

Moat Farm Infant School

Address: Brookfields Road, B68 9QR

Unique reference number (URN): 149847

Inspection report: 11 November 2025

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

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders understand the school's unique context very well. They have created an inclusive culture. Leaders have established extremely positive relationships with pupils and their families. This starts from the moment pupils join the school. This means leaders understand pupils' individual needs particularly well, both academically and pastorally. Leaders place this information at the centre of all decision-making. Leaders ensure that staff fully understand the school's priorities. Areas for improvement are addressed quickly. Since joining the trust, leaders have used the expertise of trust executives. They have worked together to secure notable improvements across the school. This includes significant and rapid improvements in attendance and developing a culture of professional learning. All of this means that pupils' achievement is rapidly improving.

The trust and local governing body are immensely diligent in carrying out their role. They have a detailed understanding of the school. They systematically carry out activities to ensure leaders remain focused on its priorities. This helps leaders secure continued improvement. Leaders establish effective links with external partners. This provides effective support to the school, for example from the local English and mathematics specialist hubs.

Staff are committed and positive about the level of support and training they receive. Leaders ensure that this training is of a high quality. Staff feel particularly well supported in their workload and wellbeing. For example, the school has reviewed its marking policy to reduce staff workload.

Parents are positive about their children's experiences at the school. They place high value on the support it provides to parents and children.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically achieve well by the time they leave Moat Farm. This prepares them well for junior school. Pupils learn the important foundational knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics that they need to succeed in their next stage of learning. Leaders ensure that staff focus on communication skills. This supports pupils' learning well. Pupils grasp phonics and the basics of reading and mathematics effectively. Pupils typically achieve well in the phonics screening check.

Over time, reading fluency and understanding significantly improve as pupils reach the end of Year 2. Pupils also develop a breadth of knowledge across the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have low starting points catch up and learn the knowledge they need to be ready for their next step. Pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and vulnerable pupils achieve well due to the school's inclusive practices and effective support.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' work to improve attendance has been highly effective. It has led to notable and demonstrable improvements. The school takes swift action when concerns arise. Clear communication and family-centred support have built trust. This enables any attendance issues to be addressed before they escalate. Supportive, strong relationships with parents positively influence their attitudes towards attendance. Persistent absence has reduced. Positive incentives in key stage 1, including pupil-led rewards and celebrations, further motivate pupils and families.

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Clear routines help the school to feel calm and orderly. Leaders ensure staff have the expertise to deliver targeted support for those who need it. Their comprehensive knowledge of pupils and families enables them to address underlying causes of behaviour. Staff typically implement the behaviour policy well. On the rare occasion when a pupil's behaviour lapses, it is managed sensitively. If needed, staff make adaptations that ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve leaders' expectations for behaviour. Leaders promote a culture of respect where bullying and discrimination are not tolerated. Any concerns are dealt with promptly, helping pupils feel safe and well supported. Leaders respond swiftly to patterns of behaviour. This quick response has led to an impressive reduction in playground incidents by improving play opportunities.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the curriculum. They ensure pupils learn a broad and ambitious range of knowledge in a logical order. In key stage 1, the curriculum is tailored to meet the school's context. Leaders have designed the early years curriculum to provide children with the key information they need to be ready for Year 1.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' learning of foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics is a clear priority. The development of oracy skills underpins this. From the early years, children are introduced to phonics and get to know letter-sounds quickly and begin to read words. To help develop confidence and fluency, the books they read help them practise the sounds they already know. Pupils who need extra help with reading, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, get individual support and catch up quickly.

Leaders use their knowledge of the curriculum alongside their expertise to ensure that staff are deployed and trained effectively. This ensures teachers, including those new to the school, have the necessary subject knowledge needed to teach the curriculum well. Systems for monitoring and review are robust, enabling leaders to address issues promptly. Teaching is typically effective. However, there are occasions where teaching does not support pupils to learn key knowledge as well as it could.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children make a positive start to school life in the early years. Leaders have prioritised high-quality provision, starting with 2-year-olds. Children's needs, characters and interests are known. Skilled staff know and build upon each child's starting point. Through interactions with adults, children learn, play and collaborate. The prime areas of learning are a clear focus. For example, playdough, scissor-cutting and mark-making help children to have the skills they need to control tools and form letters. This love of learning is seen in the way they know their letters, sounds and numbers and use them in their reading, writing and counting. Children in Nursery are prepared well to learn phonics in Reception.

