

St Edward's Church of England Academy

Address: London Road, Romford, Essex, RM7 9NX

Unique reference number (URN): 145944

Inspection report: 6 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders interrogate attendance data rigorously to identify pupils who need targeted intervention. They act quickly to address concerns and ensure that support is in place for pupils whose attendance is at risk of decline. Attendance remains above the national average, overall, and is notably strong for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. The school operates a comprehensive first-day absence process. Staff follow up non-responses tenaciously, including through home visits when necessary. This persistent approach is having a clear and positive impact on improving attendance and securing good habits for pupils over time.

Pupils are proud of their school and speak positively about the sense of community it creates. They show high levels of respect for staff and for each other and conduct themselves with courtesy throughout the day. Sixth-form students act as mature role models and set high expectations for younger pupils. The school's rules are well understood and staff apply consequences fairly and consistently. In lessons, pupils listen attentively because they want to learn. Pupils report that incidents of discrimination or bullying are rare and that staff deal with them effectively. Staff at all levels know pupils well and work closely with parents and carers to build strong, trusting relationships that support pupils' wellbeing and success.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a precise understanding of the contextual challenges their pupils face. They use this insight effectively to shape a personal development curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and responsive to pupils' needs. The personal, social and health education programme is comprehensive and prepares pupils well for adult life. Through specialist sessions, assemblies and workshops, pupils learn age-appropriate content about relationships and sex education and health education. As a result, pupils speak confidently and maturely about issues such as toxic relationships, different family structures, consent and how to keep themselves safe online and within the local community.

Staff explicitly teach the social behaviours and interpersonal skills pupils need to interact respectfully with others. Pupils learn the importance of maintaining eye contact in conversations and how to conduct themselves appropriately as an audience. Leaders ensure pupils understand the differences between people protected by law. Difference is celebrated through events such as charity fundraising during Black History Month and pupil-led activities during Pride Week. These opportunities deepen pupils' understanding of equality and strengthen their tolerance and respect for others.

Pupils receive helpful and impartial careers information, education and guidance from Year 7. All pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 complete meaningful work experience placements that broaden their understanding of future pathways. Pupils are well supported to apply for university, apprenticeships and employment opportunities that match their aspirations. The 'On the Horizon' programme provides targeted support for pupils at risk of not being in education, employment or training when they leave school.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to broaden their cultural and spiritual experiences. A wide variety of clubs and activities enrich pupils' experiences at lunchtimes and after school. These include STEM clubs, art, sports, historical debate and a Bible study group. Every pupil visits a museum annually and Year 9 pupils visit a theatre. Leaders ensure disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully. Regular pupil surveys inform leaders' analysis of engagement and help them target interventions so that all pupils benefit from the full range of opportunities.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well, overall. Their progress and attainment at the end of key stage 4 is in line with national averages. Disadvantaged pupils generally achieve outcomes that are above national averages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make suitable progress through the curriculum alongside their peers.

Pupils develop the reading skills and mathematical knowledge skills needed to access the curriculum. Pupils generally read confidently and write with fluency. Typically, they write with accuracy. However, in some instances pupils' writing lacks depth. Pupils who enter the school at the earliest stages of reading, writing and speaking English are supported with effective interventions to make progress. Any gaps in their foundational knowledge are quickly secured.

While sixth-form students' achievement in national examinations is typically below average, they make steady progress over time. This does not prevent students from succeeding in their next steps as they are well prepared for their futures. Almost all students secure sustained placements in education, employment and training, with a number entering the most competitive universities.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the curriculum and the quality of teaching across the school. The trust allocates resources where they are most needed to help pupils improve. Leaders have identified the pupils who need the most help and ensure they receive additional support.

Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum that is sequenced so they build knowledge over time. Specific prompts for pupils help them recall prior learning and prepare them for learning new content. Teachers draw on their subject expertise, especially in the sixth form, to support pupils' learning. They apply consistent lesson routines, including retrieval practice, to help pupils learn more and remember more. Teachers typically use in-class assessment to check pupils' understanding. At times, teachers do not ask precise-enough questions to enable pupils to explain their reasoning.

Teachers receive training on effective strategies to support all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to access the curriculum. Teachers

explicitly teach vocabulary to support pupils to learn more complex topics. In some lessons, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to sustain their writing and develop their ideas fully, especially in equipping them to achieve the highest standard. Pupils with SEND receive the support needed to be successful.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and teachers work together to sustain an inclusive culture across the school. Staff collect detailed information from feeder primary schools. This ensures they understand the needs of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities before pupils join the school. They identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately and act promptly to reduce barriers to learning from the outset. Staff work closely with external professionals to ensure that vulnerable pupils known to social care receive appropriate support. Pupils, parents and carers value this help.

Staff receive clear information about pupils' additional needs and the strategies that they can use to support them. Regular training strengthens staff expertise in addressing barriers to learning. Typically, staff use this knowledge to adapt the curriculum and help pupils achieve well.

