

Creech St Michael Church of England Primary School

Address: Hyde Lane, Creech St Michael, Taunton, Somerset, TA3 5QQ

Unique reference number (URN): 123793

Inspection report: 20 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.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that children are given the support they need to transition smoothly into school. For example, the school works with local nurseries and parents and carers to understand children's needs before they arrive.

Leaders have mapped the early years curriculum carefully alongside key stage 1 to meet the needs of the mixed-age class structure. The curriculum is coherently sequenced and identifies what children need to know. Teachers carefully check how well children are building this knowledge and identify any gaps that may emerge. They provide targeted support where needed to address any gaps. For example, when children need further development in their finger and hand skills, ready for writing, teachers design specific activities during independent learning to help strengthen these skills.

Children get off to a secure start in learning to read. This is prioritised from the very start of Reception Year. Trained staff teach phonics well. They provide regular opportunities for children to practise reading the sounds and words they are learning. The environment is language rich. Staff interact purposefully with children to extend their vocabulary. On a small number of occasions, these interactions do not deepen learning as much as they could for some children, including for those children who are disadvantaged.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have constructed a coherent and broad personal development and wellbeing programme to support pupils across the school. The programme is carefully sequenced to ensure that it prepares pupils well for life beyond the school. Leaders consider the needs of pupils carefully, including any barriers they may have in accessing this broader offer.

Through the personal, social, health and education curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They confidently share examples of how to keep themselves healthy, such as through taking regular exercise and eating a balanced diet. Pupils show respect for one another. They know that it is important to treat others fairly, regardless of difference. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

The school supports pupils to develop their talents and interests through a variety of opportunities and experiences. For example, pupils enjoyed learning about fossil hunting during a residential visit. This has now become a hobby for some pupils outside of school. Pupils value the clubs they can attend, such as swimming and football. They join in sporting events enthusiastically, such as cross-country races. Leaders keep a close eye on who takes part in these activities. They make changes where needed so that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be involved and benefit fully.

The school makes support for pupils' wellbeing a priority. Pupils know who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They value 'the snug' as a part of the school where they can access the support they need. The school takes part in national events, such as 'mental

health week' to celebrate this aspect of its offer. Pupils appreciate how this work has a positive impact on their wellbeing.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Too many pupils are not ready for their next stage of education. They do not secure the essential knowledge they need, particularly in writing and mathematics, to be well prepared for future learning. This reflects the weaknesses in the teaching of the curriculum. Many pupils do not get the support they need to write well enough. They do not secure accuracy and fluency in their writing, particularly in handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Leaders have begun to address this with the launch of a new writing curriculum. However, it is too soon to see the impact of these changes.

Pupils develop their reading knowledge more securely. They learn to read well in key stage 1, which helps them to access the wider curriculum as they move through the school. Pupils with gaps in reading knowledge or fluency are supported effectively to catch up. As a result, pupils are better prepared in this subject for their next steps.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

The attendance and punctuality of some disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is stubbornly low. This impacts how well these pupils achieve academically and socially. The school tracks the attendance of pupils closely. It provides appropriate support for pupils and families to promote regular attendance as well as punctuality. Leaders' actions mean that overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average and that the number of pupils who arrive late to school has reduced.

Leaders have taken steps to improve behaviour across the school. Behaviour is generally calm and respectful in lessons. Pupils focus well when the curriculum is better matched to what they know and can do. However, when teaching does not meet pupils' needs, some pupils disengage and distract others. This impacts how well pupils learn. Leaders have taken effective steps to improve this, such as building positive relationships between pupils and staff. In addition, leaders have supported staff to understand and apply the school's behaviour policy more consistently. This work has had an impact on the behaviour of pupils. Many pupils report that behaviour has much improved.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching is variable. Some staff do not have a secure enough understanding of the curriculum or the most effective strategies to teach it well. Consequently, pupils do not build their knowledge confidently based on what they know and remember. Teachers do not check what pupils know carefully enough. As a result, they do not adapt their teaching to provide appropriate challenge or precise support to pupils, including those with special

educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils continue to make errors in their written work that go unaddressed. This hampers their progress across the curriculum.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the curriculum. They have rightly identified where aspects of the curriculum need to be improved. Leaders have begun to address long-standing weaknesses in English and mathematics. For example, they have improved the mathematics curriculum to ensure pupils develop their number fluency in a well-ordered way. However, it is too early to see the impact of these improvements on how well pupils achieve.

Early reading is a strength. Leaders prioritise this and check rigorously how well pupils are keeping up with the pace of the phonics programme. Staff implement this programme effectively. They provide support for pupils who need extra help. This ensures that pupils make a secure start in learning to read.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

The school has systems in place to identify barriers to learning that pupils may face. However, leaders do not identify the needs of some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately or quickly enough. Support for some pupils with SEND is too broad and lacks sharp focus. Staff have received training to support pupils with SEND. Even so, at times, staff do not adapt learning to meet pupils' needs well enough. This means that some pupils with SEND do not progress through the curriculum as well as they should.

