

Little Mead Primary Academy

Address: Gosforth Road, Southmead, Bristol, Bristol, BS10 6DS

Unique reference number (URN): 138900

Inspection report: 27 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 ●

The school identifies pupils' needs systematically, for example by checking speech and language development during the early years. This means that children get the right support from the start. Almost half of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school supports each pupil to develop their language skills according to their level of fluency. The learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is expertly monitored. Leaders work alongside well-trained staff to help each pupil to meet their targets. The support provided to pupils is astutely chosen. Decisions are guided by robust evidence of what has worked well elsewhere.

This is a school that does not hesitate to adapt provision to meet pupils' changing needs. For example, leaders have developed an internal provision for pupils who need more bespoke support for their communication needs. Where pupils' needs cannot be met on site, leaders are discerning in their choice of off-site alternative provision. As a result, the pupils who access this typically succeed. For example, their attendance and/or behaviour improves. Disadvantaged pupils receive tutoring to address gaps in their knowledge as they move through the school.

Expected standard ●

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard ●

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum since the previous inspection. Early reading is taught with greater rigour. Increasingly, children and pupils are learning phonics as well as their national peers. For older pupils who still need to secure fluent reading, there is ongoing teaching to help them to catch up. Staff have received training to help them to teach the school's writing curriculum effectively. This includes plenty of discussion of texts and ideas in class, which pupils enjoy. Across the school, pupils benefit from teaching in mathematics that targets any weaker topics.

Staff have the training and development opportunities that they need to lead and teach curriculum subjects well. Leaders' knowledge of what is working well and what needs to improve is sharp. Where they have worked to bring about improvements, this has had clear impact. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to learn successfully because teaching staff know to design the learning with them in mind. Although much reduced, there remains some minor variability in the quality of teaching. This usually happens when staff are trying out new approaches or when recently introduced curriculum plans are still being established.

Early years

Expected standard ●

There is a strong emphasis on language development in the early years. A high proportion of children join the school with gaps in their skills and knowledge. Nursery staff check what

children know from the start, to identify individual needs early. The children benefit from adults who model high-quality spoken language. For example, during outdoor play, adults reshape children's words into full sentences. This continues in the Reception Year, providing purposeful language development opportunities.

Staff have a strong understanding of children's starting points. Children's progress is monitored closely. This helps leaders to know whether teaching is making the right difference. Early reading through phonics is a central focus. Extra support is provided at the first sign of struggle. Leaders aim for children to keep up from the start rather than have to catch up later.

Learning is well organised, with resources to hand so that children can begin promptly. Effective routines teach children to settle quickly and understand how they should behave. Children develop their finger strength and big body movements through activities such as digging and climbing. The children apply the learning points from the classroom during their outdoor play. This helps them to secure their knowledge. Achievement in the early years is improving steadily in readiness for Year 1.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The school joined the trust shortly after the previous inspection, which identified a number of weaknesses. Since then, leaders have brought about clear improvements in the curriculum, teaching and behaviour. Inclusion is now a strength of the school. Pupils' needs are now met consistently well, and the climate for learning is a positive one. Nonetheless, leaders recognise that there is still more to do. Their ongoing efforts are informed by examples of what has worked well in other schools.

The trust has ensured effective governance by appointing skilled and experienced individuals to the 'School Performance Board'. Trust leaders and local governors work together to support the school with its key challenges. For example, the trust has allocated additional funds for extra teaching in key stage 2, to ensure that pupils are ready for the secondary phase.

Staff recognise that the school has made many positive changes in the past 18 months. The impact on staff's workload and wellbeing has been artfully managed. An inspiring programme of professional learning is driving ongoing improvements in the curriculum and teaching. This is often supported by experts drawn from outside of the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school day and the curriculum are full of rich opportunities for personal development. In lessons, there are many opportunities to discuss different ideas and opinions. This helps pupils to accept that people have different points of view. Pupils learn about friendship, consent and their changing bodies. This builds their understanding of healthy relationships as well as their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils learn how to use the internet safely and report any concerns.

Breaktimes are organised in a way that promotes positive social interactions. Pupils play an active role in managing their playtime together. They support one another and resolve

conflicts sensibly. Assemblies, 'circle time' and 'class charters' are used deliberately to foster positive behaviour and a sense of right and wrong. Pupils are keen to impress. For example, they are eager to gain the headteacher's 'You made me smile' award. The school's extra-curricular offer is well attended, with disadvantaged pupils often getting involved.

Pupils have a strong voice in the school. They take on leadership roles, such as contributing to the school council or as 'oracy champions'. Pupils learn how democracy works by watching debates in parliament. They know the importance of debating positively. When pupils raise a concern, they are listened to. For example, the school arranged a sleepover to support pupils who were anxious to attend a residential trip.

