

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Princethorpe

Address: Leamington Road, Princethorpe, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23 9PU

Unique reference number (URN): 125721

Inspection report: 14 April 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 

Leaders have designed a rich and coherent personal development and wellbeing programme that is carefully woven through the curriculum and daily school life. Assemblies, reflection time and classroom discussions revisit key themes such as keeping safe and understanding right and wrong. This enables pupils to understand how values such as kindness and equality influence real-life decisions. Through leadership roles within the school and participation in community activities, pupils develop a deep understanding of democracy, responsibility and mutual respect.

Pupils treat one another with courtesy. They speak thoughtfully about different beliefs and cultures, drawing confidently on their learning about faiths, celebrations and historical events. Pupils engage maturely with current and global events and discuss the moral and social issues these raise with sensitivity.

Pastoral support is highly effective. Staff know pupils extremely well and respond promptly and appropriately to needs. Pupils consistently report that they feel safe, happy and supported. They are confident to approach trusted adults if they have any concerns. Targeted and informal support helps pupils, particularly those experiencing challenging personal circumstances, to regulate emotions, build resilience and develop confidence.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They talk knowledgeably about online risks, including privacy and scams. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and respectful behaviour. Carefully chosen visitors, such as the police, enhance pupils' understanding of real-world risks, including road safety, and reinforce who is responsible for keeping them safe.

Leadership opportunities contribute meaningfully to pupils' confidence and sense of responsibility. Roles such as reading buddies and head boy and head girl foster social responsibility and positively influence younger pupils. Charitable activities effectively nurture compassion and empathy.

A wide range of clubs and educational visits enrich pupils' experiences and broaden their interests. Leaders monitor participation closely to ensure all pupils, including those with additional needs or vulnerabilities, engage fully and benefit equally from the school's offer.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils generally achieve well over time. By the time they leave the school, pupils secure the essential knowledge and skills needed for secondary school. Older pupils in particular become skilled at solving complex mathematical problems and show pride in their written work. Although in a few subjects some younger pupils do not learn as well as they could, pupils achieve securely over time across the curriculum.

By the end of Year 6, most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, most pupils achieve well in the Year 4 multiplication check. In the past, some pupils did not fully secure their phonics knowledge by the end of Year 1. Leaders' actions have brought about improvements. Year 1 pupils now learn to read with increasing confidence. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make suitable gains in their learning from their different starting points.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Overall attendance is close to the national average and has improved over time. The number of pupils who are persistently absent continues to reduce. Leaders emphasise to parents, carers and pupils the importance of regular attendance. Staff check attendance daily and follow up concerns promptly. Welfare checks and home visits help leaders understand and remove barriers to attending well, particularly for pupils facing difficult circumstances. Strategies such as access to the school's breakfast club create a welcoming culture and support pupils to arrive promptly.

Clear expectations from staff support calm and orderly classrooms. Most pupils behave well, listen carefully and stay focused on learning. A few pupils occasionally need reminders to remain on task. Pupils move sensibly around the school. Routines at lunchtimes and in the playground help pupils to play cooperatively and to show respect in shared spaces. Bullying and incidents of unkind behaviour are rare. When concerns arise, staff address them promptly and help pupils to understand the impact of their actions and to move on positively. Leaders support staff to consistently manage behaviour through training and shared systems. Staff know pupils well. Pupils who need extra help benefit from movement breaks, pastoral support and fidget toys, which helps them to successfully re-engage with learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out a broad and ambitious curriculum that takes appropriate account of the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Clear curriculum plans identify the knowledge and skills pupils should learn and remember. This helps pupils to build a secure understanding of key concepts over time.

Leaders keep a close eye on curriculum quality and teaching across the school. They know where implementation varies and where improvement is needed. This accurate view is supporting leaders in securing more consistent experiences for pupils across the school.

Generally well-planned activities help pupils to develop secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers place an emphasis on language and vocabulary, which helps pupils speak with increasing confidence and express their thinking in writing.

Teachers explain new ideas clearly and use practical experiences well to support pupils' learning. They break learning into small steps and typically use questions well to check pupils' understanding and address misconceptions. Targeted support usually helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to access essential content. On occasion,

however, the adaptations do not go far enough for pupils who need extra help. This leads to variations in how securely some pupils build on previous learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Adults build warm and trusting relationships with children, which helps them to feel safe and valued. Staff work closely with parents and carers to support smooth transitions, including for children who need additional reassurance. As a result, children settle quickly and engage positively with learning.

Leaders understand the strengths of the provision and where improvement is needed. They use this knowledge to make appropriate adjustments that enable children to access learning. They prioritise staff training and ensure welfare requirements are met. This supports children's wellbeing and gives all children a secure start.

