

Elm Park Primary School

Address: South End Road, Elm Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM12 5UA

Unique reference number (URN): 102272

Inspection report: 2 June 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 have a robust and effective approach to managing pupils' attendance. Leaders check attendance information each day and act quickly should any concerns arise. They swiftly identify any patterns for different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work closely with families and external support to create tailored plans to help pupils who struggle to attend well. As a result, all pupils, including those with SEND or who are disadvantaged, improve their attendance over time. Leaders continue to focus on reducing persistent absence, especially in younger year groups.

In classrooms and around the school, pupils behave well and show very positive attitudes to their learning. They listen, talk kindly to each other, concentrate and take great pride in their work. Leaders have ensured that routines are clear and used consistently across the school. This means classrooms are calm, learning is not disrupted and social times are safe and fun. Bullying is rare. Pupils say staff deal with any concerns quickly. Any discrimination or unkind behaviour is addressed immediately. Pupils feel safe and trust adults to help them. Leaders work hard to support pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders quickly establish a clear understanding of children's different starting points, particularly in communication and language. They use this knowledge to shape provision effectively, for example through early language screening, targeted interventions and an embedded focus on vocabulary development. Leaders check the quality of the early years provision closely to ensure that practice remains highly effective and responsive to children's needs.

The curriculum is well designed and carefully sequenced to support children's development across all areas of learning. There is a clear focus on early language, phonics and number, ensuring children build the strong foundations they need for future learning. Teaching is highly effective. Adults engage children through purposeful interactions, modelling language and encouraging children to talk, explore and explain their ideas. During play and adult-led activities, children develop vocabulary and confidence through well-supported discussion.

Children achieve well from their starting points. Although many enter with very low levels of language and communication, most make marked progress through the curriculum and are very well prepared for Year 1. This reflects the highly positive impact of the curriculum, teaching and support provided.

Children feel safe. They settle quickly and follow routines confidently. Staff support children's emotional development effectively, promoting independence and positive relationships.

Leaders ensure the provision is inclusive. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are supported through tailored strategies, enabling them to access learning and develop key skills alongside their peers.

This is a welcoming and inclusive school. Many pupils arrive with starting points lower than those found nationally, and with some barriers to their learning. Leaders identify and assess pupils' needs when they join. Through the effective use of initial assessments, including language and communication screening, leaders achieve an accurate understanding of what pupils need and provide targeted support. This early action has meant pupils have any speech and language difficulties identified and addressed early. Leaders also work closely with parents and carers of young children due to come to the school before they arrive so they can help build supportive relationships with families from the start.

Pupils who are disadvantaged are well supported. Leaders use allocated funding strategically to improve teaching, provide additional reading opportunities and targeted mathematics support, as well as ensuring these pupils can access the wider opportunities available. This means that pupils are very well supported in making demonstrable improvements in their attitudes to learning, confidence, knowledge and understanding.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Individual needs are well understood and provision is highly personalised. Clear information about pupils and what helps them best is shared with staff. This means that, across the school, pupils are well supported. The school has developed specialist provisions to better support pupils who have more complex communication needs or require specific sensory support. Staff who teach and support in these provisions are highly trained and very knowledgeable. Pupils in these settings develop communication, independence and social skills and progress well from their starting points.

Leaders work with external agencies and families to support pupils who face additional barriers to their learning and participation, including those known to social care. High-quality pastoral support and engagement with local early help processes ensure these pupils' needs are identified and addressed promptly.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders at all levels, and those responsible for governance, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders evaluate the impact of their work through a range of well-designed systems and activities. They use the insights they gain to prioritise actions that improve outcomes for pupils. As a result, there have been notable improvements to the curriculum, language, oracy and attendance since the previous inspection. Leaders have been proactive in responding to the changing context of the school, including increasing levels of need, through developing additional provision and staff expertise to support pupils with high levels of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Governors understand the school's strengths and priorities. They fulfil their statutory duties, including in safeguarding and financial oversight, and engage well in the life of the school. They are aware of the challenges the school faces and work closely with leaders to ensure resources are used strategically in the best interests of pupils.

Leaders prioritise staff wellbeing and workload. Morale is very high. Staff report feeling valued and supported. Systems are in place to keep a check on staff workload, and leaders make adjustments where needed. Professional development is carefully planned and closely aligned to school priorities. Staff benefit from a range of training opportunities, including coaching and specialist development, which helps to improve the quality of teaching and support.

Leaders engage well with parents and the wider community. For example, the use of digital platforms and other communication methods help to ensure parents feel fully informed. Parents are positive about the school. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families, ensuring they receive the help they need in a timely way.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have established a well-planned and ambitious approach to pupils' personal development and wellbeing. They have a clear understanding of pupils' needs and the barriers they may face, particularly relating to communication, emotional wellbeing and life experiences. This has led to a carefully tailored programme that extends beyond the formal curriculum and makes a positive difference to pupils' confidence, resilience and readiness for the next stage of education. The personal development programme is broad and well considered. Pupils learn about different cultures, religions and perspectives. This supports pupils' understanding of the world, and of themselves. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to be healthy and safe in their friendships, when online and in their communities.

Pupils develop a secure and detailed knowledge of important issues. For example, pupils recognise the importance of not sharing personal information online and understand risks associated with social media. They understand the importance of road safety, water safety and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of relationships and respect, including different types of families and the importance of kindness and inclusion. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of fundamental British values. They can discuss ideas such as democracy, fairness and mutual respect and apply these in their interactions with others. Pupils listen thoughtfully to different viewpoints and demonstrate respect for diversity.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, can access and benefit fully from a personal development programme. Staff use adaptations and helpful resources to support pupils with additional needs to develop their understanding and confidence effectively. Staff know pupils well and identify needs early, providing support through a range of interventions, including emotional wellbeing programmes and nurture provision. Pupils are confident to seek help and feel supported by trusted adults.

