

Ormiston Sudbury Academy

Address: Tudor Road, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 1NW

Unique reference number (URN): 138506

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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' meticulous work on attendance has resulted in improvements over time. Pupils now attend school more regularly than their peers nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged also attend school more regularly. Leaders look closely at why pupils may miss school and work with families to reduce any barriers. They scrutinise the attendance information closely and are effective in ensuring more pupils attend more frequently.

In lessons, pupils remain focused. They pay attention and engage productively in their learning. Pupils respect the school's rules with regard to bullying and discrimination. They know that such behaviour is not acceptable. Pupils willingly adhere to the school's rules on digital access and use. On the whole, pupils behave well. On the minimal occasion that they do not, leaders are quick to respond. Around the school, the atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect. Leaders put any adjustments in place for pupils who need it to support them in meeting the school's high expectations.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the strengths as well as aspects to refine within the curriculum. Recently, leaders increased the curriculum time for science and modern foreign languages to enable pupils to learn this content more effectively.

Staff are secure in their subject knowledge. They embrace the school's work on furthering their understanding of how pupils learn. This work helps staff to deliver the curriculum so that pupils learn the content securely. The emphasis on maintaining attention, supporting pupils to remember the curriculum and helping pupils to think deeply is having a positive impact. Pupils make meaningful connections in their learning as well as across subjects. The school's approaches to widen pupils' vocabulary are consistently delivered. Leaders have prioritised focus on building pupils' stamina for extended writing. This is having a positive impact.

Staff know pupils well. They use information on pupils' starting points, their barriers and their needs to guide appropriate curriculum adjustments for pupils who need them. Often, the strategies that teachers use help these pupils to learn well and make positive contributions in lessons. However, this picture is not consistent. Where approaches are more variable, these groups of pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school prioritises addressing any barriers that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities may face. There are systems in place so that pupils' needs are identified quickly. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to provide appropriate support for pupils. Disadvantaged pupils receive timely and well-targeted support. Leaders use alternative provision in pupils' best interests. The use of the funding for pupil premium is

effective, particularly in supporting attendance procedures and a reduction in behaviour incidents.

The school looks closely at how well the most disadvantaged pupils learn. Staff use their training in therapeutic thinking to employ a range of strategies to support pupils, including those who are known and previously known to social care, engage and learn in lessons. Leaders promote helpful liaison with parents and carers, and external agencies.

Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read access an appropriate phonics programme. However, leaders have not been sufficiently rigorous when following up on pupils' starting points. As a result, leaders do not know how well some pupils have achieved over time.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders make appropriate changes with integrity. They consider what is in the best interests of the pupils. Staff value and access the professional training with enthusiasm. The trust and leaders have established systems for staff to share and develop effective practice through networking opportunities. Leaders and staff are focused on improving outcomes for pupils. Their actions are aligned appropriately.

The trust and local governors know the school well. They fulfil their statutory duties. They focus sharply on the school's priorities and ensure that the school has the resources to drive improvements. For example, using funding effectively to best support disadvantaged pupils. Across the school, leaders who are new to their responsibilities are in receipt of helpful support.

Staff are highly positive about the support that they receive from leaders. They say that feel looked after and are of the view that leaders make decisions with due regard to their workload. Staff are complimentary of how leaders manage change processes, helping staff to see the benefits of refined approaches. Early career teachers are well support under the careful guidance of their mentors. Parents and carers are appreciative of the quality of provision that their child receives.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's personal, social, health and economics education curriculum is well considered. It teaches pupils the age-appropriate content that they need to know, such as consent and how to forge healthy relationships. In addition, the curriculum focuses on pertinent issues such as what it means to be a positive male role model. Pupils have a detailed understanding of how to stay safe online, how to look after their mental health and how to stay physically fit.

The school's emphasis on respect and celebrating difference enables pupils to value others' points of view. They understand the fundamental British values, for example, tolerance and respect and how to enact these in their daily lives. Pupils contribute meaningfully to school life. For example, the school council gathered pupils' views on the school values of 'ambition, respect and endeavour' and what these mean. This enabled them to work with professional designers to create a logo that demonstrated pupils' views. Pupils know and

understand a range of faiths and beliefs as well as the understanding the importance of cultural events. Pupils are keen to support their local community and are active fundraisers for charity. They are being prepared well for life in modern Britain.

