

Silver End Academy

Address: School Road, Silver End, Witham, Essex, CM8 3RZ

Unique reference number (URN): 144955

Inspection report: 19 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

Historically, pupils achieved below expected standards in national tests and examinations. This includes the number of pupils reaching greater depth. New leadership has made significant changes to the curriculum. They have invested significant resources into providing staff with ongoing high-quality training. As a result, teachers and learning support assistants are highly skilled in supporting pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, to meet the challenge of the curriculum. In 2025, there was a notable improvement in national test results. Pupils' skills and knowledge are now at expected levels for their age. These improvements are evident in pupils' achievement in a range of subjects across the school, including in early years.

The school places a strong emphasis on building pupils' secure knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. From Reception Year, pupils benefit from a high-quality curriculum. They are well supported to develop strong communication skills. They are well prepared for their next steps.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure oversight of pupils' attendance and behaviour. They build highly positive relationships with families. This helps them understand the barriers that pupils may face in attending regularly. The school acts quickly if pupils struggle to come in. Leaders are proactive in supporting families who may need extra help. As a result, pupils are well supported. They attend in line with their peers nationally. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.

The school ensures that pupils' behaviour is consistently impressive. From Reception Year, staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Staff are consistent in supporting pupils to meet these high expectations. From arrival, pupils settle quickly. There are clear routines from the start which help pupils to understand how to conduct themselves. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils are keen to learn. They demonstrate impressive learning habits. Some pupils benefit from one of the many extra interventions on offer. These are carefully targeted to meet pupils' individual needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are polite and friendly. They treat each other with respect and kindness. They listen quietly to others' opinions. Bullying is extremely rare and dealt with promptly if it occurs.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, new leaders have been appointed. Leaders recognised that gaps in some pupils' knowledge needed to be quickly closed. The current curriculum supports teachers in identifying gaps in pupils' understanding. Teachers are skilled in adapting teaching to support pupils to achieve well. They pre-teach vocabulary to ensure pupils can keep up. Staff, including learning support assistants, are highly skilled in making appropriate adaptations to reduce barriers to pupils' learning.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils make secure progress from their starting points. From Reception Year, staff have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Teachers use assessment well to move pupils' learning forward and address misunderstandings. As a result, pupils have a secure understanding of their learning.

From Reception Year, there is a strong focus on developing children's mathematical, reading and writing skills and knowledge. Effective staff training ensures high levels of consistency in teaching and learning across the school. The phonics scheme is now well embedded. Historic weaknesses in provision have been robustly addressed. As a result, pupils can read at age-expected standards. The minority of pupils who struggle are provided with high-quality help to catch up.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the Reception Year benefit from a highly effective start to their education. Leaders have established a well-considered curriculum with a strong focus on developing children's communication and language from the outset. Staff model language well and engage children in purposeful conversation throughout the day. As a result, children are confident communicators. They are enthusiastic about their learning and play.

The teaching of phonics is effective. Staff deliver the programme consistently. They ensure that children quickly learn and apply new sounds. Children use their phonics knowledge with increasing confidence in their reading and writing. Their writing is developing well. Adults place a high emphasis on correct pencil grip, letter formation and fine motor development. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Teachers and support staff support children skilfully. They know the children and their needs very well. They provide timely support to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to achieve successfully from their starting points. Children enjoy the indoor and outdoor opportunities to explore independently and cooperate with others. Children learn to sustain concentration and make friends. Relationships in early years are warm and nurturing. Children feel safe, secure and happy.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a robust, child-focused approach to inclusion. They have precise systems in place to identify and monitor pupils with potential needs. They carefully track pupils who may have emerging vulnerabilities, such as young carers or pupils with a family bereavement. They provide highly effective wellbeing support for identified pupils. This includes young carers' lunches. This provides opportunities to share experiences and feel a sense of community.

The school has an above-average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND benefit from a high-quality education. This includes pupils with an education, health and care plan. The academic and pastoral support pupils receive notably reduces barriers to their learning. The school has invested significantly in communication and language support. This includes a language and

communication-rich environment from Reception Year. Some pupils receive targeted speech and language interventions or speech and language therapy from well-trained staff.

The school use additional funding well to support disadvantaged pupils. The school is proactive in anticipating barriers that disadvantaged pupils may face. They actively target disadvantaged pupils to ensure they attend clubs and trips regularly. The school has developed positive relationships with parents and carers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They understand the school's strengths and priorities well. They have taken quick and effective action to improve the quality of education for pupils. This work has had a demonstrable impact. The curriculum and teaching have been strengthened and outcomes are improving across the school.

Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support. They acted decisively when pupils' achievement dropped. They now maintain a clear focus on securing the best possible outcomes for pupils. Trustees have a secure understanding of the school's priorities and monitor improvement work carefully.

