

Discovery Primary School

Address: Battery Road, Thamesmead, London, SE28 0JN

Unique reference number (URN): 131109

Inspection report: 24 February 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 ●

Attendance is positive. It is consistently close to the national average and continues to improve swiftly. Leaders have comprehensive knowledge of the barriers that may affect pupils' attendance. They provide extensive support to families and pupils to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and on time. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or barriers to learning attend well. Leaders track attendance closely and act quickly when concerns arise. Pupils understand the importance of attending school, and attendance is celebrated through the work of attendance champions. Pupils enjoy school and do not want to miss learning.

Pupils show great respect for others, which contributes to highly positive behaviour throughout the school. They appreciate the school's inclusive approach and understand that some pupils need different support to be successful. Pupils help each other to build positive relationships, demonstrating kindness and care towards one another. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils show strong engagement and perseverance in their learning. All staff model warm, caring and respectful behaviour. This helps to create a nurturing environment. Leaders monitor behaviour incidents carefully and use them to inform teaching. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour are low, and reports of bullying are exceptionally rare.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The school's highly inclusive culture helps pupils to feel that they belong and enables them to succeed in their learning and development. Staff hold high ambitions for all pupils. They quickly identify and check on vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they receive the support and teaching approaches they need to access and benefit from the curriculum.

Leaders work closely with external professionals and families to support staff to understand and meet pupils' complex and changing needs. They ensure that staff receive the guidance and training needed to provide tailored support for each pupil's needs and context. Pupils make secure progress from their starting points, and the school prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.

Inclusive approaches are used widely and consistently across the school. For example, staff use visuals to support communication. This supports the high number of pupils at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language to understand and communicate. Staff are adept at tailoring provision to meet pupils' individual needs with precision, for example, through supporting pupils to manage their emotions and engage in learning.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Well-trained staff and targeted resources help pupils to make positive progress through the curriculum. Leaders also ensure that all pupils access wider enrichment and learning opportunities. They are determined and highly effective in their work to prioritise equal opportunity for all pupils.

The school provides extensive opportunities that enrich pupils' personal development. Pupils show a strong understanding of the relationships curriculum and demonstrate respect for their peers. This is underpinned by a deep understanding of different faiths, cultures and beliefs. Pupils appreciate their diverse community and value learning, debating and understanding different perspectives.

From the early years, pupils learn the personal, social and emotional skills that they need to succeed. The curriculum helps pupils to understand more about the world they live in, including economic concepts. Practical activities strengthen this further. For example, pupils raise money and then decide how to spend it effectively on resources. Innovative ideas teach pupils about how to stay physically and mentally healthy. For example, pupils take part in competitions to monitor their activity and movement.

Keeping safe is a priority. Pupils understand safeguarding risks they can come across, both online and offline. The school's 'travel for life' ambassadors promote safe travel and road safety. Leaders skilfully adapt the curriculum so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also learn about risks they may face.

Leaders provide meaningful enrichment opportunities. These enhance curriculum learning and give pupils experiences they may not otherwise have. For example, key stage 2 pupils relish the opportunity to build friendships and independence on their residential trip. Pupils also value immersive history days that bring their learning to life. Pupils have high aspirations for their future. Careers day provides them with the opportunity to learn about different professional roles and the goals they need to achieve to get there. Older pupils are proud to act as positive role models and take this responsibility seriously. They are especially proud of the life skills they gain through leadership roles. For example, they recently worked with leaders and the kitchen team to design a culturally diverse menu.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, have full access to trips and enrichment opportunities. A wide range of clubs encourages pupils to develop new talents and interests. Pupils are proud to represent the school at sports and music events and value participation and sportsmanship over winning.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Leaders have comprehensive knowledge about every pupil's progress through the curriculum. When pupils face barriers to learning, leaders provide precise support to address them. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well from their starting points and are ready for their next steps.

Pupils have achieved very well over time in national tests, including disadvantaged pupils, who often outperform their peers nationally. Although reading outcomes dipped last year, leaders recognised early that the cohort needed additional support. Despite some pupils not

reaching the expected standard, pupils made secure progress in their reading development. While phonics outcomes are historically low, leaders' actions mean they continue to improve swiftly, with many pupils now reaching the expected standard. For the high number of pupils with SEND, leaders provide strong support to help them catch up and build phonics knowledge securely.

Pupils typically apply foundational knowledge confidently. For example, they use secure number knowledge and fluency to solve problems. Leaders recognise that handwriting needs further development for some older pupils. Pupils recall their learning well across the curriculum, although their written work does not always reflect the depth of their understanding.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school has an ambitious and well-structured curriculum that enables pupils to build knowledge and skills over time. Leaders think carefully about the foundational knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics that pupils need. They are determined that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, secure the reading and writing skills required to access learning.

Leaders are swift to identify and address any areas of the curriculum where pupils are not achieving as well as they could do. For example, they strengthened the teaching of reading fluency and vocabulary following a decline in reading outcomes last year. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding and provide tailored support to address gaps. This is especially important for the many pupils who join the school mid-year. The school acts quickly to put in place effective 'catch-up' support for those who need it.

Leaders prioritise staff training to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively. Staff use their secure subject knowledge to explain learning clearly and check pupils' understanding. Pupils engage well and enjoy their lessons. They make meaningful connections in their learning. For example, Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of the Holocaust to create artwork with depth and sensitivity.

