

Ilketshall St Lawrence School

Address: Hogg Lane, Ilketshall St Lawrence, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 8ND

Unique reference number (URN): 144445

Inspection report: 3 March 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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. They are rarely absent and feel disappointed if they need to go home unwell. Leaders monitor attendance patterns closely and work effectively with families to overcome any barriers to high attendance. Persistent absence is very uncommon and is significantly lower than the national averages.

Pupils show consistently positive attitudes to school and learning. They say that unkind behaviour, bullying or discrimination is extremely rare. They learn to talk about their feelings and trust staff to help them resolve any problems that arise. Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well so that they are not overly reliant on adult support. This helps ensure they are ready to learn and develops their independence.

Pupils know and follow the expectations of being ready, respectful and safe. Pupils behave well in lessons and staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. They rarely need to remind pupils of the high expectations. Beginning in the early years, clear strategies help pupils to listen well to one another. Pupils enjoy social times together and benefit from a wide range of activities, including forest play, digging, role play and sports.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure that children get off to the best possible start. Effective partnerships with parents and carers begin before children join the school through home visits and contact with pre-schools. Children create an 'All About Me' box, which helps staff understand their needs and interests quickly. Leaders make thoughtful decisions about staffing so children are well supported to access all areas of learning and make steady progress.

Leaders plan and sequence the curriculum carefully and teachers teach it effectively. The well-designed provision, consistent routines and high-quality care help children develop their personal, social and academic skills. Leaders prioritise reading. Children start to learn to read and write as soon as they join the Reception Year. Staff use high-quality texts to broaden knowledge and foster a love of reading. Phonics is taught well. Children who need extra help receive prompt support. As a result, children achieve well and are well prepared for year 1.

Children use indoor and outdoor spaces with growing independence and confidence. Staff model how to use resources effectively and extend language through high-quality interactions. They enrich conversations and introduce new vocabulary, which children enjoy using in their play. For example, while hunting for fossils children learn to use the word 'palaeontologist'.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusion sits at the heart of the school's ethos. Everyone is welcome and supported to take a full part in school life. New pupils settle quickly and feel part of the community. Staff know

pupils well and skilfully identify needs or gaps in understanding with care and accuracy. In the early years, staff quickly spot any barriers and put support in place.

Systems for identifying and reviewing pupils' needs are well established. Leaders check pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. They use additional funding well, review the impact of support and adapt approaches when needed. Teachers adjust lessons thoughtfully so pupils can access the curriculum and learn alongside their peers. Pupils receive the support they need to progress well from their starting points.

The school's approach to inclusion begins with promoting belonging and recognising and celebrating pupils' strengths. Staff help pupils to talk confidently about what they are good at. As a result, pupils speak positively about themselves and their learning. Staff involve pupils and their parents and carers in decisions about the help they need. Staff are well trained to meet the needs of pupils. Leaders ensure that everyone understands and uses agreed strategies consistently well. When needed, leaders work effectively with external professionals to secure specialist support.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders know the school, staff and pupils well. Their improvement plans focus sharply on raising achievement and strengthening the curriculum. They make decisions in the best interests of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff benefit from high-quality professional development. This is through well-established networks and opportunities to work with other schools and subject experts across the trust. Trust leaders recognise the school's strengths and use staff expertise to improve provision across their schools.

The trust has established a local governance model. This ensures that the school remains rooted in its community. Governors understand the school's context and hold leaders to account with clarity and purpose. They are visible, informed and ensure that leaders receive the support they need. They work closely with the trust, who provide strategic oversight. Leaders ensure that progress is made in achieving trust and school priorities. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. They place a clear focus on the wellbeing of staff and pupils.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care their children receive. They value the clear communication, support and family feel of the school. Parents appreciate leaders' positive approach to promoting a love of learning. Staff feel respected, listened to and appreciated. Teamwork and collaboration underpin the school's work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Personal, social and health education and leaders' focus on wellbeing underpin the curriculum and pupils' personal development. Leaders place the wellbeing of every member of the community at the centre of their work. Families value this personal care and recognise the attention to detail staff provide. All pupils including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take on important roles and responsibilities. They talk confidently about their strengths and how they contribute to school life.

Staff support children's personal development in the early years. They teach them how to learn together, negotiate and share. The school's approach to wellbeing shapes every aspect of school life. Leaders monitor wellbeing closely and respond swiftly to support pupils' needs.

