

Orton CofE School

Address: Orton, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3RG

Unique reference number (URN): 112419

Inspection report: 30 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 ●

Pupils' attendance rates are high. Rates have improved over time and continue to increase. Leaders have created a welcoming environment where pupils are eager to attend school. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face disadvantage attend school regularly. Leaders check attendance daily. They work with the local authority to analyse attendance. No pupils are currently persistently absent. Leaders have high expectations for attendance. When needed, they support parents and carers who face challenges in bringing their children to school.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are polite, respectful and caring towards their peers and adults. Staff teach pupils how to self-regulate and manage their emotions. Pupils play together harmoniously. When they disagree, they resolve issues fairly and considerately. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils have a developed sense of equality. They value each other as unique individuals and openly accept difference. Older pupils instinctively care for younger ones, including nursery children. They are positive role models and take responsibility for equipment and toys. Younger pupils quickly learn to share and take turns. Pupils engage positively with their learning. Lessons are seldom interrupted, allowing pupils to focus on their learning.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum. They gain the basic skills that they need in reading, writing and mathematics. However, handwriting in books is inconsistent. Pupils talk confidently about their learning. They use subject-specific vocabulary and demonstrate detailed knowledge. For example, in history, they explain key aspects of life in Tudor England. Pupils who face disadvantage achieve well because of the support they receive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make positive progress from their starting points.

The school has small cohorts, so year-on-year published data offers limited value when comparing pupils' achievement to national figures. However, pupils generally achieve well in the phonics screening check. Where leaders provide additional support, gaps in learning are reduced. On the whole, pupils achieve well at the end of key stage 2 and are ready for the next stage in their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard ●

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. It captures the interest of pupils. Leaders sequence subjects well so that teachers teach key knowledge across the curriculum. The curriculum is effectively designed to meet the requirements of the mixed-age classes.

Leaders have ensured that teachers have secure subject knowledge to teach well across the curriculum. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of key vocabulary across different subjects. Leaders prioritise the teaching of basic skills. Teachers typically deliver phonics lessons well. This helps many pupils become fluent readers by the end of Year 2. Leaders promote reading for pleasure. The library is inviting and well resourced with books that pupils immerse themselves in.

Teachers typically teach reading and mathematics well. While recent improvements to the teaching of writing are evident, there are inconsistencies in how handwriting is being taught. Errors such as letter formation remain in some pupils' work over time.

Teachers adapt activities to meet the wide age range of pupils in each class. Teachers provide suitable activities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps these pupils to achieve the skills that they need most. Leaders organise additional help for pupils in English and mathematics to reduce gaps in learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Typically, children receive a positive start to their education. Staff interact in meaningful ways with children. They foster secure relationships. Staff work in close partnership with parents and carers. This helps children to settle quickly and happily into school life. Staff prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of children. They help children manage their personal needs with increased independence.

Leaders have designed a curriculum for both the Nursery and Reception Years. However, in places, this is not sequenced as well as it could be. Therefore, some of the activities that staff prepare do not focus on the skills children need most. This means that a few pupils are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they could be.

Children talk with confidence about their learning. They engage in meaningful conversations with each other and staff. Staff prioritise language acquisition. When needed, children receive support to develop speech and language skills. Children interact positively with each other and share resources, such as when building in the construction area. They generally use their phonics skills to read familiar words with increased fluency. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories. Typically, children are ready to take on the challenges of the Year 1 curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have established effective systems to identify the learning and social needs which pupils may have. Leaders provide pupils with effective support to reduce any barriers to learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who face disadvantage are supported well to learn alongside their peers. Professional training helps staff to do this. It enables them to adjust their teaching when needed so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates.

Partnerships with health and other organisations provide staff with additional specialist advice. For example, guidance for speech and language development helps pupils to

overcome speech barriers. Leaders carefully design individual learning programmes. They closely check that they are making a positive difference to pupils. Where needed, leaders make timely adjustments. This all contributes to pupils with SEND achieving well from their starting points.

Leaders use additional funding effectively. They ensure that pupils who face disadvantage are fully included in the life of the school and its wider learning opportunities. Leaders provide support to close any gaps in learning that disadvantaged pupils may have.

Leaders provide effective wellbeing support when pupils need it. Appropriately trained staff who know pupils well lead this work. Pupils value this support. They use worry monsters and calm areas in school to self-regulate independently.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the context of the school. They know their pupils and families well. Leaders accurately identify priorities for improvement. These include improving writing across the school. Leaders' actions have led to improved outcomes for pupils across all curriculum subjects.

