

Townhill Infant School

Address: Benhams Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO18 2FG

Unique reference number (URN): 140478

Inspection report: 6 May 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 ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Staff provide high-quality, purposeful interactions throughout the day. They skilfully use modelling and questioning to develop children's language. Adults talk with children consistently during play, routines and group times. Children learn new words quickly and use them confidently in context. Staff give children time to think and respond and build carefully on what they say. As a result, children's communication skills, confidence and resilience develop extremely well.

The early years curriculum strongly supports children's progress, with communication and language at its heart. Leaders have carefully planned and sequenced the curriculum so children build knowledge securely. Staff identify gaps early and provide targeted support, so children catch up quickly. Children are highly engaged and enthusiastic learners. Outdoor provision complements indoor learning and offers meaningful opportunities for children's physical development, exploration and writing.

Reading is treasured and prioritised from the start. Children begin learning speaking and listening skills in Nursery, which prepares them extremely well for learning phonics in Reception. Children confidently recognise and remember the essential sounds and letters securely. They are able to apply these skilfully when reading and writing. Children read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. This helps children build fluency and confidence in their reading. Children also develop secure early number and reasoning skills.

Children make excellent progress and are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1. Strong partnerships with parents and carers and clear transition arrangements support children's learning and wellbeing from the outset.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders know the school extremely well. They are clear about its strengths, understand why these have been secured and identify precisely where further improvement is needed.

Leaders at all levels, including governance, are highly effective and united in their ambition to help all pupils succeed. Decisions are evidence-based and consistently put pupils first, particularly those who need extra support. Leaders closely monitor pupils who find learning or attendance more difficult and act swiftly to provide well-matched support. As a result, the school continues to secure rapid improvement across key areas, including inclusion, attendance and achievement.

Trustees and governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They provide robust challenge alongside meaningful support. They understand the school's context well, scrutinise its use of resources carefully and hold leaders firmly to account. Their work contributes directly to sustained improvement over time.

Professional learning is a clear strength. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to a high-quality, evidence-informed programme that builds expertise over time. Training is closely aligned with school priorities and supported by trust expertise, including coaching and

professional courses. Early career teachers receive strong support, helping them to develop confidence and consistency in their practice.

Leaders give careful consideration to staff wellbeing and workload. Work is shared fairly and systems are in place to manage demands effectively. Staff feel valued, respected and proud to work at the school. Relationships are open and positive. Morale is high and leadership at all levels continues to drive improvement with moral integrity.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school provides an extensive and carefully designed personal development programme that runs through the taught curriculum and pupils' wider experiences. It is sharply tailored to the school's context and pupils' needs. It makes a strong, demonstrable difference to pupils' lives. Leaders ensure the programme supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and responds effectively to issues that matter to pupils, including mental health and wellbeing.

Pupils develop a secure and detailed understanding of values such as respect, fairness and responsibility. They are encouraged to reflect thoughtfully on their own beliefs and experiences and to respect the views of others. Through assemblies, lessons and discussion, pupils engage confidently with moral and ethical issues. They cooperate well, resolve conflict maturely and show integrity in their behaviour. Pupils demonstrate strong character and resilience and make a positive contribution to school life. Their understanding of the fundamental British values, including democracy, mutual respect and tolerance, is secure and evident in their actions.

The school's curriculum widens pupils' experiences and their appreciation of diversity. Pupils learn about different cultures, traditions and religions and take part in creative and cultural opportunities, including celebrations and performances. The school's well-taught personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils to understand healthy relationships, personal safety and online and offline risks. In the early years, children develop confidence and positive relationships from the outset.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from the school's offer. They track participation carefully and make precise adjustments when required. This means that disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils facing additional barriers benefit fully. Highly effective pastoral support underpins pupils' wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders know pupils and their circumstances extremely well. They provide targeted, individualised support that makes a positive difference. As a result, pupils develop high levels of confidence, self-belief and independence. They are resilient, respectful and well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils make good progress through the curriculum across year groups and key stages. In the early years, children learn key skills in phonics, handwriting and number. This helps them to get ready for Year 1 and beyond. Pupils typically build knowledge and skills securely over time and can recall and apply what they have learned. This is reflected in the quality and consistency of their work, particularly in reading and mathematics. In some subjects in the wider curriculum, pupils' knowledge and understanding are not as secure as in core subjects. Overall, pupils achieve well.

Where national test outcomes are available, these are above national averages over time, most notably in phonics at the end of Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils generally do well. Gaps between the attainment of these pupils and their peers are closing, especially in writing. Where needed, staff provide timely, targeted support. As a result, most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure and accurate understanding of attendance across the school. They analyse attendance information at whole-school level and for specific groups and individuals. This enables leaders to identify patterns and barriers to attendance. Leaders' actions to improve attendance are having a positive impact. Historically, rates of absence have been higher than the national average. However, in recent terms, this has improved and attendance is improving rapidly and persistent absence is reducing. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Where attendance remains low for individuals, leaders act promptly and effectively to secure improvement. Leaders recognise that their improvement work needs to continue, so attendance increases further and is in line with the national average.

