

Maple Grove Primary School

Address: St Agnell's Lane, Grove Hill , Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 7BG

Unique reference number (URN): 135221

Inspection report: 19 May 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 make the early years a high priority. They focus on giving children a positive start. They understand children's starting points and use this to plan learning. Leaders work closely with parents and carers. For example, they provide stay-and-play and playgroup sessions. These help children and families get ready for school.

Staff plan a curriculum that builds children's key knowledge step-by-step. They focus on language and communication from the start. In nursery, staff use play and interaction to build speaking and listening skills. In the Reception Year, staff teach number effectively through a range of practical activities. They teach phonics and handwriting well. This means that children learn to read with accuracy and form letters correctly.

Staff know the children well. They identify gaps and provide early support. This includes targeted support to help children keep up with the pace of the phonics programme. Children learn through adult-led activities and independent play. Staff interact well with children and help them stay engaged. Children explore and build skills across all 7 areas of learning. They revisit learning and apply what they know in different activities.

Children feel safe, settled and happy. They follow routines and work well with others. They settle in quickly. They develop confidence and independence over time. Children make progress from their starting points. They use what they know with increasing confidence.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders provide a well-planned programme for personal development and wellbeing. Additionally, the relationships and health education programme helps pupils learn how to manage relationships. Pupils explain the difference between healthy friendships and those that 'drain'. They reflect on situations and share their views with respect. Pupils listen to others and consider different opinions. Additionally, pupils learn about British values, including fairness and responsibility. Over time, pupils develop confidence in expressing themselves and engaging with others.

Pupils learn about different families and understand that people live in different ways. They know that everyone deserves respect. Pupils challenge stereotypes in a thoughtful and polite way. They learn about key values such as fairness and responsibility and apply these in their daily lives. Pupils also understand how to stay safe, both online and in the community. They explain risks and describe the steps they take to keep themselves safe.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities beyond lessons. Pupils attend visits and join clubs. They take part in activities that build skills in sport, creativity and life skills. Leaders track participation and support pupils who need help to take part. Through this, pupils develop interests, gain new experiences and build confidence.

Pupils learn how to stay healthy and care for their mental wellbeing. They know who to speak to if they need help. Staff respond to pupils' needs and provide appropriate support. Pupils feel confident to ask for help and manage challenges.

Leaders prepare pupils for the future. Pupils learn practical skills such as road safety, cycling and water safety. They develop a sense of right and wrong and learn how to take part in their community. As a result, pupils grow in confidence, show respect for others and demonstrate positive behaviour.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement has been below expected standards for some time. In the past, pupils did not gain the knowledge and skills they needed. They were not suitably prepared for their next steps in education. Published outcomes at the end of key stage 2 and in the Year 4 multiplication tables check remain below national averages.

Leaders have taken positive steps to improve outcomes. Phonics results have improved over time. Children in early years are increasingly ready for their learning in Year 1. More recently, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved and is closer to other pupils nationally. Improvements to the curriculum and teaching continue, but these changes have not secured consistent outcomes across the school.

Younger pupils learn phonics and begin to read with increasing confidence. Many pupils form letters correctly and use spelling with growing accuracy. In mathematics, pupils learn key number facts and begin to use these in their work. Across other subjects, pupils gain knowledge and recall key information. Over time, pupils begin to build a broader range of knowledge and skills. However, some pupils with barriers to learning, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not achieve as well as they should. This is because sometimes teaching does not meet their needs.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Leaders understand patterns in attendance and track this information closely. They identify pupils and groups who need support. Leaders use first-day calling, clear follow-up actions and work with families when attendance drops. They carry out home visits when needed and provide guidance for parents and carers. Leaders take a team approach. Pastoral staff and office staff work together to remove barriers to attendance. They target support for pupils who need it most. These actions have improved attendance. Despite this, attendance is below national figures and has remained so over time. Some pupils are still absent from school too frequently and their attendance is not improving quickly.

Pupils behave well. They show positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, they settle quickly and stay focused on their work. Around the school, they act with care, kindness and respect. Additionally, they move sensibly between activities. This creates a calm environment. Pupils show consideration for others. At breaktimes, they play well together and manage their behaviour appropriately. Younger pupils join in games with confidence. Many pupils say they enjoy playtimes. Bullying is rare. Other more serious incidents are also becoming less frequent. Staff deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Leaders set clear expectations for behaviour. Staff understand and apply these rules consistently. They model positive

behaviour. A small number of pupils need extra help to manage aspects of their behaviour. Staff provide this support so that pupils can take part in learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders have not secured consistent teaching approaches across classes and subjects. For example, some teachers do not use clear and precise models or explain ideas accurately. As a result, some pupils do not learn key knowledge as well as they could. Leaders are improving this by focusing on key priorities, such as phonics and early reading, and providing targeted training for staff.

Leaders understand variations in the quality of teaching and use this knowledge to take action. They deploy staff and resources where they are most needed. Leaders plan a suitable curriculum for each subject and year group. The curriculum sets out clearly what pupils should learn and when they should learn it. It links new learning to what pupils already know to build knowledge over time.

Leaders ensure that pupils at the early stages of reading learn an appropriate phonics programme. Typically, staff identify pupils who have not secured key skills in language, reading, writing and mathematics. Over time, staff act to close these gaps.