Leaders do not have an accurate oversight of how well some pupils with SEND achieve. They do not check the impact of planned support well enough, particularly for pupils with learning needs. Leaders check more carefully the provision in place for pupils with bespoke support, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs. They work effectively with external agencies to develop staff expertise, such as using physiotherapists to support pupils with medical needs.

Additional funding is used effectively to identify and reduce barriers for disadvantaged pupils. For example, leaders use this funding to undertake language assessments in the early years to identify and then address gaps in children's speech and language development.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Over time, the level of challenge that governors have provided to leaders has lacked rigour. Consequently, governors have not ensured that a decline in standards has been dealt with decisively. Leaders know that staff's subject knowledge and teaching expertise are not developed well enough to ensure the ambition of the curriculum is fully realised. This is hampering the progress that pupils make.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. They have put in place a clear, strategic and team-based approach to school improvement. Leaders have quickly established a shared vision that centres around staff and pupils knowing that they belong at Creech St Michael. They have prioritised the right areas quickly, especially improving behaviour and the curriculum. Subject leaders are

developing their role and influence across the school. Early signs of improvement are visible, although much of this work is still at an early stage.

Staff are positive about the direction and raised expectations set by leaders. They value support for their workload and wellbeing during this period of rapid development.

Governors understand their statutory responsibilities. They rightly recognise the positive impact that the new leadership team has made in a short period of time. Governors use a range of activities to gather information and strengthen their understanding of the school's priorities. Governors continue to build their strategic oversight to ensure that leaders' actions secure improvement at the pace required.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming school. They develop warm relationships with staff. This helps pupils to feel cared for.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start that prepares them well for their education journey ahead. In contrast, as pupils move further up the school, they do not learn the curriculum well enough. New leaders have acted quickly to identify what needs to improve. However, the changes that they have made are recent. It is too early to see their impact on how well pupils learn. As a result, many pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not well prepared for their next stage of education. While most pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well, disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, do not attend well enough.

Leaders have made uniting the school community a priority. They have re-established the school's vision and values. Staff and pupils have worked together to enrich the school values, including adding 'peace' and 'forgiveness'. Pupils understand these and recognise how they help them to make positive choices. These changes are improving pupils' attitudes towards learning. Even so, when learning is not well matched to pupils' needs, some pupils lose focus. This leads to low-level disruption that interrupts learning.

Pupils value their friendships. Most pupils say that bullying is rare and that adults deal with it quickly. This helps them to feel safe and confident that staff will help them if they have any worries. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities that contribute to school life and beyond, such as becoming eco warriors, sports leaders or librarians. These roles help pupils feel that they can make a positive difference to their school and wider community.

Next steps

- Leaders should support staff to develop their teaching expertise and subject knowledge to ensure the curriculum is taught consistently well across subjects.
- Leaders should improve how well staff identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and check that this support is helping these pupils to learn the curriculum well.

- Leaders should ensure that teachers check how well pupils learn and remember new knowledge and use this to design learning that builds on what pupils already know.
 - Leaders should improve pupils' accuracy in their writing across subjects, particularly in handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation, so that pupils secure the knowledge they need to be well prepared for the next stage.
 - Leaders should ensure that the attendance and punctuality of disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, improves and that persistent absence reduces.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff in early years engage children in high-quality interactions with more consistency so that children develop their language and communication in readiness for the next stage.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Bob Pamplin.

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, senior leaders, special educational needs coordinator, staff and a representative of the local authority and the diocese. The lead inspector also met with governors, including the chair of governors.

Inspectors spoke with some parents at the start of the school day. They considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The current headteacher took up their post in September 2025.

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school was carried out in July 2019.

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

There is a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

Headteacher: Chloe Holt

Lead inspector:

Esther Best, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Joanne Briscombe, Ofsted Inspector

Carl Thornton, 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

270

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

294

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)

11.85%

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

2.22%

Close to 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

11.85%

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	55%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	36%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	69%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	58%	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	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	79%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	76%	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	63%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	46%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	67%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	49%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	81%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	19%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	17%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	29%	44%	Below

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	56%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	50%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	71%	60%	Close to average

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	38%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	33%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average

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	25%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	33%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	29%	59%	Below

‘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	19%	68%	-49 pp
2024/25 (revised)	17%	69%	-53 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	29%	66%	-38 pp

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	56%	80%	-23 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	71%	78%	-7 pp

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	38%	78%	-40 pp
2024/25 (revised)	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	57%	77%	-20 pp

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	25%	80%	-55 pp
2024/25 (revised)	33%	81%	-47 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	29%	79%	-51 pp

‘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)	5.4%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.0%	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)	13.0%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	18.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	16.0%	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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