

Cranbourne

Address: Wessex Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 3NP

Unique reference number (URN): 116432

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

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's programme for pupils' personal development and wellbeing is of high quality. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum enables pupils to learn beyond what is expected and meets their specific needs. Specialist teachers teach the PSHE curriculum across the school. Pupils build up a detailed body of knowledge and skills in PSHE. They talk confidently about what they have learned and can apply their learning to their own lives.

Vulnerable pupils, including those not attending the school site, are supported well. For example, teachers adapt the PSHE programme to revisit content when necessary. This ensures that all pupils learn important knowledge and skills, including how to keep safe and stay healthy. When required, pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral support for their wellbeing.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They develop a deep understanding of difference and the importance of equality. Pupils receive age-appropriate relationships and sex education, learning about potential risks to their safety, including online risks and how to manage them.

The careers curriculum prepares pupils to make ambitious and informed decisions about their future. Leaders give careful consideration to events and promote a range of options for pupils' next steps. Pupils benefit from the school's links with a range of businesses, and further education and apprenticeship providers. The school's careers event is well attended.

The school offers pupils a variety of leadership roles. These include school council roles, green leaders and young interpreters. The roles fully support pupils' wider development, increase their confidence and help shape their character. The range of clubs on offer varies from traditional sports and performing arts, through to activities such as gardening and knitting. Pupils also benefit greatly from trips in the local area and abroad. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities take an active and purposeful part in school life.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 11 have improved over time and are broadly close to national averages. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well compared to disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well from their various starting points. The school prioritises supporting pupils who have not mastered the basic knowledge and skills in English and mathematics that they need. These pupils quickly develop the confidence and knowledge so that they can successfully access the full curriculum.

Pupils generally progress well through the curriculum, securing the required knowledge in most subjects. Overall, leaders ensure that pupils are ready for the next stage in their education, employment or training.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school meets the ambition of the national curriculum. Leaders have constructed a curriculum in each subject which builds on pupils' prior learning. This helps pupils to apply what they already know to their new learning. Teachers follow the same approach to teaching the curriculum consistently across the school. This is known as the 'Cranbourne way', which both pupils and staff value.

Subject teachers have the specialist knowledge they need to deliver their subjects. During lessons, teachers provide clear explanations. This enables pupils to access their learning successfully, particularly when the concepts that they are learning become more complex. Reading is high priority in the school. The school's approaches help pupils to catch up and keep up with the reading curriculum. Pupils' reading improves throughout their time at school. Teachers adapt their lessons well to support disadvantaged pupils or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example through the use of resources that help pupils work in the way that meets their needs.

Teachers generally check carefully what pupils know and understand from their learning and use this information to plan pupils' next steps effectively. However, whereas in some subjects teachers do this well, this is not consistently the case across the curriculum. On the occasions when teachers do not use their assessment of pupils' learning effectively, pupils do not build their knowledge securely.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Staff receive appropriate training on how to identify when pupils may have additional learning needs. Overall, the school's work identifies the needs of pupils well. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders use their knowledge of pupils' needs to ensure that they get the right support at the right time. Staff use effective strategies to help pupils to overcome the barriers to learning that they face. The school tracks how well pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are achieving, taking positive action when they need to.

Leaders with oversight for provision for pupils with SEND are well qualified. They use their expertise to support staff and pupils effectively. This includes for pupils who attend the school's specially resourced provision. The school works closely with external agencies, including the local authority, to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.

Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding. Their choices help to improve the education and wider personal development of disadvantaged pupils. The school uses alternative provision appropriately. Leaders check carefully that this provision is suitable for pupils, and in their best interests.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths. They identify priorities and put appropriate actions in place to support improvement, for example in relation to pupils' attendance. Governors meet their statutory requirements. For example, their oversight helps ensure that pupils are kept safe. They challenge leaders' decisions appropriately and make sure that these are made in the best interests of pupils. Governors have supported school leaders to manage the challenges of the new school building while making sure that leaders have maintained the quality of education provided by the school.