Leaders and staff use assessment to check what pupils understand. In the main, staff make suitable adjustments for pupils who need support. They take account of education, health and care (EHC) plans when they plan learning for pupils with SEND. This means that pupils with EHC plans get the right support for their learning and needs. However, for some other pupils with SEND, staff are not always consistent in ensuring that support matches their needs. Where this is the case, it negatively affects how well they learn and progress through the curriculum.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders identify pupils' needs accurately. However, their approaches to meeting these needs are inconsistent. For some pupils, leaders do not use a clear step-by-step approach. This means that staff do not match support to these pupils' needs consistently well. At times, leaders do not set out next steps or check whether support is working. As a result, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not get the right help quickly enough. For other pupils, typically those with a wide mix of SEND needs, leaders work well with parents, carers and teachers to create individual plans. These plans show what the pupil can already do and what they need to learn next. This helps staff teach in ways that match pupils' needs. Additionally, leaders work with outside agencies to guide next steps for some pupils.

Leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, they provide home learning packs so pupils can use these resources at home. Leaders track which pupils attend clubs and work to widen pupils' experiences. They also fund speech and language teaching, phonics catch-up and pastoral care. Leaders have started to explore how pupils' home experiences affect learning. This work helps staff understand pupils' needs more clearly.

Leaders use alternative provision where appropriate. They stay in regular contact with these providers. Leaders check attendance and plan for pupils to return to school. This helps make transitions smooth. Leaders also provide tailored support for pupils known to social care.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They use this knowledge to set clear priorities aimed at improving pupils' achievement. Leaders review information about the school and take action to improve provision. They involve staff in these priorities so that they understand their role in improving outcomes. This helps staff feel valued and part of the direction of the school. Despite leaders' positive and appropriate actions, they have not secured consistently positive improvements in attendance or achievement for some pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have improved the curriculum and teaching, but effectiveness is not yet consistent across all areas of the school.

Leaders develop staff expertise through regular training. This training links to school priorities, such as meeting pupils' needs and improving teaching. Teachers at the beginning of their careers value the support they receive from mentors. Leaders consider staff workload and provide support where needed. Most staff feel supported and speak positively about leaders' care for their wellbeing.

Leaders make decisions that place pupils first, including the use of staffing and support provision. Governors understand the school's context and check the actions leaders take. They provide support and challenge. They ensure that resources support the school's priorities and meet requirements.

Engagement with parents and carers continues to develop. Some parents value the care and commitment shown by staff. Others raise concerns about communication and consistency. Leaders have begun to take steps to improve this. However, there is more to be done to strengthen relationships with some parents so that confidence in the school continues to grow.

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

Pupils enjoy learning and generally speak positively about their school. They take pride in their work. While most pupils achieve well, others do not achieve as well as they should. Some pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not get effective support to overcome barriers to learning. This means that they do not make the progress that they are capable of and do not achieve as well as they should.

Most pupils attend regularly. However, some pupils are frequently absent. This means that they miss out on important learning and the wider opportunities that the school offers.

Pupils show care and kindness to each other. Positive relationships with staff and other pupils help them feel safe. Pupils rarely experience bullying. They trust staff to deal with it

quickly if it happens. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any concerns. They are confident that staff will listen and help them. Typically, pupils behave well. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy learning and try to do their best. Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions. As a result, they work in calm classrooms and stay focused. This means they use their time productively. At playtime, pupils get along well with each other. Children in the early years settle into routines quickly. They enjoy playing, exploring and learning alongside each other.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences beyond lessons. These experiences are available to all. Pupils take part in activities that widen their interests. For example, they learn about different types of music and visit interesting places, such as castles. These opportunities help pupils to remember what they have learned. They also help pupils make links across different subjects.

Next steps

- Leaders should use the graduated approach more consistently. To ensure most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their specific barriers to learning addressed through targeted, evidence-informed classroom adaptations that are implemented and reviewed for impact.
 - Leaders should continue to embed consistent curriculum implementation across all subjects and year groups. This will ensure pupils secure key knowledge more quickly and achieve well, with more reaching the expected standard by the end of key stage 2.
 - Leaders and governors should continue to strengthen relationships with parents and carers so that confidence in the school grows.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Gerald Byrne

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, support staff, pupils and some parents and carers during the inspection. They also spoke to representatives from the governing body and local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision, that is unregistered.

Headteacher: Sam Woodcock

Lead inspector:

Jessie Linsley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Lucille Pollard, Ofsted Inspector

Rachel Kirk, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

210

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

210

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)

29.15%

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

7.14%

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

18.10%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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).

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	28%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	36%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	17%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31%	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	57%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	37%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	24%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31%	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	49%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	34%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	73%	Below

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	23%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	30%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	0%	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	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	60%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	40%	60%	Below

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	30%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	0%	58%	Below

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	40%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	60%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	30%	59%	Below

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	23%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	0%	66%	-66 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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23 (final)	40%	78%	-38 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	30%	78%	-48 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	78%	-38 pp
2022/23 (final)	0%	77%	-77 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	40%	80%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	79%	-49 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	30%	79%	-49 pp

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 (3 term)	7.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.5%	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 (3 term)	20.1%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	25.7%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	15.9%	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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