

Durrington Infant School

Address: Salvington Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 2JD

Unique reference number (URN): 125862

Inspection report: 24 February 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 personal development offer is rich, carefully planned and closely matched to the needs of its pupils. Leaders have designed an ambitious and broad curriculum that reflects pupils' lived experiences and supports their wider personal growth. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that help them develop important life skills. For example, they learn about earning, saving and spending money through the school shop. Leaders make sure every pupil, including those who are disadvantaged or face barriers to learning, can take part and are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils gain a strong sense of belonging. The programme develops their social skills and teaches them clearly about relationships, physical and emotional health and how to stay safe online. Staff weave the school's values through daily routines. This helps pupils make sensible choices, behave with integrity and take responsibility for their actions. Pupils understand British values and show mutual respect and tolerance. They welcome others warmly and value difference.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, visits and cultural experiences. These reflect the evolving interests and talents of all groups of pupils. They talk excitedly about music, sport, creative activities and theatre visits. They understand why these activities happen and how they are helping them learn the curriculum even better. Leaders have widened access so that more disadvantaged pupils now take part. Financial considerations are never a barrier to participation. Pupils take real pride in leadership roles, such as serving on the school council or being chosen to help others in class.

Wellbeing sits at the heart of the school's exciting offer. Staff understand pupils' emotional needs and respond quickly when help is needed. Older pupils from the junior school act as sports leaders. They support younger children at playtimes in fun games, which builds confidence, patience and teamwork. Pupils also contribute to charitable and community projects and understand how they can make a positive difference to others. Leaders review the impact of the school's wider offer carefully to ensure every pupil benefits.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Overall, pupils achieve well. Most pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need across the curriculum and build learning securely from their individual starting points. They enjoy positive learning experiences that broaden their understanding and enrich their lives. Pupils talk confidently about their learning in different subjects and explain key ideas with increasing accuracy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make assured progress because staff understand their needs and provide appropriate support.

Year 1 phonics screening results are consistently in line with national averages. Most pupils develop the early reading skills they need to access the wider curriculum. Pupils are

generally well prepared for the next stage of their education. This includes pupils who move from early years into Year 1. However, some key skills, such as spelling and sentence construction, are not yet fully secure. This affects the quality of some pupils' writing, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are taking appropriate action to improve writing and strengthen accuracy and fluency in reading, but this work is still at an early stage.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' actions and their relentless focus on raising attendance have led to clear improvements. They have a secure understanding of the barriers that some pupils may face in attending regularly. Staff also know the families well and give personalised support and challenge. These approaches help many pupils to improve their attendance, and overall attendance is now in line with national levels. Persistent absence is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils behave well in school. Well-embedded routines help to create a calm, positive environment where pupils learn successfully. Staff use the school's therapeutic approach consistently. They help pupils understand their emotions and make good choices. When some pupils struggle with their emotions, well-trained staff step in promptly to get learning back on track. Pupils understand the school's values and enjoy earning rewards. They feel safe because staff care for them and listen to them. Staff have a clear understanding of the school's approach towards behaviour. As a result, issues are dealt with consistently and effectively. Staff act as positive role models and demonstrate the care and kindness they expect to see. Pupils mirror this in the way they behave towards one another. As a result, playtimes are harmonious and sociable occasions that all pupils benefit from.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff promote a culture of high expectations and want all pupils to achieve well. They have built an ambitious and coherent curriculum that begins in the early years, helping pupils build knowledge over time. Leaders check how well the curriculum is taught and use this to guide improvements. Staff understand what pupils need to learn and how best to teach it. These expectations are met well overall, especially in mathematics.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to become fluent readers, writers and mathematicians. Staff receive useful training that helps them teach essential skills confidently. They break learning into small steps and give pupils regular practice so that key ideas are remembered. When pupils need extra support, staff provide it promptly. Teaching is strengthened by secure subject knowledge and high-quality professional development. Staff use clear modelling, effective questioning and appropriate resources to help pupils understand and revisit new concepts.

Inclusive practice is evident across the school. Staff typically adapt teaching well, so pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can learn alongside their peers. Some disadvantaged pupils still need further support to secure consistent outcomes in early

reading and writing. Gaps in spelling, handwriting and composition remain for some. Leaders know this and are taking the right steps to strengthen reading and writing further.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Leaders have made high-quality provision a priority, beginning in the Nursery. Staff work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's development needs. This helps them to identify starting points quickly and plan learning that builds on what children can already do. Children form warm, trusting relationships with staff. This helps them to feel safe and settled.

The early years curriculum is coherent and clearly ordered. Leaders adapt the curriculum each year so it reflects the needs of each cohort. Children receive targeted support for their physical development and for any gaps in speech and language. Leaders check how well the curriculum is taught and ensure that it helps children achieve well.

