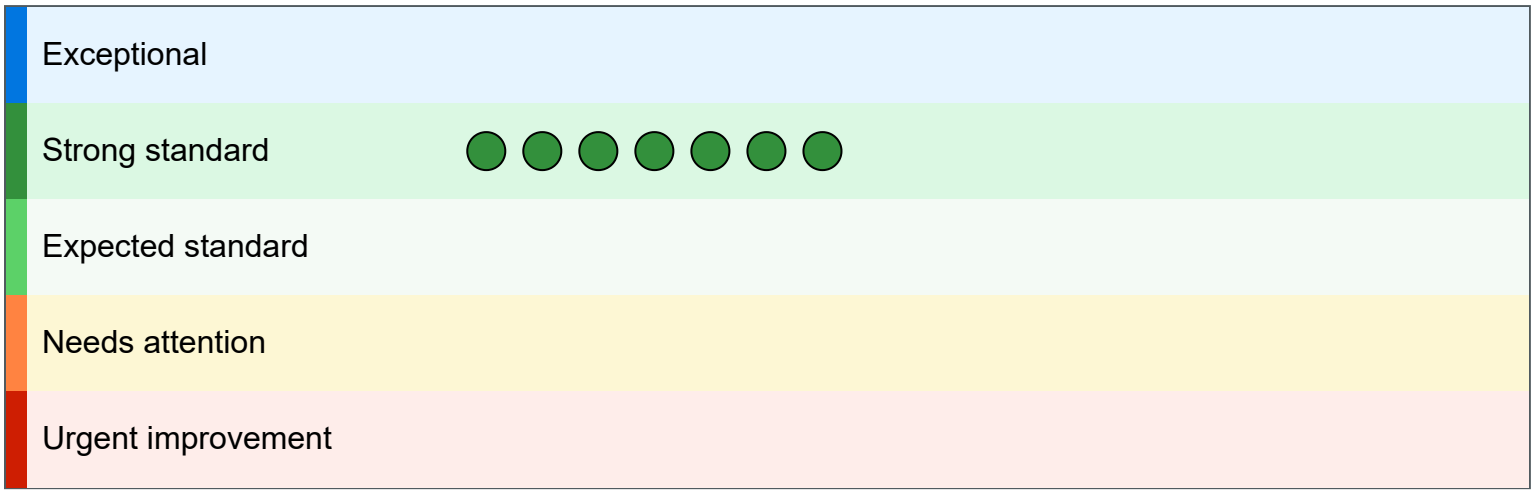
Downsbrook Primary School

Address: Dominion Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 8GD

Unique reference number (URN): 145925

Inspection report: 2 June 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

Achievement

Strong standard

Pupils achieve highly at this school. They develop confidence, resilience and an enthusiasm for learning. Over time, pupils' outcomes in national tests have been consistently above national comparators. This includes disadvantaged pupils at the school who achieve better than disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make impressive progress from their starting points.

Pupils are prepared well for their next educational steps. They acquire the key knowledge and skills they need in reading, writing and mathematics. Across the curriculum, pupils produce work of high quality. For example, they showcase their knowledge and skills in the high standard of their completed art and design pieces. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to practise and refine their skills. For example, in physical education and music, pupils evaluate their performance and give useful feedback to others. The supportive learning culture allows pupils to feel safe to engage in review and reflection. Pupils remember their learning well and apply it successfully and confidently when faced with new experiences and challenges.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Pupils' attendance at school is high. They and their parents and carers know why this matters. Leaders promote the importance of attending school and offer support and guidance to families who need it. The levels of persistent absence are extremely low. Leaders intervene quickly and effectively if any concerns arise.

Pupils behave very well. They live up to the high expectations set by the school staff. Pupils benefit from the positive relationships they build with each other and adults. Kindness and nurture permeate the school's culture. Pupils show empathy towards each other and are unfailingly polite in their greetings. In lessons, they listen and participate well. Many pupils show resilience with their learning and sustained levels of concentration. Over breaktimes and lunchtimes, there is a harmonious and happy atmosphere across the school. Pupils enjoy using the school's trim trail and playing games with their friends.

