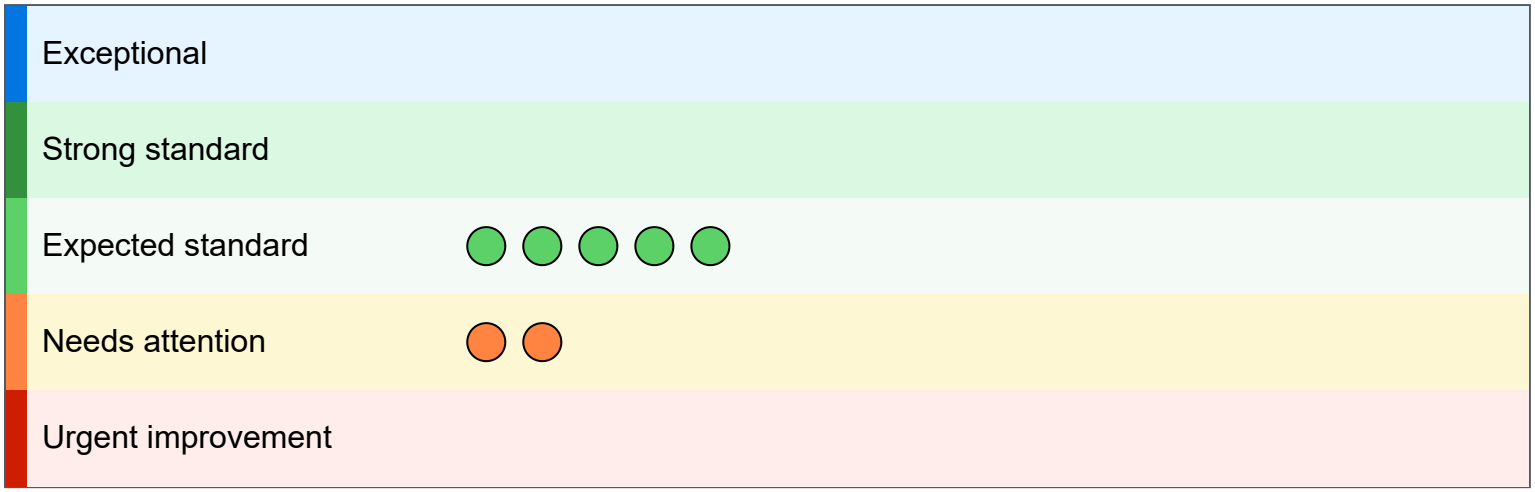
Croyland Primary School

Address: Croyland Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 2AX

Unique reference number (URN): 133600

Inspection report: 9 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.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders are proud of the curriculum that they have designed for Croyland pupils. Teachers understand what they have to teach. They value the opportunities they have to build their subject knowledge. Phonics is typically taught well. Most pupils learn to decode simple texts. Everyone encourages pupils to read more. There is a broad range of books which interest pupils. Reading more regularly is beginning to make a difference.

Careful checks inform leaders where the curriculum is working well and where there is still more to do. They make changes so that lessons can better. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn more about multiplication facts. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the adjustments that teachers make to lessons. Everyone can join in learning because of the changes teachers make.

Pupils learn about a wide range of subjects. Staff encourage pupils' curiosity and independent thinking. Some write at length about what they know in subjects such as history. Leaders know that there is more to do so that expectations of how pupils learn to write are consistent. New approaches have been introduced to improve this. These changes are not as deeply embedded as other parts of the curriculum.

Early years

Expected standard

Everyone at Croyland Primary School wants children to get off to a great start. Staff work closely with parents and carers before children's first days at school. This helps staff to know how they can help children to settle and join in the learning straight away. Any additional needs that children have can then be met as soon as possible. As a result, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the Reception classes. Children are nurtured well, and become confident and resilient individuals. Typically, they persist and concentrate well.

