

Hanham Abbots Junior School

Address: Abbots Avenue, Hanham, Bristol, BS15 3PN

Unique reference number (URN): 149942

Inspection report: 21 April 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils achieve highly in national assessments, well above national averages in many areas. The majority of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievements in reading are particularly impressive. This means they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make excellent progress from their starting points. This is because the school ensures that, as far as possible, all pupils secure strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils talk with confidence and enthusiasm about what they have learned. They produce high-quality work which they are rightly proud of. Pupils, including pupils with SEND, develop detailed understanding of the wider curriculum, for example by explaining different belief systems, or the effects of depressants, stimulants and painkillers on the body by linking it to their knowledge of the circulatory system.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a detailed understanding of behaviour and attendance in the school. They analyse attendance closely, accurately identifying barriers and supporting pupils and families appropriately, for example by providing access to breakfast club or activities before school. Overall attendance compares very favourably to national averages, and has improved over time. In addition, there is an improving trend for most pupils who have historically had lower attendance. Very few pupils are persistently absent.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and goes far beyond quiet compliance. Clear routines and high expectations support pupils to make the right choices. Staff consistently create a culture which is highly conducive to learning, including learning from mistakes. Pupils are unafraid to take risks and 'have a go' because they feel safe and supported by staff and their peers. Bullying is very rare, but when unkind behaviour occurs, leaders take tenacious action to help pupils resolve their difficulties, for example through group work with a mental health practitioner. This helps pupils understand their behaviour and the behaviour of others.

Leaders are highly attuned to the needs of vulnerable pupils and use reasonable adjustments to support positive behaviour and attendance. As a result, serious sanctions such as suspensions are very rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Pupils learn from a broad and highly ambitious curriculum. Each subject has been carefully planned and resourced, supporting teachers to deliver subjects in a rigorous and engaging way. The quality of teaching in the school is consistently high. Leaders have created absolute clarity around the most effective teaching strategies. As a result, staff are highly skilled at explaining new concepts and using questioning to check pupils' understanding and deepen their knowledge. There is a palpably ambitious learning culture in which pupils are unafraid to make mistakes and learn from these. Teachers use information from

assessments to adapt what they teach and address any misconceptions. Pupils revisit important content regularly, so they remember what they have learned over time.

The breadth of the curriculum is impressive, but this does not compromise leaders' sharp focus on ensuring that pupils have the necessary skills in reading, writing, mathematics and spoken language. Leaders have ensured that the most able pupils are given opportunities to extend their learning. Pupils who have gaps in learning, for example in phonics knowledge or mathematical fluency, receive additional help to ensure these gaps are filled. Pupils develop their spoken language through effective vocabulary instruction and learning to listen attentively and build on each other's ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities consistently benefit from high-quality teaching and targeted support, when needed.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders are relentless in their commitment to supporting vulnerable pupils. Staff accurately identify pupils' needs and any barriers they may face. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. The vast majority of these pupils benefit from high-quality teaching with their peers, which is adapted to meet their individual needs. Pupils with SEND who need more bespoke support, receive this in the school's 'Learning Lodge'. While this provision was only introduced this year, it is already having a demonstrably positive impact on these pupils' wellbeing, attendance and academic achievements, including helping them fill gaps in their reading knowledge.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to support pupils experiencing financial disadvantage. For example, staff have supported pupils to improve pupils' attendance, which has helped them to thrive academically.

Staff know every pupil well. They have a detailed understanding of individual academic progress and leave no stone unturned when striving to ensure pupils are happy and achieving well. Leaders work effectively with the local authority and the virtual school to ensure pupils who are known to social care are able to succeed. This includes commissioning alternative provision appropriately. The school puts its most vulnerable pupils at the heart of their decision-making.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Governors, trustees, school and trust leaders are rightly proud of this inclusive and ambitious school. Over time, they have worked relentlessly to make improvements. Pupils are at the heart of their decision making and nothing is left to chance. Leaders have prioritised high-quality teaching, and this is borne out in pupils' achievements. Staff consistently report high levels of support with their workload and wellbeing. They work hard, but are motivated to do so by leaders who model high expectations and want the very best for pupils. The school's mantra of 'We are ambitious!' permeates not just what happens in classrooms but leaders' commitment to staff's professional development. The trust ensures that staff develop the subject and pedagogical expertise they need to be highly skilled practitioners and leaders, often collaborating with and supporting other schools.

