

Southfield Primary

Address: Tranmoor Lane, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 3BN

Unique reference number (URN): 144410

Inspection report: 17 March 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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders' meticulous approach to improving attendance means that pupils' attendance is high and above the national average. It continues to improve each year. Leaders closely track pupils at risk of persistent absence and intervene early to provide support. Persistent absence has reduced significantly, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, and pupils live up to these expectations. Any form of discrimination is not tolerated. Leaders make reasonable adjustments for some pupils where needed, which helps some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others with specific needs to improve their focus on learning. Pupils who have struggled in the past now show clear improvements. Leaders deal with any potential issues quickly. They work with parents and carers to support pupils with being safe in school and online. Bullying is not tolerated. Leaders address any issues swiftly.

Leaders' work helps pupils feel safe in school and in the community. When issues arise, leaders act quickly and work with pupils and their families to resolve them. Pupils' conduct is excellent. They show self-discipline and move around school sensibly. They are kind and courteous and manage small disagreements well. Staff use the behaviour policy consistently, although sanctions are rarely needed. Pupils are motivated and committed to learning.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Staff have an excellent understanding of the early years curriculum, which sets out the words and sounds each child needs to use confidently. Staff model this language throughout the day, such as when cleaning paintbrushes or filling water containers. Staff are experts in modelling how children should play with a purpose. They use appropriate sounds, words and phrases to build children's vocabulary. Every moment is used to help children learn the language that they need to be successful.

Children learn important routines, such as putting on their coat or sitting in a circle. This helps them to move smoothly from one activity to another. Children show sustained concentration when undertaking tasks that develop a wide range of skills.

Leaders prioritise early reading and writing, which are taught well. Children move quickly from early mark-making to precise and accurate letter formation. Staff consistently show children how to hold and use a pencil. Children enjoy writing regularly and do so with accuracy. By Reception, they can read a wide range of words and sentences. Children are very well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Leaders build highly productive links with parents and carers. Learning outside the school is celebrated. This helps the youngest children to swiftly gain the skills that they need and get off to a very positive start.

Pupils have a detailed understanding of important aspects of the personal, social, health and economic curriculum and talk about these with maturity. This maturity is reflected in their conduct. They learn how to build positive relationships, which helps them maintain friendships. Pupils have a remarkably deep understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. They are very clear about how to stay safe online and offline. Pupils speak sincerely and with warmth about their respect for one another.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the wide range of opportunities available to them. They develop an appreciation of culture through links with a ballet organisation and visits to the theatre. Leaders spot when pupils have a particular flair or talent. Leaders set up bespoke experiences to help pupils develop their talents, or to try something new. Leaders make sure that all pupils can access high-quality opportunities. For example, the school has arranged for pupils to help and learn from professional musicians. This gets pupils excited about new interests, and many of them then pursue these outside of school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive extra support so they can take part fully and develop their talents and interests.

Leaders are aware of the need to enable pupils to learn about and experience a range of cultures and beliefs outside their community. Leaders provide plentiful opportunities to do this. Pupils talk about the need to celebrate all parts of society with remarkable insight and sophistication. This prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Staff provide a high standard of pastoral support. Pupils who are new to the school settle in extremely quickly. Any pupils who are struggling to regulate their behaviour are given high-quality support on a regular basis. Pupils who receive this help are very grateful and talk about how it helps them to feel 'successful every day'.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Pupils' outcomes in national tests in English and mathematics, for all groups, are often well above the national average. Last year, all disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard.

Where outcomes were lower, such as in the Year 1 phonics screening check and the Year 4 multiplication check, leaders acted quickly. They increased regular teaching of key skills, and pupils are now keeping up and showing a secure grasp of the content.

Pupils' handwriting has improved significantly. Most pupils write accurately and confidently. Leaders have made sure that pupils who had gaps in their writing knowledge and skills now achieve well. Pupils secure important early mathematical knowledge and can count reliably and calculate with accuracy.

Some variability in teaching across the wider curriculum means that work in some subjects is not recorded to the same standard as in writing. Some pupils also have limited knowledge

in certain foundation subjects. Overall, pupils are well prepared for their next stages of learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They have designed a broad and balanced curriculum that focuses on the essential knowledge pupils need. Teachers and support staff have secure subject knowledge. They model and explain new learning well and build on what pupils already know, particularly in English and mathematics. Leaders recognise that teaching in some wider subjects is less effective, as some staff continue to develop their understanding of how best to teach key content.

Leaders have strengthened teachers' use of assessment. Staff focus on the small steps that pupils must master, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers identify any misconceptions that pupils may have quickly and spot gaps in important skills so they can address them straight away. The curriculum clearly sets out the vocabulary that pupils need to use. Teachers model how to use these important words. Pupils then use them with accuracy in their conversations with each other.

