

Corfield CofE Infant School

Address: Thorpes Road, Heanor, Derbyshire, DE75 7GQ

Unique reference number (URN): 112826

Inspection report: 3 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.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils attend school well. They enjoy the stickers and rewards that celebrate their attendance. Leaders have clear systems and processes in place to track attendance and ensure that pupils attend well. They work closely with pupils' families and offer appropriate support, when needed, including to disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Although the attendance of pupils with SEND is lower than other groups, for some of these pupils there have been demonstrable improvements.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour. These expectations are communicated effectively to pupils, staff and parents and carers. Pupils' behaviour across the school is positive. They are polite, friendly and respectful towards one another. Leaders have established a calm and orderly environment so that pupils can learn without disruption. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They try hard and are keen to please their teachers.

Leaders have created a culture, where staff know how to support and protect pupils. Appropriate training means that staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently and make suitable adjustments when necessary.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years benefit from a welcoming, inclusive environment that helps them feel safe and ready to learn. Routines are well established and support children to settle quickly. Staff know the children well. They provide support tailored to children's needs. This includes children facing additional barriers, such as special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and children who are disadvantaged.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the children's starting points. They work effectively with nurseries, childminders and parents and carers to ensure a smooth transition into school.

The curriculum is designed carefully to ensure that children make progress across all areas of learning. In the Reception Year, the teaching of phonics is systematic and well sequenced. This ensures that children secure their early reading and writing skills. Children practise what they have learned in early mathematics, for example developing their understanding of numbers using counting cubes. Children achieve well and are ready for their next steps.

Developing children's communication and language is a key area of focus for the school. Teachers model vocabulary and sentences well during focused teaching sessions. However, this modelling is less evident when children explore the learning environment or play independently.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's programme for personal development and wellbeing is logical and well organised. It is aligned closely to the school's values of achieve, believe and care. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to revisit their learning so that they can secure their knowledge. Pupils learn how to keep physically and mentally healthy. They know how to keep themselves safe, when working online and when out in the community.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. They are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs, understand right and wrong and consider ethical issues. Through visits, 'wow days' and community events, pupils learn about a range of cultures and faiths. They have a developing understanding of diversity and fundamental British values, such as mutual respect and supporting others. They learn about respectful relationships and different kinds of families. Despite being young, pupils know and show respect in a mature way. They understand the importance of helping others and are excited when asked to do a job. Pupils help one another readily if they see that a peer is finding something difficult.

Leaders and staff understand how to meet pupils' emotional needs. A flexible pastoral support offer is tailored to meet pupils' needs so that they are ready for learning.

Pupils enjoy the after-school activities offered by the school. They particularly enthuse about the science club, which is well attended. Pupils and parents and carers welcome 'Fresh-air Friday', when pupils enjoy exploring and developing through outdoor learning.

Leaders make sure that all groups of pupils benefit from the school's curriculum enrichment opportunities. When necessary, leaders ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have additional support so that they can participate fully.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not achieve consistently well. They are not prepared well enough for their next steps.

In writing, teachers do not focus on the fundamental skills that pupils need to become successful writers, such as letter formation or word spacing. Staff do not help pupils to secure the key knowledge that they need for their next steps. For example, pupils copy out sentences written by staff, but they are not able to read back what they have written. Teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge about writing accurately, so these gaps remain.

The proportion of pupils passing the phonics screening check is significantly below the national average and is declining over time. Work to improve reading is already in progress. Teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge of reading and provide appropriate support to help pupils to catch up. Despite this, some pupils do not have a secure knowledge of the sounds they should know.

The school's new approach to teaching mathematics is having a positive impact on the progress that pupils make in this subject.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders do not have a secure understanding of how well the curriculum is delivered across different ages and subjects. They do not ensure that all pupils benefit from high-quality, inclusive teaching. There are inconsistencies in how well teachers implement the curriculum and these are not being addressed. While leaders have secured some improvements in the teaching of reading and mathematics, this is not the case for writing. Pupils make mistakes in their written work and, often, teachers do not spot these. As a result, pupils do not correctly form letters and their spelling does not improve. Leaders' actions to improve writing have been neither timely nor effective.

In most subjects, the school's curriculum identifies what pupils will learn. It is well sequenced and builds on what pupils have learned before. Teachers demonstrate effective subject knowledge across the curriculum. They give clear instructions and explanations. In some lessons, teachers talk about what pupils have learned before to help pupils embed their learning.

On occasion, teachers check how well pupils are learning important knowledge and skills. However, this is not consistent. At times, teaching is not adapted well enough to match what pupils know and can do. Teachers' feedback to pupils is not always accurate and pupils do not know what they need to do to improve. As a result of these weaknesses, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not achieve as well as they should.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders make sure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and assessed accurately. Individual learning plans outline the support that these pupils need and suitable strategies that might help. However, teachers do not use this information routinely to support pupils with SEND. When this happens, these pupils struggle to access their learning and do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils with SEND sometimes benefit from effective support so that they can overcome barriers to learning. However, this is not consistently the case. Leaders do not monitor the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND closely enough so that they know what is working well and when things need to be reviewed and modified. When necessary, leaders work effectively with parents and carers, and external agencies to support these pupils.

Leaders and staff understand the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language. They have an informed understanding of pupils who are known to social care and how to ensure that these pupils are supported and included. Leaders use funding effectively to ensure that these groups of pupils benefit from additional support and can access the enrichment activities on offer.

Urgent improvement ●

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. However, this vision has not been realised. While leaders have identified some of the school's weaknesses, their actions to rectify them have not been timely. As a result, weaknesses in the curriculum in some subjects, and in how well some pupils access their learning, have persisted for too long. Leaders' capacity to bring about the improvements that the school needs is limited without external support.

Leaders do not always act in the best interests of pupils. Not all pupils receive their curriculum entitlement. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not achieve as well as they should because leaders do not ensure that these pupils get the support they need. Leaders do not always allow pupils to be in school when they could be. This practice constitutes off-rolling, according to Ofsted's definition.

Governors are beginning to hold leaders to account effectively. They know the school's improvement priorities and have started to question the progress that leaders are making towards achieving them. Governors understand the barriers to learning for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding. They check that additional funding is used effectively to support these pupils.

Leaders provide training for staff, in response to the school's changing context. This has had a positive impact on how effectively staff support pupils' emotional needs. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate that leaders are, typically, mindful of staff's wellbeing and workload.

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

Pupils' experiences at this school are mixed. The school offers pupils a nurturing environment, where staff know them well. Warm relationships between staff and pupils help pupils feel happy and secure. However, while children make a successful start to their education in the early years, they do not go on to achieve as well as they should. Some pupils cannot access their learning well enough. This means they do not secure their understanding of important knowledge and skills in sufficient detail. Decisions that leaders make about the curriculum are not always in pupils' best interests.

Pupils do not become fluent readers as quickly as they should. Outcomes in the phonics screening check are significantly below national averages. Recent work to help pupils who have fallen behind with their reading to catch up is beginning to make a positive difference.

Most pupils attend school often. They know how they are expected to behave. They respond positively to this and conduct themselves well. They follow instructions and, typically, listen carefully in class. Pupils enjoy social times and report that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff will help them if they have a concern.

Pupils understand how they can make a positive difference in school. They enjoy being responsible for carrying out special roles and responsibilities in the classroom and on the playground. The school actively promotes pupils' broader development. A range of clubs and activities nurture their interests. Pupils enjoy the sports and science clubs. Educational visits are well planned to build pupils' character. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged and those who speak English as an additional language are included in the wider aspects of school life.

Next steps

- Leaders must ensure that all pupils benefit from their full entitlement to an appropriate education.
 - Leaders, including governors, must make sure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to improve the school, and that they act swiftly and decisively to remedy any areas of weakness.
 - The governing body must ensure that it has an accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve so that it can enhance the support and challenge that it provides to leaders.
 - Leaders must make sure that their evaluation of the quality of the curriculum and of teaching is accurate. They should prioritise the most important areas for improvement and monitor the impact of their work closely to ensure that it is having the desired impact.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information effectively to check what pupils know already so that learning is adapted appropriately, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders need to continue their work to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in the early reading and writing.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jo Francis.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, representatives of the local authority and of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a range of teaching and support staff, and pupils.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a Church of England primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in December 2024.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Louise McAlavey

Lead inspector:

Donna Chambers, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

George Huthart, 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 3 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

81

Well 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

90

Well below 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)

29.63%

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

0.00%

Well 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

25.93%

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).

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)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.3%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.8%	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)	6.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	13.3%	14.6%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.7%	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