

Kenilworth Primary School

Address: Kenilworth Drive, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 1QL

Unique reference number (URN): 117183

Inspection report: 16 June 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 use detailed analysis to understand attendance patterns and the experiences of individual pupils. They identify trends, emerging concerns and barriers affecting persistent absence. Leaders adapt routines, deploy support and implement targeted interventions. They evaluate the impact of these actions carefully. Attendance is improving. Pupils who face barriers receive effective support. They attend more regularly, catch up on missed learning and remain engaged in school life.

Leaders analyse behaviour information carefully to identify patterns, emerging concerns and pupils requiring additional support. They adapt provision, routines and targeted support in response. This helps pupils develop increasingly effective strategies for self-regulation. Pupils contribute positively to the calm and purposeful atmosphere of the school. They are courteous and respectful towards adults and one another. They greet visitors confidently, hold doors open and willingly support their peers. Pupils understand the school's expectations. They reflect on their actions, resolve difficulties and manage their emotions successfully. They feel safe and know that adults deal with bullying and unkind behaviour effectively. Positive relationships underpin the school's work. Behaviour incidents have reduced over time and pupils participate fully in school life.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children get off to a positive start in the early years because adults know them well and respond thoughtfully to their individual needs. Leaders quickly establish what children already know and can do. They use this understanding to shape learning and provide effective support from the outset. There is a clear focus on securing the foundations children need in communication and language, early reading, writing, mathematics and personal development. Staff work closely with parents and carers so that support is consistent at home and in school.

Children approach learning with confidence and curiosity. Meaningful experiences encourage them to explore, investigate and apply what they know. For example, during activities inspired by 'Jack and the Beanstalk', children independently extend their mathematical understanding through practical problem-solving and collaboration. Songs, stories and skilful interactions reinforce learning and sustain children's enthusiasm and sense of discovery.

Adults are proactive in noticing what children need next. Children who need additional support receive it quickly. Adults identify those requiring encouragement, reassurance or additional challenge and respond with purposeful interactions and high expectations. Children continue to move forward in their learning. They develop independence, persevere when learning is difficult and take pride in their achievements. Leaders ensure that this support continues into Year 1. As a result, children leave Reception well prepared for key stage 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Inclusion is woven through every aspect of school life. Staff know pupils and families exceptionally well and respond with care, sensitivity and precision, when barriers arise. Leaders understand that inclusion is about ensuring that every pupil feels that they belong, participates fully and has the opportunity to succeed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils, those known to social care and pupils experiencing emotional or social difficulties receive carefully tailored support that maintains ambition while reducing barriers. Leaders use pupil premium funding thoughtfully to widen opportunities for disadvantaged pupils. They monitor the impact of this work closely and provide targeted academic and pastoral support, so that pupils can access the same experiences as their peers.

Staff adapt support thoughtfully in response to individual circumstances. They help pupils revisit missed learning and provide them with additional opportunities to practise and refine their work. Staff address misconceptions before they become barriers to future learning. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of pupils to identify the small steps needed to move learning forward. Adults work together closely to reinforce learning, build confidence and encourage pupils to become increasingly independent. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to secure the support pupils and families need.

As a result, pupils feel valued and included within the life of the school. They participate fully, develop confidence and achieve well from their individual starting points.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Personal development and wellbeing are deeply embedded within the life of the school. Leaders know pupils and the community well. They provide pupils with support that extends beyond academic success and helps pupils develop into confident, compassionate and reflective young people. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life beyond school.

Pupils benefit from a curriculum that reflects both the school's context and the realities of modern life. Leaders strengthen pupils' understanding of online safety through curriculum adaptations and direct teaching in response to emerging concerns. Relationships, sex and health education extends beyond a planned programme. Through class question boxes, pupils feel safe to raise worries and seek guidance, reflecting the trust they place in adults.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of diversity, fairness and belonging. They reflect thoughtfully on identity, citizenship and the expectations people place on one another. They listen respectfully to different viewpoints and value the perspectives of others.

The school's values are lived out by pupils. Pupils know what kindness, empathy and moral courage mean in practice and how these shape their choices and relationships. Pupils benefit from opportunities to engage with the wider community. Through creative and environmental projects, they see that their ideas can influence others. For instance, through one project, leaders ensured that pupils learned that 'every small voice counts'. This helps

pupils to understand that their views are valued and that they can make a positive contribution beyond the school gates.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from wider opportunities and monitor participation carefully so that disadvantaged pupils and those facing barriers to learning do not miss out. Pupils know where to turn if they need help and they value the pastoral support available to them. Staff help pupils manage emotions, develop resilience and navigate challenges successfully, enabling them to participate fully in school life and learning. As a result, pupils contribute positively to school life, value difference and are well equipped to navigate an increasingly complex world.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

A number of pupils join the school at different points in their education. Many face other complex barriers to learning or have experienced disruption to their education in the past. The school helps them to overcome these barriers. Pupils typically achieve well. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils develop knowledge and skills securely over time. This positive achievement is not always evident in published outcomes from national tests, such as those at the end of key stage 2.

