

Nutley Church of England Primary School

Address: High Street, Nutley, Uckfield, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 3NW

Unique reference number (URN): 114517

Inspection report: 6 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 attend school often. Persistent absence is lower than the national figure. Leaders' work to remove attendance barriers for vulnerable pupils is matched to individual pupils' needs and is highly effective. This targeted approach particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's breakfast club, nurture provision and strong collaboration with parents and carers helps vulnerable pupils to arrive on time and be ready to learn.

Pupils' behaviour is highly positive. Relationships across the school are warm and nurturing. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and lessons proceed without disruption. There is a tangible sense of positivity throughout the school. Interactions between pupils and adults are consistently respectful and considerate. Pupils show high levels of care for one another and for staff. Leaders recognise that bullying can occur in any school and they work proactively to prevent it. Pupils state with confidence that racism or prejudicial language would never be tolerated here. A culture of kindness, cooperation and compassion is firmly established at the school. Leaders model these values and staff and pupils uphold them from the early years to Year 6.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders' personal development programme is highly effective. It offers well-planned opportunities to build pupils' character, deepen their understanding of right and wrong and prepare them strongly for life beyond school. Pupils demonstrate secure understanding of the personal, social, health and economic curriculum. For example, they know how to stay safe online and offline and understand that families and relationships can differ. Relationships education is age-appropriate and equips pupils with the knowledge they need to make safe and informed choices. Pupils show a strong grasp of fundamental British values and engage thoughtfully with ethical issues.

The school's pastoral care is a significant strength. 'The Nest' provides expert emotional support that helps pupils to regulate their feelings and reflect on their experiences. Pastoral provision is strong and benefits all pupils. Support for vulnerable pupils, including those who are looked after, is well targeted to pupils' needs. Leaders maintain close oversight to ensure that interventions to help pupils are effective and meet pupils' needs.

Educational visits enrich the curriculum and broaden pupils' appreciation of cultural diversity, heritage and the wider world. Over their time at the school, pupils benefit from a wide range of creative, artistic and cultural experiences, including visits to museums, restaurants, outdoor adventure activities and theatre performances. Leaders remove financial and practical barriers, to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, access these opportunities fully.

Pupils develop as proactive, responsible citizens. They work with local council members to raise awareness of road safety and propose practical solutions to protect their community. The school raises pupils' aspirations through career development days and visits from

inspirational speakers. Pupils thrive in their roles, such as ‘worship leaders’ and ‘school councillors’.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders have an accurate and well-informed understanding of the quality and impact of education and care in the early years. They make thoughtful decisions that support the improvement of provision to ensure that children make a successful start. For example, leaders have invested in developing an environment that promotes children's curiosity, independence and physical development.

Leaders ensure that children experience a purposeful curriculum from the moment they begin school. The curriculum is well designed and carefully ordered. Staff help children to build knowledge progressively, with opportunities to revisit and consolidate learning. Teaching is effective. Staff generally provide high-quality interactions that model language clearly and extend children's thinking. Leaders are taking effective steps to ensure that this successful work happens even more throughout the early years at the school. Teachers prioritise the development of children's vocabulary and early reading.

Staff use careful checks on knowledge to understand each child's starting points, including for disadvantaged children or children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They adapt teaching so that all children can access learning successfully. Positive partnerships with parents and carers, as well as colleagues across the federation, support children's smooth transitions into Year 1.

Leaders promote children's personal, social and emotional development effectively. Staff establish warm relationships and a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Children feel safe, learn to manage risks and develop their independence. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders foster a caring and inclusive culture that is matched by well-targeted support for pupils across the school. Leaders ensure that all pupils access the full curriculum through well-considered strategies that increasingly help them to overcome barriers to their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from a range of help, such as through visual aids, language prompts, adapted resources and purposeful adult support. As a result, they achieve well and make sustained progress from their starting points.

Leaders identify with accuracy the key challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. Where needed, leaders prioritise support for pupils' language and communication skills, social and emotional needs and also provide targeted help to improve pupils' mathematical

understanding. This focused approach ensures that disadvantaged pupils receive the right support at the right time.

Leaders support staff effectively to identify pupils' individual needs. Most of the time, teachers respond by putting appropriate help for pupils in place. Leaders monitor this support closely and are taking steps to ensure that it remains targeted, timely and effective for all pupils. Staff training equips teachers and support staff with the knowledge and expertise required to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Strong communication with families, alongside timely engagement with external agencies, ensures that decisions are made in pupils' best interests. Collaborative working by leaders across the federation of schools strengthens provision at Nutley further, particularly for pupils with SEND who benefit from shared expertise and consistent approaches.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's context, strengths and areas for development. They identify clear improvement priorities and take decisive action that leads to positive change. For example, leaders have strengthened early years provision so that children in Reception benefit from richer, more purposeful learning opportunities. Leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching throughout the school is well informed and they are acting on their appropriate plans, to strengthen teaching further so that pupils achieve more highly.

