

Grove Park Primary School

Address: Hilton Drive, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1PT

Unique reference number (URN): 138151

Inspection report: 9 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 ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a comprehensive, coherent and well-sequenced programme of personal development. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, protected characteristics and respectful relationships in clear, age-appropriate ways. They speak confidently about fairness, equality and respect. Leaders seek to embrace every opportunity to promote acceptance and respect for people from different ethnicities, religions and backgrounds. This develops pupils' understanding of common values shared across the community, including tolerance for others. Alongside the school's religious education curriculum, these opportunities develop pupils' appreciation of spirituality and respect for all.

Through the well-planned personal development programme, pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding about healthy relationships. They also learn how to look after their physical and mental wellbeing. This knowledge gives them the confidence to make informed and safe decisions, both online and offline.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities. Clubs, including sports, choir and cooking club, are well attended by all pupils, including those that are disadvantaged. Extensive leadership roles are available that include social time rangers, members of the school council, and diversity ambassadors to name a few. Community involvement, including care home visits, food bank collections and charity events, deepens pupils' understanding of citizenship. Pupils develop resilience, confidence, empathy and a firm sense of belonging.

Leaders and staff have a deep understanding of pupils' needs and backgrounds. High-quality pastoral support is woven through school life. They are systematic in identifying who might need additional pastoral support. Pupils benefit from this support. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing and are successful in meeting their social, emotional and mental health needs. As a result of the provision here, pupils are resilient, confident, kind, independent, respectful and behave with integrity, all while having a huge amount of fun.

Expected standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They consistently demonstrate the school's values of respect and responsibility. Pupils especially enjoy social times. They play cooperatively, taking turns and demonstrating kindness. They have a positive attitude to their learning and try their best in lessons. Leaders set high expectations for behaviour. These are rooted in well-understood rules and routines. Pupils follow these rules and typically meet these expectations. There are highly positive relationships between staff and pupils. Leaders and staff deal effectively with the rare instances of poor or unkind behaviour, including bullying and discrimination. Staff support pupils who need help managing their emotions well.

Attendance is a priority for the school, which is shared by leaders, staff and those responsible for governance. Leaders have recently put systems in place to address poor attendance. Leaders understand the reasons why some pupils struggle to attend school regularly. This is improving attendance for all pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, leaders recognise that these changes must be maintained to ensure that all pupils attend as often as they should.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching. They check how well curriculum plans are implemented and use this information to identify what needs to improve. Leaders take action to strengthen teaching and make sure that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

The curriculum is engaging and builds logically from Reception through to Year 6. Clear end points of knowledge are identified, these help staff to understand what pupils should learn and when. Teachers ask pertinent questions to test what pupils understand. However, at times these questions are not precise enough. In these cases, they do not identify where pupils have developed misconceptions. As a result, these misconceptions go unaddressed. They become embedded and pupils do not secure key knowledge as well as they could.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and generally plan tasks matched to the needs of pupils, including those that face barriers to their learning. Additional resources to support pupils are generally used well. Leaders have prioritised early reading and phonics. The phonics scheme is well established and helps pupils build knowledge of the sounds and corresponding letters. Staff adapt the programme to revisit earlier sounds when needed so that pupils gain confidence and fluency. Reading interventions support pupils who need additional practice.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years get off to a positive start at school. Leaders understand the strengths of the provision and where improvement is needed. They use this knowledge to make appropriate adjustments that enable children to access learning. Leaders have made some recent changes to the curriculum and sharpened their focus on early writing and vocabulary acquisition. There is a sharp focus on making sure children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and learn to read and count. Leaders prioritise staff training and ensure welfare requirements are met. This supports children's wellbeing and gives all children a secure start.

Routines and expectations are well established. The environment is calm, well organised and supports children to practise and apply their learning with increasing independence. Staff form warm, positive relationships with the children in their care. They typically use high-quality interactions and carefully plan activities to target specific skills. For example, craft activities improve scissor skills and fine motor development.

From their starting points, children generally make secure gains across the areas of learning and are typically well prepared for Year 1. Phonics teaching usually supports confident

practice of sounds and early writing. Targeted support helps children with additional needs access learning alongside their peers and develop positive learning behaviours.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders place inclusion at the centre of their work. They have a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged and those who are known to children's social care.

Staff receive appropriate training to support pupils with additional needs and to implement the graduated approach. Staff understand the needs of their pupils and make sure they have everything they need to succeed. There are a range of interventions available to pupils to reduce barriers to learning and to support wellbeing. Some pupils benefit from the use of regulation circuits, which are positioned around the school as well as the newly established 'Bubble' room. Other pupils benefit from accessing bespoke spaces within the school that help them to regulate their emotions, including the 'Rainbow' room.