Leaders at all levels are united in their vision. They have a forensically detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, so together they are able to prioritise the right things. They lead with deep moral purpose, striving for the best for all, including the most disadvantaged pupils. Even where some work is in its early stages, it is already having a positive impact of these pupils. Leaders continue to respond and adapt provision to meet these pupils' needs.

Governors and trustees have a secure understanding of their statutory duties and fulfil these effectively, for example by having robust oversight safeguarding and attendance. Almost all parents who completed the survey, would recommend the school; the view of one parent being typical of many: 'Each and every teacher, assistant or administration worker has my child's best interests at heart and continues to create a positive learning environment.'

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum is comprehensive. Pupils develop a detailed understanding of important issues such as how to keep themselves safe online and personal safety when starting to visit places on their own and with friends. They learn about different kinds of families and develop a keen sense of injustice and discriminatory behaviour. For example, they talk about ageism and invisible disabilities. They engage thoughtfully with what they learn in assemblies, making links with other learning and experiences. As a result, they develop more than a superficial understanding of the fundamental British values, such as linking the concept of individual liberty with free speech and consent. They develop a strong sense of right and wrong, linking this with laws and why we have them. Many pupils take on leadership roles, supporting younger pupils and helping school leaders make decisions in their best interests.

Alongside formal learning, pupils benefit from a rich offer of extra-curricular provision, including sports competitions and clubs that nurture their talents and interests, such as choir and art. Pupils enjoy residential trips with their friends, developing resilience and independence. Underpinned by strong relationships, pupils benefit from effective pastoral support. They learn how to regulate their emotions and overcome difficulties with calm and expert staff guidance. Pupils who need additional support receive this, including from mental health experts. Pupils feel safe, happy and well-cared for. Older pupils are well prepared for secondary school and the have knowledge they need to start this next phase with confidence. Leaders ensure that any barriers to participation in the wider life of the school are effectively removed so all pupils benefit. As with other aspects of the school's work, leaders' oversight of this programme is detailed and there is a relentless drive to ensure it is highly inclusive.

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

Pupils are immensely proud of their school. When asked to describe it, they use words such as ambitious, welcoming, exciting, inspiring and safe. These words accurately describe their experience. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their high rates of attendance. Pupils feel valued and know that their views matter. They are keen to take up the many opportunities to get involved in school life, such as by being a

librarian or a buddy to younger pupils.

Pupils behave remarkably well. This is a result of clear and well-understood routines and warm, trusting relationships with staff. Pupils get on well with each other. Bullying rarely happens. If it does happen, pupils say that staff take the time to get to the bottom of the issue and to resolve it. Pupils consistently show respect, empathy, self-discipline and integrity in their behaviour.

Pupils enjoy learning. They say that teachers make lessons interesting. Pupils are expected to work hard and achieve well. Staff go to great lengths to overcome barriers that pupils may have to learning or wellbeing. As a result, pupils thrive and achieve very well academically. This is reflected in their strong performance in national assessments. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are very well-prepared for their next steps.

Pupils learn about relationships, managing risks, staying healthy and being a good citizen. A rich offer of clubs, trips and other experiences is designed to bring out the very best in each pupil. The school's values of respect, independence, perseverance, enjoyment and responsibility are lived and breathed by this happy and highly ambitious school community.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to strengthen leadership across all areas of the school so that the work to transform the achievements and experiences of vulnerable pupils is sustained over time.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Leaf 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), Ross Newman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Simmons-Bird.

The school is part of Hanham Primary Federation.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and groups of staff during the inspection. The lead inspector met with the CEO, Director of Education and members of the local governing board and board of trustees.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 1 unregistered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Gabrielle Howells

Lead inspector:

Victoria Griffin, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Andrew Orgill, Ofsted Inspector

Maggie Spence, Ofsted Inspector

Sandy Hayes, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

321

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

384

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)

12.46%

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

1.56%

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

14.02%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	80%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	68%	61%	Close to average
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)	90%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	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)	84%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	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)	84%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	73%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	27%	46%	Below
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	64%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	82%	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)	64%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45%	58%	Below
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)	57%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45%	59%	Below
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)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	27%	67%	-40 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)	64%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	80%	2 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)	64%	78%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	45%	78%	-32 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)	57%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	45%	79%	-34 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.0%	5.5%	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)	8.6%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	12.6%	14.6%	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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