Leaders' oversight of pupils' behaviour is detailed. They ensure that pupils who need a more personalised approach receive it. These pupils flourish as a result. Pupils show maturity and independence in the way they recognise and regulate their emotions. They know that they are well cared for and that any rare incidents of poor behaviour are swiftly and effectively dealt with.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

Leaders take account of pupils' interests and engagement when making decisions about the curriculum. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It is rich with content which widens pupils' cultural capital and experiences. For example, the curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to explore Shakespeare texts and learn about significant people and their

achievements in art and history. It is a curriculum which celebrates diversity and builds pupils' aspirations.

Leaders ensure that there is an appropriate focus on pupils acquiring the knowledge and skills they need in English and mathematics. They ensure that phonics is taught by skilled staff. Leaders have meticulous oversight of how pupils progress with their reading. They make sure that additional support is provided quickly for any pupils who need it. Any area needing further strengthening is swiftly identified and addressed with determination, reflected in recent refinements to the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Across the curriculum, pupils have access to resources which aid and enhance their learning.

Teaching staff are adept at meeting pupils' learning needs. They provide bespoke and highly effective support in the way they make precise adjustments to the curriculum and their teaching. In lessons, teaching staff are skilled at promoting discussion and checking how well pupils are learning. Teachers have detailed subject knowledge and use it well to promote subject-specific vocabulary.

Early years

Strong standard

In early years, children benefit from an excellent start to their school experience. At the start of the year, parents and carers receive useful information during the carefully managed settling-in procedures. Relationships between teaching staff and children are extremely positive. Children are happy with their nurturing and caring adults.

Leaders ensure that the interesting curriculum equips children extremely well with the knowledge and skills they need. They shape curriculum content skilfully around children's interests and needs. There is precision in the way children's needs are identified and support is put in place. Activities are meticulously planned to allow children to apply their learning and show independence and confidence. Children use the well-placed resources and displays to remind them about their learning. They are enthused and show impressive listening and concentration skills.

Leaders ensure that all staff promote children's language and communication development by engaging them in high-quality conversation. Children enjoy their story times and hearing their favourite books read aloud. They demonstrate their growing phonics knowledge in their reading and writing. Leaders deliberately provide children with many opportunities to develop their physical and fine-motor skills. Children show control and coordination in the way they use their writing and art resources. They enjoy opportunities to play games which illustrate their ability to take turns and share equipment.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils. They are relentless in ensuring that all pupils are welcome at this school and receive the highly personalised support they need. Nothing is left to chance. Inclusive practice is embedded extremely well across all aspects of school life. Teaching staff have in-depth knowledge about their pupils' needs. Any barriers to learning and participation are identified quickly and addressed. This includes pupils with more complex needs in the school's 'Rothko class'. They are included fully in school life and supported with precision and expertise.

Leaders' oversight of how well pupils learn is thorough and insightful. They ensure that support, and the use of additional funding, is regularly reviewed and adjusted in pupils' best interests. Pupils' emotional and social wellbeing is given high priority. Staff skilfully use a range of communication techniques which enable pupils to articulate and demonstrate their feelings. There is a clear focus on building pupils' independence and resilience alongside their academic progress and achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make impressive progress from their starting points.

Leaders forge positive relationships with external services. They liaise well with virtual schools so that children in care experience success. The use of alternative provision is well considered. Leaders have robust oversight of how this provision benefits pupils.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders across the school and trust express a clear and unwavering ambition for all pupils to be prepared for their next steps. There is a shared sense of pride in the way all pupils, whatever their needs may be, are welcomed and supported at this school. Leaders are relentless and creative in the way they ensure pupils receive a bespoke approach which meets their needs over time. Leaders set no ceiling for pupils' academic outcomes or for their emotional and social development.

Information is shared purposefully between the trust, 'school community council' and school leaders. Together, they fulfil their statutory responsibilities and ensure that the school's strategic priorities are accurately identified and evaluated. Every strategic decision is accompanied by careful consideration of the impact on pupils' learning and wellbeing. Pupils' best interests sit at the heart of all thinking. This school has a motivated and happy staff team. Staff appreciate the consideration given to their workload and wellbeing. They engage well with their training opportunities. Staff feel well supported by school and trust leaders. They value their opportunities to work with colleagues in other settings, sharing their expertise and practice.