Pupils' starting points are very varied. Leaders identify gaps in learning quickly and provide targeted support so that pupils catch up successfully over time. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well from their individual starting points. Pupils across the school are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Across the range of curriculum subjects, pupils can typically recall aspects of previous learning. In some instances, they do not always connect this learning or articulate it in as much depth as they could.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed the curriculum so that pupils build knowledge and skills in a logical sequence over time. They have identified the essential content that pupils need to learn and have an accurate understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching across the school.

Teachers use assessment effectively to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching and determine precise next steps. This enables pupils, including those requiring additional support or challenge, to continue to make progress in their learning. This is particularly evident in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers place a deliberate emphasis on securing foundational knowledge and skills before extending pupils' thinking and application of learning. In writing, pupils revisit, edit and redraft their work using precise feedback to improve its quality. In mathematics, pupils explain their reasoning and deepen their understanding rather than move prematurely on to new content.

Teachers and support staff work together effectively to address misconceptions and adapt learning. Additional adults are deployed purposefully to provide timely support, promote independence and maintain ambition for what pupils can achieve.

Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' spoken language. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to discuss, explain and justify their ideas. However, this work is not yet embedded consistently across all curriculum subjects. As a result, pupils do not always use subject-specific vocabulary confidently or make connections between their learning as readily as they could.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's context well and have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. They are ambitious for pupils, reflective about the school's current position and identify clear priorities while recognising where further improvement is needed. The senior leadership team has been restructured and demonstrates clear strategic oversight. Leaders have strengthened and embedded systems for assessment, behaviour and attendance. They have also strengthened the school's systems for monitoring and evaluation. Leaders use these systems to identify priorities, direct support and review the impact of actions taken. Leaders explain the rationale behind their decisions and evaluate the difference these actions are making for pupils. As a result, they respond more precisely to pupils' needs. Leaders have identified the development of oracy and subject-specific language as key priorities. These reflect careful consideration of the barriers pupils face and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Leaders continue to refine this work to secure greater consistency across the curriculum.

Leaders value their staff and promote a culture of trust, openness and shared responsibility. Professional dialogue and professional learning help staff develop their practice. Staff describe leaders as approachable and considerate of workload and wellbeing.

Leaders work closely with parents and carers. They recognise the importance of these partnerships in supporting pupils' learning and wellbeing. They communicate proactively with families and the wider community.

Governors know the school well and understand both its successes and challenges. Through regular visits, discussions with leaders and scrutiny of information, they provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They maintain effective oversight of safeguarding and monitor behaviour, attendance and the experiences of pupils who face barriers to learning.

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

Pupils are proud to belong to this warm and inclusive school community. They are courteous and welcoming, greeting visitors confidently and engaging thoughtfully in conversation. Relationships between pupils and adults are characterised by mutual respect, kindness and trust. Pupils know that adults understand them as individuals. Staff provide the support pupils need to succeed.

Pupils enjoy learning. They speak enthusiastically about the experiences their teachers provide. They talk passionately about books and authors. They can explain how stories introduce them to new vocabulary, improve their writing and help them understand the world around them. Older pupils describe enjoying the twists and turns of 'Macbeth'. Younger pupils delight in poetry, stories and practical activities that bring learning to life. Pupils take pride in their work and value opportunities to revisit, improve and achieve success.

Pupils feel safe and know that staff listen carefully when they have worries or concerns. They trust staff to deal with problems quickly and fairly. Bullying is uncommon. Staff address concerns swiftly and effectively. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. They learn about diversity, fairness and belonging in ways that are meaningful and relevant. During discussions, pupils speak thoughtfully about identity, citizenship and treating others with respect.

Pupils look after one another. They encourage classmates, celebrate each other's successes and make sure that nobody feels left out. Those who need additional help are supported sensitively. This enables them to participate fully in school life. Pupils value the wider opportunities available to them. These help them develop confidence and responsibility.

Pupils attend regularly and value being part of this caring community. They achieve well from their individual starting points because adults identify barriers early and adapt support carefully. From the earliest years, children develop the knowledge, confidence and resilience needed for the next stage of their education. By the time pupils leave the school, they are articulate, compassionate and reflective young people, who are well prepared for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Next steps

- Leaders should embed the school's work to develop pupils' spoken language across subjects, so that pupils routinely use and apply precise subject-specific vocabulary to explain and justify their thinking.
- Leaders should strengthen pupils' ability to retain, connect and articulate their learning across the wider curriculum, so that they demonstrate the same depth of understanding that is evident in reading, writing and mathematics.

About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Irmine Mason and Ash Patil.

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, deputy headteacher, phase leaders, teachers and support staff. They also spoke with governors, including the chair of governors and the school effectiveness adviser.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and a new senior leadership team has been established.

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

The school runs its own breakfast club.

Headteacher: Katherine Sampson

Lead inspector:

Cindy Impey, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Michele Geddes, Ofsted Inspector

Nick Hackett, 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

220

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

225

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)

30.00%

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

7.27%

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

15.00%

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

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	40%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	37%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	59%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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 (final)	47%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	48%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	62%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	52%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	36%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	62%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	55%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	52%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	36%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	83%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	52%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	36%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	83%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	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.

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	52%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	69%	-33 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	67%	16 pp
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	62%	80%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	55%	81%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	80%	4 pp
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	52%	78%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	78%	-42 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	78%	6 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	52%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	81%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	83%	79%	4 pp
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	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 (3 term)	6.5%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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)	18.4%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	24.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	20.5%	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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