

St John's Church of England Primary School

Address: Peel Grove, Bethnal Green, London, E2 9LR

Unique reference number (URN): 100953

Inspection report: 10 February 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 ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Provision in the early years is calm, purposeful and well organised. Secure partnerships with parents help children settle quickly and establish confident routines. Teaching across Nursery and Reception is language rich and carefully sequenced. Staff provide consistently high-quality interactions. They purposefully extend vocabulary, model communication and respond skilfully to children's needs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from inclusive practice and well-judged support that enable them to take part fully in learning.

Reading and early mathematics are clear priorities. In Reception, well-established phonics and handwriting routines help children read accurately, form letters correctly and begin early writing. Children develop secure early number, counting and reasoning skills through purposeful activities and clear adult modelling. Precise checks on learning guide next steps and support secure progress. Outdoor provision complements indoor learning and offers purposeful opportunities for writing, number, exploration and physical development.

Daily routines, including family-style dining, promote independence, social interaction and positive behaviour from an early age. As a result, children develop confidence and independence. They make excellent progress from their starting points. Consequently, children are very well prepared for Year 1 and the next stage of education.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a deeply inclusive culture across the school. They know pupils well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged and those who are known or previously known to social care. Staff identify pupils' needs early through careful checks on learning and close work with families, professionals and external agencies. Leaders act quickly to assess needs and put the right support in place. This shapes highly effective provision and raises aspirations for pupils.

Leaders follow a clear step-by-step process to identify needs and provide focused support. They skilfully reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing through practical adjustments, highly trained staff, targeted support and the precise use of resources. Leaders monitor pupils' progress rigorously using well-analysed information. They evaluate the impact of support and adjust provision promptly. Pupils make sustained improvements in outcomes, engagement and readiness for the next stage.

Pastoral support and practical help for families strengthen pupils' attendance, wellbeing and participation in school life. Funding for disadvantaged pupils is used strategically and reviewed carefully. Leaders also keep a close check on support for pupils known to social care. This ensures help makes a significant and lasting difference to pupils' experiences and achievement.

Leaders know the school well and make sure the curriculum supports pupils' wellbeing. The curriculum reflects the school's context and gives pupils secure spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences. They understand right and wrong and talk insightfully about fairness, equality and how people should treat one another. They learn about democracy and voting through workshops and discussion.

The school builds pupils' social skills particularly well. Pupils work together, solve problems and make tangible contributions to school and community life. Leadership roles, such as the school council and prefect team, give pupils real responsibility. Pupils explain how their views have improved classroom resources and play equipment, including the introduction of soft balls. These opportunities help them develop cooperation, confidence and respect for others.

Family-style dining at lunchtime also supports pupils' personal development. It gives children from the early years upwards the chance to try new foods and develop healthy eating habits. It builds social skills, such as conversation, polite behaviour and cooperation in a calm shared setting.

The personal development programme is well designed and appropriate for pupils' needs. The programme supports disadvantaged pupils well and ensures they take part fully in school life. Discussions and practical activities help pupils learn about health, safety and how to keep themselves safe online and offline. Relationships and sex education and health education are taught in a clear, age-appropriate way.

A wide range of experiences strengthen pupils' character. Clubs, visits and sports opportunities broaden their horizons. Trips to museums, cricket events and cultural venues deepen their understanding. Pupils speak very positively about school and feel part of a family community.

Leaders' analysis of wellbeing information shows clear impact. Pupils feel safe, cared for and ready to learn. Vulnerable pupils participate fully and achieve well. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve well across the school. In the early years, children build secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics through a carefully structured curriculum and high-quality interactions. They make consistently secure progress from their starting points.

By the end of key stage 2, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with national averages over time. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are above the national average over time. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn alongside their peers and access the full curriculum with well-matched support. They make secure

progress from their varying starting points. Overall, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Across key stage 1 and key stage 2, approaches to identify and address misconceptions are not always applied consistently. This means a small number of pupils do not secure some key concepts as well as others.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance is below national expectations, and persistent absence has been above national expectations over time. However, leaders' actions are making a positive difference. The school has a high number of pupils who join partway through a year group and leave during the same year. Leaders work closely with new families from the outset to build secure relationships and reinforce the importance of regular attendance. They monitor pupils' attendance carefully and work directly with families and external services when needed. Leaders also provide practical help and targeted support to remove barriers for pupils who find regular attendance more difficult. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attendance is improving.

Behaviour across the school is calm, orderly and respectful. Leaders set clear expectations that staff apply consistently. This creates a positive environment where pupils feel safe and supported. Pupils listen carefully, concentrate in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning from the early years onwards. Bullying and unkind behaviour are not tolerated. Any instances are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils who need extra support in managing their behaviour are supported well by staff.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. Informed decisions strengthen provision and support ongoing improvement. The ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum helps build pupils' knowledge, language and skills across subjects. The curriculum is carefully sequenced. Leaders ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge they need to teach it effectively.

