

Hainford VC Primary School

Address: Newton Road, Hainford, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 3BQ

Unique reference number (URN): 121041

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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils progress very well as they move through the school because the curriculum is of a high quality and implemented consistently well. They know and remember more across subjects and apply what they learn in English and mathematics to their wider learning. They take pride in their work, showing secure understanding and increasing independence.

Although small cohorts make year-on-year data less reliable, national assessments show outcomes that are in line with or sometimes above national figures. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils also achieve well. As they move through the school, gaps between the outcomes of different pupil groups continue to close.

Pupils are well prepared for transition to secondary school and the next stage of their education. They develop secure knowledge, positive attitudes to learning and confidence in explaining their thinking. They use what they have learned with maturity, resilience and respect.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders promote high attendance consistently and make sure everyone understands why it matters for pupils' learning. They track emerging patterns, including dips linked to illness, and respond quickly with sustained and effective actions. Leaders work closely with families so that parents recognise the impact of absence on progress. When pupils or groups show signs of low attendance or persistent absence, leaders provide personalised support, such as counselling or family help, to secure improvement.

Pupils behave well across the school and help create a calm, orderly and respectful environment. They show care, compassion and understanding towards each other and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

Classrooms remain purposeful, and pupils respond promptly when staff give instructions. Staff apply the behaviour policy with consistency. They have high expectations. Movement around the school at playtimes and lunchtimes flows smoothly throughout the day. Pupils can explain what bullying is and say it happens extremely rarely. They trust staff to act quickly and consistently if concerns arise. Pupils know that staff will challenge any form of discrimination or harassment. Staff know pupils very well. They build strong, trusting relationships that reflect the school's values. As a result, pupils behave extremely well and feel safe.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff have developed an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. Their systematic approach to evaluating the impact of the curriculum ensures that decisions are evidence-based. Alongside this, leaders' detailed knowledge of pupils and their interests enables them to make appropriate adjustments. The curriculum is constructed around

carefully chosen core books with a focus on spoken language and developing pupils' vocabulary. Pupils have regular opportunities to think deeply, discuss their learning and make connections across subjects. Sequencing is deliberate, revisiting key ideas and vocabulary, so that pupils build secure knowledge over time.

The curriculum places emphasis on core knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who need to secure or fill gaps in essential knowledge receive targeted practice and support to help them catch up quickly. Staff identify misconceptions promptly and provide additional practice during lessons. Ongoing checks enable staff to respond swiftly to pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This allows staff to make appropriate adaptations and identify when longer-term help may be required.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. Collaboration across the federation allows staff to share expertise, work alongside colleagues and access high-quality professional development. Regular reviews of pupils' work ensure high expectations and give leaders a clear understanding of strengths in teaching and the impact of the curriculum on pupils' outcomes.

Early years

Strong standard 

Children in the Reception Year learn alongside Year 1 pupils. Staff plan a bespoke curriculum that gives every child the strong foundations of knowledge that they need for future learning. Staff use skilled interactions to extend children's language, model rich vocabulary and prompt children to articulate their thinking. They quickly identify when children need more practice or repetition and provide well-timed opportunities to secure understanding. When children need to revisit earlier learning, staff build this into provision, so that they consolidate knowledge before moving on.

The curriculum emphasises communication and language development in all areas. Staff engage children in purposeful talk, introduce new vocabulary and encourage children to explore ideas through high-quality dialogue.

Reading is a priority. Children are encouraged to listen and respond to stories they hear. Children in the Reception Year learn phonics from the start. They practise daily and use these skills to begin reading and writing with growing confidence, for example when writing labels and their names. Pupils in Year 1 have the opportunity to revisit previous learning. This helps them to be secure and confident. Any gaps from the Reception Year are revisited and learned. Staff work closely with pre-school providers to ensure a smooth start in school.

Close partnerships with parents strengthen learning. Staff share learning goals, discuss progress and guide parents on how to support early reading and language development at home. Staff ensure children feel secure, independent and ready for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Staff follow clear processes to identify pupils' needs and raise concerns about their wellbeing, progress or development. They work closely with families, social care, the virtual school and other local providers to put effective support into place for every pupil. Staff

create pupil profiles with parents, pupils and colleagues. These capture each child's needs, skills, talents, targets and support. Parents speak highly of the quality of care and personalised approach their children receive.

Leaders operate a well-established cycle of implementation and review. They discuss pupils' progress and evaluate the impact of strategies in place. They use this information to understand pupils' needs across the school and federation. Staff then adapt provision and target specific pupils effectively.