Leaders ensure that staff training has a positive impact, such as in developing teachers' expertise. It is tailored to meet the individual needs of staff and linked to the school's framework for teaching and learning. The rapid expansion of the school in the last three years has meant that the professional development of teachers new to the profession is a high priority. The training and guidance that they receive from the school helps them to make a positive start to their career.

Leaders consider the workload of staff. They identify ways to reduce it, including when they introduce new ideas. As the school has grown in size, leaders have engaged with all members of the school community effectively to ensure that the school's ethos and values are maintained.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance is below national averages. This includes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have improving attendance as a significant priority for the school. They have put in place strategies to improve attendance, such as 'attendance streaks', and raised awareness of the importance of regular attendance with parents, carers and pupils. However, it is too early to see the impact of these strategies.

Pupils behave well in school. Disruption to learning is rare. Staff apply school policies and procedures consistently. This is evident in lessons across the school and at social times. Pupils are polite to adults and each other. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils rise to these expectations. Leaders use suspensions appropriately. Pupils receive precise support to make a positive return into school after suspension. Leaders do not tolerate any form of discrimination. If there is bullying, school leaders deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils feel cared for and describe how they value being part of the 'Cranbourne family'. Pupils appreciate the rewards they receive from staff in recognition of their positive behaviour and attitudes. Pupils build a sense of belonging in the school and enjoy celebrating what they achieve. When appropriate, the school makes adaptations to support the needs of specific pupils effectively.

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

Pupils feel happy and safe at Cranbourne school. Where pupils need support they know where to go to get it. They typically receive the right support that they need. The opportunities pupils receive, both academically and beyond the subject curriculum, prepare them well for their next steps in employment, education or training. Pupils engage with businesses, colleges and universities through a range of events that take place during the school year. This includes the popular careers fair.

The curriculum is ambitious. Pupils learn a wide range of subjects that are taught by subject specialists. They enjoy learning and want to do their best. The 'Cranbourne way' provides a structure to lessons that teachers use across the school. Pupils achieve well. For example, their outcomes in national examinations are close to national averages. Staff use appropriate adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to support them to learn well. Pupils in the specially resourced provision benefit from the effective extra support and guidance that they receive, for example in relation to their specific needs.

Pupils behave well in school. They are polite to staff, visitors and each other. Bullying is rare. If it does happen the school deals with it appropriately.

Pupils receive a high-quality personal development curriculum. The school offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take part in trips, such as to local places of interest, the theatre and abroad for activities such as skiing. The wide range of clubs on offer fully encourages pupils to develop their talents and interests. This include sports, the performing arts, computer gaming and gardening. The school supports all pupils to participate in these clubs.

Pupils are not attending school as often as they should. The school has put in place appropriate strategies to improve attendance but these have not currently had the desired impact.

Next steps

- Leaders should implement their attendance strategy fully, so that it results in pupils' high attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment consistently well across the school, particularly to check on pupils' understanding of what they are taught and inform the next steps for pupils' learning.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mrs Melissa Paxton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, governors, teachers, the local authority and pupils during the inspection. They visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and reviewed documents, including for the curriculum.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes a specially resourced provision for pupils with a diagnosis of dyslexia.

The school makes use of 8 unregistered alternative provisions.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The number of pupils on roll has increased from 549 to 1,088.

Miss Sarah Conlon: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Paul Grundy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Peter Fry, Ofsted Inspector

Julia Mortimore, Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Cattell, His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Robb-Webb, 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

987

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: 1,067

School capacity

900

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

28.27%

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: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.98%

Well above 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.70%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SpLD - Specific Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	41.9%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.1%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	21.7%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	42.2	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.8	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.0	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.13	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.71	-0.03	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	24.4%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44.4%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	10.0%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	32.2	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.3	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	30.1	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.05	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.97	-0.57	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	24.4%	52.8%	-28.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	44.4%	53.1%	-8.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	10.0%	52.4%	-42.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	32.2	50.3	-18.1
2023/24 (final)	43.3	50.0	-6.7
2022/23 (final)	30.1	50.3	-20.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	0.05	0.16	-0.12
2022/23 (final)	-0.97	0.17	-1.14

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	85%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	94%	Average

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)	9.4%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	9.1%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.4%	9.0%	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)	23.6%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	23.7%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	27.1%	26.5%	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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