

Woodlands Primary School

Address: Loxford Lane, Ilford, Essex, IG1 2PY

Unique reference number (URN): 102834

Inspection report: 24 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Most pupils make steady progress through the curriculum from their starting points. This is particularly evident for those who attend the school over time, including from Reception. Typically, staff enable pupils to build secure knowledge. This enables pupils to be well prepared for the next stages of their education and learning. Pupils recall and apply what they have learned, for example when reading stories.

Over time, published outcomes for pupils are in line with national averages. A high proportion of pupils join the school at different points through the school year. Many pupils arrive with gaps in their prior learning. As a result, not all pupils reach the expected standards by the end of key stages. Many pupils who join the school are new to English. The school identifies and closes gaps in pupils' understanding quickly. This means most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, generally achieve well.

Current achievement reflects the impact of a curriculum that is increasingly supporting pupils to secure key knowledge, although inconsistencies remain in how well this is embedded across the school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriately sequenced to help pupils' learning over time. Many pupils join at different points in the school year. Leaders have prioritised key areas of learning, such as early reading and language development, to meet these pupils' needs. Phonics is taught in a clear, structured way, helping pupils to build secure early reading knowledge.

Teachers generally present new learning clearly and check pupils' understanding during lessons. Through regular updates and training, subject leaders ensure that staff have a clear understanding of what they are teaching. In many cases, teachers adapt tasks so that pupils at different stages, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, can access learning confidently.

Leaders have identified the importance of securing strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school provides effective support to any pupils who need to catch up, including through targeted interventions. Teaching generally builds on pupils' prior knowledge, though there are times when opportunities to address misconceptions or deepen understanding are not fully taken, particularly in work on pupils' language and vocabulary. Leaders are already focusing on strengthening the way teaching secures and develops pupils' knowledge across the curriculum.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years settle quickly into well-established routines and feel safe and secure. Adults create a calm environment where children engage positively with activities

and with one another. Relationships are warm, and this supports children's confidence and readiness to learn.

Early reading is prioritised. Children take part in structured phonics sessions and engage well with routines that help them to practise sounds and begin to read simple, decodable texts. Many children are able to talk about stories and their favourite characters. They enjoy listening to, and joining in with, stories, songs and rhymes.

Staff support children's learning across the curriculum. They lead activities that interest and stimulate children's thinking, making use of the outdoor space effectively to extend their learning. In most activities, children build knowledge over time securely. On occasion, adult-led activities do not focus on the intended learning precisely. For example, there are occasions when opportunities to strengthen children's communication and language are not fully taken, which does not broaden some children's vocabulary and language skills.

Staff understand children's needs and provide appropriate support where required. Children are generally well prepared for Year 1, particularly in early reading.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have established an inclusive culture where pupils' needs are identified quickly and understood well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged and those known to, or previously known to, children's social care. Staff use a range of information to identify any barriers to pupils' learning or wellbeing. Typically, staff provide pupils with timely and appropriate support.

Adaptations in lessons, together with targeted interventions, help most pupils to access the curriculum successfully. Where needed, specialist staff, such as speech therapists, work with pupils and provide guidance for teachers. Staff have high expectations and are clear about how to provide pupils with the right support and care. This contributes to pupils engaging positively in lessons and progressing well from their starting points.

The school uses pupil premium funding thoughtfully to reduce barriers, and there is a clear focus on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are included fully in school life. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families. This is reflected in positive outcomes for pupils who face additional challenges.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need further development. They have identified suitable priorities, including attendance and achievement. Work to address these is underway and beginning to make a difference, particularly in attendance. The school regularly reminds parents about the importance of attending school.

Leaders take decisions in pupils' best interests. The school's inclusive approach ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those facing additional barriers, are supported to access the curriculum alongside their peers. Leaders make sure

appropriate support is in place and make suitable adaptations where needed. They work with external agencies effectively to secure additional help for pupils and families.

Those responsible for governance provide positive support and challenge. They understand the school's work and are confident in holding leaders to account.

Staff value the support they receive. Training is in place to help them carry out their roles, and leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing. Staff report that they feel well supported. They comment positively on leaders clear vision and how pupils and families are central to the school's work. The school works closely with families to make sure everyone is included in the community.

