

St Martin's Garden Primary School

Address: Lympsham Green, Odd Down, Bath, Bath, Somerset, BA2 2UN

Unique reference number (URN): 143108

Inspection report: 13 January 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

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have carefully planned the knowledge that they want pupils to learn across subjects and phases. Staff consider pupils' starting points and make adjustments to what and how they teach. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additionally, some pupils in the school's specially resourced provision are provided with personalised curriculums that support their stage of learning well.

Teachers are equipped with the necessary subject knowledge to teach confidently across the curriculum areas. Leaders have prioritised improving the quality of teaching that pupils receive. They carefully check this and provide additional training and support to staff as required. Leaders' recent work to further develop teachers' use of assessment has resulted in improvements. Typically, checks on learning are effective in identifying gaps or misconceptions that pupils have in their learning. In particular, pupils are developing their vocabulary, reading, spoken and written language more proficiently as a result of this work. In mathematics, there is further work to do for pupils in the older years. Some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have gaps in their understanding of early mathematics that have not been identified or addressed.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in Reception Year understand and follow the rules and routines of the classroom. They learn to share, take turns, concentrate and ask for help when needed. Staff form positive relationships with parents and carers. As a result, the early years environment is one where children feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy. Children settle well into school life.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is sharply focused on developing children's vocabulary and their understanding of what the words mean. Many of the children who join the school need additional support in developing their speech and language. Support provided to them is effective in enabling them to communicate. Staff continually engage in high-quality interactions with the children. They model the vocabulary that they need to help them to learn.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of phonics. The chosen programme is delivered effectively by staff. Children who attend the school's specially resourced provision are successfully supported to access this learning through appropriately matched teaching to their stage of learning. The high quality of teaching and effective support that children receive means that children progress well through the curriculum. This helps them to be ready for their next stage of learning.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise the early identification of pupils' needs. Their comprehensive approach to screening pupils when they join the school enables them to determine whether a pupil has

special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or whether they have other barriers to learning. Leaders are also quick to spot emerging or changing needs and amend the provision for pupils as required. The school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND makes a substantial contribution to the local area partnership's strategy to improve the experiences of, and outcomes for, pupils. Alternative provision is only used when appropriate and in pupils' best interests.

Leaders use a well-considered, step-by-step approach to provide the support that pupils need. They seek specialist advice where appropriate, Staff receive suitable training to implement pupils' learning plans effectively. A high turnover of staff has limited the impact of this work in some cases. Nevertheless, pupils' needs are generally met well.

Leaders use evidence-led approaches to inform their use of additional funding. They have a secure understanding of disadvantaged pupils' needs. These pupils and pupils who are known (or previously known) to social care, benefit from sensitive and tailored support. Trusting relationships are at the heart of leaders' approach. This, in turn, is supporting these pupils to be successful.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils follow a well planned and suitable personal development programme. They learn about beliefs and cultures different to their own. Pupils know the traits of a good friend and what different types of relationships might look like. They develop a mature understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils also have an age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online, or when near railway lines or water. They are encouraged to eat healthily. For example, many pupils were seen trying broccoli as part of their lunch meal. Pupils in Year 6 have 'life skills' lessons to ensure they are ready for their transition to secondary school.

Leaders carefully consider and design experiences that most benefit and interest pupils. For example, pupils who attend the school's specially resourced provision visit farms or try at horse riding. At the request of pupils, a production of 'The Wizard of Oz' was arranged. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils access the same breadth of opportunities. They track pupils' participation in extra-curricular clubs to ensure equality of access. These clubs provide an outlet for pupils to develop their creative, artistic or sporting skills and talents. Leaders recently arranged a residential trip for older pupils. This helped to develop pupils' independence while being away from home. It also provided them with many new, exhilarating experiences.

Pupils benefit from participating in the 'Palladian Promise' throughout their time at school. Year group and inter-school opportunities, such as playing in a football team, build pupils' confidence and teamwork skills. Pupils also learn about their community through visits to local residential homes and to the Roman Baths. Seasonal fairs and enterprise activities are popular events in the school calendar.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Attainment and progress are consistently below national average, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have taken decisive action to bring about improvements in pupils' achievement. However, it is too early to see the impact of work in published outcomes.

Due to the recent improvements made to teaching, pupils are starting to develop appropriate knowledge and skills. The quality of work in pupils' books is improving. This is most evident in the early years foundation stage and key stage 1, where learning has been more consistent over time. Pupils who have significantly lower starting points or barriers to their learning, including pupils who attend the school's specially resourced provision, are increasingly well supported to progress well through the curriculum. Pupils are beginning to be better prepared for their next steps in education. However, there is more to do to ensure that pupils achieve all that they should.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Attendance is not improving quickly enough. The overall attendance figures, including those for groups of pupils, remain below national average. The number of pupils who miss large chunks of their schooling continues to be high. Leaders are starting to take appropriate action to bring about improvements in pupils' attendance. They analyse patterns of absence and identify where further support or challenge is needed. Leaders work with pupils and their families to emphasise the need to attend school regularly. However, further work is needed to secure more rapid improvement and ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Staff and pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of the school's renewed behaviour policy. Pupils appreciate the rewards they receive for modelling the school values of being 'kind, brave and brilliant'. Pupils understand the consequences if their behaviour falls below leaders' high expectations. Rates of suspensions have been higher than national averages. However, there has been a demonstrable reduction in the number of suspensions this academic year. Leaders plan appropriate adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities that are sensitive to their individual needs and level of understanding.

