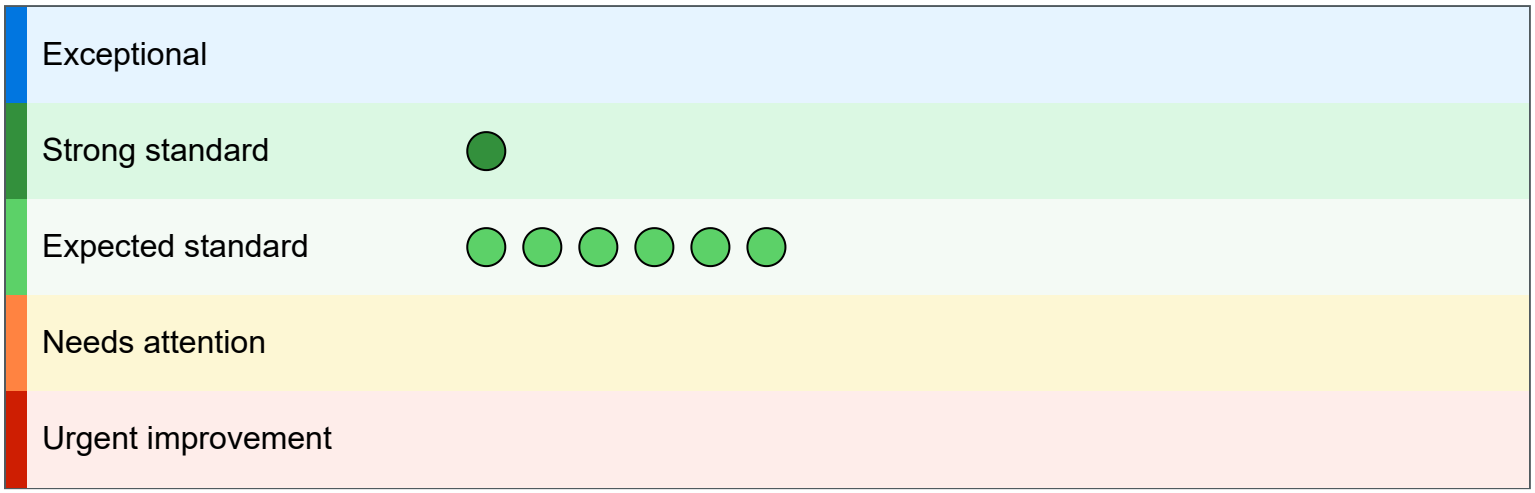
Katherines Primary Academy and Nursery

Address: Brookside, Harlow, Essex, CM19 5NJ

Unique reference number (URN): 144823

Inspection report: 17 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.

Strong standard

Early years

Strong standard

Children in the early years arrive eager to begin their school day. They know the routines and organise themselves confidently. Some children have a slightly different start to the day, so they can settle and prepare for learning. The start of the day is strengthened by positive relationships between the school and parents and carers. These relationships begin before children join the Nursery Year or the Reception Year. They continue to grow as parents take an active role in their children's learning throughout the year.

Leaders very carefully consider and plan the curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils. Staff in the early years engage in high-quality interactions with children. They listen attentively and respond with care. During these moments, staff focus on developing children's language and modelling accurate speech. Children enjoy these opportunities and respond well. Interactions between children are positive and they show kindness as they share and take turns. Children are keen to talk about the books that they are reading. For example, confidently recalling the sequence of events from 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'.

Phonics teaching is effective and prepares children well for Year 1. Children make phonically plausible attempts at writing and begin to use sentence punctuation. They form their letters correctly and show growing confidence as early writers.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve in line with national averages in the phonics screening check and the multiplication tables check. They continue to build on this learning as they move into key stage 2. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reach the expected standards across most subjects by the time that they leave the school. This shows that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

From the early years, staff place a prominent focus on helping children to secure basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing and maths. The focus on oracy and language development is clear in the early years' environment. Children act out stories, such as the Gruffalo, using key language. They use descriptive words, such as to describe the Gruffalo's movements, even correcting each other on the order of events.