Early reading and early writing are taught well. Staff teach pupils to read sounds and form the matching letters. They show pupils how to hold a pencil correctly and correct this when needed. Pupils with additional needs receive helpful adaptations so they can write with confidence.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff know pupils well. Staff quickly identify any particular needs or barriers the pupils may have. Staff produce well-designed support plans that outline what each pupil needs to be successful. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who join the school after early years are particularly well supported. Staff provide strong initial support to help them settle. Other pupils show understanding and kindness towards their peers who may face difficulties.

Leaders work effectively with families to design plans together. They also work well with local authority specialists, and staff act on this advice. Leaders provide training for staff that is specific to the needs of the pupils staff work with. They listen carefully to pupils' views, which helps to ensure that provision for pupils with SEND or other barriers is well planned and understood.

Leaders make effective use of additional funding to provide a range of attendance and enrichment support for disadvantaged pupils. Staff give these pupils additional help in classrooms when needed. Where pupils struggle with managing their behaviour, staff provide precise support to help them regulate and stay focused on learning. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to support disadvantaged pupils well. They keep a watchful eye on the progress that these pupils make.

Trustees have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They undertake their duties effectively. They provide the resources needed to support the school to develop further. The local academy committee holds leaders to account for outcomes, and leaders respond well to this challenge.

Leaders and governors focus on the needs of pupils across the school. Decisions made are always in the best interest of pupils. Leaders' and governors' vision for a rich enrichment offer is realised for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders act quickly when any of these pupils are not achieving or enjoying school.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's priorities. They addressed weaker outcomes in multiplication and phonics promptly. However, some of their analysis is not as detailed or responsive as it could be, particularly in monitoring the wider curriculum and evaluating the impact of how effectively additional funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. They value the training they receive in school and across the trust. Trust leaders use expertise effectively across schools and give staff regular opportunities to work together. Leaders help staff to focus on important priorities and keep their workload manageable.

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

Pupils enjoy working together in this collaborative school. Relationships between pupils are positive, and they take pride in the work they produce with their peers. This begins in the early years, where children take part in ambitious projects that develop creativity and essential skills. As pupils move through the school, they continue to show pride in their work. Their collaborative outcomes are displayed around the building, helping them celebrate each other and their school.

Pupils benefit from a wide enrichment offer. They regularly visit theatres, museums and sporting events, which helps them to develop new interests. Many pupils continue these interests outside school.

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning. They play well together at social times and enjoy leading a range of activities during this time. For example, at lunchtime, older pupils organise games for younger pupils. A positive culture of kindness runs through the school. Bullying is rare, and when it does happen, staff support pupils to resolve issues effectively. Pupils feel safe in school as they know staff will support them. Pupil wellbeing ambassadors take an active role in supporting their peers.

Pupils achieve well. In reading, writing and mathematics, nearly all pupils reach the expected standard in national tests by the time they leave the school, and many exceed it. Staff support pupils who may face barriers to their learning well. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well alongside their peers.

Pupils attend well and have a positive view of school. They understand the value of respect and contribute actively to their community. For example, they visit the local care home and campaign for better local services, giving pupils a meaningful voice. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should develop staff expertise and subject knowledge to improve teaching across the foundation subjects so that pupils produce higher-quality work and develop more secure knowledge.
 - Leaders should use more precise and responsive approaches to further develop areas of the school they have identified as priorities so that they can effectively evaluate the impact of their actions.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Empowering Minds Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sarah Cairns, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rachael Carney.

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, trustees, members of the academy committee, trust leaders and the special educational needs coordinator during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has a nursery for children from the age of 3.

There is a breakfast club that runs each morning.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mrs Nicola Worthington

Lead inspector:

Matthew Knox, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Zoe Helman, His Majesty's Inspector

John Davie, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

260

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

352

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)

13.12%

Below 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

2.31%

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

11.92%

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).

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	85%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	93%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	78%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	88%	60%	Above

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	92%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	91%	73%	Above

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	89%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	93%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	86%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	88%	71%	Above

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	94%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	97%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	94%	73%	Above

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	75%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	47%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	70%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	44%	Above

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	83%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	60%	Above

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	83%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	58%	Above
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	83%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	59%	Above

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	75%	68%	7 pp
2024/25 (revised)	100%	69%	31 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	67%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	66%	-4 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	83%	80%	4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	100%	81%	19 pp
2023/24 (final)	80%	80%	0 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	78%	-3 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	83%	78%	6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	100%	78%	22 pp
2023/24 (final)	90%	78%	12 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	83%	80%	4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	100%	81%	19 pp
2023/24 (final)	80%	79%	1 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	75%	79%	-4 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)	4.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.6%	5.9%	Below

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)	10.1%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.9%	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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