Recent leadership changes have accelerated the improvement of the school's work. School leaders, governors and federation leaders work with diligence, ambition and moral purpose to secure the best outcomes for all pupils at Nutley. Their decisions prioritise the needs of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to social care. Staff morale is high. Parents and carers value the school's caring ethos.

Governors meet their statutory duties effectively. They bring expertise, such as in safeguarding, inclusion and equality and they provide well-thought-out challenge, as well as constructive support for leaders. Governance is strengthened further through federation collaboration, which increases leadership capacity at Nutley and ensures that improvement work can continue long term. Leaders foster a culture of high expectations, expert training and shared accountability.

Leaders support and training for staff is a strength. Leaders ensure that staff access a coherent, evidence-informed programme that builds their curriculum and teaching expertise over time. As a result, teachers are increasingly successful in their work.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Leaders correctly identify that standards in mathematics have not been consistently high enough. Over time, some pupils' attainment in mathematics in Year 6 and in the Year 4 multiplication check has been below average.

Pupils generally achieve well in phonics, reading and writing. However, due to some variation in the teaching of phonics and writing, some current pupils have gaps in their essential knowledge, such as in letter formation and spelling. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities make suitable progress from their starting points.

In some subjects, such as personal, social, health and economic education, teaching is highly effective and pupils learn and remember content securely over time. They develop their knowledge well and apply it with skill and confidence.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

At times, teaching does not help pupils to build knowledge well. The activities that teachers provide do not reflect what pupils already know or what they need to learn next. As a result, some pupils find work too easy, while others find it too hard. In some parts of the curriculum, this results in pupils achieving less than they could. When teachers provide meaningful feedback, pupils' misconceptions are addressed sharply. However, this approach is not well established in some classes.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Teachers' subject knowledge has been strengthened through effective collaboration with partner schools across the federation. Generally, teachers adapt learning well so that every pupil has the opportunity to succeed. Leaders know where the quality of this work varies. They have put effective support in place, including improvements to the teaching of phonics and writing, to ensure that all teaching matches the strongest practice in the school.

Leaders have designed a curriculum with clear end points and precisely defined knowledge and skills that staff will teach. This reflects leaders' careful thinking about how to support mixed-age classes in key stages 1 and 2. Leaders' design of the curriculum encourages pupils to build their knowledge and skills steadily over time. Ambition is high for all pupils. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.

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

The school's values of respect, compassion, perseverance, friendship, forgiveness and trust are modelled daily by enthusiastic and joyful pupils in this friendly village school. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging from the moment they join the caring Reception Class. Since the school joined a federation with other schools, leaders at Nutley have raised expectations consistently for all pupils. As a result, pupils' behaviour is positive in every class and on the

playground. Pupils do not worry about bullying. They explain that everyone is kind, reflected in the way that older 'buddies' support younger children.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the effective pastoral care and academic support that staff provide for them. Pupils achieve well in many subjects, but leaders recognise that more work is needed to ensure that all pupils know and remember important knowledge securely over time. Pupils enjoy learning and are generally well prepared for their next steps in education. However, sometimes, teaching does not build well enough on what pupils already know, which means that some tasks can be too easy or too hard. At these times, pupils do not learn securely or achieve as well as they could.

Pupils attend school regularly, behave very well and benefit from impressive preparation for life in modern Britain. They show exemplary respect for others and embrace the views and experiences of others, this includes people of different faiths or culture. Leadership roles at school help pupils to develop as responsible citizens. Pupils take an active role in promoting road safety outside the school. A wide range of trips, visits and clubs enriches school life, alongside outdoor learning and opportunities that celebrate pupils' talents and interests.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching builds on what pupils know, to help them to learn and remember knowledge securely across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should support teachers to identify and address pupils' misconceptions to help them to achieve well, particularly in mathematics.
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About this inspection

The school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. The school joined the Pioneer Federation in September 2025. At this time, the new executive headteacher and head of school both joined the school.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Alan Brundle.

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 head of school, executive headteacher, inclusion leader, leaders from the Pioneer Federation, governors, teachers and support staff during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke to representatives from the local authority and diocese.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2025.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Lead inspector:

Scott Reece, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Luisa Gould, 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 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

64

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

105

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)

17.19%

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

0.00%

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

14.06%

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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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 (revised)	85%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	58%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	77%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	83%	71%	Above

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	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	83%	73%	Above
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		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

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		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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

‘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		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

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		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

‘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)	5.7%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	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 (2 term)	15.3%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	11.6%	16.2%	Below

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



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