Leaders have a secure understanding of their disadvantaged pupils and the barriers that they face. They use pupil premium funding effectively so that pupils can engage with the curriculum and benefit from the wider opportunities the school provides. When leaders use alternative provision, they do so in pupils' best interests. They work closely with providers to check that pupils are attending, participating and making progress. This oversight enables leaders to adjust pupils' support promptly when needed.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate oversight of the school's strengths and the areas for development. They work closely with external agencies and in partnership with parents and families. The trust provides effective support across all roles, including subject-specific expertise for teachers. The support has led to improvements across all areas of the school's work, particularly in ensuring standards are maintained as the school roll rises. Some aspects of leaders' evaluation could be sharper so that their actions become fully embedded.

School governors are knowledgeable and meet their statutory responsibilities. They understand the school's context and ensure that resources are used effectively. They challenge leaders' assertions and have an accurate understanding of how to strengthen the governing body, for example recruiting and matching governors to areas of expertise in line with the school's priorities for improvement.

Staff are well supported by leaders to carry out their roles effectively. They receive regular feedback that helps them develop their practice. Senior leaders consider staff wellbeing carefully, and most staff report that their workload is manageable. Staff feel valued and heard. Early career teachers receive appropriate training and benefit from the guidance of their mentors.

Leaders are ambitious for the school and model high expectations and professionalism. They take swift and appropriate action when expectations are not met. Leaders are proud of their work to improve attendance and behaviour, and they share their approaches with other schools. They engage in regular outreach activity to support sector improvements in pupil attendance and behaviour.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders continue to review and develop the curriculum and the range of vocational courses available. Students typically achieve well, particularly in vocational and technical subjects. Leaders have considered the reasons for the below-average A-level outcomes and have taken appropriate steps to address the areas that need improvement.

Support from trust consultants helps teaching staff to strengthen their subject knowledge. Teachers are encouraged to take on external examiner roles so that they can use this knowledge to support students with precise exam techniques. As a result, teaching is generally of a high quality and most students make steady progress through the curriculum. Academic advisers provide support during planned independent study sessions, helping students to develop suitable study routines. This approach contributes to students maintaining high attendance levels that are in line with the rest of the school.

Students engage in the weekly 'St Edward's Enrichment Programme' to learn important skills and knowledge to enable success in adult life. They receive independent careers advice and participate in meaningful work experience. Students act as role models for younger pupils and conduct themselves consistently well around school. They support younger pupils to read and pupils who may be socially anxious. Students are well prepared for their next stage.

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

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They have high levels of attendance and benefit from a well-planned curriculum that supports their academic and personal development. Staff know pupils very well, including students in the sixth form, and use this knowledge to provide effective support. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the help that they need to thrive. As a result, pupils achieve in line with national expectations. Although some aspects of post-16 performance are weaker, students make secure progress from their starting points and move on to destinations that align well with their interests and aspirations.

The school's Church of England ethos underpins the strong sense of community and belonging that pupils experience. Pupils show pride in their caring school and in being part of a diverse community. The school builds this further through purposeful opportunities. When pupils join the school, they mark their cultural heritage on a large world map mural, creating a positive daily reminder of the school's inclusive ethos. Pupils act with courtesy and routinely greet staff and visitors positively. Staff set clear expectations and respond quickly when concerns arise. Pupils behave well throughout the day and value the positive,

respectful relationships that they build with staff. Pupils feel confident to approach appropriate adults when they need help.

Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities that strengthen the school's work to develop their interests and character. They enjoy participating in school performances, such as 'STEDs Got Talent!', visiting museums, taking part in sports and exploring different career pathways through activities such as the crime scene investigation workshops. Students in the post-16 provision contribute positively to the wider school community by volunteering to run clubs, supporting younger pupils with reading and providing mentoring. These experiences help them to build their confidence and deepen their respect and understanding of others.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that highly effective teaching is consistently embedded so that all pupils can improve their outcomes in public examinations.
 - Leaders should maintain their focus on improving the quality of pupils' writing so that pupils, including students in the sixth form, can fully apply their knowledge and achieve the best possible outcomes.
 - Leaders should use the information available to them to more precisely identify where actions to improvement can be strengthened and consistently embedded.
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About this inspection

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is part of Unity Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dominic Norrish, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christine Quinn.

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 senior leaders, the chair of trustees, the chair of governors, a member of the diocese, staff and pupils during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Its last section 48 inspection was on 11 and 12 May 2023.

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision.

Headteacher: Jodie Hassan

Lead inspector:

Piers Saunders, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Joanna Jones, Ofsted Inspector

Katerina Christodoulou, Ofsted Inspector

Fiona (Abankwah) Jatta, Ofsted Inspector

John Blaney, 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 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

848

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,334

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

32.42%

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: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.00%

Below 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.73%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	48.6%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	49.5%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	52.3%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	44.1	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46.1	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	51.0	46.3	Above

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.05	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.53	-0.03	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	35.3%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	36.1%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50.0%	25.2%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	36.4	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.6	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	48.9	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.21	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.41	-0.57	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	35.3%	53.1%	-17.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	36.1%	53.1%	-17.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	50.0%	52.4%	-2.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	36.4	50.4	-14.0
2023/24 (final)	40.6	50.0	-9.4
2022/23 (final)	48.9	50.3	-1.4

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.21	0.16	-0.37
2022/23 (final)	0.41	0.17	0.25

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	99%	92%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	98%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	98%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	20.58	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	22.38	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.62	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.8	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.6	0.0	Below

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)	6.9%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.1%	9.0%	Below

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)	23.9%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.9%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	22.1%	26.5%	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.

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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