Early years

Expected standard 

The school prioritises building strong foundations for learning. Leaders work closely with families to understand children's needs and provide tailored interactions that support development and progress in all curriculum areas. Communication and language are key priorities, especially for children who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language. Staff introduce new vocabulary, which children use confidently. Leaders work closely with speech and language therapists to provide additional support for children with communication needs. Many staff interactions with children are skilful and help children understand new words and ideas. However, in some instances, teaching does not consistently make the most of the opportunities available to extend children's communication skills. Leaders recognise this and are working with staff to address this.

Children develop secure early reading skills through a well-taught phonics programme. They apply this knowledge in their reading and writing. The curriculum immerses children in high-quality texts, and activities link to stories so children can use new vocabulary. The

learning environment enables children to revisit and practise what they have been taught across all areas of the early years curriculum. Children enjoy school and confidently talk about their learning. They develop secure number knowledge and apply this as they play, such as counting passengers on a bus.

Leaders ensure that children are well prepared for the next stage. Any gaps in knowledge are shared with the next teacher, enabling children to begin the subsequent year confidently and maximise learning time.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Professional development aligns with school priorities, and leaders work with external specialists to ensure that staff can fully support pupils with barriers to learning. Training is tailored to staff roles, and new staff feel well supported through effective induction and bespoke support.

Leaders, staff and governors share high aspirations for every pupil. They have acted swiftly to address the recent decline in reading outcomes. Leaders design the curriculum through the lens of a pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that all pupils, including those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND, achieve well. Their strategic approach supports a strong, inclusive culture.

Governors understand and meet their statutory responsibilities effectively, including those related to safeguarding and equality. They support and challenge leaders and monitor pupils' progress carefully. Leaders work effectively with the local authority and school partnerships to enhance opportunities for pupils. For example, workshops with the local secondary school support Year 6 pupils to feel confident about their move to secondary school.

Leaders have established highly positive partnerships with parents and carers. There is extensive support for families to engage in their children's education and feel part of the school community. Parents are positive about the school. They feel their children are making positive progress with their learning because of the effective teaching they receive from friendly, approachable staff.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders consider wellbeing and workload carefully, and staff feel valued and supported.

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

The school places the ethos of Ubuntu – 'we are because of others' – at the heart of daily life. Pupils demonstrate this in all their actions and behaviours. They celebrate their diverse backgrounds and help create a community where everyone feels valued and welcomed. The school's highly inclusive culture enables staff to understand each pupil's needs and support them to experience success. Pupils enjoy warm, positive relationships with staff and trust

adults to help them if they have any concerns. As a result, pupils feel safe and speak out with confidence.

The school provides a well-designed curriculum that gives pupils strong foundations for future success. Pupils apply their knowledge confidently across all subjects. They enjoy learning and recall what they have been taught. Pupils typically achieve well, including the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who make secure progress from their starting points.

Behaviour across the school is calm and positive because pupils engage with their learning and focus well. They show strong independence, understand routines and persevere with tasks. Routines are embedded across the school and pupils appreciate staff's fair and equitable approach. Pupil attendance champions work with leaders to promote good attendance. Pupils enjoy school, and attendance is positive.

Pupils value the school's rich cultural diversity. They enjoy learning about different faiths and beliefs and show respect for each other's differences. Pupil leaders act as positive role models, and older pupils take pride in supporting younger children. Pupils know their views matter and contribute to leaders' decisions. For example, the junior leadership team worked with leaders to design the new playground equipment.

Leaders provide extensive opportunities to enrich curriculum learning. For example, pupils love immersing themselves in 'space' in the virtual reality workshop. A wide range of clubs enables pupils to experience new activities and develop new talents.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to develop pupils' transcription skills as well as ensure that pupils have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge through consistently high-quality work, especially written work, across all subjects.
- Leaders should continue to ensure that staff consistently maximise opportunities for high-quality interactions with children, so that children develop and deepen their language and vocabulary as securely as possible.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mr Sylvester Ojobo.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our updated 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 leaders, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes a resourced provision for 8 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in relation to autism.

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Harvey-Royle

Lead inspector:

Sacha Husnu-Beresford, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ogugua Okolo-Angus, Ofsted Inspector

Christopher Birtles, Ofsted Inspector

Nick Osborne, 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 24 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

592

Well 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

700

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

29.85%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

6.08%

Above 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

33.95%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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	71%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	59%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	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	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	62%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	72%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	87%	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	81%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	84%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	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	84%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	87%	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
Latest 3 year average	64%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	49%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	68%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	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	68%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	51%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	84%	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	78%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	86%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	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
Latest 3 year average	80%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	84%	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
Latest 3 year average	64%	68%	-4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	49%	69%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	68%	67%	0 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	66%	11 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	68%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (revised)	51%	81%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	80%	-8 pp
2022/23 (final)	84%	78%	6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	78%	78%	0 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	78%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	86%	78%	8 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	77%	77%	0 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	80%	80%	0 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	86%	79%	6 pp
2022/23 (final)	84%	79%	5 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 (2 term)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.1%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.0%	5.9%	Close to average

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)	13.0%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.8%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	17.2%	16.2%	Close to average

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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