Children are confident in communicating with each other and with adults, including visitors. They use a range of actions, words and sentences to share their learning and thinking. Lunchtimes are learning times too. Staff promote good manners, healthy eating and independence throughout. For example, children know and explain that 'carrots have vitamin A, and this helps your eyes'. Daily routines help children to practise their learning and to be friends and be polite. The school works closely with parents so they can support their child's learning at home.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school's inclusive ethos is embedded in its culture. There is a distinct focus on supporting disadvantaged pupils. Leaders secure ambitious aims and provide care for pupils. They ensure the specialists within the expanded inclusion team have high levels of knowledge and expertise. This, alongside leaders' knowledge of pupils and families, results in bespoke, tailored strategies that help pupils achieve. Tools such as the school's 'day in the life' documentation ensure provision remains responsive to evolving needs.

The school's approach to identifying the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is timely and accurate, allowing swift intervention so pupils access the curriculum appropriately. Staff training is comprehensive, including a professional learning programme for early career teachers, equipping them to meet diverse needs. Leaders work effectively with external agencies and maintain strong partnerships with a local special school. This enhances leaders' capacity to meet increasingly complex needs. The school has introduced the 'Rainbow Room' to provide individualised support to help some pupils who find it difficult to access the curriculum. Leaders are developing the curriculum and staff expertise to ensure that these pupils learn how to communicate effectively. However, the strategies are not fully embedded. This means some pupils are not supported as well as they could be.

Additional funding is used strategically to support disadvantaged pupils, ensuring those entitled to pupil premium funding make demonstrable progress. Leaders monitor impact closely, reducing barriers and promoting an inclusive culture across the school.

The school provides a coherent and logically ordered programme for personal development and wellbeing. It is closely aligned to its 6 core values. Leaders' work has ensured that this develops pupils' character and supports disadvantaged pupils effectively. The programme prepares all pupils to understand risks, including those online. Religious, social and health education programmes are age appropriate. They equip pupils with the knowledge they need to stay safe and make healthy choices. Leaders' strong emphasis on respect and relationships contributes significantly to the school's family feel and to pupils' positive social skills, cooperation and conflict resolution.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. They are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs, understand right and wrong and consider ethical issues. Through visits and community events, pupils learn about a range of cultures and faiths. They deepen their appreciation of diversity and fundamental British values such as mutual respect and participation in their community. Despite being young, pupils know and show respect in a mature way. They celebrate differences, saying, 'We are all different, and that is good.'

Opportunities, such as music groups followed by performances at the end of the year, help pupils to discover interests and develop confidence through creative experiences. Pupils begin to understand that they can make a positive difference in school. They enjoy the responsibility of carrying out special roles and responsibilities in the classroom and on the playground.

Pupils who need additional emotional support benefit from targeted provision. Nurture-based routines and the much-loved school dog, Lottie, help them manage their emotions and start the day positively.

The school's offer of after-school clubs and activities is innovative. It provides opportunities that are beneficial, interesting and exciting for specific groups.

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

This is a large school with a small family feel. In all aspects of its work, the school's motto of 'At Moat Farm Infant School every day we learn, achieve, have fun and play' is evident. Pupils love coming to school and learning. They say that behaviour is positive in school because 'we are all friends'. Pupils feel safe at school. They know that an adult will help them if they have any problems.

The school has high ambition for pupils. As a result, pupils typically achieve well, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Staff make sure that they get to know pupils quickly. This ensures that pupils' specific needs are well understood and met. Relationships between staff, pupils and families are strong. One parent's comment, typical of many, reflected this when they stated, 'Moat Farm is a school that strives for excellence from all children no matter their background.'

The school has worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils attend well; this is having a demonstrable impact. Lottie, the school dog, provides a friendly welcome to pupils at the start of the school day. This helps pupils to settle quickly into learning.

The school's values of collaboration, respect, creativity, perseverance, caring and reflectiveness underpin all learning. Pupils become confident learners who are always keen to chat about what they have learned. Pupils demonstrate many of these values through roles and responsibilities in school, such as being table monitors at dinnertime.

Pupils learn about life in modern Britain. For example, they visit local places of worship. Pupils enjoy wider experiences that support their learning, such as visits to the local library and the zoo. Consequently, pupils become well-rounded individuals who are well prepared for junior school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the school's curriculum is delivered consistently by all staff, taking account of pupils' starting points and addressing errors and misconceptions, so that pupils learn as well as they can.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff apply the school's communication strategies to support pupils who need additional help to communicate effectively so that they achieve well.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Stour Vale Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rachel Salter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joanne Williams.

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 school leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, including trust leaders, trustees and members of the local governing body, during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school became an academy in June 2024.

Headteacher: Deborah Walker

Lead inspector:

Barry Yeardsley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Keri Baylis, His Majesty's Inspector

James Dean, His Majesty's Inspector

Victoria Jordan, 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 11 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

416

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

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)

28.86%

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

4.09%

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

18.27%

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 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).

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 (1 term)	4.8%	5.1%	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 (1 term)	16.8%	14.3%	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 standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards 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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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