Typically, lessons are calm and purposeful. Leaders have created a culture, where staff know, support and care for pupils. Pupils are taught about the need to treat everyone equally, so any form of bullying is rare. They look forward to their social times and interact positively with each other.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

The school has recently experienced significant changes in leadership and staffing. This has led to the wider school community being unsettled. It has also stalled the pace of improvement. However, new leaders, with the support of the trust, have gained a secure understanding of the strengths of the school and areas that need to improve further. They

have prioritised aspects of school improvement and made effective use of internal and external support to accelerate this work. For example, in the upskilling of staff in the use of checks on pupils' learning. Staff, including early career teachers, now benefit from a high-quality professional learning programme. Senior leaders, subject leaders and class teachers have benefited from visits to partner schools to build their expertise further.

Those responsible for governance support and challenge school leaders effectively. They prioritise the school when considering the deployment of time and resources and ensure that statutory duties are met. Leaders make decisions in the best interests of pupils. They consider the impact that changes will have on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who experience other barriers to their learning. However, there is a lot of work still to do. Recent improvements are at an early stage. Although leaders are taking steps to manage staff wellbeing and workload, some staff continue to feel overwhelmed. They lack confidence in some of the changes that are being made. This feeling is shared by some parents and carers, whose trust in the school has been fractured over time. Leaders need to further strengthen these relationships so that they can continue to move the school forward.

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

Pupils across the school, including those who attend the school's specially resourced provision, are benefiting from recent improvements in the quality of teaching they receive. They demonstrate an enjoyment of their learning and many pupils want to share and celebrate the work they have produced. Leaders quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those of disadvantaged pupils, so that barriers to their learning and wellbeing are reduced. However, over time, pupils achievement in national tests has remained low. Older pupils have legacy gaps in their knowledge, particularly in mathematics, that are proving more stubborn to close. Some pupils are not as well prepared for their next steps as they could be.

The recent turmoil in the school's improvement journey has caused some disquiet for pupils and their families. As staffing at the school stabilises, pupils are forming positive, trusting relationships with adults in the school. They behave well in lessons and around the school site. Pupils feel safe and are confident to share any worries or concerns that they may have. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Celebration assemblies and the introduction of a house system are helping pupils to feel a sense of belonging. However, a significant number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Pupils benefit from an increasing range of leadership roles and opportunities beyond the academic. For example, taking part in clubs, such as art, sport, drama and choir. Pupils also have the chance to be a house captain or vice house captain. Equally, pupils who attend the school's specially resourced provision enjoy their participation in these activities and carrying out these important jobs. Some pupils act as role models for younger pupils by supporting with serving lunch and tidying up in the dining hall.

Next steps

- Leaders should further develop the consistency of the effective teaching practice that has been established, so that more pupils go on to achieve as well as they should in national tests and examinations.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, who have gaps in their mathematical foundational knowledge and skills from their prior learning of the curriculum, are supported to secure this key learning and close these gaps quickly.
 - Leaders should continue to build upon the school's work to promote high rates of attendance, including intervening swiftly to support and challenge parents and carers whose children do not attend school regularly.
 - Leaders should further strengthen relationships with staff and parents to support more effective partnership in the school's continued improvement journey.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Palladian Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer (CEO), Nathan Jenkins, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Lawrence West.

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, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other staff members. They also spoke with the director of education for the trust, the interim CEO for the trust, the chair of the trust board, other trustees, and members of the local governing body during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has a specially resourced provision for 50 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.

The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership. The headteacher took up the post in July 2025, and the deputy headteacher in September 2025.

Headteacher: Joe Lund

Lead inspector:

Kelly Olive, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sandy Hayes, Ofsted Inspector

Julie Fox, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

204

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

315

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)

47.55%

Well 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

25.98%

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

20.59%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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)

SEN unit

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

VI - Visual Impairment, SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health, PD - Physical Disability, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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	34%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	25%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	46%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	29%	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	46%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	34%	75%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	54%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	48%	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	53%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	41%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	47%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	31%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	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	24%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	18%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	29%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	25%	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	36%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	24%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	35%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

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	48%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	41%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	41%	58%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average

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	32%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	18%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	29%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

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	24%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (revised)	18%	69%	-52 pp
2023/24 (final)	29%	67%	-38 pp
2022/23 (final)	25%	66%	-41 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	36%	80%	-44 pp
2024/25 (revised)	24%	81%	-57 pp
2023/24 (final)	35%	80%	-44 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 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	48%	78%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	41%	78%	-37 pp
2023/24 (final)	41%	78%	-36 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	77%	-15 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	32%	80%	-48 pp
2024/25 (revised)	18%	81%	-63 pp
2023/24 (final)	29%	79%	-50 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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 (2 term)	7.8%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.5%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.8%	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 (2 term)	21.1%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	23.4%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	25.8%	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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