

Belmont CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Address: The Links, Belmont, Durham, DH1 2AG

Unique reference number (URN): 114227

Inspection report: 28 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

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard 

Pupils want to come to school. This is due to the warm and welcoming environment that leaders and staff have crafted over time. Staff engage productively with parents and carers to emphasise the importance of strong attendance and punctuality. As a result, whole-school attendance is high and above national figures. The same is true for the attendance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is very little lost learning due to absence or lateness. Leaders have worked effectively with disadvantaged pupils who have not attended regularly over time. This work has led to an improvement in disadvantaged pupils' attendance.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff consistently reinforce high expectations across the school. This includes in the early years classes. Lessons proceed without disruption. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are unfailingly polite and welcoming. The nurturing and respectful environment in school enables pupils to flourish. This is supported through the school's clear values and ethos. Pupils display commendable attitudes to each other. Bullying and discrimination of any form are not tolerated. Where a small number of pupils might occasionally struggle with their emotions, compassionate staff put highly effective pastoral support in place.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils progress well through the curriculum. This is as a result of typically secure teaching and learning in school. The very youngest children in the school's early years classes do well. Pupils build an increasingly secure foundation in reading, writing and mathematics. This allows them to achieve well over time. Leaders have the ambition to increase further the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher standard in reading and mathematics. This work is ongoing. The impact is not currently reflected in published outcomes.

Leaders have overseen significant improvements in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils now achieve more highly in writing and mathematics than disadvantaged pupils nationally. This is less the case, however, in reading. Overall, by the time they leave Year 6, pupils' achievement in national assessments typically compares favourably to national outcomes. This means that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have overseen improvements to the curriculum. It is ambitious and well-sequenced. Teachers with appropriate expertise and subject knowledge guide pupils through it. Teaching is designed to give pupils the knowledge and skills required to be ready for the next stage of their education. This ambition is realised. Pupils learn what they need to be successful.

Over time, pupils' basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics build and become increasingly secure. However, leaders' understanding of where the curriculum and teaching could be further adapted sometimes lacks precision. This means that, particularly in mathematics, pupils do not develop the detailed knowledge they might.

Pupils typically have effective recall of their learning. They use this knowledge well in independent work. For example, pupils use expanded noun phrases and similes in their writing to achieve a desired effect. Others make links between recent discussions about the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and previous learning about Grace Darling.

Teachers seek to adapt learning appropriately. This means that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are otherwise disadvantaged, get the opportunity to be successful and achieve.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff have developed an effective curriculum for early years. This curriculum sets out the skills, knowledge and experiences that children need to achieve and thrive. Early years provision is grounded in a love of rhymes, stories and songs. Children as young as 2 love to hear stories shared in the outdoor reading shed. They choose their next story with excitement. Leaders' focus on communication and language has a notable impact. The early years provision is alive with the chatter of children playing productively. Staff generally model and promote new language and vocabulary effectively. Children playing happily and collaboratively in the mud kitchen used this vocabulary to describe the 'delicious snacks' they were making. Interactions with staff typically extend children's learning well.

Skilful staff craft and shape activities to ensure that children learn well, whatever their starting points. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff prioritise the development of children's skills for reading. Children receive effective phonics teaching, which enables them to secure their knowledge and ability in early reading. This prepares them well for more difficult texts in key stage 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

This is an inclusive school. Pupils are nurtured and welcomed into the school community. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or any other form of disadvantage. Pupils are able to engage in meaningful and appropriate opportunities to learn and thrive. Leaders are resolutely focused on enhancing the provision in the school. They adapt this well to emerging pastoral needs. For example, the 'soft landing' provision in the morning helps pupils who may have difficulty with the transition between home and school.

Well-trained staff identify pupils' academic needs swiftly and accurately. This means the school removes barriers to learning for pupils as quickly as possible. Where additional support is necessary, leaders deploy staff to make best use of expertise. Appropriate monitoring of support helps leaders understand where they need to adapt provision further. This process of regular review and adaptation means that pupils get every chance to succeed. The school's work with external agencies and with families helps to further shape the support that pupils receive.

Leaders spend the government's pupil premium funding appropriately. Over time, this means that pupils who are eligible for this funding get the support they need to achieve, notably in writing.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed an effective and motivated team in the school. They ensure that staff are supported with their workload and wellbeing. Through an evidence-informed approach to professional development, staff develop their expertise over time. This allows them to make useful contributions to school improvement priorities. These priorities are typically carefully considered and targeted to where they will have most impact. For example, the work that leaders have overseen around the development of the early years curriculum is particularly noteworthy. However, analysis of data about pupil attainment is not as precise as it could be. This means the curriculum is not always adapted and taught as well as leaders intend.