Staff give pupils regular opportunities to explore important themes, including discrimination, sacrifice and love. Pupils make links with learning in other subjects. They understand fundamental British values, such as democracy and they can explain why it matters. They develop increasing awareness of different cultures and faiths. Staff encourage pupils to challenge themselves. Pupils reflect on their progress and speak openly about what makes them feel worried or unsafe. They learn about trusted adults and how to seek help. They know how to keep themselves safe online and in the local community. They learn about the importance of physical and mental health.

Leaders enrich the curriculum through a wide range of real world experiences. They organise national and local visits, debates, discussions and fundraising events. Numerous sporting, artistic and creative clubs are available. Leaders monitor access closely to ensure every pupil, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND, can attend clubs and represent the school. The '50 things to do before you leave Ilketshall' programme further enriches pupils' personal development.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils progress securely through the curriculum and over time. They achieve well from their various starting points. Because the year groups are very small, comparison with national averages is not always reliable. Even so, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in national tests at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is close to the national average. This means that most pupils are ready for their next stages in education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who may be disadvantaged progress well from their various starting points.

Leaders respond swiftly to any dips in pupils' achievement. For example, they effectively refined the mathematics curriculum to address gaps in pupils' multiplication knowledge. They also strengthened the reading curriculum to boost pupils' reading fluency following a decline in pupils' outcomes in 2025. While pupils gain the basic knowledge they need in spelling and handwriting, they do not always apply these skills well across the wider curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders continue to refine and develop it. There is a clear focus on building pupils' speaking and listening skills and vocabulary. Pupils revisit and explore previous learning, which helps them secure important knowledge. They start to learn to read and write as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Leaders place a high priority on developing a love of reading. The reading curriculum broadens pupils' knowledge and

understanding of the world beyond Ilketshall. Pupils who do not pass the phonics check at the end of Year 1 receive support to help them catch up quickly. Staff have secure subject knowledge. They identify pupils' misconceptions promptly and anticipate when pupils may need help. They use a range of strategies to adapt the curriculum when required.

Pupils show a breadth of knowledge and understanding across subjects. They remember the important information staff want them to learn. They discuss their thinking with confidence and listen to others' views. In some subjects, staff do not always apply agreed approaches consistently. They do not always expect pupils to present their work with the same care they show in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils' written work does not always reflect the depth of knowledge they demonstrate through discussion.

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

Pupils are happy, positive and active members of their school community. Their learning is memorable. Exciting opportunities deepen their knowledge and understanding. They develop their knowledge securely across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning, attend well and take pride in their progress.

Pupils are well supported to understand and live up to the school aims for pupils to be independent, individual, informed and invested. Pupils explain how these values help them in their education and life. They recognise the importance of behaving in ways that reflect these expectations. Staff model teamwork and cooperation. They ensure pupils receive the care and support they need and work proactively to reduce barriers to learning. This helps all pupils succeed, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils understand the rules of being ready, respectful and safe. They know what bullying is, how to report concerns and trust staff to help them.

From the moment children start school, staff help them develop positive attitudes to learning. In the early years, children benefit from rich learning opportunities. They learn to share, collaborate and communicate. Older pupils reflect thoughtfully and discuss a wide range of subjects, from abstract ideas to complex problem-solving. Pupils typically achieve well because teachers identify and provide the right help. All pupils can discuss their strengths, areas for improvement and personal goals.

Pupils value the respectful and caring relationships they build with staff and with each other. In lessons, they show motivation and engagement and feel confident to ask questions. Pupils know what it means to be active citizens in school and the wider community. They enjoy a wide range of opportunities beyond the academic curriculum, which broaden their knowledge and interests. Playtimes and lunchtimes offer chances to play, socialise, explore outdoors or relax with friends.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff support pupils to develop their handwriting and spelling skills across all subjects.
 - Leaders should strengthen consistency in the approaches used to teach the curriculum in some subjects, so that expectations for pupils' written work are applied uniformly and written outcomes reflect pupils' secure knowledge as they progress through the school.
-

About this inspection

The school is part of the Asset 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, Jacqueline Bircham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon Evans-Evans.

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 school and trust leaders and the local governing body during the inspection. They also spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Sarah Orves

Lead inspector:


Oriana Dalton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Rachael Judd, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

101

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)

17.82%

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

1.98%

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

14.85%

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

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	57%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	56%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	77%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	41%	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	65%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	56%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	92%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	53%	73%	Below

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	87%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	81%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	88%	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
Latest 3 year average	72%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	33%	46%	Below
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	33%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
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	67%	59%	Above
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	56%	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	33%	68%	-34 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	33%	80%	-46 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	67%	78%	-11 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	56%	80%	-24 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)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.0%	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)	4.5%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.6%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.1%	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.

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