Pupils behave calmly and respectfully across the school. Clear rules and routines help pupils feel safe and ready to learn. Lessons are calm and focused, with no low-level disruption. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. Staff manage behaviour with care and high expectations. Bullying and discrimination are rare. Staff deal with concerns quickly. Pupils who need extra support, including those with SEND, receive timely and appropriate adjustments. The school shows a strong culture of respect. Pupils and staff treat each other with courtesy. Staff model respectful behaviour at all times. As a result, pupils feel valued and supported.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. Informed decisions strengthen provision and support ongoing improvement. The ambitious curriculum helps build pupils' knowledge, skills and language across subjects. Leaders review and refine the curriculum regularly. This helps to ensure that it remains relevant for current pupils. Leaders make sure that teachers have the subject

knowledge and expertise needed to teach the curriculum well. Leaders support this through trust-led training and well-considered professional learning.

Reading is prioritised. The teaching of phonics is consistent and helps pupils learn to read accurately and fluently. Regular checks on learning and focused support help pupils who need extra practice to catch up. A structured approach to teaching handwriting supports pupils' early writing. Across the school, teaching promotes pupils' vocabulary well.

Staff know pupils well and adapt teaching to meet pupils' individual needs. Leaders ensure that reasonable adjustments for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils known to children's social care are carefully implemented. Pupils typically make secure progress from their starting points. Leaders recognise the need to improve some aspects of the wider curriculum to ensure it is always at the standard of the core curriculum. For example, pupils' recall and understanding in some subjects are not as leaders intend. This work is already underway.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

A highly positive culture of care underpins the school's approach to inclusion. Well-trained staff know pupils extremely well and understand their individual needs. In the early years, adults set high expectations for all children and put help in place quickly. Pastoral support is highly effective and woven into daily practice.

Leaders identify pupils' needs promptly and accurately. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils known or previously known to children's social care. Clear systems help staff recognise pupils' emerging needs early and adapt their provision swiftly.

Leaders hold high expectations for all pupils. Support is carefully planned and informed by specialist advice where needed. This reduces pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing, helping them to thrive. Staff receive suitable training and understand their role in assessing, planning, delivering and reviewing support for pupils. Leaders use assessment information and other evidence to shape the school's pupil premium strategy, which staff generally understand. The school's ethos of acceptance and welcome is evident, and families speak positively about feeling known and supported.

The resource provision provides a nurturing environment for pupils with complex needs. Pupils make progress from their starting points, supported by clear targets and close leadership oversight. Leaders are refining their approaches so that more pupils in the provision have increasing access to the mainstream curriculum and experiences.

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

Pupils experience a warm and welcoming school where they feel valued and included. From the moment pupils arrive, calm routines and friendly faces help them settle quickly. Staff know pupils well and build warm, trusting relationships. Pupils feel safe and confident. They know who to talk to if they have a worry and trust that adults will listen and help. Pupils

benefit from a personalised approach to help them succeed, regardless of their starting points or circumstances. No stone is left unturned to help pupils feel that they belong.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils understand the rules and follow them with confidence. They treat each other with kindness and respect. Pupils enjoy the structured activities available at playtimes. They enjoy school trips, fundraising and receiving rewards in assembly for their good conduct and effort. Pupils' behaviour is very positive. They learn how to manage their feelings and resolve small disagreements for themselves. Bullying is very rare and is resolved effectively. Pupils say adults deal with these concerns quickly and fairly.

Learning is enjoyable and engaging. Teachers explain ideas clearly and encourage pupils to talk about what they know. Pupils take pride in their work and enjoy working both independently and with others. They are curious, focused and keen to share what they know. Overall, pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

All pupils are included. Those who need extra help, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive thoughtful support that helps them learn alongside their friends and build confidence. This contributes to the improving attendance of pupils, who feel secure at school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff continue to embed the changes made to the school's wider curriculum and teaching, so that pupils' knowledge builds quickly and deepens from their starting points.
 - Leaders should ensure that their work to improve overall attendance is sustained over time and results in pupils' attendance being consistently at least in line with national averages.
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About this inspection

This school is part of 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.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector spoke to several representatives of the trust, including the chair of trustees. He also spoke with the chair of the local governing body. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils.

Inspectors also reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View and spoke with parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The executive headteacher also oversees Ludlow Infant Academy, which is in the same multi-academy trust. The local governing body works across both schools.

The school includes a resourced provision. This is for pupils in key stage 1 with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as speech, language and communication needs. There are currently 5 pupils, all of whom have an education, health and care plan.

Since the previous inspection, numbers on roll have reduced notably. This is due to a range of contextual factors. As a result, nearly half of the pupils on roll live outside the designated area and have to travel further across the city.

The school also, under the same registration, runs nursery provision for 2- and 3-year-olds.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school offers before- and after-school provision.

Executive Headteacher : Beverly Corbin

Lead inspector:

Gareth Flemington, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

William James, Ofsted Inspector

Vickie Farrow, 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 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

160

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

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)

39.39%

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

5.00%

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

16.88%

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).

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)	7.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.3%	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 (3 term)	24.3%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.8%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.9%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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