Pupils are supported to develop their talents and interests through participating in clubs, workshops, school performances and sporting events.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Across the school, and in different subjects, pupils' achievement is broadly in line with what is expected nationally. Although published outcomes have varied slightly over time, they now align with national averages. This demonstrates an improving picture, including for pupils who are disadvantaged.

Pupils typically build secure foundational knowledge, especially in early reading, spoken language and mathematics. Pupils read with increasing confidence and fluency. This is because phonics is taught in a structured way. Improvements to the mathematics curriculum and teaching are supporting pupils to develop greater precision. The fluency and accuracy of pupils' writing are less consistent. Leaders have rightly identified the need to bring about the same consistency in this area of the curriculum. Across other subjects, pupils secure an appropriately deep and connected knowledge and understanding. They talk and write with increasing confidence about their learning in different subjects.

Those who join the school with significantly lower starting points than is typical nationally progress quickly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make secure progress from their different starting points, particularly where support is well tailored. They develop communication, independence and social skills, helping them to access the intended curriculum.

Overall, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and areas for development in the school's curriculum and quality of teaching. Subject leaders have been instrumental in refining the structure of the curriculum. Leaders have identified the key knowledge and vocabulary pupils need to learn in each subject. This helps pupils to secure the knowledge they need and make effective progress. Leaders carefully check teaching and additional support across the school. They use this information well to inform staff training.

Leaders have ensured there is a significant focus on pupils securing foundational knowledge, particularly in early reading, spoken and written language and mathematics. Early reading is taught systematically through phonics, with targeted support for pupils who need to catch up. Younger pupils develop early language and number skills effectively. Older pupils who need help to catch up are given the support they need.

Teachers present information clearly, use appropriate learning activities and support pupils to develop vocabulary and understanding across subjects. They promote discussion, enabling pupils to talk through their ideas and embed knowledge. Pupils generally deepen their knowledge over time, are able to explain their learning and apply knowledge in different contexts. Teachers typically check how well pupils are learning and adapt their teaching or explanations as needed. However, this is not consistently effective across classes. This can affect how securely some pupils grasp key concepts and understand the intended curriculum.

Pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are generally well-supported to access learning through thoughtful adaptations, interventions and specialist provision.

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

Pupils enjoy being part of this warm, inclusive and caring community where they feel safe, known and valued as individuals. Pupils know that someone will always listen to them and help them feel ready to learn. For example, each morning, pupils reflect on and explain how they are feeling. This helps adults quickly recognise who may need extra support.

Pupils are highly engaged in lessons. They listen well to their teachers and each other. Pupils behave very well because there are clear expectations of them. Pupils understand and follow well-embedded routines. This means learning is rarely disrupted and pupils move around the site safely. These expectations are clear from the start, and children in early years are deliberately taught, for example, how to engage positively in discussion, listen and focus. Pupils understand that bullying can happen, but they consider it rare and trust adults to deal with it effectively.

In classrooms, learning is calm and purposeful. Pupils enjoy talking about their ideas and explaining their thinking. They use subject vocabulary confidently and can explain how their learning connects over time. Pupils engage with learning and achieve well because staff meet their needs effectively. At social times, pupils access a wide range of creative equipment, building materials and imaginative play resources. This helps them to develop their communication, creativity and collaboration skills. Older pupils take pride in leadership roles, such as peer mentors and play leaders, helping their younger peers to join games and resolve any disagreements kindly.

Pupils value the range of opportunities available, including clubs and educational and residential visits. The school's highly inclusive approach ensures that all pupils, including those who need extra help, participate fully in the life of the school. This is supported by high rates of attendance for most, meaning pupils gain the full benefit of everything the school offers.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure teaching consistently checks pupils' understanding. This will help to ensure that any errors or misconceptions are swiftly identified and addressed, supporting pupils to secure key knowledge and understand the intended curriculum.
 - Leaders should ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting and transcription, so that pupils' writing fluency and accuracy continue to improve.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Lorraine Earle.

The school is part of The Aspire Learning Federation, which is a federation of 2 local primary schools.

The executive headteacher, who works across the 2 schools, is Victoria Morris.

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 the executive headteacher, the head of school, assistant headteachers, members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, a range of staff and a representative from the local authority during the inspection.

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Head of school: Lesley Fuller

Lead inspector:

Una Buckley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ray Lau, His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Kinnaird, Ofsted Inspector

Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

416

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

420

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)

18.51%

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

8.41%

Well above 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

14.42%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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	56%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	52%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	61%	Close to average
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	73%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	82%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	66%	73%	Close to average

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	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	69%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	72%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	36%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	23%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39%	44%	Close to average

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	64%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	54%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	38%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	56%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	47%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	31%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	56%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

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	36%	68%	-31 pp
2024/25 (final)	23%	69%	-46 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	67%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	39%	66%	-27 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	64%	80%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	54%	81%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	69%	80%	-11 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	78%	-12 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	53%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	78%	-40 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	78%	-21 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	61%	77%	-16 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	47%	80%	-33 pp
2024/25 (final)	31%	81%	-50 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	79%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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)	4.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.9%	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 (3 term)	13.7%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	16.9%	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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