the importance of regular attendance at school and share the goal to achieve this consistently.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is calm and respectful. Effective routines and processes in lessons help pupils feel secure and safe to try new things. Staff support pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their behaviour with a range of strategies. This has a positive impact on the behaviour and learning of individual pupils and the calm classroom environment for their peers. Consequently, suspensions have reduced significantly.

Children are taught positive social skills from the start, in Nursery. Pupils demonstrate positive relationships in social times. Breaktimes are fun, with music, dancing and games to play and adults modelling and teaching pupils how to play and use the equipment. Pupils feel happy to come to school and are positive about the school and staff. They value the safe environment and caring relationships modelled by staff and leaders. Pupils say that bullying is rare. Staff swiftly and appropriately help pupils to resolve any unkind or discriminatory behaviour.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is sequenced well, ambitious and continually refined to meet pupils' needs. It aligns closely with the local secondary school to support pupils' progression. Staff receive training from the trust's subject leads and external specialists so they have the knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum effectively. Early career teachers are supported well to develop high-quality practice.

Leaders evaluate strengths and areas for development to ensure that subjects are typically taught well across all year groups. In key stage 2, careful teaching of vocabulary and well-designed scaffolding enable pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, to secure and remember essential knowledge. Pupils explain what they have learned and build deeper understanding over time.

Assessment informs targeted support for pupils and the professional learning programme for staff. Due to their low starting points, many pupils require intervention to close gaps in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are adapting the curriculum so more of this is addressed through class-based teaching. This approach aims to reduce reliance on intervention as pupils keep up with the curriculum.

Teachers adapt their lessons well. This ensures that pupils can access the curriculum. These strategies help pupils overcome barriers, retain key information and make progress from their various starting points.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a strong start in the Nursery. The environment is stimulating and well organised, and it encourages children to take risks in their learning. High-quality interactions between children and staff in the Nursery support children's communication, language and personal development. As a result, children are confident, happy and able to sustain their play purposefully.

Many pupils who start school in the Reception Year have not benefited from the effective provision in the Nursery. Some children start school developmentally behind where they should be. As a result, there is a continued focus on developing and extending children's language and vocabulary. Children learn to read as soon as they start the Reception Year. Staff establish routines and teach children how to use the learning space and cooperate and work together. Staff carefully check children's progress and development. They use this information to support a successful transition into Year 1. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they know how they can support children at home and that children are ready to learn.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a shared vision and ambition for pupils in the school. There have been recent changes to school leadership and structures at the school. The shared local trust board with the secondary school, along with increased collaboration and partnership, are improving outcomes and attendance. The trust provides appropriate challenge, support, training and

guidance for leaders. The trust identifies talent and supports staff to achieve their ambitions.

Leaders have a detailed knowledge of their cohort and the needs and barriers facing vulnerable groups and pupils with attendance issues. They analyse data and information effectively and use this to produce detailed, robust plans to improve provision and ensure impact for the pupils in their school. Leaders have carefully considered strategies that they are employing to improve standards across the school. These include more precise assessment to support knowledge of gaps in early reading skills and interventions to enable pupils to catch up due to weak foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have also extended pastoral provision and support. This is leading to improvements in attendance, behaviour and outcomes for all groups in school.

Staff feel their workload and wellbeing are a priority for the current leadership team. They receive support professionally and personally. Staff value leaders' approach to their professional learning and expertise development. They say that this has had a positive impact on their understanding of effective teaching and learning. Staff feel valued and supported. Leaders are visible. They meet parents and carers at the start of the day, and parents feel that communication and support are positive to keep them informed about their child's education.

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

Pupils are proud to attend Great Yarmouth Primary Academy. They are welcoming to visitors and eager to talk about their school. Pupils explain what they are learning in class with enthusiasm. Older pupils speak confidently about their learning across the curriculum. They learn to be articulate and communicate their thoughts and understanding. Close links with the local secondary school, including a joined-up curriculum, shared staff and a well-planned offer and transition, ensure that pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Many pupils face significant and multiple barriers to learning. The school works closely with the community and parents and carers to help pupils overcome these barriers. Pupils experience a curriculum that inspires, motivates and enables them to make progress from their starting points. Many pupils do not start their education at the school. Pupils ensure that pupils new to the school feel welcome and a full part of their caring, inclusive community. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff take time to check on pupils' wellbeing.

There are lots of opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world and the community they live in. This includes a range of clubs and a carefully planned programme of events and extra-curricular activities and trips. Leaders ensure every pupil has a chance to represent the school at either sporting or creative events.

Pupils understand and demonstrate the school's values of respect, kindness and courage. This ensures that the school is a calm and happy place to learn. Pupils value and celebrate each other's progress and encourage each other to try their best. Pupils know and

understand how to keep themselves safe. A high level of care and support is available to ensure pupils are ready and able to learn.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that quality first teaching takes into account the typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum content. This includes children in the Early Years.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Inspiration Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gareth Stevens, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Theodore Agnew.

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 school leaders and trust leaders during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school runs provision for 2-year-olds.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Principal: Garry Russon

Lead inspector:

Oriana Dalton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Carol Dallas, Ofsted Inspector

Emma Davies, Ofsted 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

420

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

472

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)

63.34%

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

4.76%

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

10.24%

Below 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	55%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	56%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	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	58%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	61%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	48%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	62%	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	67%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	69%	71%	Close to average

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	70%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

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	52%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	51%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	52%	44%	Close to average

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	57%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	59%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	58%	60%	Close to average

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	66%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	64%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	67%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	62%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	52%	68%	-16 pp
2024/25 (revised)	51%	69%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	67%	-15 pp
2022/23 (final)	52%	66%	-15 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	57%	80%	-22 pp
2024/25 (revised)	59%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	80%	-27 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	78%	-20 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	66%	78%	-12 pp
2024/25 (revised)	64%	78%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	78%	-11 pp
2022/23 (final)	68%	77%	-10 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	67%	80%	-13 pp
2024/25 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	79%	-8 pp
2022/23 (final)	71%	79%	-8 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)	7.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.1%	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)	26.8%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	21.4%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.4%	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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