Leaders recognise that further work is needed to ensure recent improvements, particularly in attendance, are sustained.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school provides a broad range of opportunities that support pupils' wider development. Pupils learn about respect, relationships and how to keep themselves safe. The school has regular internet safety days closely matched to the needs and interests of the pupils. Pupils speak confidently about these topics and demonstrate a clear understanding of how to treat others respectfully. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on different viewpoints and to listen to opinions that may differ from their own.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop an understanding of the wider world. This is supported through the curriculum, including religious education, and through planned opportunities for discussion. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs and are encouraged to consider their role within the school community and beyond.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences that extend beyond the academic curriculum. The school help pupils to build confidence and develop their interests. Themed workshops, such as the Florence Nightingale day, and wider activities enrich their learning and support pupils' personal development. The school promotes opportunities for pupils to explore outdoor environments. For instance, staff work closely with pupils in the school's woodland area. Staff further broaden pupils' experiences by visiting the Thames foreshore and learning about aquatic creatures.

The school's work supports pupils' wellbeing effectively. Pupils report that they feel safe and cared for, and staff provide appropriate pastoral support where needed.

While the programme is broad and supports pupils' development well, leaders continue to refine how these opportunities build progressively over time to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit in full from what is offered.

Attendance and behaviour

Attendance remains below national averages and continues to be a key area for improvement. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to address this, including closer monitoring and targeted work with families, particularly for pupils who are persistently absent. The school works with families to promote the importance of regular attendance. There are early signs of improvement in some pupil groups. However, while this work has been sustained over time and reflects clear commitment from leaders, it has not secured consistent improvement. Too many pupils do not attend regularly enough, which limits their access to the full curriculum and the progress they make.

Behaviour across the school is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite, respectful and interact positively with one another and with staff. In lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to participate, and low-level disruption is rare. Staff apply the school's behaviour expectations consistently and pupils understand what is expected of them. Leaders have created a supportive environment where pupils feel safe and well cared for. Pupils say that bullying is uncommon and that any concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported well to meet expectations, contributing to a positive climate for learning.

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

Pupils experience a calm and welcoming school where adults know them well. Relationships between staff and pupils are a clear strength. Pupils feel safe and are confident that any worries will be dealt with by trusted adults. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite, cooperative and keen to contribute. Pupils behave well and concentrate on their learning. Any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly by staff.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, are supported to take part in lessons alongside their peers. Staff identify pupils' needs promptly and provide additional help where required. As a result, most pupils, particularly those who attend the school over a longer time, build their knowledge steadily. The school ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education. Pupils enjoy their learning. They are attentive in lessons and take pride in their work, for example when explaining new vocabulary or sharing their reading.

Pupils benefit from a range of wider opportunities, including visits, workshops and enrichment activities. These broaden pupils' experiences and support their personal development. However, attendance remains too low. This is partly because families take their children out of school during term time. Although behaviour is positive, too many pupils do not attend regularly enough to benefit fully from what the school offers.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve attendance so that it is in line with national averages, ensuring that the school's recent actions are embedded and lead to sustained reductions in persistent absence.
 - Leaders should further strengthen pupils' achievement by ensuring that teaching consistently secures and deepens pupils' knowledge, particularly by addressing misconceptions more effectively.
 - Leaders should refine provision in the early years so that adult interactions more consistently support and extend children's communication and language development.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mr Waheed Akhtar.

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 members of the senior leadership team. They also spoke with leaders about their oversight of specific areas of the school's work, such as inclusion.

The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff.

Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Melanie Jackson

Lead inspector:

Adam Vincent, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Robin Boshier, Ofsted Inspector

Amanda Ruthven, Ofsted Inspector

Diana Valcheva, 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 24 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

648

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

960

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)

36.78%

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

3.70%

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

17.90%

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

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	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	51%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	66%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	58%	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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	59%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	74%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	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 (revised)	71%	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	74%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	64%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	79%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	50%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	55%	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	67%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	63%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	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	63%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	65%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	64%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	61%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	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	50%	68%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	67%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	55%	66%	-12 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	67%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (revised)	63%	81%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	66%	80%	-14 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	78%	-1 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	63%	78%	-14 pp
2024/25 (revised)	65%	78%	-13 pp
2023/24 (final)	55%	78%	-22 pp
2022/23 (final)	71%	77%	-6 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	64%	80%	-15 pp
2024/25 (revised)	61%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	79%	-22 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	79%	-2 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)	7.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.0%	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)	23.2%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	21.2%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.5%	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.

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