Leaders review how effectively they use funding, including pupil premium, to close gaps and support pupils' access to the curriculum. This clear approach enables leaders to identify and provide training for staff on strategies that meet the specific needs of pupils and families. Staff have the skills to provide high-quality pastoral and academic support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who face other barriers to learning receive the support that they need to blossom.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and share ambitious plans for the future. Leaders ensure that every decision they make reflects the best interests of their pupils and the wider school community. By working collaboratively and combining strengths across the federation, leaders have extended what they offer and meet the needs of pupils attending Hainford with increasing accuracy and skill. This approach has also created leadership capacity and improved access to high-quality training and support.

The governing body demonstrates strong knowledge of the school and fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Governors are able to make comparisons and evaluate the impact of leaders' actions and compare these to other schools in the federation. They contribute actively to strategic decision-making, ensuring accountability and alignment with federation priorities and policies.

Leaders place staff wellbeing and workload at the forefront of their work. Staff feel valued, supported and proud to work within the federation. High morale is evident, and staff speak positively of what leaders do for them.

Access to quality training is a significant strength. Staff benefit from opportunities to learn from experts, share practice across schools and develop deep subject knowledge. Leadership capacity continues to grow because leaders identify talent, provide targeted development and plan effectively for succession. This strengthens staff retention, improves consistency in expectations and secures high-quality provision for all pupils. Staff recognise the benefits of being part of the federation and the additional opportunities it provides for collaboration, pastoral support and professional growth.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This is because the school provides rich opportunities for them to reflect on their beliefs, experiences and values. They discuss right and wrong with increasing maturity and engage thoughtfully with ethical issues raised through the curriculum and assemblies.

Pupils show high levels of respect for others and value what makes each person unique while recognising what they share. They speak confidently about difference.

The school develops pupils' social skills exceptionally well. From the early years onwards, pupils learn how to cooperate, resolve conflict and rebuild relationships when difficulties occur. Tailored, effective support helps pupils who need further guidance in managing friendships.

Pupils participate actively in their school and village community, contributing through activities such as litter picking, fundraising and church links. These foster responsibility and pride. Leaders ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values, including democracy, respect and individual liberty, through class discussions, pupil roles and collaborative projects.

The personal development and wider curriculum programme is well planned and inclusive. Staff adapt the offer so disadvantaged pupils can access all opportunities. These include federation events, sports festivals, arts projects and cultural visits such as trips to London and geography fieldwork. Pupils broaden their interests through music, sports and creative activities. They learn the value of commitment, practice and healthy competition. The relationships and health education programme is age appropriate and equips pupils with the knowledge they need to keep themselves safe. This includes online risks, healthy relationships and safety in the community. As a result, pupils grow into confident, independent and reflective individuals who understand themselves and others. They contribute positively to their community and are very well prepared for their future lives.

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

Pupils at Hainford love their school and their learning. They arrive promptly and eager to learn. Pupils settle quickly into purposeful routines. Pupils experience engaging teaching that motivates them to explore new ideas and deepen their understanding. Pupils confidently discuss their learning. They enjoy using the vocabulary they learn. They take pride in their work and using and applying their knowledge across subjects.

Pupils progress well from their varied starting points. Staff quickly identify any barriers to learning and provide effective support. As a result, pupils achieve well not only in national assessments but across the curriculum and socially and emotionally. Carefully planned transition activities and visits help all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, move on confidently to the next stage of their education.

Relationships with staff and peers are built on mutual respect and care. Staff know pupils well. Pupils work collaboratively, show compassion towards one another and uphold the school values in their daily interactions. Regular participation in federation events, sports competitions and enrichment activities broadens their experiences beyond the academic curriculum. These opportunities enable pupils to discover new interests, develop their talents and gain a wider understanding of life beyond their village community.

Classrooms are calm, focused and enjoyable places in which to learn. Pupils are highly motivated and take pride in their work. Pupils feel safe in school and know that staff will listen to them and act quickly if concerns arise. They understand what bullying is, and, although friendship issues sometimes occur, they receive effective support to resolve them. Attendance is high because pupils value being in school. Through the curriculum and wider experiences, pupils learn how to contribute positively to their school, local community and modern Britain. They leave school confident, respectful and well prepared for their future.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain the effectiveness of their work in all areas. They should seek continued improvement, overcoming barriers and challenges, in order to drive a transformational impact for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Sue Hill.

The school is part of a federation called the Nebula Federation.

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 executive headteacher, head of school and other leaders from across the federation during the inspection.

This school is registered as having a Christian (Church of England) religious character. The last section 48 inspection was in 2019.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher: Ashley Best-White

Lead inspector:

Oriana Dalton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Susan Child, 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

63

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

87

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)

15.87%

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

6.35%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.46%

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	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	62%	S
2023/24 (final)	53%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	71%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	89%	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	65%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	65%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	65%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	59%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	73%	Close to average

‘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

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
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%	

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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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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
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)	4.0%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	3.9%	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)	1.8%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.9%	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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