There is a wide-ranging extracurricular programme which many pupils take part in. Staff know pupils very well. This helps them to identify ways for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged to take part in the school's full offer. Many pupils participate in extracurricular clubs on a regular basis.

From Year 7 onwards, pupils benefit from helpful careers information, advice and guidance. This helps older pupils to make appropriate choices for their next steps in education, employment and/or training.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Overall, pupils have not attained outcomes at the end of key stage 4 that match national averages. This includes in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Some pupils who are learning to read have not made the gains that they should. This means that some pupils have not been prepared sufficiently well for their next steps in education, employment or training.

However, this picture is changing. For example, disadvantaged pupils are now achieving higher results in mathematics over time. The work to support pupils to attain higher grades is having a positive impact. The numbers of pupils who are securing appropriate next steps is rising.

Pupils' current work shows that they are learning the intended curriculum well. Their verbal contributions in lessons show confidence with the subject matter. Pupils who are in receipt of additional support are being supported to reduce the gaps that they have in their knowledge and understanding.

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

Pupils make the most of the opportunities afforded to them. They want to do well as individuals and as school community. For example, over 150 pupils recently took part in the school's musical. Many pupils take part in the array of extracurricular opportunities. These range from learning Japanese to finding out about their heritage in ancestry club.

Overall, pupils' gain a positive experience of school underpinned by caring relationships with staff and each other. Throughout the school, pupils show resilience, maturity and optimism. They benefit from opportunities to undertake leadership roles, such as wellbeing ambassadors. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the full school offer.

Pupils are helped to have a clear sense of belonging to their school. They attend regularly. Pupil voice is valued, supporting them to feel seen and heard. Pupils have a healthy respect for one another and acceptance of difference. They are sensitive and understanding of the barriers that people may face due to their disabilities. Consequently, they are being well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are appreciative of the high-quality pastoral support they receive. Bullying, when it occurs, is dealt with effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe and they know that they can share concerns with staff who will act promptly.

While pupils' outcomes in national tests are not in line with those of their peers nationally, the curriculum in place is generally effective. Pupils are motivated in their lessons. They listen attentively and participate well. Pupils take the initiative to further their learning as they have been inspired by their teachers. For example, some pupils undertake masterclasses in printing in their own time. Increasing proportions of pupils are securing appropriate next steps in education, training or employment.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they continue to drive school improvement with precision so that pupils achieve well over time and attain more highly in national examinations.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff use information about pupils' starting points and needs, including in reading, consistently and to adjust support accordingly so that pupils make the gains in learning that they should.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Ormiston Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tom Rees, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Julius Weinberg.

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 (OI) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the director of education for the trust and several members of the local governing body, including the chair. They also spoke with the principal and senior leaders, pastoral managers and staff. Inspectors spoke with leaders of alternative provision that the school uses and with parents of pupils who are in receipt of part-time timetables or those who attend alternative provision.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses two alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

Principal: Sally Morris

Lead inspector:

Liz Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Duncan Ramsey, Ofsted Inspector

Karen Kerridge, Ofsted Inspector

Louise Cooper, 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 24 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

679

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: 1,067

School capacity

800

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

34.02%

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: 28.9%

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

3.83%

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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.20%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	41.6%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.7%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	19.3%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	39.6	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.3	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.8	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.30	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.62	-0.03	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	20.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	17.4%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	13.0%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	30.4	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.1	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.51	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-1.07	-0.57	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	20.0%	53.1%	-33.1 pp
2023/24 (final)	17.4%	53.1%	-35.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	13.0%	52.4%	-39.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	30.4	50.4	-20.0
2023/24 (final)	35.0	50.0	-15.0
2022/23 (final)	31.1	50.3	-19.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.51	0.16	-0.68
2022/23 (final)	-1.07	0.17	-1.23

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	87%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	86%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	92%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	34.16	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)	8.6%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.8%	9.0%	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 (2 term)	23.2%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	27.9%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	31.1%	26.5%	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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