

Harnham Church of England Controlled Junior School

Address: Saxon Road, Harnham, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP2 8JZ

Unique reference number (URN): 126351

Inspection report: 12 May 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

A shared sense of belonging shapes daily life across the school. Leaders analyse attendance patterns closely, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. They intervene quickly when concerns arise. Support options, such as 'soft starts', breakfast club funding and close work with external agencies, help pupils who face barriers to attend more regularly. Persistent absence has decreased across all groups of pupils. Pupils understand the importance of regular attendance. They value the rewards and recognition for coming to school on time.

Leaders have secured improvements to pupils' behaviour and experience of school. Staff implement the behaviour policy consistently. Pupils understand and follow staff's expectations. As a result, suspensions have reduced significantly. Staff and pupils share warm and respectful relationships. Classrooms are typically calm, purposeful places where pupils can concentrate and learn. Pupils enjoy the recognition that they receive for positive behaviour, such as earning house points. Leaders deal with the very few incidents of discrimination and unkind behaviour quickly and effectively. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and take pride in contributing to the wider school community.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders hold an accurate understanding of the school's priorities. They have taken decisive action to improve the quality of the school's curriculum and teaching. Leaders have introduced curriculums that identify the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. Staff benefit from additional training. As such, they are increasingly confident in tailoring learning for pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Lessons are purposeful and engaging. Teachers use a range of strategies to help pupils recall important information. For example, they recap previous learning, emphasise subject-specific vocabulary and display key content for pupils to refer to. Pupils say that these approaches help them remember and understand what they are learning.

Most teachers keep a careful check on pupils' learning during lessons. On occasion, however, some staff are not as skilled as others in using this information to identify and reduce errors in pupils' work. When this happens, gaps in pupils' spelling, letter formation and punctuation persist. Leaders continue to refine the curriculum and teaching so that all pupils secure these foundations across subjects.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have strengthened the school's approach to inclusion. They accurately identify pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive regular training so they can recognise and understand pupils' differing needs. They draw on this knowledge to review and adapt their teaching effectively. For example, staff use symbols to build pupils' vocabulary and practical resources to help them access

learning confidently. Leaders monitor the progress of pupils with SEND closely. They use this information to plan timely interventions, including small-group tuition and pastoral support.

Staff know pupils as individuals. They fully include those who face additional barriers to learning in day-to-day school life. Leaders work sensitively to ensure that all pupils can participate in lessons and wider opportunities. As a result, pupils feel valued.

Leaders use the pupil premium funding increasingly well to support disadvantaged pupils. This has contributed to improved attendance and greater engagement with learning. The gap between disadvantaged pupils' achievement and that of all pupils continues to narrow. This remains an ongoing priority for leaders.

The school maintains close oversight of pupils who attend alternative provision. Leaders check that these pupils receive suitable learning experiences and that their welfare is carefully monitored.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The school has a clear and ambitious improvement strategy. Leaders, supported by the local authority, have acted swiftly to understand the school's context and prioritise the most urgent areas, including behaviour, curriculum structure and inclusion. They draw on up-to-date research to inform their actions. These are already making a positive impact. Nonetheless, leaders know that more needs to be done to secure pupils' basic skills. They are rightly addressing this as a priority.

Despite many changes to the school's organisation, staff morale remains high. Staff describe leaders as supportive, approachable and dedicated. Leaders take workload into consideration and implement measured steps to promote staff wellbeing. They prioritise professional learning to build staff expertise. Staff value the development opportunities they receive, such as training in retrieval techniques and subject leader networks, which strengthen teaching consistency. Collaboration with the local authority and other schools enhances the school's improvement work.

Governors, many of whom are new since the previous inspection, have a clear understanding of their role and the school's priorities. They use their expertise to challenge and support leaders, including monitoring the impact of pupil premium funding. Governors visit the school to meet subject leaders and understand the impact of leaders' curriculum developments. They maintain appropriate oversight of safeguarding and inclusion.

The support that leaders provide to pupils and families means that most parents and carers are positive about the school. Many welcome the improvements made by leaders in recent years.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an engaging personal development and wellbeing programme. It reflects the school's values and the needs of its pupils. Pupils learn about topics such as

self-esteem and consent in an age-appropriate way. Visitors, including local police officers, help pupils understand how to stay safe online and the importance of the rule of law.

Leaders carefully plan enrichment opportunities to take into account the local context. For example, the school celebrates its military links during Remembrance Day and the month of the military child. Pupils take part in residential trips, museum visits, music lessons and performances. These experiences broaden pupils' horizons and inspire them to pursue new interests. As an example, the school introduced a girls' football team at the request of pupils after they watched the English women's team play.

