

Glenfield Infant School

Address: Rossington Way, Bitterne, Southampton, Hampshire, SO18 4RN

Unique reference number (URN): 140516

Inspection report: 3 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' work to improve attendance is having a positive impact. Overall, attendance is improving and is in line with national averages. The number of pupils who are often absent is reducing. This is because leaders place clear importance on school attendance and act quickly. They know pupils well and have a secure understanding of the barriers some may face to high attendance. Leaders analyse attendance data carefully and use this to plan specific, targeted support for pupils and to increase family engagement. It also helps the school identify issues early. Leaders have raised their expectations. They skilfully balance their tailored support with challenge. This results in more pupils attending regularly.

Pupils behave well across the school. They are consistently respectful towards staff and each other. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and apply the school's rules consistently. Pupils respond well to the positive modelling and praise they receive from staff. Pupils want to behave and choose to do so. Teachers develop regular classroom routines right from the start so that learning is both focused and purposeful. Pupils recognise the importance of treating others with respect. As such, discrimination of any kind is never tolerated. Sometimes, teaching adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not fully effective. Where this is the case, pupil engagement can occasionally be less positive.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years make a positive start to their education. In partnership with parents and carers, staff have redesigned a safe and welcoming learning environment. This is across the whole early years provision. It covers both inside and outside learning. This broader offer helps entice children, so they settle quickly and are ready to learn.

In Reception, staff prioritise reading and teach phonics well. Immersion in the spoken and written word helps instil a love of reading. Children access a range of activities that encourage curiosity and develop their social and emotional development. They quickly learn the behaviour expectations and routines. This creates a calm and purposeful learning environment.

The early years curriculum is thoughtfully designed to provide children with the foundations they need for their next stages in learning. There is clear focus on children's language and communication development. In most cases, high-quality interactions between staff and children maximise language learning. On occasion, this is less consistent. However, leaders' work in the early years means that children progress well through the curriculum. Leaders utilise coaching to support staff to develop the skills they need. This ensures children typically develop their language and vocabulary across all areas of learning. They are prepared effectively for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff share high ambitions for all pupils to be successful. The school's inclusive ethos is at the heart of its practice. The school identifies pupils' individual needs with accuracy and care. For example, staff are skilled at finding out about children's needs in the early years and spot those who may need more help.

Staff benefit from regular training to develop the ways they teach and support pupils. This helps staff develop their confidence. Staff typically respond well to pupils' needs. However, there is some variability in the quality of learning support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders create beneficial relationships with wider professionals and external agencies. Leaders also work closely with parents and carers to ensure the support plans increasingly reflect both practical needs and aspiration. Parents value how inclusive the school is. They appreciate that staff listen carefully and help pupils with their learning and wider personal development.

Leaders know which pupils may need extra help. Systems to monitor the impact of support on pupils' progress are well considered. Leaders use additional funding and resources to benefit disadvantaged pupils. For example, leaders use targeted approaches to improve attendance and progress for some pupils. Leaders carefully consider how best to promote disadvantaged pupils' physical development in sustainable and meaningful ways.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders know the school well. They are ambitious and strategic. Leaders understand the school's strengths and act effectively to address areas for improvement. Their decisions are timely and always taken in the best interests of pupils. The deep moral purpose to provide a high-quality education for every pupil is clear. Leaders consider how their actions have a positive impact on the outcomes of pupils, starting with the most vulnerable. This helps everyone feel empowered and united in a common goal.

The trust and local governing committee are deeply invested in the success of pupils in the school. They understand their statutory responsibilities and carry them out effectively. Trustees and the local governors ensure that school leaders are supported and challenged appropriately. This leads to some sustained improvements. Trustees and governors hold leaders to account through clear systems and insightful analysis of performance. Those responsible for governance use data effectively to celebrate success and ask further questions that drive improvement, for example regarding attendance.

Trust leaders work with school leaders to shape priorities and rigorously check that actions are successfully implemented and monitored. Leaders at all levels work together well. This is because there is a clear vision and focus on improving the experiences and outcomes for all pupils.

Staff, including those in the early stages of their career, value the high-quality opportunities for professional learning that leaders offer. They especially praise the coaching and mentoring programme. This is leading to more consistent practice across the school.

However, leaders acknowledge there is more to do. Overall, staff report high consideration for their workload and wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure pupils follow a coherent and logical programme for their personal development and wellbeing. The programme develops pupils' character and supports disadvantaged pupils effectively. Outdoor learning develops pupils' risk assessment skills. They learn about online safety. This is complemented by leaders' work alongside other professionals, such as children's charities and mental health professionals. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in appropriate ways, for example, through the high-quality stories they read and discuss. Pupils are equipped with the knowledge they need to stay safe, make appropriate choices and raise any concerns they have. Pupils are developing their knowledge of discrimination and fundamental British values, such as the rule of law and democracy, in age-appropriate ways.

