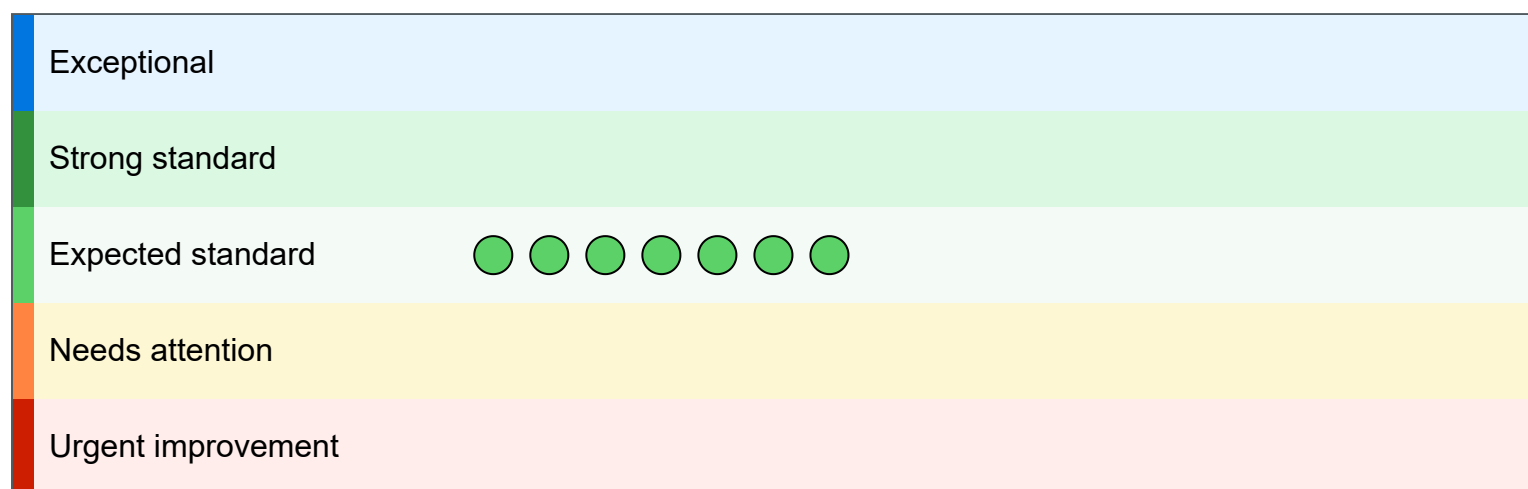


Ainderby Steeple Church of England Primary School

Address: Station Lane, Morton-on-Swale, Northallerton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9QR

Unique reference number (URN): 144165

Inspection report: 13 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Increasingly, pupils achieve well. This includes recent improvements in pupils' outcomes in national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement in other areas, for example in the Year 1 phonics screening check, has been above average over time.

Progress through the curriculum is clear to see when looking at examples of pupils' work or talking with them about what they have learned. Pupils develop an effective understanding of the topics and themes they encounter, although their understanding is deeper in some subjects than in others.

Children in the early years acquire the knowledge and skills they need for later learning. Older pupils can read fluently and with meaning. Pupils' verbal communication, in particular, is excellent. Additional support to improve pupils' handwriting is having a clear impact on their written work. Pupils recall and articulate their learning with increasing confidence and clarity. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Absence is rare. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the recognition they receive for doing so. Leaders' strategies to support and improve attendance are highly effective. Pupils who face barriers to regular attendance receive additional support. If pupils miss too much school, leaders act promptly to address this. Leaders have a deep understanding of each pupil's circumstances. They support families and build positive relationships so that attendance is something that can be celebrated, not worried about.

The atmosphere created by leaders and staff at the school supports learning well. There are clear guidelines for how all pupils will conduct themselves. When teaching is at its best, pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. If pupils find work difficult, they sometimes struggle to focus. Staff and other pupils quickly help them to get back on task. The supportive and caring culture of the school shines through. Everyone wants the best for everyone else. Around school, older pupils are role models for younger ones. They help their peers at social times and in lessons. Pupils understand the importance of empathy and respect. They listen attentively to one another's opinions and collaborate well. Bullying, discrimination, and other unkind behaviours are extremely rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have made considerable improvements to the school's curriculum over time. The knowledge and skills that pupils will learn are now clearly set out. The curriculum is ambitious. Leaders understand what makes a high-quality curriculum and carry out checks on how well theirs is working. They review and refine what pupils learn and when. For example, leaders have ensured pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and handwriting skills throughout the school.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They teach pupils the important content they will need for later learning. Teachers regularly revisit important topics and skills so they are embedded. For example, English and mathematics teaching starts with the basics and gradually builds effectively on what pupils have previously learned. In science, pupils' learning about different scientific techniques and processes becomes more complex over time.

Teachers check effectively what pupils know and can do. In some cases, this information could be used more precisely to adjust what pupils will learn and in what order. Typically, teachers' choices about how pupils will learn new knowledge are effective. This includes any adaptations made for pupils with gaps in their knowledge or with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, occasionally more-careful consideration is needed to ensure all pupils benefit fully from the learning opportunities.

Early years

Expected standard 

The curriculum in the early years is carefully considered. Deliberately planned activities provide opportunities to develop children's language and understanding of the world around them. The curriculum identifies specific learning goals for children to achieve at each age and stage. This helps staff to direct activities towards what each child should be learning. Sometimes these activities, or the focus of them, could be refined.

Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. Children respond quickly to these expectations and engage well with the learning activities. Children progress well through the curriculum and develop a secure understanding in all 7 areas of learning. Reading and phonics are prioritised, as is mathematics, so that children are very well prepared for key stage 1.