The curriculum is carefully planned and reflects children's developmental needs. Staff typically adapt activities to children's starting points and interests. This helps play and learning to feel meaningful. Independent tasks engage children well, such as when children extracted orange juice and used herbs to make 'potions'. Activities such as these effectively support children's vocabulary development and independence. There are, however, times when staff miss opportunities to deepen learning through high-quality interactions with children. This limits communication development for some children.

From their starting points, children generally make secure gains across the areas of learning and are typically well prepared for Year 1. Phonics teaching usually supports confident practice of sounds and early writing. Targeted support helps children with additional needs access learning alongside their peers and develop positive learning behaviours.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff ensure that every pupil feels that they are a valued member of the school community. Staff have a clear and shared understanding of pupils' learning and developmental needs across the school. They identify pupils' additional needs early, including as soon as children join the nursery. Regular checks on pupils' learning help staff to spot any barriers quickly and put suitable interventions in place. The school works closely with external professionals to ensure pupils receive timely support.

Staff receive regular training and coaching to support their teaching of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps staff to make generally suitable adaptations to learning activities, although there are occasions when these adaptations do not fully match the needs of all pupils. Pupils who attend the Bridge provision benefit from tailored support. Staff create individual learning resources for pupils who join the school partway through their education. This enables them to catch up rapidly on previous learning. Pastoral provision helps pupils to build confidence and participate fully in school life.

Additional funding is used considerably to provide support for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders and governors track its impact carefully and use it to widen access to enrichment

activities, targeted learning activities and wellbeing support. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make secure progress over time and usually attend well.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders provide clear direction and demonstrate a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas that require further refinement. Their decisions consistently prioritise pupils' achievement, safety and wellbeing. Leaders' actions have had a positive impact on pupils' experiences. This includes thoughtful curriculum decisions such as revised planning to better meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Targeted improvements in phonics have helped pupils build knowledge securely from their starting points.

Leaders and staff place equality and inclusion at the centre of their work. They monitor attendance, progress and wellbeing carefully for different groups of pupils and use this information to adjust support when needed. Investment in pastoral care and the Bridge provision ensure that pupils who need further support access learning and feel emotionally secure.

Governors meet their statutory responsibilities well. They work closely with leaders, providing appropriate challenge and support. Governors use their expertise effectively to focus on the impact of the school's work on pupils' outcomes and personal development. This oversight helps ensure staffing and resources align closely with pupils' needs.

Staff value the professional learning opportunities and guidance they receive. Training strengthens both teaching and support roles, while leaders take appropriate steps to manage workload through shared planning. Leaders also work constructively with external professionals, which supports safeguarding, inclusion and pupils' wider experiences. Parents and carers have confidence in the school and appreciate the care and commitment shown by leaders and staff.

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

Pupils are happy to come to school and feel that they belong. They benefit from warm relationships with adults and friendly interactions with one another. This helps them to feel welcome and valued from the start of the school day. Pupils who are new to the school settle quickly and feel included.

By the end of Year 6, pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils generally achieve well across the curriculum and show positive attitudes towards learning. They enjoy lessons and talk with increasing confidence about what they have learned in subjects such as science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make secure progress from their starting points. Pupils who need more tailored support benefit from the school's Bridge provision. Adults provide pastoral support that helps pupils who are more vulnerable to build confidence and feel supported.

The school is calm and orderly. In lessons, many pupils concentrate and work cooperatively. The school motto of 'do small things well' shapes a culture where pupils approach tasks with

care and perseverance. Clear routines promote sensible movement around school. Bullying is uncommon, and pupils say adults deal with concerns quickly and fairly. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they are worried. They understand and can explain how to keep themselves safe, including online. Attendance is in line with national figures. Most pupils attend school regularly, and those who have struggled with regular attendance in the past are improving due to the work of leaders.

Pupils enjoy many experiences beyond lessons. Clubs such as art, football, cooking and basketball enable pupils to develop new interests. Opportunities to support the local food bank and raise money for local and national charities help pupils understand their role in the wider community and develop a sense of responsibility and service.

Next steps

- Leaders should work with staff to strengthen the precision and consistency of classroom adaptations so that pupils who need extra help can build even more securely on prior learning.
 - Leaders should continue to support staff in the early years to use consistently high-quality interactions that deepen children's language and communication skills.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Peter Jeremy Turner.

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, assistant headteacher, teachers and support staff. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The current headteacher started working at the school in September 2024.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in April 2024.

Headteacher: Catherine Burch

Lead inspector:

Usha Devi, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Gill Turner, 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 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

106

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

119

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)

10.10%

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

1.89%

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

13.21%

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	65%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	76%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	65%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Below

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	79%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	64%	73%	Below

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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	82%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	71%	Below

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	79%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	88%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	33%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S

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

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	67%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

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

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	33%	68%	-34 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	80%	-35 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	78%	-33 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	67%	80%	-13 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

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

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

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.3%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.3%	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)	20.7%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.3%	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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