Governors fulfil their roles effectively. They have a clear vision for the school: 'A happy place to learn, grow and thrive.' This informs decisions and is evident in the life of the school.

Governors visit the school and meet with staff to help them consider the impact of strategic decisions. This enables governors to provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Leaders appropriately consider the workload and wellbeing of staff. Staff appreciate working as part of the team. They are proud to work at the school. Leaders prioritise professional learning. This provides staff with the expertise to teach lessons well. It also equips staff with the knowledge to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders partner closely with the local authority and diocese. When required, they work with other agencies for the benefit of pupils and their families.

Parents and carers value the education that their children receive. In particular, parents welcome the care and nurture that staff give in the safe and calm environment that leaders establish.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise personal development and wellbeing. Staff teach personal, social, health and economic education well. This provides pupils with the skills and knowledge to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships. They are aware of coercive behaviours. Pupils know how to keep safe in the community and manage risks. This includes water safety and stranger danger. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils understand how to contribute positively to modern Britain. They understand how people of different religions and cultures can live well together. While respectful attitudes are

evident in practice, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is not as consistently developed or secure.

Leaders ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who face disadvantage, thrive by reducing barriers that they face. Wellbeing support teaches pupils to be resilient, independent and to work well with others. Leaders provide support when needed.

Leaders provide a wide range of enrichment activities, including music, crafts and sports. They provide opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and attend music concerts. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities, such as hockey, dance and gymnastics.

Leaders support pupils to become active citizens. Pupils are proud of their contribution to the local community and beyond. Activities include enterprise initiatives with local businesses. Pupils organise events, such as talent shows. These raise funds for national and international charities. Leaders arrange opportunities for pupils to learn about possible careers. Visits and visitors inspire pupils. These include talks by paramedics, blacksmiths and local farmers. Pupils enjoy leadership roles. Older pupils are proud to lead the eco, school and arts councils. They influence decisions, such as improving recycling in the school.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this small Church of England village school. They care about each other and have a genuine sense of belonging. Pupils know that staff keep them safe. Routines are well established and effective. The learning environment is calm and purposeful. Staff warmly welcome pupils each day, helping them to settle in. Their attendance rates are high.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They instinctively look after each other. Pupils are courteous, respectful and kind. They resolve their own conflicts. The school has established systems to deal with bullying, should it happen. Older pupils are proud of their leadership responsibilities. These include serving lunch to the younger pupils, who view them as role models. Pupils' play is inclusive. They adapt games so that everyone can join in. Pupils appreciate the wonderful school grounds that they can explore together.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They are both challenged and supported in lessons. Pupils benefit from activities that engage them in new learning. Where needed, staff effectively support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. This helps them to access the same learning as their peers. Across the curriculum, pupils generally achieve well.

Pupils relish the broader experiences that leaders arrange. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to experience residential visits, tour cities and learn in museums and theatres. Extra-curricular activities such as cookery, computing and crafts are often chosen by pupils. Pupils enjoy the sporting opportunities available, including lacrosse, netball and tennis. They broaden their experiences through interesting workshops. For example, pupils learn about

bees as part of their wider work around the environment.

Pupils are motivated to make a positive contribution to their community and beyond. They are proud to sponsor Georgina, who lives in Ghana. Pupils are keen to grow their own vegetables, which they enjoy eating at lunchtime.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that learning in the early years is consistently ambitious and develops children's knowledge more effectively through carefully sequenced learning activities.
 - Leaders should embed the recent improvement to the teaching of transcription so that pupils' handwriting becomes more consistent across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should strengthen pupils' personal development by ensuring that pupils develop a secure and detailed understanding of fundamental British values, including how these apply in everyday school life and the wider community.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is John Newton.

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 and school leaders during the inspection. Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.

Inspectors spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school was in March 2022.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Emma Pomfret

Lead inspector:

Kathryn Pym, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Trish Merritt, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

53

Well 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: 272

School capacity

96

Well 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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.89%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

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

1.89%

Below 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

24.53%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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)

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	59%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	59%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	43%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

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	64%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	43%	72%	Below
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	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	57%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24		46%	
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%	
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24		62%	
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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24		58%	
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		60%	
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24		59%	
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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24		67%	
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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		80%	
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		78%	
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24		78%	
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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		79%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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)	2.7%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.1%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	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)	2.4%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	0.0%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	22.9%	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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