Those responsible for governance have appropriate skills and expertise to fulfil their roles. They fulfil their statutory duties. Governors ensure that the vision and strategic direction of the school are typically secured and maintained over time. They generally build a fair understanding of the progress towards school improvement priorities. However, at times, governors do not offer robust challenge to leaders. This is regarding whether priorities are being addressed in a sufficiently timely manner to have a greater impact on pupils' outcomes over time.

Parents are positive about the relationships they have with the school. Leaders have worked to create an environment in school that matches their vision of 'The Belmont Family'. This enables pupils to flourish, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Decisions made at Belmont are designed to be in the best interests of pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a coherent, relevant and appropriate programme for personal, social and health education across the school. This is from early years provision onwards. Personal, social and emotional development is a clear focus in early years. The school's work in this area has notable impact. Young children are given the space and freedom to develop their own characters. This is while adhering to the clear routines and expectations of the school. The youngest pupils develop skills in cooperation and resilience. These skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Older pupils develop an understanding of spirituality through the school's teachings and through well-planned educational visits. For example, older pupils discuss with admirable knowledge the impact of their visit to a mosque.

Pupils have access to an appropriate range of clubs and extra-curricular activities. Pupil voice is used to help shape this offer. This helps to promote and nurture talents and interests. 'Belmont's Got Talent' was a popular showcase for these. Other pupils speak positively about 'SNAG', the school's nutrition action group. They praise the impact this has on promoting healthy eating in school. Across the personal development programme, leaders remove barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils develop a keen understanding of equality and tolerance. They understand the dangers of discrimination and stereotyping. This prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. For example, when discussing fundamental British values, some pupils share how individual liberty should not interfere with the rule of law. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of online and offline risks. They know how to be safe beyond the school gates. This includes an appropriate understanding of the content of the school's relationships education, such as regarding healthy or toxic relationships.

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

Pupils are part of the loving and nurturing 'Belmont family'. They are happy and confident. Pupils are polite young people who make a positive contribution to life in the school. For example, the 'playground buddies' include others in games and friendship at breaktimes. The 'wellbeing warriors' look out for those pupils who may at times need some emotional support. Positive relationships are evident in classes, from Nursery to Year 6. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and resilience throughout the curriculum and the wider development programme. The school's vision of 'flourishing together' is embodied by its pupils.

Pupils and staff share the high expectations for behaviour that are embedded across the school. Pupils feel safe. They know that any allegations of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. A typical phrase heard by pupils across school is that 'we are nice to each other'. School is a place where pupils want to be. As a result, pupils' attendance is high. Pupils' high levels of respect for others with any perceived difference does them great credit. They are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils develop curiosity and enjoyment. Their engagement in lessons is generally of an impressive standard. Pupils typically achieve well. Those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable have barriers removed. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the support they need. These pupils do well from their starting points by the time they prepare to leave for secondary school.

Next steps

- Governors should ensure that they use their expertise to challenge leaders consistently and robustly across all aspects of the school's work, gathering sufficiently detailed information on school performance from as wide a range of sources as possible.
- Leaders should use assessment information robustly to understand how well pupils learn what is intended and therefore where the curriculum and teaching should be adapted.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Nicola Lee.

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 headteacher, other school staff, members of the board of governors, a representative of the diocese and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils, visited a sample of lessons and looked at pupils' work across a number of curriculum subjects.

Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is therefore also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last such inspection was in September 2023.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. Staff and pupils moved into a new building in the 2024 to 2025 academic year. The school has increased its nursery provision to accommodate 2-year-old children since the last inspection.

Kirsty Harrison-Brown: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Julie McGrane, Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Fallon, 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 28 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

275

Close to 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

361

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.18%

Below 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

0.73%

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

11.64%

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 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	73%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	74%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	73%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	86%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	94%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	77%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	79%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	76%	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	88%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	89%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	94%	73%	Above

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	35%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	44%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	53%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	44%	63%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	47%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	67%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	71%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	89%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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	35%	68%	-32 pp
2024/25 (revised)	44%	69%	-25 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	44%	81%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	47%	78%	-31 pp
2024/25 (revised)	67%	78%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	71%	80%	-9 pp
2024/25 (revised)	89%	81%	8 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.1%	5.9%	Below

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)	9.7%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	16.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.2%	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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