

Somers Heath Primary School

Address: Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5LX

Unique reference number (URN): 144448

Inspection report: 10 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.

Strong standard ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders provide a broad and ambitious personal development programme that is clearly mapped across the trust and adapted to the school's context. It covers many important areas, such as relationships, online safety and finance. Several aspects are supported by external agencies. For example, online safety experts work with pupils and local fire and police services teach pupils how to stay safe. Through this programme, pupils also develop an understanding of the rule of law and responsibility.

Relationships, health and social education form a key part of personal development, and there is clear parental engagement in this area. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the changes ahead of them.

Pupils develop an understanding of similarities and differences. The texts the school uses help pupils to understand a broad range of cultures, families and religions. This work is supported effectively by thoughtfully planned enrichment activities, such as Brazil Day. Leaders ensure that all pupils can take part in every activity, and they adapt plans when necessary. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who face other barriers do not miss out. For example, the Year 6 residential has been changed to an activities week. Pupils participate in similar activities as well as new ones, which ensures a breadth of experiences that all pupils can access.

Pupils gain a sense of responsibility and belonging through their leadership roles. They value these positions and they support younger pupils and influence aspects of school life. Recently, the school council has raised funds for the new playground and contributed to decisions about its development.

Pupils access the pastoral team through gym trail sessions, the family support worker and individual or group sessions. This helps pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities build secure relationships, develop their social skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils secure a better understanding of the curriculum as they move through the school. By the time they leave, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This is shown in the above national average outcomes in the end of key stage 2 tests and assessments.

This improvement is becoming evident in the younger years, where pupils are strengthening their phonics knowledge. In the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1, pupils now achieve scores that are closer to national averages than previously. As pupils move towards

Year 4, they continue to develop their achievement in mathematics and their knowledge of multiplication tables.

Across the school, pupils' recall of the wider curriculum varies. They can speak with more detail about topics they have learned recently. For example, pupils confidently use specific scientific vocabulary about current topics rather than previous ones.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that all pupils attend school regularly. They monitor all pupils to make sure attendance stays above national averages. Leaders work with families and pupils who do not attend regularly so they can overcome the circumstances that prevent good attendance. Support may include counselling for pupils, wraparound care or help from the family support worker. This has led to sustained improvements in attendance for individuals.

Pupils are calm and respectful towards each other and adults. They are positive about their interactions on the playground and in class. Staff care for pupils. They sort out any problems effectively, so that bullying is rare. Pupils understand that staff have high expectations of their behaviour. Staff have received training to manage behaviour consistently well. Pupils know the school's routines and respond well to them. For example, at the end of playtime the head boy or girl and a member of staff award the class flag to the class that lines up the quickest and quietest. The class with the most flags at the end of the week earns extra playtime. Most pupils want to learn and focus well in lessons. Pupils who struggle to do so receive the support they need to stay on track.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school, as part of the trust, has designed its own curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Staff from different schools write and review the plans and class teachers make sure they are right for the pupils they teach. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It gives pupils a wide-ranging education. Topics are carefully organised, so that pupils build knowledge over time. Teachers usually have secure subject knowledge and understand what they want pupils to learn. Teachers usually make suitable adaptations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils learn well.

Foundational skills in reading, including phonics and mathematics, are taught in groups across the year. Staff teach pupils at the level they can access, so they can continue to develop their learning successfully. These groupings help most pupils move forward.

Staff have been well trained in the teaching of phonics. Pupils participate well in phonics lessons because the delivery is secure and effective. However, the teaching of handwriting is not as consistently effective across the school. Some pupils have had handwriting support programmes that have helped them improve, but this is not consistent across the school. This means that some pupils do not develop the handwriting skills they need as well as they should.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years learn in a warm and engaging environment that supports their growth and development. They enjoy learning and participate well in the activities provided. These activities cover all areas of learning and are adapted to meet children's needs and starting points, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that children can develop securely across the curriculum.

The curriculum is carefully planned, with reading, writing and mathematics at its heart. Staff share stories with children, who then explore a range of linked activities that deepen their understanding. Children know the routines of their phonics lessons. Staff model the correct skills clearly. The wide range of mathematics activities helps children to build their number skills in a structured and purposeful way.

Staff generally interact with children to develop their language and vocabulary. They do this at activity tables and through planned interactions during transition times, which help children use new words with confidence.

Parents are invited to workshops so they can understand how the environment supports children's learning. They also share the learning their children complete at home, which strengthens the link between home and school.