Children learn indoors and outdoors in exciting and stimulating environments. Some of these opportunities have a more positive impact on children's learning than others. Staff lead learning activities with passion and confidence. When staff interact with children, they ask meaningful questions that extend children's vocabulary and understanding. Children's communication and language development is a strength of the early years.

Staff work in partnership with parents to support children's transition into school and on to the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately. Staff understand what each pupil needs to succeed. Adaptations made to lessons are mostly effective. They help pupils learn the intended curriculum well. Additional targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is precise. The positive impact of this work is considerable, both academically and personally. Leaders' actions reduce barriers to success for disadvantaged pupils. For example, some pupils receive additional support to help them have a calm start to the school day. Other pupils have access to technology, which supports their specific needs in the classroom.

Training on how to adapt lessons for pupils with SEND, or with gaps in their learning, has been provided. Staff generally use the techniques they learn well. Leaders monitor the impact of strategies and quickly adapt them if they are not working. Leaders have made ongoing professional learning a priority in relation to disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium fund is intelligently used and accurately evaluated to find out what works best. Leaders' work with different professionals benefits pupils directly. Partnerships with parents are effective at supporting individual pupils' needs. Many parents are positive about the impact the school has had on their children.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They act upon their identified priorities swiftly and with rigour. This has brought about significant improvement to several aspects of the school over time, including in the curriculum, pupils' achievement and inclusion.

Professional learning for staff is specifically tailored to the school's development goals. Staff collaborate well with others and share best practice. The staff team is close-knit and staff support one another well. This has helped to develop classroom practice and improve support for disadvantaged pupils.

Those responsible for governance have an effective understanding of the school's context. They support leaders and challenge them to continually seek improvement. Governors undertake their statutory duties well, for example by ensuring there are robust safeguarding practices at the school.

Early career teachers receive expert help and guidance as they embark on their teaching journey. This helps them to become effective and confident practitioners. Staff enjoy working at the school. They recognise that workload has increased but that this was needed to achieve positive change. Leaders are mindful of staff's wellbeing.

At each level of the school's leadership, there is a shared vision and determination to ensure pupils' educational experiences are the best they can be. Leaders engage with parents and other stakeholders effectively to achieve their objectives. Opportunities for communication between school and home are appreciated. Many parents cite the caring, supportive nature of the school as one of its strengths.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's personal development programme, including what pupils are taught in personal, social and health education (PSHE), and relationships and sex education and health education, is very appropriate. It ensures pupils understand the importance of being a good friend and how different families function. Pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy, online and offline. They identify local risks and discover the importance of a balanced diet. The PSHE curriculum helps pupils appreciate diversity and the important values that support their school and wider society. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures is still developing.

Pupils relish the many leadership opportunities the school has to offer. These include an active student council, wellbeing team and pupil health and safety representatives. Through these roles, pupils make a genuine contribution to school life. They develop the confidence and character to speak up when something is not right. Pupils appreciate the pastoral support on offer to them. This is a notable strength of the school.

Leaders listen actively to pupil voice and this shapes school activities and experiences. Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities they have had recently to play competitive sports. Pupils value the educational trips they participate in. These help pupils to learn more about the natural environment, historical periods and local issues. Some pupils participate more fully than others in the school's enrichment offer. Leaders are exploring ways to give all pupils frequent access to activities that will enhance their educational experiences.

Regular collective worship emphasises the school's ethos. It also celebrates important national and international events, and teaches pupils about fundamental British values such as tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Visiting speakers complement this programme. This prepares pupils very well to be active members of society in future.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this small, welcoming school. Staff know pupils very well. Relationships between pupils and staff are kind and supportive. This helps pupils feel safe. There are many occasions when pupils work alongside each other to enhance the school community. These include tending to an allotment, handing out equipment at playtimes, and caring for the school chickens. Staff ensure that all pupils get access to enriching activities, especially those who need extra support and encouragement to do so. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these opportunities. Leaders consistently look for new ways to enhance pupils' educational experiences.

Pupils behave well around school. They hold doors open for others and give a warm welcome to visitors. The school's vision, 'Do everything in love', is well understood. Pupils are kind and caring. They are respectful of each other and bullying is very rare. If pupils fall out, staff quickly help them make up and move on. Occasionally, pupils forget the high expectations for their behaviour and need help to refocus on learning. Children in the early years learn strong routines from the very start of their time at school. Pupils become increasingly independent with adult support. Staff ensure pupils are ready for the next stage of their education and for life after school.

Pupils show enthusiasm for their learning. They ask meaningful questions and are keen to do their best. Pupils increasingly develop a secure understanding of what they have been taught. Achievement at the school has improved significantly more recently. In most cases, pupils receive the resources and guidance they need to succeed in lessons. Some pupils who previously struggled to engage in education are now thriving thanks to the support they receive.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff consistently adapt the curriculum and teaching methods so that they meet pupils' needs and build effectively on what pupils already know and can do.
 - Leaders should ensure that improvements in teaching enable pupils to develop deep, secure knowledge across all subjects within the curriculum, leading to consistently high standards of achievement in all subjects.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of Dales Academies 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), Damian Chubb, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Judy Hooton.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, CEO and director of primary education for the trust during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke with those responsible for governance, a representative of the diocese and the virtual headteacher about their work with the school.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The last section 48 inspection was carried out in May 2024.

Headteacher: Rachel Peart

Lead inspector:

John Linkins, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Jo Heaton, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

80

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

105

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)

15.00%

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

3.75%

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

8.75%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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 (revised)	83%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	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	89%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	100%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	73%	Above

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	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	58%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Close to average

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	70%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	38%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
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	88%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
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	50%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
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	63%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
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	38%	68%	-30 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
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	88%	80%	8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
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	50%	78%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
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	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
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 (2 term)	3.5%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	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 term)	5.4%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	10.8%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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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