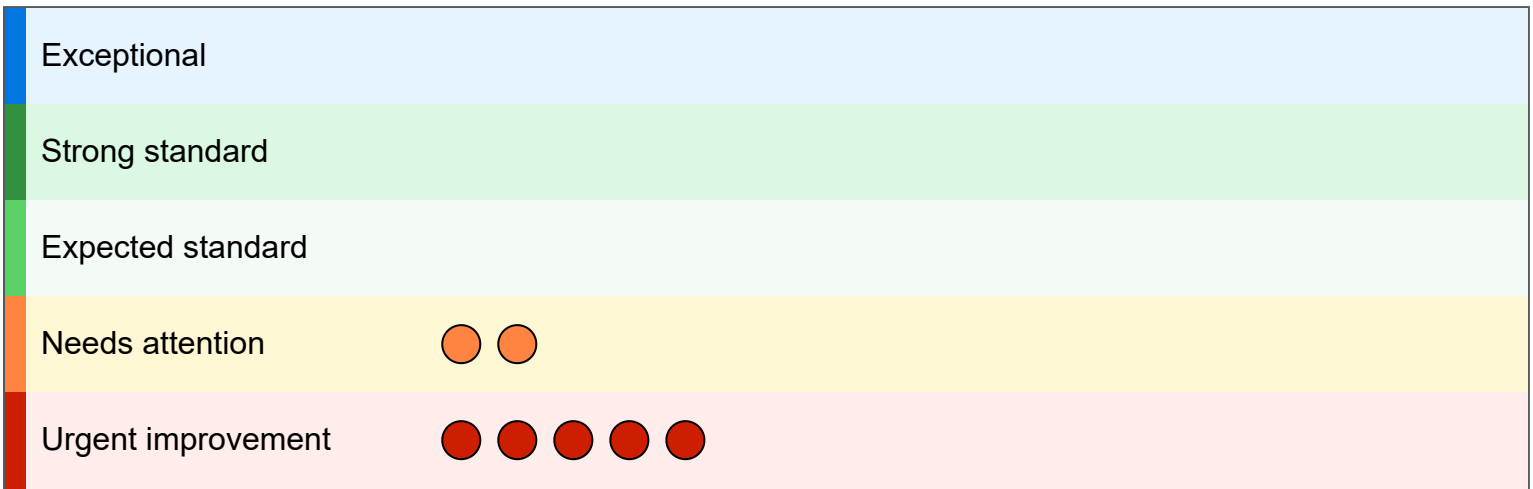


# Wayfield Primary School

**Address:** Wayfield Road, ME5 0HH

**Unique reference number (URN):** 143909

## Inspection report: 4 December 2025



## ⊗ Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding. They do not prioritise pupils' safety and wellbeing. Significant weaknesses in the school's behaviour management procedures put pupils at risk of harm.

Pupils do not always feel safe at school. They sometimes feel upset and worried about how other pupils behave and how staff respond to such incidents.

Staff do not have confidence in some of the school's systems. Some staff do not feel listened to and do not feel safe to raise any concerns.

Leaders ensure that staff know who the school's designated safeguarding leaders are. They also liaise with other services to seek support for pupils and their families. Recruitment checks for staff are appropriate and monitored by the local governing body and trust.

### 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.

## ⊗ This school requires special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

## Needs attention ●

### Early years

Needs attention ●

The school's early years curriculum is designed to build children's knowledge and skills and successfully prepare them for their next educational steps. However, teachers do not routinely make sure that what children already know is taken into account and built on. This is particularly the case in terms of children's language and communication. Staff do not have a sharp focus on the development of children's phonics learning and vocabulary. They recognise this issue and have recently started work to improve the quality of verbal

interactions and the way in which staff promote rich and grammatically correct language. However, this means that children in the Reception Year are not fully prepared for Year 1.

Children are happy and settled in the school's early years. They benefit from the welcoming environment and develop positive relationships with the kind staff. A reading culture is promoted through regular sharing of books. Children enjoy listening to stories and show excitement about events and characters' actions.

The provision for 2- and 3-year olds in the Nursery Year is appropriate and includes support for children's wellbeing and welfare. Families receive appropriate information when their children join the school, which allows them to understand routines and expectations. They are invited to share their children's strengths and interests so that staff get to know them and can identify any area of need quickly.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Needs attention** ●

Pupils generally benefit from the school's personal development programme. However, leaders do not review the impact of the school's programme on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. They do not evaluate how well the programme supports disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils understand some of the fundamental British values, such as the concept of democracy. They know that this process allows them to have a voice in school. Pupils show pride in their elected leadership roles, such as kindness ambassadors and members of the school council. They carry out their duties with care.

Pupils are welcoming to all, including visitors to the school. They are accepting of difference and value the diversity within their school population. Pupils benefit from age-appropriate relationships education and understand the concept of consent. They know the risks associated with using the internet and how to stay safe when online.

The school offers a range of trips and extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy trips to a dockyard and look forward to their residential trip in Year 6. However, leaders do not have oversight of pupils' participation with this whole wider offer and experiences. This does not allow them to identify why pupils may not attend and support them to do so. This means that some pupils are not able to take part in, and benefit from, the school's wider offer to enhance their learning and promote their talents.

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## **Urgent improvement** ●

### **Achievement**

**Urgent improvement** ●

Pupils do not achieve well. This is reflected in the published data at the end of key stage 2. The attainment of Year 6 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics has been below average for a number of years. The academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have worsened over time.

Pupils' work across the curriculum shows that they are not prepared for their next steps. They do not accumulate the knowledge and skills that they should. Errors and misconceptions are not noticed and addressed. Pupils do not receive the feedback that they need to help them overcome misconceptions or gaps in their learning.

Pupils do not acquire the foundational knowledge that they need in reading, writing and mathematics. They have a weak understanding of phonics and struggle to read and write with increasing fluency and accuracy. Many pupils struggle to read the texts they encounter across the curriculum. Pupils' writing is grammatically weak and poorly punctuated. They do not receive the feedback they need to make improvements.

Leaders' evaluation of pupils' achievement is inaccurate and is not used to shape appropriate support or identify improvement priorities.

## **Attendance and behaviour**

**Urgent improvement** ●

The school's behaviour management procedures place pupils at risk of harm. There are too many incidents where excessive and inappropriate force is used. Staff do not have the appropriate training to do this. Oversight of these procedures and the associated recording keeping is inaccurate. Pupils who experience and witness these procedures feel upset and do not feel safe.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is often disruptive. They show a lack of respect and disrupt the learning of others. This is not addressed well enough by leaders and teaching staff. Pupils receive 'internal suspensions', which do not benefit their learning or wellbeing and allow little opportunity for reflection. Leaders do not have clarity about how often pupils receive this sanction and its impact.

Some pupils enjoy breaktimes and lunchtimes with their friends. Others do not find it a safe and happy time because boisterous behaviour is not addressed by staff. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and that they should inform staff. However, they are accepting of poor behaviour and about the lack of respect shown by some pupils.

Leaders' work to improve attendance is not having a positive impact. Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough and persistent absenteeism rates are increasing.

## **Curriculum and teaching**

**Urgent improvement** ●

The school has an appropriate curriculum in place. In most subjects, the curriculum has been recently reviewed to ensure that subject content is sequenced meaningfully. However, leaders do not have enough understanding about how well the curriculum is implemented. They do not ensure that the quality of teaching is effective. Necessary improvements have not been identified or acted on as a matter of urgency.

Pupils do not receive the teaching that they need to secure their foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. The school does not prioritise the teaching of reading. Staff do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to help pupils become fluent and

accurate readers. The teaching of phonics is too variable. Pupils who need additional help with their reading do not receive it in a targeted way that helps them to catch up.