Leaders use additional funding to make sure all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those known to social care, can access all of the opportunities and experiences that the school offers. As a result, pupils are supported to engage positively in lessons and to make progress from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are focused on continuous improvement. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development and take appropriate action to improve outcomes for pupils. This work is making a difference. The school places pupils at the very centre of its decision-making.

The trust plays an active and effective role in both supporting and holding the school to account. Trust leaders carry out regular reviews, which give them a secure understanding of how well the school is performing. Leaders value the trust's guidance and support. Trustees and governors fulfil the duties expected of them. They make sure that leaders receive the right support to bring about improvement. Leaders and governors ensure that pupils who face disadvantage are a priority. The investment that leaders and governors make in supporting the wellbeing of such pupils is of particular note. This supports pupils to be well prepared for their learning.

Leaders make the maximum use of the expertise that exists in school, the trust and beyond. Staff's wellbeing and workload are carefully managed. Staff receive effective support from leaders to help them carry out their roles well. This includes teachers new to the profession at the very start of their teaching career. Staff receive effective professional learning opportunities. This ensures that teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well.

The school works closely with parents, carers and a wide range of external agencies to aid school improvement. Leaders ensure everyone's focus remains on helping pupils succeed and achieve.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Attainment over time is below where it needs to be, including in national tests. This means that too many pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, leave Grove Park without the skills and knowledge that they need for the next stage of their learning. Gaps in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics are not addressed with the urgency needed. This is reflected in some of the work that pupils produce in subjects across the curriculum.

There is a more positive picture of pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Most pupils secure this knowledge. Outcomes in the multiplication tables check in Year 4 are close to national averages. The knowledge that some older pupils have in different subjects is variable. Leaders have an accurate understanding of these weaknesses and are taking appropriate steps to improve pupils' achievement. This work is in the early stages, and the impact is not currently evident in how well pupils achieve across the school.

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

Pupils arrive with a smile as they are welcomed into school by caring staff who know them well. This positive start to each day helps pupils to feel safe and valued and to be ready to learn. The school's vision of 'we work together to achieve more' is understood by pupils and reflected in their positive attitudes. There is a strong sense of shared values across the school. Pupils demonstrate respect, resilience, responsibility and resourcefulness. As a result, pupils describe their school as a place where everyone is included.

Over time, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Leaders have put in place well-considered systems and effective interventions to address this. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are beginning to secure core skills in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these improvements are at an early stage.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, show interest in their learning. They contribute willingly and talk confidently about what they are learning. Adults encourage pupils to try, practise and improve. Pupils are supported to build confidence in all they do. In the early years, children are motivated and engaged in their learning.

Pupils are polite and show consideration towards each other, helping to create a positive atmosphere. Behaviour across the school is calm and purposeful. They follow established routines well and contribute to a positive learning environment. Pupils understand what bullying is and what it is not. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff will listen and take swift action if any concerns arise.

Overall, pupils benefit from a caring environment. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing. Beyond lessons, pupils benefit from wider personal development opportunities that build

their confidence, strengthen peer relationships and reinforce the school's values. This helps pupils to grow into thoughtful and responsible members of the Grove Park community.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to raise aspirations for what pupils can and should achieve so that pupils' achievement, including in published outcomes, improves further.
 - Leaders should sharpen staff expertise in the use of assessment to identify and address misconceptions and gaps in learning swiftly, enabling teachers to adjust learning so that pupils build their knowledge securely across subjects and achieve well.
 - Leaders should continue to tackle weak attendance systematically and build on improving trends so that all pupils attend school regularly.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of Bourne Alliance Multi 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, Diane Browning, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neil Peterson.

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 head of school, trust leaders and members of the governing body along with other school and trust leaders during the inspection.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Head of school : Lauren Flain

Lead inspector:

Jody Murphy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Lenny Williams, 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

400

Above 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

420

Above 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)

28.25%

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

2.75%

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

17.75%

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	34%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	32%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	27%	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	64%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	59%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	60%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	43%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	61%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	29%	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	51%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	46%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	56%	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	15%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	20%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	11%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	15%	44%	Below

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	50%	62%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	40%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	47%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	60%	Close to average

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	19%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	11%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	15%	58%	Below

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	33%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	20%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	47%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30%	59%	Below

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	15%	68%	-53 pp
2024/25 (final)	20%	69%	-49 pp
2023/24 (final)	11%	67%	-57 pp
2022/23 (final)	15%	66%	-51 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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	80%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	60%	78%	-18 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	19%	78%	-59 pp
2024/25 (final)	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24 (final)	11%	78%	-67 pp
2022/23 (final)	15%	77%	-62 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	33%	80%	-46 pp
2024/25 (final)	20%	81%	-61 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	79%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	79%	-49 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 (3 term)	5.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.5%	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)	13.3%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	19.6%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	22.8%	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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright