

# South Kirkby Common Road Infant and Nursery School

**Address:** Common Road, WF9 3EA

**Unique reference number (URN):** 130864

## Inspection report: 25 November 2025

|                    |                                                                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who are disadvantaged, consistently achieve well, with many achieving at a higher level. This is reflected in above-average outcomes over time in the Year 1 phonics screening check and in pupils' readiness for Year 3. Pupils are consistently well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Pupils recall what they know from previous learning with success. This helps them when learning becomes more complex. For example, at the beginning of lessons when teachers revisit previous learning, pupils recall the information quickly and accurately. Staff help pupils to build on this knowledge when they access new learning. This supports pupils to progress successfully through the curriculum in different subjects.

Some pupils in Year 1, including pupils with complex needs, had gaps in their knowledge at the beginning of the academic year, particularly in writing. Staff ensured that these gaps closed quickly.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure that the curriculum and teaching are of a high quality and astutely adapted to meet pupils' needs. Pupils' language and vocabulary development, both spoken and written, underpins all learning. They master basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics quickly. Phonics and reading are a priority and a strength. Children get off to a prompt start in the Reception Year and quickly become fluent and confident readers. Visits from famous authors, special poetry days, a well-stocked library and 'magic stories' time promote excitement around reading for pleasure. Pupils get ample opportunities to apply their reading and writing skills across the curriculum with success.

Teachers access high-quality training to secure their curriculum subject knowledge. Staff understand and apply policies to adapt the curriculum skilfully so that every pupil, including those who face barriers to learning or wellbeing, can access first-rate learning. Teachers ignite pupils' interest with exciting activities, with learning brought to life through educational visits and visitors. All staff deliver the creative curriculum consistently well. Adjustments and adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities support all pupils to access and learn a wide range of subjects. This is reflected in the high standards that they reach.

### Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders include all pupils in every aspect of school life to give them the best possible chance of success. Leaders are quick to assess pupils' individual needs. They identify any barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerabilities, including pupils known to social care. Staff are skilful and well trained. They adapt learning across the curriculum highly effectively.

Leaders plan their spending of additional funding such as the pupil premium grant to ensure this benefits disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' high ambitions and 'no ceiling' approach to inclusion are underpinned by clear systems and collaboration with external professionals. Staff receive relevant training to enable them to meet specific needs. For example, a high proportion of children in the early years start school with significant speech and language delay. Staff provide a range of effective support, including, for example, speech and language therapy, the use of sign language, and visual resources, to enable all pupils to communicate effectively. Leaders make effective, regular checks on how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Staff use information from these checks expertly to design activities that enable pupils to achieve highly across the curriculum.

To support the school's work to develop specialist practice further, leaders have established a partnership with a special school. This helps staff to provide the best support and teaching to meet the needs of pupils so that they achieve well.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders at all levels put pupils at the heart of their decisions. They are adamant that all pupils will get the best possible start to prepare them for future learning. This high ambition for all pupils starts with ensuring that the educational and care offer is of paramount importance.

Leaders instil a culture of high expectations. They provide staff with high-quality professional development based on national educational research. Staff feel extremely valued. This all helps staff to provide a highly successful learning experience for all pupils, and ultimately promotes pupils' high achievement.

The leadership of this school is outward facing. Leaders work closely with other local schools to share, develop and learn from specialist subject support and advice. This contributes significantly to the school's culture of professional learning.

Governors know the school well. They carry out their core functions effectively, particularly in shaping and supporting the school's vision, ethos, and strategic direction. They bring a wide range of experience to their roles, providing consistent support and timely challenge to leaders.

Leaders and governors use their detailed and insightful analysis of the school's performance to evaluate how well things are working. This work informs their future decision-making. Leadership actions to strengthen aspects of the school, such as increasing the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in early years, lead to rapid improvement. Leaders liaise closely with parents and carers to support their children to thrive.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

The school's key aim for pupils to become 'respectful and tolerant members of the community with good hearts and strong minds' is woven through the personal development programme. This is carefully constructed to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It provides new

experiences to build pupils' resilience. There are regular opportunities for pupils to be responsible and active citizens in the local community. For example, pupils provide artwork for the church flower festival or recycle materials at the local recycling centre. Pupils develop confidence by presenting to an audience, for example in assemblies or bigger performances.

Pupils develop a strong moral code. They understand the importance of respecting everyone's individuality. Differences are celebrated. Pupils demonstrate a mature awareness of different faiths and cultural diversity. They know about various types of families and how it is unfair to treat people differently because of their race, gender or religion. Pupils learn about, and show understanding of, healthy and unhealthy relationships at an age-appropriate level. They recognise risks to their wellbeing, including online dangers.

Pupils develop their individual talents and interests through music, creative activities and sport. There is a high take-up of extra-curricular clubs and events. Respectful and fair attitudes are taught, modelled and encouraged by staff. Pupils perform well in competitive sporting events, such as cross-country. They have also won awards for their notable enthusiasm and effort.