Some teachers lack the subject knowledge that they need to teach the curriculum or to adapt learning to meet pupils' needs. Disadvantaged pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not receive the support and adaptations they need to be able to learn and access the full curriculum.

## **Inclusion**

**Urgent improvement** ●

Leaders' inclusion procedures lack rigour and oversight. There has been some recent work to improve the processes to accurately identify pupils' needs and the barriers to their learning. However, this work is in its infancy and is not understood well by all teaching staff. Leaders' approach to inclusion does not ensure that pupils have access to the full curriculum and receive the support that they need to achieve its aims. Teachers do not have the knowledge and skills to be able to make appropriate adaptations to their teaching to meet pupils' needs.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate extra support through targeted strategies. This includes help to develop their language and communication skills. However, this support is not systematically embedded across the curriculum, nor is it accessible for all pupils who need it. In lessons, pupils do not have appropriate resources or adult help to enable them to build on what they have gained during the targeted support sessions. Leaders' evaluation of the impact of their support strategies is weak. It does not lead to purposeful staff training and development.

At times, pupils with SEND are not included in the whole class teaching sessions. They are not offered the support that they need to make progress through the curriculum and achieve well.

There is a lack of oversight about how well disadvantaged pupils benefit from the pupil premium funding. Leaders do not ensure that the whole school strategy is shared with teaching staff. The processes for review and reflection on the strategy is minimal and does not allow leaders to accurately evaluate the impact of their actions.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Urgent improvement** ●

The local governing body and the trust do not have sufficient oversight about the school's work. They have not challenged leaders about their overly positive reporting about the school. Leaders have not shared information that they should with those responsible for governance. This means that record-keeping about the school's approach to behaviour management and the use of restrictive physical intervention have not been analysed in enough detail. The local governing body and trust do not fulfil their statutory duties. This includes their checks to understand the impact of the school's safeguarding procedures.

Leaders do not have an accurate understanding about the school's areas for improvement. They have not acted with urgency to check the quality of the curriculum and teaching. While leaders acknowledge that pupils' achievement is poor, they have not focused on exploring

the reasons behind this situation. Planned professional development and checks on curriculum implementation have been affected by their focus on managing pupils' behaviour. There is a lack of leadership capacity to recognise and bring about the improvements needed.

Many staff do not feel supported in terms of their workload and wellbeing. Some staff appreciate recent changes to the expectations for their planning and marking. However, many staff raise concerns about the culture of the school and how they do not feel able to raise issues and feel listened to. Staff morale is low.

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

The school's safeguarding procedures are not effective in keeping pupils safe. Pupils' learning is frequently disrupted by the poor behaviour of others. Pupils do not routinely show respect to each other, the staff or school resources. Leaders' and staff's expectations for pupils' behaviour are inconsistent. There are too many occurrences where staff physically intervene when managing pupils' behaviour. They do not have the training and skills to do this safely. Pupils do not worry about bullying. However, some pupils do not feel safe. They are upset about the way some pupils behave and how staff respond to such incidents.

Pupils do not receive an acceptable standard of education. For too long, the attainment of Year 6 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics has been below the national average. Across the rest of the school, many pupils have significant gaps in their learning. They do not accumulate the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful. This means that pupils are not prepared for their next educational steps and life in modern Britain. Leaders have not acted with urgency to address this situation. Deficiencies in the design and delivery of the curriculum remain.

Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive the support that they need to overcome barriers to their academic achievement. Their learning and wellbeing needs are not identified accurately or shared well enough with staff. Leaders do not ensure that disadvantaged pupils access and benefit from the school's wider opportunities, such as extra-curricular clubs.

Leaders continue to build relationships with families and the wider community and to promote the importance of attending school. Even so, some pupils do not attend school regularly and this affects their learning and inclusion in the school's wider opportunities. Pupils, parents and carers are greeted warmly by school staff as they enter the school site. However, a significant proportion of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the communication that they receive from the school.

