

Elms Farm Community Primary School

Address: Dorncliffe Avenue, Sheldon, Birmingham, West Midlands, B33 0PJ

Unique reference number (URN): 103381

Inspection report: 13 January 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 ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

This is an inclusive school where pupils are welcomed warmly and have a strong sense of belonging. Leaders create a nurturing environment where pupils feel valued and supported. Leaders maintain a highly effective culture of inclusion, holding ambitious expectations for every pupil, including those who face barriers to learning. Staff are supported to identify pupils' needs swiftly and accurately. They know pupils well and adapt learning effectively. This means that pupils can achieve well.

Staff work closely with families and external agencies to understand each pupil's needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged, and those requiring additional wellbeing support. External advice is implemented effectively, and staff have lots of relevant expertise to meet pupils' needs. Leaders track the progress of these pupils carefully, introducing appropriate strategies at the right time. As a result, pupils flourish.

Some pupils attend the 'hub' for part of each day. These pupils are taught a personalised curriculum. This is effective and well matched to pupils' needs.

Leaders identify challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. They put tailored plans in place, and staff receive extensive training to support these pupils. Leaders closely monitor the impact of these actions, and this supports these pupils to be successful.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders consistently share and uphold an ambitious vision for the school. Their decisions are firmly rooted in what is best for every pupil, with specific consideration for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is aspirational and reflects high expectations.

Leaders have ensured that staff are equipped with the expertise needed to promote positive behaviour effectively. Their thoughtful analysis of the school's performance enables them to pinpoint strengths and identify priorities for further improvement with precision. Improvements are swiftly and comprehensively secured.

A highly effective culture of professional learning is deeply embedded. Staff value this and take ownership of their development. This work has resulted in rapid and notable improvement across all areas of the school's work. This is particularly evident in the support provided for, and the resulting progress through the curriculum, of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

Governors ensure that the school's ambitious vision is clearly communicated and understood by staff, parents, carers and pupils. They have a secure grasp of their roles and responsibilities. They also recognise the school's specific context, including challenges related to attendance and early years school readiness. Leaders and governors place a high

priority on managing staff workload and wellbeing, considering these carefully when making decisions. As a result, staff feel highly valued.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Most pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, not enough pupils achieve consistently high standards in comparison to national outcomes in these subjects.

Most pupils gain the essential knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. For those who do not, leaders make sure they catch up with their peers by the end of Year 6. As a result, most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

By the end of Reception Year, most children achieve well. The school prioritises making sure that foundational knowledge in handwriting, phonics, writing and mathematics is secured. Most children develop this knowledge swiftly.

Pupils move successfully through the planned curriculum, building secure knowledge across subjects. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make swift progress through the curriculum from their starting points.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure pupils and families understand the importance of good attendance. They work proactively to ensure that most pupils attend regularly. They identify most barriers that could lead to absences, although the identification of attendance trends lacks some precision. This work is successful in removing barriers to attendance for most pupils. When concerns arise, leaders act swiftly and provide appropriate support for families. As a result, most pupils attend well.

Each morning, pupils are greeted warmly and welcomed into a calm, orderly environment. Staff maintain high expectations for behaviour and act as positive role models. They apply the behaviour policy consistently. Any rare occurrence of discrimination is dealt with quickly. Pupils are polite and respectful. In lessons, they listen attentively, follow instructions, and show positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils are role models for younger children. During playtimes, pupils interact kindly and get along well.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective support to help them manage their behaviour. They seek guidance from external professionals when needed and follow this advice carefully. Most pupils benefit from this additional support. Nevertheless, some pupils occasionally do not meet the school's expectations and routines. In these cases, suspensions are used appropriately and only when necessary.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is carefully designed across all subjects and aligns closely with the ambition of the national curriculum. Important knowledge is built securely over time.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on staff development to ensure that all staff have the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. This is incorporated into the school's improvement plans and professional learning for staff.

The curriculum is generally delivered effectively, although some inconsistencies remain. Phonics is prioritised and taught effectively as soon as children join the school. Staff provide clear explanations and model learning effectively. However, in some subjects, misconceptions are sometimes not identified or addressed. This leads to gaps in some pupils' knowledge. Most pupils secure essential knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics successfully.

Leaders have focused on teaching pupils high-quality spoken language across the curriculum. This is beginning to have a positive impact on most pupils' spoken language. However, some pupils are not helped to practise using subject-specific language in their writing often enough to learn it effectively.

Targeted academic support is in place for pupils who need it. Adaptations to the curriculum are effective, where needed, to support some pupils to access their learning. This work is effective at reducing most pupils' gaps in knowledge.

Early years

Expected standard 

Staff understand leaders' clear vision and expectations for the early years. The curriculum is informed by recent research and the knowledge of children's barriers and challenges as they join the school. Leaders are knowledgeable about the quality of the early years because of diligent monitoring of children's progress through the curriculum.