Leaders skilfully develop staff expertise so that adults can communicate effectively with children. This helps children to join in conversations that enable them to learn. When counting, children talk about one more and one less and describe the patterns that they see. Staff make sure that children start to learn phonics straight away. They learn to blend these sounds to make words and some use them to write simple sentences, ready for Year 1. For example, adults help them to choose the best words to describe themselves. Not all pupils benefit as much as they might from adults' explanations of how to form letters or hold a pencil correctly.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders spot pupils' additional needs quickly. They ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the right help. This includes pupils who attend the 'willows' class. They join in familiar routines such as singing together. Staff encourage pupils to describe how they feel. Pupils' confidence builds over time and they

learn to express themselves in different ways. Staff know exactly what these pupils should learn next. Pupils get lots of chances to practise this learning through 'tray tasks'.

Staff around school understand what they need to do to make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND, can join in with learning alongside their fellow classmates. Pupils feel well supported. Leaders work closely with a range of professionals to make sure that vulnerable pupils learn well. This includes working with the virtual school services. Leaders check carefully that these pupils are making progress.

Leaders make sure that pupils who are disadvantaged have plenty of opportunities to try new experiences. Care is taken to make sure that there is something for everyone. This includes providing help for pupils who have gaps in their knowledge or need to catch up. Some of these gaps are now closing.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are ambitious for the school. They identify areas to improve and address these vigorously and at pace. They prioritise professional learning so that all staff can continue to build their expertise and share their knowledge with others. This motivates staff to remain at the school and contribute towards its journey of improvement. Governors are highly supportive of leaders' work. Regular reports from leaders keep them up to date with changes that are made. There is more to do to ensure that leaders check the impact of their actions precisely and that the challenge that governors provide is robust.

Governors understand their statutory duties to make sure that pupils are safe in school. They share leaders' deeply caring vision for the whole school community, including the staff. Staff feel valued. They say that leaders consider their wellbeing and that they get the support they need to manage the work that they need to do. Their sense of team spirit is palpable and they share leaders' entrenched commitment to serve the local area. Everyone works together to sustain the school's inclusive ethos. The best interests of pupils and their families are constantly considered.

Leaders work closely with families, who appreciate their approachability. Parents and carers say that staff are available 'rain or shine' on the playground at the start of the day to help them. They typically describe the school as a supportive family and almost all would recommend the school to others.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Staff have put a lot of thought into planning what pupils will need to know to become responsible and healthy adults. They have prioritised teaching pupils how to stay safe locally, for example around water. Teachers help pupils identify online risks. This helps pupils to think carefully about the messages they send on a mobile phone, for example. Leaders want pupils to be prepared for life in modern Britain. Times when pupils gather together for 'collective responses' encourage pupils to consider big questions. Their knowledge of a range of faiths and cultures is developing. Staff spot where pupils need to learn more about how to socialise with each other during less-structured parts of the day. Pupils benefit from well-considered opportunities that help them to learn how to be good

company for each other. This includes extra help for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Effective pastoral support underpins this harmonious school. All pupils benefit from this, and those who need more support get it. This includes pupils who have experienced challenges that they need to talk about. Pupils say that there is always someone willing to listen.

Pupils learn about the importance of respecting each other and recall the school's values and fundamental British values. They understand that everyone is different and appreciate what makes each other special. They are beginning to connect how they treat each other to the laws that they will need to understand in adult life. Leaders encourage pupils to be a part of the community that the school serves. Thoughtful visits help pupils understand their local area. There are plenty of wider opportunities that enable pupils to pursue interests. These range from music to different forms of exercise. Leaders ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged can benefit from enriching opportunities to experience new things.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Pupils' achievement varies. Many areas have improved recently. More pupils are ready for their next steps, including those who are preparing for secondary school. However, there is more to do to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have the knowledge that they need for the next stage for their learning.

