

Inkpen Primary School

Address: Weavers Lane, Inkpen, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 9QE

Unique reference number (URN): 109817

Inspection report: 3 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils generally achieve well, particularly from their starting points. This is notably the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The achievement of pupils is not typically reflected in the school's published outcomes. This is due partly to the small cohort sizes but also because there have been historic weaknesses in the curriculum. These have been addressed. Current pupils are now achieving more in line with expectations.

Due to the improvements in the curriculum and teaching, pupils have a secure recall of key content from across the curriculum. Their learning reflects the ambitions of the curriculum. Pupils are able to make connections with prior learning and across subject areas. They take pride in their work and presentation of this is important to them. Pupils generally secure the foundational knowledge they need to be successful later in life. Some pupils need more support to develop their handwriting skills. This is something that leaders are working on.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, leaders have refined their approach to the design and implementation of the curriculum. The school's curriculum reflects the mixed-age classes. Teaching is tailored to this. Learning is carefully mapped out to ensure that pupils learn the content that they need for future learning. Leaders have placed a sharp focus on ensuring that there is a consistency in the way that new concepts are taught to pupils. This work is being further refined. Staff make effective adaptations to tasks to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to access curriculum content.

In lessons, staff use their subject knowledge and appropriate strategies to check that pupils understand the most important information. Staff model tricky concepts and use questioning to deepen pupils' understanding. Getting it right from the beginning is a priority for the school. For example, the teaching of phonics is helping pupils to learn to read quickly. Pupils who fall behind are swiftly given the help that they need to catch up with their classmates. The teaching of handwriting is an area that leaders are further developing in order to ensure that pupils are supported to form letters accurately and legibly consistently well.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years are encouraged to be curious and inquisitive. They are keen to learn and demonstrate high levels of independence within the provision. Children share their learning with enthusiasm. Parents and carers appreciate the start that their children get in the early years. Staff actively promote positive working relationships. It is here that children start to develop the sense of belonging that runs through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported so that they can access learning alongside their peers.

The foundations for future learning begin in the early years. Phonics teaching is a strength of the provision. This is helping children to learn to read quickly. Children eagerly engage with stories and rhymes. The school's oracy focus is also evident in the early years.

However, at times, there are missed opportunities to deepen children's learning in the most effective way. For example, through high-quality adult interactions or by encouraging independent play. Overall, children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Due to the mixed-age provision, they learn the routines of Year 1 early and are ready for this step. They generally achieve well.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Staff have a secure awareness of the needs of pupils at the school. There are clear systems in place for the identification of barriers to learning and/or wellbeing that pupils may face. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure that there are plans in place that identify appropriate strategies to support pupils to overcome these barriers. Leaders are alert to any variation in the precision of these plans. They are working to address this in order to further enhance consistency.

Leaders take steps to ensure that there is a real sense of equity, so that pupils who face barriers to their wellbeing are fully included in school life. Staff are well trained to understand the school's approach to inclusion. They ensure that pupils are well supported to access learning alongside their peers. Pupil premium funding is used appropriately. Leaders are alert to the potential barriers that disadvantaged pupils may face. They take action to understand and address these barriers effectively. This includes tailoring the approach to meet specific needs as well as ensuring that all pupils can benefit from the school's social, emotional and wider offer beyond the academic.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The school has been on a journey of improvement over the last few years. Leaders have prioritised the right areas to ensure that pupils access a high-quality curriculum in a safe and nurturing environment. Leaders have taken effective action to address previous weaknesses. They are alert to the next steps in the school's improvement and are taking appropriate action to address these. There is a genuine sense of equity that runs through the school. Leaders are determined to fully prepare each pupil for the next stage of their educational journey. This includes pupils who experience barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders ensure that support provided helps to close gaps for disadvantaged pupils, this is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors offer appropriate support and challenge. They understand and fulfil their statutory duties.

There is a clear moral purpose from leaders with pupils at the heart of decision-making. This contributes to the school's warm and caring ethos. This welcome and inclusive environment extends to all stakeholders. Professional learning for staff is a priority for leaders. Staff are appreciative of this. They know that the guidance that they receive helps them to be successful and is in the best interests of pupils. Governors have a secure oversight of staff workload and wellbeing. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the care that staff take to support pupils to develop confidence and independence.