Leaders engage well with stakeholders. They give parents, carers and pupils a voice in school decision making and are responsive and reflective in their actions. For example, they consult parents in the creation of policies about mobile phones and relationships education. Many parents express extremely positive views about the school. They appreciate the school's commitment to inclusion and its kind and caring culture. The school's pastoral team provides pupils and families with far-reaching and valued support.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. They have designed a programme which promotes and celebrates pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. It reflects the context of the school and prepares pupils well for life beyond school. Leaders ensure that the personal development offer is accessible to all pupils and that appropriate adjustments are made. Experiences are frequently tailored around pupils' needs and interests. Leaders act with determination to ensure that any barriers to participation are addressed. This includes access to the school's extensive and exciting club offer. Leaders carefully consider the timing of clubs in the school day and what equipment is needed to support pupils to fully participate.

Pupils value and celebrate diversity and difference. They show kindness, empathy and respect to others in a way which goes far beyond tolerance. Pupils have an in-depth understanding about the concepts of equality and equity. They champion others, willing to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. Pupils learn an appropriate relationships education. They understand what characteristics make a good friend. Pupils know how to keep safe online and in their local community, around roads and water.

Pupils embrace their many leadership opportunities with maturity and a sense of responsibility. They contribute well to school decision making through their roles on the school council, as sports captains and on the 'eco-team'. Pupils develop a clear sense of belonging, knowing they have a genuine voice in school life. Leaders listen to, and act on, pupils' suggestions.

Leaders hold high ambition for pupils' character development through the shared understanding of the school values, 'equality, engagement and empowerment'. Pupils develop high levels of confidence and independence. They show curiosity and interest about the world beyond 'Downsbrook' and a desire to learn and engage with others. Pupils consider and discuss national and world events with maturity. They are well-informed and active citizens in the way they suggest and lead fundraising activities. Pupils want to make a difference to their school and the world.

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

This is a school full of happy pupils and staff. Pupils feel well cared for and safe at school. They know that the staff help and support them if they have any worries. Pupils' needs are well understood. The school's focus on inclusion is extremely successful. Support is provided in a highly bespoke way and to the benefit of pupils' academic progress and outcomes, as well as their wellbeing. Pupils and families are made to feel welcome as part of the school's supportive community.

Pupils behave extremely well at school. The values of mutual respect and kindness are highly evident in every interaction and shape every relationship. Pupils show care and empathy to each other and exemplify the school's high expectations for behaviour through the school's 'just right' approach. In lessons, pupils concentrate and work hard. Over break and lunchtimes, they enjoy socialising with their friends and making full use of the school grounds. Pupils are unfailingly polite and helpful in their interactions with each other. Pupils do not worry about bullying at this school. They know that any rare incidents are dealt with well.

Pupils show joy and enthusiasm for their learning. They achieve very well across the curriculum and greet new experiences with confidence. Pupils have high levels of attendance. They want to be at school and embrace all their opportunities. Pupils enjoy their rich and varied experiences through many opportunities to attend clubs and participate in trips. They relish learning outdoors about nature and how to care for the environment, as well as developing their teamwork and problem-solving skills. The curriculum prepares pupils well to be active citizens in modern Britain. They show curiosity and interest about

their locality as well as national and global events. They develop the knowledge, skills and characteristics that prepare them well for their future.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue with their work to strengthen pupils' spelling and handwriting even further by embedding recent curriculum enhancements.
- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is delivered with expertise in all subjects, with consideration given to pupils' disciplinary knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary.

About this inspection

This school is part of Schoolworks 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, Cathy Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Norman Rose.

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.

Inspectors spoke with school and trust leaders during the inspection. They also spoke with staff and pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 3 alternative provisions, including 2 that are unregistered.

Headteacher: Just Jeffrey

Lead inspector:
Kate Fripp, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Kate Magliocco, Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Marshall, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

362
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

630
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)

9.12%
Well 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

3.31%
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

11.05%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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	65%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	65%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	62%	60%	Close to average

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	75%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	62%	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	76%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	74%	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	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	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	55%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	67%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	38%	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	68%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	100%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	38%	60%	Below

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	77%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	83%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	64%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	55%	68%	-13 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	69%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	67%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	66%	-29 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%	-11 pp
2024/25 (final)	100%	81%	19 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	80%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	78%	-41 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	77%	78%	0 pp
2024/25 (final)	83%	78%	5 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	77%	-2 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	64%	80%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	83%	81%	3 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	79%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 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 (3 term)	3.6%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.4%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.8%	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 (3 term)	3.5%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.6%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	10.7%	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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