Reading is a priority. The consistent teaching of phonics helps pupils learn to read accurately and fluently. Regular checks on learning and focused support help pupils who need extra practice to catch up quickly. A structured approach to handwriting supports early writing. Across the school, teaching promotes pupils' vocabulary, so most pupils use subject-specific language confidently. In mathematics, pupils generally use the correct vocabulary and methods to explain their thinking.

Teaching is adapted effectively for disadvantaged pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum alongside their peers and benefit from particularly effective support. Staff use skilful approaches that help these pupils learn successfully.

There remain inconsistencies in how effectively some misconceptions are identified and addressed across key stage 1 and key stage 2. As a result, a small number of pupils move on without fully securing key concepts.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's strengths, priorities and context. They know the needs of pupils, including the high number who join mid-year. Leaders focus closely on inclusion, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and the quality of the curriculum. Leaders place pupils' best interests at the centre of their decisions. Staff use inclusive approaches in every part of school life. As a result, vulnerable pupils take part fully in lessons and wider activities. Pupils achieve well. Leadership and governance create a culture of ambition, care and continuous improvement, where pupils feel safe, valued and able to thrive.

Parents and carers value the warm and inclusive culture. Many parents and staff describe the school as an inclusive 'family', where every child is known and supported. Staff say leaders are visible, supportive and quick to respond. They feel listened to and well supported.

Through the federation, leaders set clear expectations. Well-planned training helps staff build expertise over time. Teachers at the start of their career receive effective guidance, mentoring and professional support. Leaders think carefully about workload. They act to ensure that staff feel well supported.

Governors have a strategic oversight of the school and ask the right questions. They meet their statutory duties, check how leaders use resources and how pupils are kept safe. Governors maintain high expectations and monitor improvements closely. They keep a close check on the school's ongoing work to improve attendance. They are aware of the challenges created by high pupil mobility and monitor the actions taken to support pupils to attend regularly.

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

Pupils are happy, safe and proud to belong to this welcoming school community. This begins in the early years, where children arrive each morning to a warm welcome from staff. Older pupils help serve breakfast to others in a responsible and kind way. Pupils say the school 'feels like home' and that adults care for them and solve problems quickly. Pupils know they can talk to any member of staff and feel confident that they will be listened to and supported.

Pupils enjoy learning and work well with their classmates. They say they are taught how to help each other as learning partners and feel supported in lessons. Relationships between pupils and adults are warm and respectful. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are fun, organised and inclusive. As a result, pupils play cooperatively and take turns. Bullying is rare, and if concerns arise, pupils trust staff to deal with them quickly.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. They talk confidently about online safety, sun safety, fire safety and how to look after their health. They value opportunities to learn

practical skills, such as basic first aid and caring for their wellbeing. Clear behaviour expectations help pupils make positive choices and treat others with respect.

The school removes barriers to learning, and pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, take part fully in school life and achieve well. Attendance has risen and the school continues to work closely with families to improve it further. Pupils enjoy coming to school and value being part of the school community. Pupils grow in confidence, develop secure friendships and learn how to be responsible members of their community. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of education and for life beyond school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that recent improvements in attendance, including reductions in persistent absence, are further strengthened and sustained so that more pupils benefit from regular attendance.
 - Leaders should ensure that misconceptions are identified and addressed consistently across key stage 1 and key stage 2 so that all pupils secure key concepts before moving on to new learning.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr Robin Precey.

The school is part of a federation called St John's & St Paul's Whitechapel Federation.

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 headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. They also met with members of the governing body, as well as representatives from the local authority and diocese.

Inspectors spoke with several pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's last section 48 statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools was 1 February 2024.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Lead inspector:

Karen Kent, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sam Carnegie, His Majesty's Inspector

Bob Hamlyn, 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 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

172

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: 272

School capacity

236

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)

67.11%

Well above 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

4.07%

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

52.91%

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

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).

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	69%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	64%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	79%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	72%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	81%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	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	74%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	72%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	68%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	79%	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	64%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	58%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	68%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	75%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	68%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	79%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	70%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	68%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	58%	Close to average

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	72%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	63%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	79%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	64%	68%	-3 pp
2024/25 (revised)	58%	69%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	68%	67%	1 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	66%	0 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	75%	80%	-4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	68%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	79%	80%	-1 pp
2022/23 (final)	80%	78%	2 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	70%	78%	-8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	68%	78%	-10 pp
2023/24 (final)	74%	78%	-4 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	77%	-11 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	72%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	63%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	79%	79%	0 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	73%	79%	-6 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)	9.9%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.7%	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)	35.4%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	30.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	34.1%	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.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright