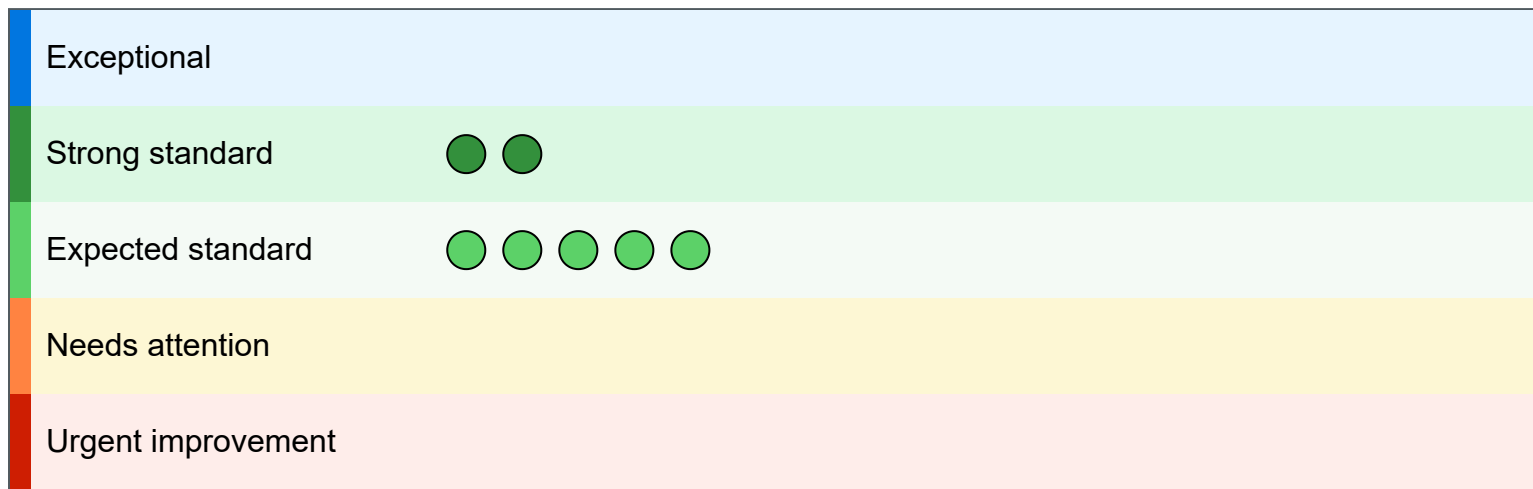


# Dinnington First School

**Address:** Sycamore Avenue, NE13 7JY

**Unique reference number (URN):** 108437

## Inspection report: 6 January 2026



### ✔ **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 is high. They attend school regularly, and persistent absence is very low. The school's work to support pupils with lower attendance is impactful. It enables pupils to improve their attendance rapidly. Leaders' careful analysis of attendance information helps them to support pupils and families in bespoke ways. Leaders' actions to support attendance are prompt. They use a range of strategies, such as a wellbeing offer, key adults or the school dog, to help pupils to attend school regularly. The school liaises with other professionals or the local bus company to support pupils' attendance. Collectively, this enables pupils to be in school regularly and make the most of its curricular and pastoral offer.

Pupils behave very well in and around school. They show relentless enthusiasm for learning. They are kind, polite and well mannered to each other and staff. Leaders and staff enable pupils to regulate their emotions effectively, seek help where needed and set a good example to others. Incidents of serious misbehaviour, such as bullying, are very rare. However, where they do happen, they are dealt with promptly and with care. The ethos and expectations around school, set by leaders, help pupils to thrive in a learning environment where they can be themselves.

### Early years

Strong standard ●

Children thrive in early years. They quickly acquire relevant skills and knowledge in readiness for key stage 1. Highly skilled leaders and staff have thought carefully about what they want children to know, remember and do to secure future success.

In Nursery Year, children receive highly effective support from the start. Important, secure relationships are made with families before children join. These continue to be fostered well as children move through the school.

The teaching of phonics is highly effective. Children enjoy well-chosen books that link to key vocabulary and enable language to develop well. Interactions between children and adults are purposeful and highly effective. Staff utilise research-based approaches to ensure that children are able to express themselves and communicate clearly. Mathematics is a significant area of strength. Careful consideration of number and counting enables children to rapidly grasp early number concepts.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those who may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, receive timely support in their learning and pastoral care. This helps them make swift progress through the planned curriculum.

Children's routines and expectations are well embedded. Children are supportive and caring of each other. They show skill and collaboration when building obstacle courses or when doing paired mathematics learning.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well. They acquire skills in reading early and achieve highly in aspects of mathematics such as the multiplication tables check. This success has been sustained over time. It means pupils are generally ready for their next stages in their education. Leaders carefully track the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This provides assurances that pupils do the best they can.

Pupils' work shows that they make suitable progress through the curriculum. In classes, pupils typically demonstrate an understanding of their learning and the intentions of their lessons. Staff provide effective interventions to help pupils keep up and catch up with their peers where needed. Recent changes in handwriting are enabling the youngest children in early years to make a more effective start to their mark making and early writing. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are less confident about their learning in some wider curriculum subjects.

### Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school's curriculum is well sequenced. It ensures that pupils have opportunities to build knowledge and skills over time. Leaders are clear about the quality of the curriculum and have made appropriate changes to improve it further since the previous inspection. Staff demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum's intentions. The curriculum is generally taught well. It enables pupils to learn the key knowledge identified. For example, in geography, pupils talk with confidence about the continents of the world.