Pupils are at the centre of all the school's work. There is an impressive programme of pastoral support in place. Leaders are vigilant at recognising pupils who need additional guidance or care, and match the support they provide well to pupils' individual needs. Effective relationships with parents and carers strengthen the pastoral offer.

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## Expected standard

### Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have robust systems in place to analyse the causes of pupils' absence and intervene promptly to improve attendance. Strategies such as breakfast club places, escorting pupils to and from school and support for families have successfully improved attendance over time. The attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have improved over the past three years because of adjustments made by the school to reduce absenteeism. In particular, the number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who miss a higher proportion of school has decreased rapidly. Leaders' actions continue to have a positive impact on the attendance of most pupils. However, some pupils continue to have sporadic attendance. As a result, they do not benefit fully from the inspirational curriculum that the school provides.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. Leaders have established high expectations for how pupils should behave. Pupils follow the behaviour rules without the need for reminders. The calm and purposeful routines across the school provide a positive environment which is conducive to learning. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Mutual courtesy and respect are evident. Pupils are eager to talk to visitors.

They are friendly, confident and sociable. Pupils play together harmoniously at social times. Bullying and unkind behaviour are rare.

## Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders provide high-quality education and care to give children a successful start to their school life. Nurturing relationships are fostered between staff and children.

The curriculum includes the crucial knowledge that leaders want children to learn. Children develop their independence quickly and, overall, progress well through the different areas of learning. The environment, both indoors and outside, is inviting, exciting, child-friendly and safe.

There is a sharp focus on making sure that children acquire a wide vocabulary, learn to communicate effectively and gain confidence in their spoken language. Many children join the school with limited communication, speech and language skills. They are supported to communicate, including through the use of sign language and visual resources. Staff are knowledgeable about how young children learn. The most recent early years welfare requirements are met to keep children safe and secure.

Children secure their knowledge of phonics quickly. However, historically, by the end of Reception, some children had gaps in their knowledge of early writing. Leaders made changes to the curriculum last academic year to ensure that, from the Nursery Year onwards, children develop the foundations needed for writing. These changes are being built upon this year in Reception. Leaders' work is rapidly improving the accuracy of children's writing. Nevertheless, these changes need to be fully embedded so that a higher proportion of children leave the Reception Year ready for the curriculum in Year 1.

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

Pupils are proud of this vibrant school where everyone is valued. They are happy, confident and resilient. Pupils benefit from the school's nurturing environment, where they have highly positive relationships with adults and their peers. There is a tangible sense of belonging for all pupils within the school community.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils rise to meet those expectations readily. They cooperate enthusiastically, show respect for one another and feel safe. Pupils understand what constitutes bullying, but this is not a common occurrence. Pupils know that it is important to tell someone if bullying happens and they have confidence that staff will resolve any issues.

Pupils who attend the school's warm and welcoming breakfast club are supported to make healthy food choices, socialise well and partake in interesting activities. This helps many pupils to be ready for their first lesson of the day.

Staff are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality support. The school identifies any barriers to learning quickly and reduces these swiftly so that pupils can learn well. All groups of pupils achieve highly, especially in Year 1 and 2. Pupils can recall many important facts about what they have learned. They are prepared very well for key stage 2.

Most pupils attend regularly. However, the attendance of some pupils is not as high as that of others. Therefore, they do not benefit fully from the inspiring opportunities that the school provides.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of cultural and real-life experiences through the exciting curriculum and community links. They enjoy after-school activities, such as sports club. These activities are well attended. Pupils relish opportunities to develop their leadership skills, through roles such as reading leaders or membership of the pupil parliament. Parents and carers appreciate the high-quality learning and care that enable their children to thrive.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should embed the recent changes to the early years provision to strengthen children's achievements by the end of the Reception Year and, in turn, ensure that a greater proportion of children are ready for all of their learning in Year 1.
  - Leaders should build further on their close work with parents and carers to tackle the barriers that some pupils have to regular attendance.
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# About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mrs Janie Theaker.

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 senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities, the early years leader, designated and deputy designated safeguarding leaders and governors during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.

Headteacher: Danielle Edwards

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## Lead inspector:

Alison Aitchison, His Majesty's Inspector

## Team inspectors:

Kathryn McDonald, His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's 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 25 November 2025

# School and pupil context

## Total pupils

**202**

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

**258**

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)

**37.93%**

Above 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

**3.47%**

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

**15.35%**

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 above 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 (1 term) | 7.5%        | 5.1%             | Above                          |
| 2023/24          | 6.8%        | 5.5%             | Above                          |
| 2022/23          | 7.8%        | 5.9%             | Above                          |

**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 (1 term) | 25.3%       | 14.3%            | Above                          |
| 2023/24          | 26.3%       | 14.6%            | Above                          |
| 2022/23          | 29.5%       | 16.2%            | Above                          |

## 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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