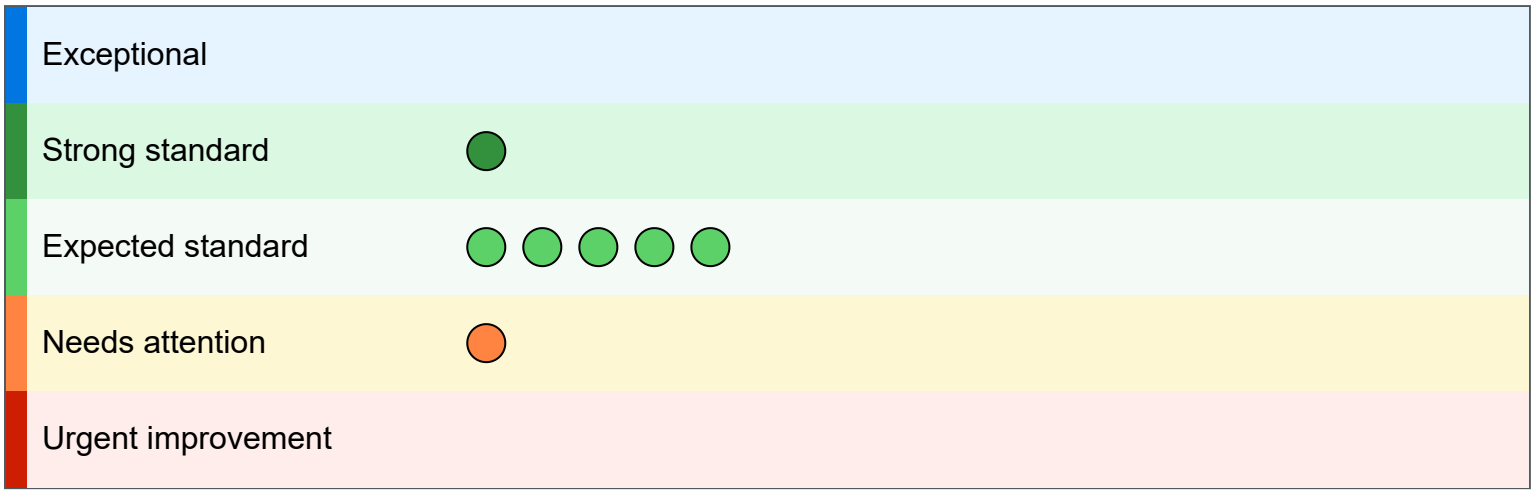
Bethany School

Address: Finlay Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S3 7PS

Unique reference number (URN): 107168

Inspection report: 10 March 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.
- Insufficient evidence: Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Strong standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing is at the heart of the school's ethos and nurturing community. The school provides high-quality care and support for pupils and their families. Pupils enjoy a rich variety of opportunities that broaden their experiences and develop their character. They engage enthusiastically in the school's clubs, trips and whole-school and local community events. Pupils of all ages show respect for different cultures and beliefs. Older pupils develop a deep understanding of diversity and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

From the early years, pupils learn about about potential further education and career options. They discuss and debate the Bethany School 'norms', which support their understanding of social and moral issues, such as integrity and respect. Pupils secure a detailed knowledge and understanding of fundamental British values and take pride in representing the school in competitions and events, including sports, music and theatrical performances. Pupils learn to socialise effectively and are aspirational.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is highly effective in supporting pupils to recognise risks and learning how to keep themselves safe, including online, travelling in the local area and from coercion and substance misuse. Pupils enjoy various trips to enhance their learning and workshops supported by external visitors. They appreciate the sessions where parents and carers lead them in a wide range of learning experiences and enrichment activities. These opportunities bring the school community together to share expertise and knowledge and broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world. All appreciate the end of year whole-school camping event.