Routines are clear and well established. Children move calmly around the setting and focus well on activities. Staff provide high-quality interactions throughout the day. They model new vocabulary, ask helpful questions and give children time to think and respond. Reading is prioritised. Children start phonics as soon as they join and use this knowledge to read and write simple words. Mathematics is also well supported through meaningful play with practical resources. Children enjoy learning. They talk confidently, play cooperatively and show increasing independence and resilience.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have strong oversight of inclusion. Their vision that every pupil is welcome and can thrive at Durrington Infant School is shared by staff and governors. Leaders understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Staff raise concerns early, and leaders use clear systems to track pupils from Nursery onwards. This helps staff provide timely support, personalised plans and, where needed, tailored curriculum approaches.

Leaders keep a close watch on the progress of the most vulnerable pupils to make sure they take part fully in school life. Leaders reduce barriers to learning through thoughtful decisions and well-planned adaptations. These include the 'Gateway class', nurture provision, movement or calming breaks and carefully tailored help in lessons. Staff use visual supports and sensory resources effectively so pupils stay engaged and can access the full curriculum. The school's in-house support helps pupils with social, emotional, communication or mental health needs to build their confidence and independence. Many pupils return to their mainstream classes with improved readiness to learn.

Leaders review individual plans regularly and adjust support when needed. They use additional funding to help disadvantaged pupils, although evaluation of this strategy is still developing.

Leaders at all levels share a clear drive and passion for the school's mission. Governors embrace the school's inclusive vision and carry out their statutory duties effectively. They monitor resources and strategic plans closely. They challenge leaders robustly and provide support that leads to improvement, for example in attendance and pupils' wider outcomes. However, there is more to do to ensure the pupil premium strategy is fully evaluated so that it leads to consistently positive outcomes, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders' actions have a clear impact on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those facing barriers to learning or wellbeing. The school's community hub and nurture provision play an important role in helping pupils feel ready to attend and learn. Leaders pursue positive outcomes for pupils and balance this well with a strong commitment to staff workload and wellbeing.

Leaders have an accurate and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that still need to improve. They act on priorities in a timely and thoughtful way. Since the previous inspection, leaders have strengthened curriculum planning, professional development and safeguarding systems. They have built a positive and supportive culture in which staff feel valued. Leaders monitor workload carefully, and staff speak highly of the support they receive. Professional development is well organised and helps staff, including new members of the team, to build their confidence and knowledge, including about early years and inclusion. Relationships across the school community are strong, and leaders maintain high expectations for all pupils.

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

Pupils are proud to attend this inclusive and friendly school. From Nursery to Year 2, they arrive happily each morning and are greeted warmly by staff. Positive routines help pupils feel safe, settled and ready to learn. Staff nurture pupils extremely well. They know pupils as individuals, including their interests. As a result, pupils enjoy school and look forward to learning new things alongside their friends.

Pupils say that bullying is rare. They trust adults to deal with any unkind behaviour quickly and fairly. This confidence helps pupils to feel secure. They move calmly around the school and treat each other with care and respect. Pupils are courteous and tolerant. They show compassion towards one another. Kind, caring relationships across the school are a real strength and contribute to pupils' positive attitudes in lessons.

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil. Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum. They develop the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Staff understand their needs and provide the right adaptations so pupils with SEND can learn successfully alongside their peers. Pupils who face wider barriers to learning or wellbeing receive well-planned, tailored support. This helps them to participate fully in school life and grow in confidence.

Pupils enjoy and benefit from the many enrichment opportunities woven through the curriculum. They talk enthusiastically about clubs, trips, visitors and themed days, which help broaden their horizons. These activities also motivate pupils to attend regularly, and leaders' work to improve attendance is having a positive impact for vulnerable pupils.

The school places pupils' wellbeing and personal development at the heart of its work. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the care their children receive and the difference the school makes to their children's lives.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the school's pupil premium strategy is thoroughly evaluated and that this additional funding leads to a consistently positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' education.
 - Leaders should continue to embed strategies for developing writing and grammar skills so that they can continue to improve pupils' achievement.
 - Leaders should continue to drive up standards of attainment for disadvantaged pupils so that their outcomes in national tests are more in line with their national peers.
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About this inspection

The school is part of a federation called Durrington Infant and Durrington Junior School Federation. The chair of the governing board is Natalie Tierney.

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, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. They also met with the special educational needs coordinator, staff members, governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority.

Inspectors confirmed the following about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

The school provides nursery provision for 3-year-old children.

The school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. Previously, there were 2 co-headteachers; the federation now has one headteacher overseeing both schools. Numbers on roll have also reduced from 304 to 212. This forms part of a planned reduction in the published admission number over time.

Lead inspector:

Gareth Flemington, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Justin Bartlett, Ofsted Inspector

Vanessa Hickey, 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 24 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

252

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

240

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)

19.64%

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: 26.3%

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

2.38%

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

15.87%

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

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)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

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)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.8%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.7%	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)	14.3%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	12.1%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	11.0%	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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