The school celebrates the wide range of different cultures and languages that pupils represent. Pupils respect each other's differences. They have kind and tolerant attitudes. Pupils know the different religions, cultures and lifestyles that make up modern Britain. Their understanding of equality is developing. For example, they know that people should be treated equally well, no matter what their age. Although pupils' knowledge of these issues is secure, it is not very detailed. When learning these topics, pupils do not gain the depth of understanding that they could.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

In recent years, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Many have left the school without being fully ready to learn the secondary school curriculum. Older pupils have gaps in their knowledge because the school's curriculum has not served them well in the past. Staff are working to close any remaining gaps quickly. Typically, this work is appropriate, but there are some occasions where it is not precisely matched to what individual pupils need to learn.

The achievement of younger pupils, including children in the early years, is better. Increasingly, the school ensures that pupils gain the important building blocks of knowledge in reading, writing, communication and mathematics that they need to achieve well. Outcomes in national checks such as phonics and multiplication show an improving trend and are now close to average.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance is below national averages. Too many pupils are persistently absent. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders understand well the reasons for absence. They support pupils and their families with any barriers to regular attendance. For example, when families are worried about their child's wellbeing, they provide reassurance that they will be well looked after in school. Leaders' work with individuals and small groups to improve attendance is effective. This is beginning to make a difference to the overall rate of attendance across the school. However, improvements so far have been incremental. Although work is underway, there is still more to do to embed and sustain regular attendance habits for some pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is consistently positive. Children learn to play well together in the early years. They continue to build on this throughout the school. Pupils look out for each other during social times, making sure everyone has something to do and someone to play with. Pupils are interested and focused learners. It is very rare for lessons to be disrupted. Staff help pupils who struggle with their emotions or behaviour to settle quickly. Positive behaviour is managed and taught very well, which means that everyone can focus on learning.

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

The school is a joyful and vibrant place. Pupils play, learn and laugh together happily. Classrooms and outdoor areas are calm, purposeful places. Pupils' positive attitudes towards their education are obvious. A real spirit of effort and industry runs through the school. In the past, pupils have not achieved as well as they should by the time that they have left the school. The school is determined to change this and give pupils the best chance of success.

If pupils struggle with any aspect of school life, staff find a way to help them. Over time, parts of the school have been developed to meet different needs. For example, the 'Calm Cove' helps pupils to manage their emotions. Whatever their starting point, the school sets out to close any gaps in pupils' learning and development.

There are softer starts to the school day in place for some. This helps the most vulnerable pupils transition calmly into school. Some pupils still do not attend school regularly enough. Staff work hard to support these families and make the school a place where they want to be. Pupils trust staff. They know whom to approach with concerns and do so readily. Pupils know that any bullying or unkindness will be dealt with.

Pupils from a wide range of cultural backgrounds feel welcome and included. The school successfully teaches pupils the importance of tolerance and respect. This is reflected in pupils' friendly and caring interactions with one another.

Pupils' enjoy rich experiences and build their confidence at this school. They look forward to events on the school calendar, such as the 'Meadovision' talent contest. Many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, take part in sports and clubs for yoga, coding and reading.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that any teaching designed to help older pupils to close gaps in their knowledge, so that they achieve at least as well as their national peers, is focused precisely on what individual pupils need.
- Leaders should continue to embed the new curriculum and associated teaching approaches so that children and pupils benefit from consistently effective teaching, both in the early years and across the rest of the school.

- Leaders should continue to further strengthen their work to secure sustained improvements in pupils' overall attendance.
 - Leaders should develop pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics and equality even further, so that pupils' tolerant attitudes are underpinned by more detailed knowledge.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Trust in Learning Academies (TILA), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sue Elliott, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Hugh Barrett.

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 CEO and the directors of education and school improvement from the TILA trust, 2 trustees, including the chair of the school performance board, the headteacher and members of the school's senior leadership team during the inspection.

The school makes use of 2 alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The school joined the TILA trust, and several members of the senior leadership team, including the headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator, joined the school.

Headteacher: John Calvert

Lead inspector:

Lydia Pride, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ian Robinson, Ofsted Inspector

Victoria Griffin, His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Fox, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

447

Well 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

420

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)

29.44%

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

3.13%

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

17.23%

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

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	44%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	39%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	49%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	44%	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	60%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	48%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	54%	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	62%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	63%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	60%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	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	60%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	54%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	28%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	18%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	35%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30%	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	46%	62%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	27%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	75%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	39%	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	42%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	32%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43%	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	40%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	27%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	45%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	48%	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	28%	68%	-40 pp
2024/25 (revised)	18%	69%	-51 pp
2023/24 (final)	35%	67%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	66%	-36 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	46%	80%	-33 pp
2024/25 (revised)	27%	81%	-54 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	80%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	39%	78%	-39 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	42%	78%	-36 pp
2024/25 (revised)	32%	78%	-46 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	77%	-34 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	40%	80%	-40 pp
2024/25 (revised)	27%	81%	-53 pp
2023/24 (final)	45%	79%	-34 pp
2022/23 (final)	48%	79%	-31 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)	6.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.9%	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)	18.6%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	20.2%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	25.9%	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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