Pupils take an active part in shaping school life. 'Pupil voice' leaders organise and manage fundraising events, making the school a better place for all. Pupils become confident, resilient and achieve success through the school's nurturing approach and extensive curriculum and enrichment offer.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve well over their time in school. They gain appropriate knowledge across the curriculum. By the end of Year 11, pupils achieve well in a range of GCSE qualifications. Most go on to sustain successful next steps in further education, employment or training. There are currently no disadvantaged pupils in the school, but in the past, these pupils have achieved similarly well. Leaders establish what pupils know and can do when they join the school. This helps to ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make positive progress from their individual starting points.

Pupils build essential knowledge and skills, including in reading, writing and mathematics. They establish secure foundations for further learning as they move through the school.

Younger pupils also develop the important knowledge they need in reading and mathematics. However, leaders have correctly identified and started appropriate work on improving achievement for the youngest pupils in writing.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Overall attendance is positive. Leaders take appropriate action to reduce absence and promote regular attendance. They track pupils' attendance carefully and when pupils are absent, make sure that they are safe and well. Leaders work very effectively with parents and carers to support pupils to attend. When families need more support, leaders make reasonable adjustments for pupils who struggle to attend. They ensure that these are suitable and successful in helping pupils to feel happy in school and attend more regularly.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils typically rise to these expectations and behave well. They are respectful, considerate of others and polite. Leaders have secure oversight of the school's actions to promote positive behaviour. The school is a calm and purposeful place where pupils are eager to learn. Pupils are eager to follow established routines. Warm, positive relationships flourish across classes and phases. Incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying or discrimination, are rare. Pupils are kept safe. They are confident that staff respond quickly to address any poor behaviour. Pupils of all ages know that they can talk to staff about their worries. They understand the systems in place for them to report more confidential concerns, when necessary.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Pupils enjoy a broad and ambitious curriculum that inspires their interest. It is enriched by the school's focus on broader themes linked to its ethos. Staff use their checks on pupils' learning to ensure that pupils across the school secure essential knowledge and skills, including in reading, writing and mathematics, to support them in learning and achieving across the curriculum. Pupils become enthusiastic and dedicated learners.

Leaders closely check the impact of the curriculum and the quality of teaching. They identify improvements to strengthen pupils' learning and progress through the curriculum. For example, carefully considered changes to the teaching of phonics are having a positive impact.

Staff receive effective training and support to teach the curriculum well. They prioritise extending pupils' vocabulary and generally have high expectations. Pupils typically build successfully on their prior learning. They receive extra help when needed to address gaps in their learning. For example, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit from precise interventions to help them secure learning and catch up quickly. However, although leaders have identified that the teaching of early writing has not been as precise as it should be, their actions to improve this aspect for children in the early years are in the early stages.

Inclusion

Expected standard

The school provides an inclusive and caring environment for pupils. Since the last inspection, leaders have improved their approaches to identifying barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Staff know pupils and families well and understand the barriers pupils face. The school has appropriate systems in place to support pupils' individual needs and check the impact of additional support and to help pupils achieve success, be happy and learn well.

Leaders seek advice from external professionals when necessary and work effectively with the local authority to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and pupils known or previously known to social care. Pupils who need extra support with learning, including pupils with SEND, benefit from carefully designed interventions with precise targets which help them to catch up quickly. Pupils receive highly effective pastoral support. They learn useful strategies to support their mental health, relieve their anxieties and manage their sensory and behaviour needs.

The proprietor has ensured that leaders' oversight of the school's provision for inclusion is high priority. Staff receive appropriate training to meet pupils' needs and make carefully considered adaptations to teaching to help pupils learn well. All pupils have equal access to enrichment opportunities.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) are met consistently. The proprietor maintains secure oversight of the school and checks the impact of school improvement priorities carefully. Members of the proprietor body work closely with leaders and staff to ensure that the information they receive is accurate and that pupils are well cared for and learn and achieve well. Leaders are aspirational for all pupils. They understand the strengths and areas where the school needs to improve and take purposeful action. For example, they are taking appropriate steps to improve the teaching of early writing and are accessing external guidance to improve provision for children in the early years.