The statutory requirements of the early years are met, including welfare requirements. Parents and carers are encouraged to work in close partnership with the school. Staff have the right expertise to develop children's vocabulary effectively. Typically, staff put this training into action and support pupils' vocabulary development well; although this is inconsistent. Some staff do not consistently maximise opportunities to engage children in high-quality interactions. Some pupils who face barriers to their learning do not develop as broad a vocabulary as they should.

Children in the early years settle quickly into the school day. Routines are well established. Children are well cared for and nurtured. Each day, children focus on activities that develop strong foundations in communication and language, phonics knowledge and letter formation. This is done in a sensible and independent manner. Most children secure essential knowledge effectively and achieve well. As a result, most children are ready for Year 1.

The school's personal development programme is carefully designed and sequenced to ensure that pupils build their knowledge in a coherent way. It is adapted effectively to reflect the school's specific context, including its particular needs and challenges. More vulnerable pupils, such as those accessing the special educational needs and/or disabilities hub provision, receive a personalised programme that meets their needs well. However, some pupils do not consistently develop a secure and detailed knowledge of the personal development programme.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values. The importance of belonging is emphasised through the curriculum and a broad range of wider opportunities including clubs, educational visits, trips and leadership roles. Pupils learn to be respectful of different beliefs and have an appreciation of cultural diversity. They benefit from varied experiences both within the school community and beyond it, including engagement with visiting speakers. These opportunities help to prepare pupils effectively for the demands of life beyond the school.

Pastoral support is high quality. Staff know pupils well, which positively influences pupils' wellbeing. Leaders use a range of well-established systems to ensure that pupils receive timely and appropriate support. This effective pastoral provision helps pupils to feel a sense of belonging and supports them to thrive. Combined with the school's values-led approach, it contributes to pupils' positive behaviour, confidence and pride in their school.

Leaders monitor pupils' participation in clubs and trips and use this information, alongside pupils' views, to review and refine what is offered. Although pupils are given opportunities to take on leadership roles and contribute to school life, these opportunities are not accessed widely enough across the whole school.

The 'pupil passports', which are built to give pupils access to a rich range of experiences, are designed to prepare pupils for life beyond school. They are a particular strength of the wider personal development and wellbeing programme. In addition, the emerging work to introduce pupils to the world of work is ambitious.

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

Pupils are happy and safe in this welcoming and inclusive school. They understand the school values of ambition, community, equality, aiming high, fairness and helping others. High expectations of pupils are evident. Most pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage in their education. However, for some pupils, gaps in their knowledge are not consistently addressed effectively.

Children in the early years are happy and well cared for. They engage in purposeful learning from the start of each day. Children are encouraged to use new vocabulary most of the time.

Some children join the school part way through a year or key stage. They are welcomed and quickly made to feel part of school life. Any challenges or barriers that pupils face are identified swiftly. Pupils receive high-quality personalised pastoral support. This is highly

effective and supports pupils' wellbeing successfully. Pupils are taught to cooperate with their peers and show an acceptance of others. They work hard and enjoy learning. Pupils experience a calm environment throughout each day. They are highly valued by staff.

Pupils experience a broad curriculum that is tailored to individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) develop a deep sense of belonging. Staff are expert at supporting pupils with SEND effectively.

Pupils trust that staff will help to keep them safe. They are taught strategies to keep themselves safe in the local community. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly when it happens. Most pupils attend school regularly. Pupils visit different places of worship and are respectful of others' beliefs and opinions. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils take part in a range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities that develop their talents and interests, raise aspirations and provide opportunities to learn through sports, music and visits that extend the curriculum.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff consistently identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should make sure that pupils consistently develop a wide range of ambitious vocabulary and use this effectively in their writing.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff consistently maximise high-quality interactions in the early years.
 - Leaders should maximise every opportunity to rapidly improve the attendance of pupils who do not attend often enough.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Beth Gallagher.

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 school leaders including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and other leaders. They also spoke with a representative of Birmingham local authority, and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Lead inspector:

Emma Titchener, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stuart Evans, Ofsted Inspector

Ian Tustian, Ofsted Inspector

Anne Bennett, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

420

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)

64.63%

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

1.19%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.76%

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

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	55%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	60%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	49%	60%	Below

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	64%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	69%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	65%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	73%	Below

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	65%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	62%	71%	Below

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	71%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	47%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	45%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	47%	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	56%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	60%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	53%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	56%	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	60%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	53%	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	64%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	47%	68%	-21 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	45%	67%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	47%	66%	-19 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	56%	80%	-24 pp
2024/25 (revised)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	53%	80%	-27 pp
2022/23 (final)	56%	78%	-23 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	60%	78%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	67%	78%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	53%	78%	-25 pp
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	64%	80%	-15 pp
2024/25 (revised)	67%	81%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	66%	79%	-14 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	61%	79%	-18 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)	7.2%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.7%	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)	15.3%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.1%	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