Staff promote pupils' mental and physical wellbeing effectively. Outdoor learning, such as archery and climbing, builds pupils' teamwork and resilience. Through bike safety and first aid, pupils learn practical life skills. Staff apply approaches that nurture pupils' emotional needs. Pupils know how to access help, such as through the wellbeing lunch club, and say that adults listen to them and offer thoughtful support.

The school's 'change maker' programme promotes diversity and aspiration. Pupils learn about equality, race and society through studying inspirational people. They speak confidently about the importance of treating others with kindness and respect. This strengthens pupils' sense of belonging and their willingness to challenge unfair treatment.

Pupils play an active role in school life and in the wider community. They raise money for charities, contribute to the Harvest festival and sing in a residential home for the elderly. Many pupils value the recognition they receive for their academic and personal achievements, such as entries in the golden book or messages on the values tree.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Pupils' achievement is variable, especially the quality of their written work. Too many do not secure the basic skills they need, such as correct letter formation, accurate spelling and consistent punctuation from their various starting points. Leaders have introduced changes to the curriculum to address this, but some remain at an early stage and are not consistently embedded. Therefore, the impact has not yet been fully realised. As a result, pupils' readiness for their next steps in learning remains uneven across the school.

Despite these weaknesses, pupils' outcomes in national assessments at the end of key stage 2 are improving year on year. They are now close to the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils are increasingly well supported. They are beginning to develop greater accuracy and fluency in reading. Across the school, pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they listen to and read in class.

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

Pupils experience a calm, caring environment where they feel safe and supported. They enjoy the warm welcome that greets them each morning. Pupils trust adults to listen to them and help if they have any worries. Many value the 'Mulberry' room as a place where they can talk about things that matter to them. This helps pupils who face personal challenges to feel ready to learn and contributes to regular attendance.

Across the school, pupils speak confidently about the school's 'FAITH' values and what they mean in practice. For example, they show 'tenacity' by not giving up and demonstrate 'harmony' in their positive interactions with others. Pupils report that behaviour has improved considerably in recent years due to raised expectations. They follow the 'ready, respectful and safe' routines confidently. Bullying and discriminatory language are rare and never tolerated.

Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities available to them. They talk with pride about singing at Wembley and performing at rock concerts. Many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, take part in clubs such as art, mindfulness and sports. Pupils value the leadership roles they hold, including as school councillors and play leaders. They describe how these experiences help them make a positive contribution to school life.

From history lessons to music, pupils enjoy learning. Those who need extra help, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive appropriate support so they can learn the same curriculum as their peers. However, over time, some pupils have not secured the basic skills they need, especially in writing. Leaders recognise this. They have high aspirations for every pupil to achieve their very best. Already, recent improvements to the curriculum and teaching are making a positive difference.

Next steps

- Leaders need to strengthen pupils' achievement in handwriting, spelling and punctuation knowledge so that pupils develop secure basic skills and are well prepared for each stage of their learning.
- Leaders should continue to ensure that teaching consistently identifies and corrects gaps in pupils' understanding so that errors and misconceptions are addressed quickly and do not persist.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Andrew Barnard.

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 deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other school staff during the inspection.

The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke with the school improvement adviser from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Changes to leadership and have occurred in recent years. The current headteacher took up the role in September 2024.

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Salisbury. Its last section 48 inspection took place in November 2024.

The school currently makes use of four unregistered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Helen Donnelly

Lead inspector:

Dale Burr, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ken Buxton, Ofsted Inspector

Jyotsna Paranjape, 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 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

268

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

360

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)

19.78%

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

4.10%

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

19.03%

Above 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	50%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	51%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	60%	Below

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	72%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	72%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	73%	Close to average

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 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	51%	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	63%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	59%	73%	Below

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	16%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	7%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	13%	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	54%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43%	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	30%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	42%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	33%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	22%	58%	Below

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	32%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	13%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	30%	59%	Below

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	16%	68%	-52 pp
2024/25 (final)	33%	69%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	7%	67%	-61 pp
2022/23 (final)	13%	66%	-53 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	54%	80%	-26 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	78%	-35 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	30%	78%	-48 pp
2024/25 (final)	42%	78%	-37 pp
2023/24 (final)	33%	78%	-44 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	22%	77%	-56 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	32%	80%	-48 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	13%	79%	-66 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	79%	-49 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 (3 term)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.7%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.4%	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 (3 term)	12.9%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	15.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	15.9%	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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