The changes that leaders have made to the curriculum are beginning to make a difference. However, there is still a significant minority of pupils who do not read or understand mathematics as well as they need to. Some pupils do not use their knowledge of punctuation or letter formation when they are writing. Because mistakes are not always spotted, pupils continue to make errors. This affects the quality of their work.

The careful work of staff with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities makes a difference to them. They make steady progress from their starting points.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Further improvements in attendance are needed. Levels of absence are high. Leaders know which pupils do not attend as often as they should. They work with families to help them understand the importance of attendance. Leaders liaise with other professionals to make sure that pupils' absence, for example through appointments, is minimised. Recently, this has begun to make a difference. The proportion of pupils who miss school frequently has begun to diminish and attendance has recently increased. This is at an early stage. More work is planned to check that the actions leaders are taking are the right ones.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils usually rise to meet these. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places. Pupils can explain how the rewards that they get encourage them to work together and learn well. They value the shared class

discussions which help them to solve problems. Pupils can name and describe different types of bullying. They feel these are rare at Croyland Primary School, and that incidents of poor behaviour are not typically repeated. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities get the help they need when they find managing their behaviour tricky. This works well.

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

Croyland Primary School is a special place to be. Leaders want all pupils to be 'warm, safe, nourished and happy'. This starts right from the beginning of the day. Pupils are warmly welcomed into school. They settle quickly and are eager to share 'book time' in the library. Parents and carers value the commitment and care that staff demonstrate. One parent explained, in a view shared by many, that staff and leaders 'go more than the extra mile' for pupils and their families. Unsurprisingly, parental support for the school is high.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning in the many different outdoor areas. They value the places to be quiet, such as the 'mini forest' as well as the trim trail where they can challenge themselves physically. Typically, they play together well and enjoy learning new games to try out. Pupils feel safe and know who they can go to with any worry, however small. They say that adults always sort out any problems straight away. Pupils know that they need to 'do good, be good, be golden'. They conduct themselves well around school and usually listen carefully in class. They understand the shared values of 'the Croyland way'.

Leaders want all pupils to be ready for the future. Many pupils, such as those who speak English as an additional language, flourish. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy their learning and more pupils are well prepared for their next steps because of changes that leaders have made. These are beginning to make a difference to pupils' achievement, but there is more to do. Good attendance is strongly promoted. However, there are still too many pupils who do not benefit from the education that the school provides because they do not come to school as often as they should.

Next steps

- Leaders' work to improve attendance should continue to be focused precisely on those groups of pupils who do not come to school often enough.
- Leaders should ensure that they continue to evaluate the impact of their actions to improve pupils’ attainment closely so that they have a clear understanding of what is working well and what should be modified.
- Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of transcription so that pupils write accurately and fluently.
- Leaders should ensure that the strategies that teachers use to close gaps in pupils’ knowledge are applied consistently so that all pupils achieve well.
- Leaders should ensure that they evaluate precisely the impact of the positive work that they are doing to improve the school and that governors support the evaluation process

through robust challenge.

About this inspection

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 the headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with the chair of governors and representatives of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes provision for 8 pupils with autism.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Lucy Deakin: Headteacher

Lead inspector:
Hazel Henson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Rob Perkins, His Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Stewart, Ofsted Inspector
Chrissie Barrington, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

414
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

420
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)

38.65%
Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

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

7.73%
Well 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

14.25%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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	47%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	55%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	39%	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	56%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	62%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	57%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	49%	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	65%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	66%	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	67%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	67%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	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	38%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	47%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	63%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	40%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

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	53%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	55%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	58%	Close to average

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	55%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	64%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44%	59%	Below

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	38%	68%	-29 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	33%	66%	-33 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	47%	80%	-33 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	80%	-40 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 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	53%	78%	-24 pp
2024/25 (final)	55%	78%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	78%	-38 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	77%	-11 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	55%	80%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	64%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	55%	79%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	44%	79%	-35 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)	8.3%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.7%	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 (3 term)	24.0%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	21.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	25.5%	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.

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