The impact of professional learning and expertise is a strength of the school. Leaders have invested significantly in the development of teachers and support staff. Staff benefit from high-quality training, coaching and professional support. This has strengthened classroom practice and ensured consistency across the school. Staff are very positive about the support they receive. They are confident in delivering the curriculum well. Leaders are mindful of staff wellbeing and workload. Staff appreciate the support leaders give them and are highly positive about the school.

Leaders have prioritised engagement with parents and the wider community. Parents are very positive about the school's leadership. They value the quality of communication that they receive. This includes parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a well-developed approach to supporting pupils' personal development and wellbeing. This begins in the early years and builds pupils' understanding progressively over time. The school adapts this work well to meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils have opportunities to develop their teamwork, collaboration and resilience. They benefit from a broad range of experiences that support their broader personal development. For example, they contribute positively to the local community through visits to the local care home.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of popular enrichment opportunities, including dodgeball, football, mindfulness, maypole dancing and the arts. Pupils also develop practical skills such as cookery. Leaders ensure that information about relationships, sex and health education is shared appropriately with parents. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, peer pressure and how to keep themselves safe online and offline. They learn effective

techniques to support their emotional wellbeing, including managing relationships with their peers and breathing techniques.

The school promotes pupils' understanding of fundamental British values securely. Pupils learn about equality and respect for others. The school continues to develop and strengthen this work. Pupils are encouraged to think ambitiously about their future. Initiatives such as Aspirations Week expose pupils to a range of experiences through visitors, including business leaders, police representatives and the local MP.

Leaders carefully monitor pupils' participation in clubs, trips and wider opportunities. Staff provide appropriate support to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, participate fully in enrichment opportunities. The school's pastoral support is highly effective. Staff are vigilant and quickly spot if a pupil would benefit from bespoke care. There is a wide range of well-considered interventions for pupils who need extra help. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for.

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

Pupils are friendly and happy. They demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm towards their learning. As soon as they arrive at school, pupils are supported to focus and think hard. In lessons, pupils enjoy a range of well-selected activities which help them to develop their learning. From Reception Year onwards, pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum that appropriately challenges them. Teachers and support staff quickly spot if pupils are struggling. This might be due to their understanding of the work or their wellbeing. Pupils who need extra help are very well supported. Due to improvements in curriculum and teaching, pupils now leave school ready for their next steps.

Pupils enjoy the thriving community at Silver End Academy. They benefit from a secure sense of belonging. Pupils feel happy and are included well into different aspects of school life. During playtime, older play leaders help their peers play games. A significant number of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils, attend different clubs and trips. This includes maypole dancing, arts and sports. Some pupils, including those in Reception Year, benefit from accessing the sensory room. This develops their coordination and helps them with their readiness to learn.

Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils are very well cared for. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct. They provide a wealth of extra support for pupils who need help managing their emotions or behaviour. As a result, pupils' behaviour around school is consistently positive. Pupils are kind and considerate to others. Bullying is very rare. It is dealt with promptly if it occurs. Pupils attend school regularly. The school is quick to provide additional support if pupils struggle to come in. Many pupils enjoy the breakfast club. This provides a calm and settled start to the day.

Next steps

- Leaders should fully embed the curriculum to support pupils to build on their prior learning and achieve well in national tests and examinations.
 - Leaders should support teachers to further develop their pedagogical expertise so that more pupils attain the highest standards, including greater depth.
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About this inspection

This school is part of INSPIRES MAT, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ceri Jones, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Bhavika Gorasia.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with trustees, the chief executive officer (CEO), trust leaders and the headteacher during the inspection.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Since the last inspection a new CEO and headteacher have been appointed.

Headteacher: Sarah Meares

Lead inspector:

Bessie Owen, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Michael Thomas, Ofsted Inspector

Nikki Willis, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

370

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

440

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)

23.21%

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

2.97%

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

21.89%

Well above 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	43%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	62%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	33%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	53%	60%	Close to average

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	61%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	68%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	55%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	59%	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	50%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	51%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	71%	Close to average

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	64%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	73%	Close to average

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	29%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	28%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	31%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	29%	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	53%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	56%	63%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	46%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	57%	60%	Close to average

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	37%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	58%	Below
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	53%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29%	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	29%	68%	-39 pp
2024/25 (final)	28%	69%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	31%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	29%	66%	-38 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	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (final)	56%	81%	-25 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	80%	-34 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	78%	-21 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	37%	78%	-41 pp
2024/25 (final)	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24 (final)	38%	78%	-39 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	77%	-35 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	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (final)	61%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	79%	-26 pp
2022/23 (final)	29%	79%	-51 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)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.3%	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 (3 term)	15.3%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.4%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	18.1%	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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