Opportunities, such as musical, artistic and sporting activities, are well considered. These help pupils to discover interests and develop their confidence to try new things. Leaders carefully track which pupils take part in clubs and enrichment activities. Leaders want to improve participation, especially of disadvantaged pupils who take up fewer opportunities. Leaders seek to create further meaningful experiences that will lead to sustainable, long-term relationships with local providers in the community, such as sports clubs. Leaders are ambitious and are beginning to widen pupils' horizons and aspirations. For example, leaders are promoting more cultural and artistic experiences to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are benefitting from this. They recognise the differences that exist between people. They celebrate diversity and speak positively about what they know about different faiths and cultures. Pupils are respectful of others.

Pupils who need additional emotional help benefit from effective and targeted pastoral support. This helps pupils to manage their emotions and be ready to learn at the start of each day.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not achieve as highly as they should. For example, for the past 3 years, pupils' attainment has been significantly below average in the phonics screening check in Year 1. Pupils who face barriers to their learning do not consistently make enough progress from their starting points. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, gaps in learning persist. Consequently, many pupils are prepared well enough for the next stage of their education.

Leaders are addressing this at speed. Staff check pupils remember new sounds when teaching phonics, and pupils receive extra help when they need to keep up or catch up. Pupils benefit from the greater focus on key skills. There is more for the school to do to

ensure that pupils learn to form letters accurately right from the start, so that they can write fluently.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching is not consistently effective across the school. Some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not become fluent readers quickly enough. This hinders their learning across the curriculum. The teaching of phonics has variable impact.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is suitable and well designed for each subject and year group. It sets out what pupils need to know and remember in a logical order. Staff have secure subject knowledge. They receive feedback in how to teach the curriculum more effectively. However, staff sometimes do not address errors or help pupils build on prior learning. This means gaps in learning persist. Teachers do not consistently adapt learning well enough for pupils, including those with SEND. Teachers have started to use assessment strategies to check and challenge pupils' understanding before moving the learning on, however, it is not consistent across the curriculum.

Too many pupils do not secure the necessary foundations in knowledge and skills connected to developing fluency in writing. Leaders' recently introduced strategies have a sharper focus on helping pupils master basics in handwriting, spelling and constructing simple sentences. While leaders' actions are appropriate, they are at an early stage. This means it is too soon to determine the impact of this work.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this inclusive school. This is reflected in their improving attendance. Pupils who struggle to attend are supported through strong family partnerships. They benefit from warm, caring relationships with staff. Pupils' individual needs are well understood and met. Consequently, any barriers that a pupil may face are reducing.

Everyone has a friend to help them when needed. 'Happiness heroes' are always on hand to help peers feel welcomed, included and valued in the school community. Playtimes are harmonious, with plenty of laughter and fun. Pupils delight in the range of games and activities on offer to develop their skills. They are kind to each other and behave well. Pupils feel safe. Bullying is rare. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe online in age-appropriate ways. The approach of being 'ready, respectful and safe' permeates the school.

Pupils enjoy and engage well in learning. However, the curriculum has varied impact in developing pupils' reading and writing skills and knowledge. Pupils benefit from teachers who know them well. That said, teachers do not always adapt learning so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access it confidently alongside their peers.

Pupils are proud of their school. They describe the school as a safe space and know what to do if anything worries them. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect. They are very clear that everyone should be treated equally and fairly. Parents and carers

are also welcomed into the heart of the school's generous community. They appreciate the family feel and that every morning starts with a warm welcome and smiles.

Pupils do not consistently achieve well enough. This is reflected in the proportion of pupils being successful in the phonics screening check. This has been significantly below the national average over time.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to embed and strengthen teaching strategies for developing handwriting, spelling and grammar across the curriculum so they can raise levels of achievement in writing.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently use assessment information to check pupils' understanding systematically, and in response adapt their teaching so that pupils build successfully on prior learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that phonics teaching is fully effective across the school so that all groups can achieve consistently well in their reading and gain the fluency they need.
 - In the early years, leaders should ensure the consistent use of high-quality interactions from staff to extend children's vocabulary and deepen their understanding of important knowledge as they play.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Hamwic Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Robert Farmer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gary Plummer.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the CEO and other leaders from the trust and the chair of the board of trustees and a representative from the local governing body during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Clare Clifford

Lead inspector:

Gareth Flemington, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Deborah Perkins, Ofsted Inspector

Rebecca Mayman, 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 3 February 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

270

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)

25.38%

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

4.23%

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

13.85%

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).

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)	6.7%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	4.5%	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)	15.8%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.7%	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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