Pupils remember more of the learning they enjoy. However, in some subjects, pupils need to have the right knowledge and skills from which to build on.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders set ambitious expectations for pupils to attend school regularly. Pupils do so. Leaders ensure that the school community understands the importance of good attendance. Parents and carers and pupils respond positively to the school's clear messages. Leaders

reinforce these expectations through newsletters and assemblies, which keeps attendance high on everyone's agenda. Staff work closely with parents to support pupils' attendance. The school uses a range of recognition activities to celebrate improved and sustained attendance, which motivates and encourages pupils' positive habits.

Pupils behave well and support each other's differences, creating a positive environment. Those who need additional help with their behaviour, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive tailored support that meets their needs. Pupils are considerate during social times and look out for one another.

Staff receive training in the school's approach to behaviour. This creates an effective approach so that expectations are consistent. Pupils understand what is expected of them. Leaders monitor behaviour closely. They act quickly when they identify any emerging concerns.

Pupils generally concentrate well in lessons and try hard to complete their work. At times, some pupils lose focus and do not work with the effort needed to meet staff expectations. As a result, the quality of their work occasionally does not reflect what they could achieve.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have an accurate and informed understanding of the strengths in teaching practice and school development priorities. They provide professional development and coaching support from within the school and across the trust to sharpen practice further.

Leaders have developed the curriculum carefully so that it remains broad, ambitious and personalised to the school. As a result, curriculum plans match the needs of pupils. The curriculum is sequenced so that learning builds over time. Teachers have the knowledge and skills required to secure pupils' learning across the curriculum. However, sometimes checks on pupils' learning are not as thorough as they could be. On occasion, this means that pupils are moved on to new learning before they know and understand the key information.

Children learning the foundations of writing, spelling, maths and reading do so securely. Those pupils who need it receive effective support. Staff are well trained in teaching phonics. Vocabulary sits at the heart of the curriculum.

Pupils have the resources or adaptations they need to support their learning. Older pupils show independence in accessing what they need, when they need it.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders use clear systems and processes to identify pupils' needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are known to social care and those who may face other forms of disadvantage. Staff receive training so that they can recognise pupils' needs early and provide effective support through a wide range of strategies. Leaders check that pupils develop the skills that they need to strengthen their knowledge and develop their readiness to learn. They routinely review the impact of the support that they put in place and make adjustments as necessary to further enhance provision.

Leaders consider carefully the best ways to enhance provision for pupils who are disadvantaged, including the appropriate use of additional funding. They ensure that pupils learn well and are included in all activities. As a result, by the time this groups of pupils leave the school they achieve as well as their non-disadvantaged peers.

The school works closely with external professionals, including an alternative provision. Effective communication between the school and the alternative provision helps pupils to maintain a sense of belonging within the school community.

Leaders build positive relationships with families so they can work together to provide effective support.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require further development. They have made well-considered decisions to ensure that provision continues to meet pupils' needs effectively. Their actions show a continued and robust commitment to maintaining high expectations.

Trustees and governors have clear working processes in place. They understand their responsibilities and provide both support and challenge to leaders. They draw on first hand experiences, cross referencing this with the information that they receive from leaders. They listen carefully to staff and act on feedback, particularly in relation to workload and wellbeing, which remains a priority for them. Staff value the ongoing support from leaders, who provide the time and space needed to implement any necessary changes.

Staff receive targeted professional development within the school and trust. This supports them to improve pupils' learning and ensures that they consider pupils' individual circumstances when delivering lessons. Leaders are visible across the school to support staff and offer timely coaching when needed. Staff also work with colleagues across the trust to develop their practice further. This creates a collaborative approach within the school and trust, which challenges thinking and drives continued improvement.

Parents and carers speak positively about their relationship with the school. The school is active within the local community, which helps pupils to develop a secure sense of belonging and pride in their environment.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school promotes clear values to empower pupils. These values help pupils to grow into well-rounded individuals who are prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders place a clear emphasis on developing pupils' character, so that they gain the confidence and resilience that they need for future success.

Pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance, which they talk about with growing maturity. A recent visit from the local member of parliament strengthened this understanding and helped to deepen pupils' insight into these values. Pupils speak confidently about concepts such as the rule of law and make clear links

between this and the school rules that guide their daily conduct. They recognise how these principles help to maintain a safe school environment.

Pupils show understanding and respect for each other's differences. They learn about a range of religions and explore significant events in history such as Windrush. They also read texts that address themes including disability and fairness. These experiences prompt thoughtful discussions in which pupils listen carefully to one another and express their ideas with sensitivity.

The school's personal development programme, including relationships and health education, is enriched by varied extra-curricular activities and opportunities. Pupils take on responsibilities such as pupil ambassadors or class councillors. They also attend clubs that help them to explore their interests. These experiences lead to participation in sporting competitions, singing events and community activities. Carefully planned trips enhance the curriculum and help pupils to understand how to stay safe, including online. Leaders ensure that all pupils can access the full range of opportunities.

Children in the early years learn to recognise and understand their emotions. They develop strategies to manage their feelings in different situations. As pupils move through the school, they build on these foundations and develop increasing independence and resilience.

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

This is a happy and nurturing school where pupils look forward to each day because they find their learning enjoyable and engaging. Pupils benefit from practical aspects of learning, for example, in science where they carry out investigations and music where they explore instruments. Playtimes offer lively moments for pupils to join in with the many activities that staff provide or to relax with friends. The school council recently secured scooters for pupils to use during playtime. These opportunities motivate pupils to attend school regularly, which they do.

Pupils show kindness and respect towards adults and each other. They know that trusted adults listen to any concerns which helps them to feel safe. Staff address any issues straight away which ensures incidents of bullying remain very low. Most pupils stay focused in lessons and they participate with enthusiasm. Those pupils who need extra help receive thoughtful support that enables them to engage fully with their learning. Staff reduce barriers that might hold pupils back, which helps them to grow in confidence as learners. As a result, most pupils have the knowledge and skills that they need before they move on to secondary school.

Older pupils can apply to become advocates to act as positive role models when they reach Year 6. Successful candidates wear black blazers that distinguish their role. They take responsibility for helping in the lunch hall, supporting pupils on the playground and guiding visitors around the school. Pupils show pride in their school and in the wider community. They promote care for the environment by joining local litter picks. Pupils raise funds for national charities which strengthens their sense of citizenship. This work builds their determination and independence.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' knowledge, understanding and skill development consistently across subjects before pupils move on to new learning.
- Leaders should continue to ensure that pupils are ready to learn, taking pride in what they do and their achievements.

About this inspection

Inspection activities:

■ Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior staff, teachers, support staff, pupils and some parents during the inspection. They also spoke to representatives from the trust, governing body as well as trustees.

This school is part of NET 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, Jo Coton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Shephard.

■ 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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.
■ The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.
■ The school also, under the same registration runs a nursery.

Head of school : Jeannette Harman

Lead inspector:
Katie Devenport, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Karen Stanton, Ofsted Inspector
Richard Fordham, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

251
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

315
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)

31.42%
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

3.19%
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

10.76%

Below 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)

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	71%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	86%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	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	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	75%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	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	57%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	69%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	53%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43%	44%	Close to average

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	81%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	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	62%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	59%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43%	58%	Below

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	70%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	69%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	57%	59%	Close to average

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	57%	68%	-11 pp
2024/25 (revised)	69%	69%	0 pp
2023/24 (final)	53%	67%	-14 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	66%	-23 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	81%	80%	1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	77%	81%	-4 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	80%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	86%	78%	7 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	62%	78%	-16 pp
2024/25 (revised)	77%	78%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	59%	78%	-19 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	77%	-35 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	70%	80%	-9 pp
2024/25 (revised)	69%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	76%	79%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	79%	-22 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)	5.7%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.0%	5.9%	Above

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)	12.8%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.7%	16.2%	Above

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