When children finish nursery, they are typically well prepared for the Reception class, with the early skills they need to succeed in the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school has clear systems and processes to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Once staff identify a pupil's needs, they put appropriate targets and adjustments in place. These may involve additional interventions or extra adult support. Staff have received training in writing targets for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but some targets still lack precision and do not show when pupils will achieve them. This slows the pace at which staff can move pupils on and could limit the development some pupils make.

The school runs an extensive intervention programme. Leaders monitor this carefully for impact. Interventions run for short periods so that staff can see clear improvements in pupils' class work. When pupils do not move forward as expected, staff review the intervention and make changes that will better support the pupil.

Leaders set high aspirations for every pupil. They make sure pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, access the support they need so they can take part in school life and beyond. Through the pupil premium strategy, the school works with a range of external professionals and seeks advice when needed. This includes working with external organisations that help pupils understand the opportunities that attending university could offer them.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils and they want every pupil to have ambitious goals for their future. Leaders make decisions that place pupils' best interests at the centre. Leaders are clear about their priorities and adjust these when needed, which ensures a sustained and focused direction for improvement. Leaders across the trust support the school effectively, providing an external perspective on its strength and areas for improvement.

Governors and trustees support and challenge leaders effectively. Governors visit the school regularly so they can understand what is happening in day-to-day practice. These visits give governors and trustees the knowledge they need to check that the improvements discussed in meetings with leaders are evident in the school.

Staff are usually well supported with their workload and wellbeing, although a few feel that they have too much work to manage. Leaders have put several strategies and incentives in place to support staff. This includes opportunities to work with colleagues across the trust and to share resources where appropriate. Staff also receive a broad range of training, with recent sessions focused on the school priority of supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are further opportunities for staff to take additional training to support their own professional development.

In most cases, parents are supportive of the work of the school. They are particularly complimentary about the staff and value the positive relationships that staff build with pupils.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they have a wide range of opportunities. They know that staff go out of their way to provide experiences that are fun and accessible for everyone. Staff plan trips carefully so they give pupils life skills or experiences they may not have had, while also linking them to their learning. For example, pupils travel by train to visit the Tower of London or spend a day at the seaside.

Pupils relish their playtimes because they spend time with their friends. They know that if any problems arise, staff will sort them out quickly. This is due to the trusting relationships they have with staff. These relationships support pupils to feel safe at school. Pupils understand the high expectations staff have of them. They work hard to meet these expectations by earning one of the many rewards on offer.

Pupils achieve well at the end of key stage 2 and are well prepared for secondary school. They attend school regularly because they want to make the most of their learning. Pupils usually concentrate and typically engage well in their learning. Any pupils who struggle with their learning generally get support to overcome this so that they can make progress.

Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school, the trust and the wider community. Their leadership roles give them a clear sense of responsibility. They know how to support others with confidence. Pupils wear their badges with pride and take their roles seriously. They raise money for the local hospice and sing for older residents in the community. Pupils

also contribute more widely to the trust by taking part in the Catalyst Cup and trust sporting competitions. Pupils feel valued members of each community because they play an active part in them.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that pupils have enough teaching and practice so that they become fluent and accurate with their handwriting.
 - Leaders should further develop the graduated approach to ensure pupils' targets are specific so that staff know when they have been achieved and can move pupils on to new targets swiftly.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Catalyst Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tony Parfett, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Darren Walters.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Paul Fuller.

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 executive headteacher, headteacher, senior staff, teachers, support staff, pupils and some parents during the inspection. They also spoke to representatives from the local governing board, trustees and representatives from the trust.

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provisions.

The school runs a nursery.

Head of school: Martin Curtis

Lead inspector:

Katie Devenport, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Lisa Massey, Ofsted Inspector

Laura Hwer, Ofsted Inspector

Mike Wade, 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 10 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

445

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

498

Well 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)

32.27%

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

3.60%

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

10.79%

Below 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	81%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	81%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	60%	Above

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	86%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	89%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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	85%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	81%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	87%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	71%	Above

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	85%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	87%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	84%	73%	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 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	74%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	65%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	79%	44%	Above

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	82%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	87%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	60%	Above

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	79%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	58%	Above

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	80%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	93%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	65%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	83%	59%	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 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	74%	68%	6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	73%	69%	4 pp
2023/24 (final)	65%	67%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	79%	66%	13 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	82%	80%	2 pp
2024/25 (revised)	87%	81%	6 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	80%	-9 pp
2022/23 (final)	86%	78%	8 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	79%	78%	1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	73%	78%	-5 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	78%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	86%	77%	9 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	80%	80%	1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	93%	81%	13 pp
2023/24 (final)	65%	79%	-15 pp
2022/23 (final)	83%	79%	4 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)	5.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.2%	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)	17.1%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.2%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	17.2%	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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