Staff describe working at the school as 'a calling'. They appreciate the support of leaders to manage their workload and wellbeing and to do their jobs successfully. They are proud to work at the school and value the relationships they establish within the community. Leaders provide staff with a precise professional learning programme and opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and expertise.

The school's collaboration with parents and carers is at the heart of its ethos and purpose. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Leaders are increasingly proactive in their work with external professionals and other schools to support the welfare of pupils. The proprietor understands its legal responsibilities to keep pupils safe and ensure compliance with the standards. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Needs attention

Early years **Needs attention**

Until recently, the school did not ensure that children secure effective early writing skills. Leaders identified this weakness and have introduced a new approach, focusing more closely on correct pencil grip and letter formation, recognising the importance of regular practice. However, it is too early to tell whether these changes will lead to lasting improvements. Some activities within the provision do not support learning well. The way they are organised makes their purpose sometimes unclear and choices for children are confusing. Some adults do not know how to support and extend children's learning through high-quality conversations.

Despite this, staff work purposefully with parents and carers to ensure that barriers to children's learning and wellbeing are identified and addressed. The support for children's personal, social and emotional development is high quality. Children are valued and happy. They follow established routines and learn to discuss and appreciate the school's values and nurturing ethos from the start. The school's carefully considered curriculum ensures children build important knowledge across all areas of learning. Reading is high priority. Phonics is taught with precision. Children are increasingly able to use their phonics knowledge to read with accuracy. Most make positive progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.

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

Pupils love coming to this welcoming and nurturing school. They attend well because they enjoy learning. Pupils want to rise to the challenge of attending school 100% of the time. Pupils appreciate that their families are actively involved in the life of the school. All see the school as a place of comfort and safety, underpinned by knowing everyone well and understanding what is expected of them. As one pupil commented, 'I feel really happy when I walk through the school gate.'

Pupils trust staff to keep them safe and help them with any worries they may have. They consider their teachers to be kind and caring. Staff establish highly positive relationships with pupils. They deal with the rare incidents of poor behaviour effectively. Bullying or discrimination are not tolerated. Pupils understand the rules and routines and most follow them consistently. They typically behave sensibly in class and around school and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with specific vulnerabilities get the help they need.

Pupils show enthusiasm in their lessons, and they are confident to suggest ideas and achieve well. However, provision for children in the early years does not support their learning as well as it should. The teaching of early writing for these children lacks the necessary precision.

The school's inclusive culture and ethos shines through its positive relationships with families. The weekly 'family afternoon' sessions provide rich opportunities for parents and

carers and their children to learn together. From the early years, pupils relish their trips to different places of worship, museums, art galleries and theatres. Pupils are proud to organise fundraising for charities and represent the school in sporting competitions, choir performances and events with other schools. They are well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training and for life beyond school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that recent work to improve the teaching of writing in the early years is fully embedded and that all adults know how to support the development of children's early writing skills effectively.
- Leaders should ensure the early years curriculum is fully supported by purposeful provision activities and that all adults have high-quality conversational interactions with children.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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 the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the chair of the proprietor body, the leader with oversight of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the office manager, some staff and parents and carers.

The name of the proprietor is Christian Family School Trust Ltd. The chair of the proprietor body is Benjamin Udejiofo.

The school does not charge a fixed fee.

The email address of the school is office@bethanyschoolsheffield.org.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Christian religious character and ethos.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

The address of the school is Finlay Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S3 7PS.

The school is registered to admit up to 96 pupils.

Headteacher: David Charles

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided — Standards met

All standards have been met.

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils — Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils — Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors — Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools — Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information — Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:
Stephanie Innes-Taylor, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Kate Rowley, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

This data is from 10 March 2026

Total pupils

91

School capacity

96

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

0

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

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.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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