Staff are highly skilled in teaching phonics. This enables pupils to make a flying start to reading. Pupils who need additional support to keep up and catch up with their phonics knowledge receive this promptly. This additional teaching helps pupils close gaps and address misconceptions effectively. The skills and knowledge pupils need to be successful mathematicians and writers are carefully mapped out. Pupils typically use the sounds they know to write coherent sentences well.

Teachers are suitably skilled to teach the curriculum. In class, pupils typically benefit from appropriate adaptations to help them understand the curriculum and apply their skills. However, further work is needed to ensure that adaptations are used consistently well across the curriculum.

### Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the different barriers pupils face across school. Staff, with leaders, share the same high expectations for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to learn alongside their peers. The school promptly identifies any additional support pupils may need. Leaders seek and use the support of other professionals promptly to support their work for pupils with SEND. This includes

speech and language teams, support through the local authority and through work with specialist provisions in the local area. Leaders carefully review some of the support they provide to pupils to ensure it is impactful. This work shows that it is. The school's wellbeing offer for pupils, including a counselling offer, makes it a highly inclusive place in which to learn.

Typically, staff are skilled in supporting pupils. Staff benefit from pertinent training to help them support pupils effectively. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, receive skilled intervention to help them achieve well. Leaders carefully consider how they can support pupils who are disadvantaged. The pupil premium strategy is regularly reviewed. Leaders and staff consider the individual starting points of pupils well. This helps them shape any additional support effectively.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders and governors share the same high expectations and values for the school and its pupils. This is a school that has grown since the last inspection, and together, leaders and governors have ensured that the values of the school have remained a positive part of school life. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. This understanding is shared with staff and governors. Leaders and staff are reflective professionals. Well-chosen professional development supports leaders and staff to improve the school. They work collectively in school, with other schools and leaders and the local authority, to get the provision right.

The school team is a community in itself. Staff retention and happiness are high. They feel well cared for and supported. There is a shared sense of purpose across the school team. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and celebrate how well their children do here at Dinnington First School.

Governors are skilled and provide appropriate support and challenge to the leadership team. They seek external validation and use a range of sources to provide assurance on the quality of the school and its provision.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Expected standard** 

The school provides pupils with a diverse personal development offer. It centres on wellbeing and helps pupils to understand their feelings and emotions well. Its impact is seen in the happiness of the pupils who attend. Weekly cross-phase reflection meetings build pupils' self-confidence and esteem effectively. This helps pupils make friends across classes and year groups, starting in early years. The school's personal, social and health education supports pupils to understand themselves and the world they live in. For example, pupils talk with confidence about how to stay safe online and keep themselves healthy.

A weekly enrichment offer every Friday means all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have the opportunities to learn new skills. Pupils take part in chess, woodland learning and cricket. Clubs before, during and after school are equally as diverse. The large school choir and the coding club help pupils explore their talents and interests.

Through the celebration of world religious festivals and visits to places of worship, pupils learn about different cultures and faiths. The school's values, such as community spirit and kindness, help pupils to generally understand fundamental British values. It is clear that pupils live out these values in their attitudes to learning and their behaviour around school and to each other. The school helps pupils to understand stereotypes well. Pupils understand that anyone can take on different roles and jobs.

School visits provide important learning experiences for pupils. They visit art galleries, museums and landmarks. Pupils remember key information and experiences from the places they go to. For example, the reward for overcoming a fear of climbing the steep steps in the lighthouse was to see a pod of dolphins.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Pupils benefit from highly positive relationships with the adults who care for them. This helps pupils feel safe. This is a school community where everyone is welcome.

Pupils behave well, both in classrooms and around school. They are kind and considerate to each other. They welcome new starters to the school warmly. Pupils celebrate their own learning and interests with pride. This love of school life and learning starts in early years, where children arrive eager to learn each day and settle into the school's expectations promptly. Pupils want to come to school. They attend school regularly.

Pupils do well here. A carefully planned curriculum enables pupils to develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful when they move on to their next stage in learning. Leaders set high expectations, and pupils rise to meet them. Staff across the school, including leaders, have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning any pupils may face, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. From a friendly smile as they walk into school through to high-quality interventions, pupils benefit from a wide range of support to help them succeed in all areas of their development.

The school offers a diverse range of additional activities to broaden pupils' experiences. Outdoor learning opportunities sit alongside opportunities to learn curling, golf and ballet. This enables pupils to explore their own interests or learn a new skill. Leadership roles such as 'planet protectors' and being part of the school council help the school community through activities such as planting trees.

A true sense of community can be felt across the school between pupils, leaders, staff, parents and families. This is a happy place for both pupils and staff alike.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should further embed how effectively adaptations are used by staff during lessons to meet the needs of all learners effectively and consistently.
  - Leaders should ensure that all pupils, including vulnerable pupils, develop detailed and connected knowledge and skills across all wider curriculum subjects.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dan Talbot.

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 senior leaders, representatives from the governing body, the local authority and the school improvement partner during the inspection. Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and across the school day, including during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors considered the views of staff through formal and informal discussions. Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View and as part of morning routines.

The school uses no alternative provision.

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

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The numbers on roll have grown. The school is now 2-form entry from Reception Year to Year 4.

Headteacher: Caroline Ash

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### Lead inspector:

Emily Stevens, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Catherine Beard, Ofsted Inspector

Nicky White, 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 6 January 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**315**

Close to average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

### School capacity

**333**

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)

**16.67%**

Below 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

**1.90%**

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

**13.33%**

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).

### 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 (2 terms)	4.0%	5.2%	Below
2023/24	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23	4.8%	5.9%	Below

## 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 (2 terms)	8.3%	13.3%	Below
2023/24	10.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23	9.4%	16.2%	Below

## 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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