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## Next steps

- Those responsible for governance must fulfil their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding so that they have the information they need to check on procedures and hold leaders to account for pupils' safety.
  - Leaders must ensure that the behaviour management procedures eradicate poor behaviour, support pupils' wellbeing and lead to pupils feeling and being safe.
  - Leaders must ensure that record-keeping about behaviour incidents, especially incidents linked to restrictive physical intervention, is accurate and shared with the local governing body and trust.
  - Leaders should ensure that they evaluate the quality of teaching to identify where improvement is needed, and then provide staff with suitable support to help them gain the subject knowledge and teaching skills that they need to deliver the curriculum well so that pupils achieve well.
  - Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is evidenced by accurate information and robust analysis.
  - Leaders should ensure that the learning and wellbeing needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified accurately and that these pupils receive the support they need to thrive and succeed.
  - Leaders should check pupils' attendance with more rigour so that patterns and themes are identified, leading to appropriate support to reduce the barriers to regular school attendance.
  - Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills that they need to teach pupils to read.
  - Leaders should ensure that children in the early years are supported with their language and communication through staff engaging them in high-quality interactions.
  - Leaders and those responsible for governance should check and evaluate the use of pupil premium funding to ensure that it benefits disadvantaged pupils.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of The Primary First Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lorna Hamilton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Rumbles.

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We decided to treat the inspection a full inspection under section 5 of the same Act.

The inspection began on 4 December 2025 as a focused monitoring inspection. The inspection was deemed a full inspection. As a full inspection requires more time to complete than a focused monitoring inspection, we returned on 5 December 2025 to complete the full inspection. The focused monitoring inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. His Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether pupils received appropriate support for their behaviour, wellbeing and safety.

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 senior school leaders and representatives from the governing body and trust during the inspection.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Ria Henry

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**Lead inspector:**

Kate Fripp, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**

Shazia Akram, His Majesty's Inspector

Sara Staggs, His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Graydon, His Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Cattell, His Majesty's 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 4 December 2025

**School and pupil context****Total pupils**

**424**

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**

**360**

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)**

**41.29%**

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**

**0.47%**

Well 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**

**14.86%**

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**

**Well 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	48%	61%	Below
2024/25	31%	62%	Below
2023/24	40%	61%	Below
2022/23	71%	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	63%	74%	Below
2024/25	56%	75%	Below
2023/24	57%	74%	Below
2022/23	74%	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	84%	72%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	84%	72%	Above
<b>2023/24</b>	77%	72%	Close to average
<b>2022/23</b>	91%	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	62%	73%	Below
<b>2024/25</b>	50%	74%	Below
<b>2023/24</b>	46%	73%	Below
<b>2022/23</b>	89%	73%	Above

### 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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	40%	46%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	24%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	29%	46%	Below
2022/23	79%	44%	Above

### 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	59%	63%	Close to average
2023/24	52%	62%	Close to average
2022/23	79%	60%	Above

### 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	81%	59%	Above
2024/25	82%	59%	Above
2023/24	76%	58%	Above
2022/23	86%	58%	Above

### 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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	52%	60%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	35%	61%	Below
<b>2023/24</b>	38%	59%	Below
<b>2022/23</b>	93%	59%	Above

## 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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	40%	68%	-27 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	24%	69%	-46 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	29%	67%	-39 pp
<b>2022/23</b>	79%	66%	12 pp

## Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	62%	80%	-18 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	59%	81%	-22 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	52%	80%	-27 pp
<b>2022/23</b>	79%	78%	0 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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	81%	78%	3 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	82%	78%	4 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	76%	78%	-1 pp
<b>2022/23</b>	86%	77%	8 pp

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	52%	80%	-28 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	35%	81%	-45 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	38%	79%	-41 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	93%	79%	14 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 (1 term)	7.8%	5.1%	Above
2023/24	8.1%	5.5%	Above
2022/23	9.3%	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 (1 term)	22.5%	14.3%	Above
2023/24	26.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	29.3%	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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