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that pupils secure the skills and knowledge that they need to successfully navigate the world around them and be prepared for life in modern Britain. Clear personal development and relationship education programmes detail what pupils will learn at different points in their education. Leaders have carefully considered how to tailor this approach for mixed-age classes as well as to support pupils who experience barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who are disadvantaged are fully included in the school's offer. This approach helps to ensure that pupils learn appropriate messages at the right time in their educational journey. For example, in the early years, children are well supported to develop a sense of curiosity and wonder. Their personal, social and emotional development is a priority for the school. This helps them to have an age-appropriate understanding of themselves and how they fit into the world. It also helps to prepare them for their personal, social and health education later in their schooling.

School councillors are excellent ambassadors for their school. They develop a clear sense of responsibility. Pupils across the school learn about fundamental British values. This helps to prepare them for life beyond the school gates. There is a sharp focus on providing high-quality emotional and social support for pupils as well as helping them to understand how to be mentally and physically healthy. Pupils recognise the importance of this and talk about the way the outdoor provision helps them to take a moment to pause and reflect. There has been much consideration given to providing the broadest range of opportunities and experiences for pupils. This helps to nurture their talents and interests. Extra-curricular opportunities and events support pupils to develop independence, collaboration and resilience. Sometimes, however, pupils do not always recall or recognise the intended learning that they could take from the enjoyable activities that they participate in.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Attendance has been too low for a period of time. Leaders are ambitious for pupils' attendance to improve. They are taking appropriate action to mitigate barriers that prevent pupils from attending school regularly. However, some of this work has not sufficiently impacted attendance for these pupils quickly enough. Although some improvements are evident, this remains a priority area to ensure that pupils attend as well as they should.

Positive relationships underpin the school's approach to behaviour. The school is a happy, calm and harmonious place. This helps to create a climate, where pupils can learn. The school's value of cooperation is central to its success in this area. Pupils are polite, conscientious and demonstrate high levels of resilience. On the playground, pupils of all ages play happily together and share resources. They demonstrate high levels of support and encouragement for one another. Mutual respect is woven through the school. The routines for school life begin in the early years, where children learn the school's high expectations for behaviour. The kind and caring ethos of the school permeates throughout the corridors. Pupils are keen to be recognised for their positive contributions to this culture.

Some pupils need more help with meeting these requirements. When needed, staff ensure a bespoke and tailored approach helps these pupils to be as successful as their peers.

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

This is a small school with a big heart. Care and compassion underpin all that pupils experience. As a result of the school's warm and welcoming environment, pupils feel valued and supported. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inclusive nature of the school shines through its work. This nurturing culture is recognised and appreciated by pupils, parents and carers.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to achieve well, both academically and socially. Pupils are generally ready for the next stage in their education. Leaders are alert to the fact that moving to secondary school from a small school is a significant transition for pupils. As a result, support is tailored to help pupils with this. Pupils love learning. They speak enthusiastically about the many trips and theme days and weeks that they experience. A love of reading has been developed through the school. This begins in the early years, where children enjoy listening to stories and reciting rhymes.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school and the important part they play in making it a lovely place to be. Behaviour is positive throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate high levels of consideration for one another. They do not have to worry about the behaviour of others as they know that any incidents of unkindness will be swiftly dealt with. Pupils are confident that there are trusted adults, who will help them if they have any worries or concerns. This helps to foster a sense of belonging as well as ensuring that pupils feel safe. Attendance for some pupils has been too low for too long. Leaders are working with families and external agencies to address this. More recently, improvements have been seen. However, this work is ongoing.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their approach towards attendance in order to positively impact pupils' attendance over time.
- Leaders should further refine their approach towards the teaching of handwriting, so all pupils secure this foundational knowledge and apply it across the curriculum.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Susan Sim.

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 the headteacher, other school leaders and staff during the inspection. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

The inspection started on 3 March 2026. It was paused in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Inspectors returned on 24 and 25 March 2026 to complete the inspection.

Headteacher: Frances Buck

Lead inspector:

Sara Staggs, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stuart Bevan, His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Yeoman, Ofsted Inspector

Chris Parker, His Majesty's 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

34

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

84

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)

17.65%

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

14.71%

Well above 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

14.71%

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)	S	62%	S
2023/24 (final)	47%	61%	Below
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)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
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)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	53%	72%	Below
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)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

‘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

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)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
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)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
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)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
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)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘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		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
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)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
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%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
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)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

‘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)	12.6%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	9.7%	5.5%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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 (2 term)	24.1%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	18.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	14.3%	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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