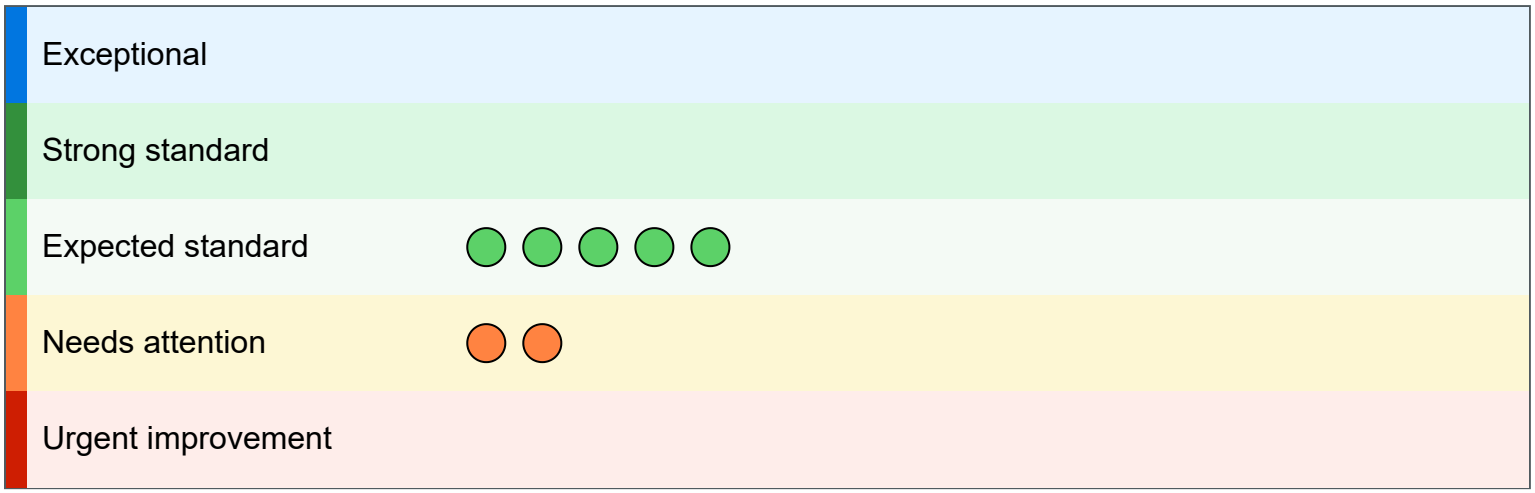
Felix Primary School

Address: Maidstone Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 9ED

Unique reference number (URN): 147261

Inspection report: 16 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Most pupils attend school regularly and punctually. This enables them to benefit from the school's curriculum and wider offer. This also helps pupils to form secure friendships and develop positive relationships with staff. Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' attendance. Leaders routinely analyse absence information. They use this analysis well to identify patterns and trends, including the causes of frequent absence. Leaders provide timely and targeted support when a pupil's attendance begins to decline. This has especially helped to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders ensure that staff understand and consistently apply the school's approach to behaviour. Staff are positive role models. They help pupils to understand the importance of showing high levels of respect to others. Most pupils behave well during lessons. They typically display positive attitudes to learning and cooperate with staff. When not in lessons, most pupils meet the school's expectations for behaviour. Leaders provide support for pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their behaviour and emotions. As a result, the behaviour of these pupils improves. Incidents of unpleasant behaviour, including name-calling and bullying, are rare. When concerns arise, leaders respond quickly and effectively. Pupils involved receive appropriate support.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise the early years. They have a clear vision for a high-quality early education. The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that children make progress across all areas of learning.

Staff get to know children's individual strengths and needs as they join Reception. Children learn in a calm, well-organised and well-resourced environment where routines are clear and expectations are always high. Staff develop nurturing and caring relationships with children. This helps children feel safe, confident and ready to learn. Children play and learn together happily.

Staff are well trained. They understand what important knowledge children need to know and when. This enables them to provide the right support at the right time. Staff talk skilfully with children and help them to know and use a wide range of essential new words. As a result, children are confident, articulate speakers. Reading is prioritised from the start of the Reception Year. Children follow a structured phonics programme and begin to develop their early writing skills, including composing simple sentences with punctuation.

Children develop well across all areas of the early years curriculum. Most, including children with special educational needs and or disabilities, progress well from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Staff know pupils well. Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly and accurately. Staff use this information to put in place clear plans to address the barriers to learning that pupils face. Leaders and staff set targets and review them at suitable times. These targets are usually precise. When targets are not sufficiently precise, or updated quickly enough, staff do not always adapt support to reflect pupils' changing needs. As a result, some pupils do not consistently receive the right level of challenge once initial barriers have been reduced. Pupils in the school's special educational needs unit benefit from consistently effective strategies.

The school works with a wide range of specialist professionals. This ensures that those pupils who need it receive effective targeted support. This includes appropriate use of alternative provision when this is pupils' best interests. Pupils that attend alternative provision improve their attendance, behaviour and achievement.

Leaders understand the individual needs of disadvantaged pupils. Staff provide thoughtful, pastoral support. This has a positive impact on pupils' welfare, attendance and happiness. Disadvantaged pupils take part in all areas of school life. Leaders continue to develop their work to overcome some of the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

The school benefits from a close-working relationship with the trust. Trust and school leaders provide stable leadership. They have a detailed understanding of the school's context and pupils needs. This includes challenges or barriers to learning and/or wellbeing that pupils may face. Since joining the trust, school leaders have been supported to evaluate their work and target improvement strategies effectively.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. They act pupils' best interests as they strive towards their vision of being 'a school where all pupils feel known, challenged and inspired, regardless of their starting point.'

Leaders have improved systems to identify and address barriers to pupils' learning and/or wellbeing. They have improved attendance and behaviour. They have identified what needs to improve further to secure consistently effective teaching and raise achievement. They have put suitable actions in place. While there are early signs of improvement, these are still to be embedded and sustained.

Leaders are positive role models. Staff feel part of the improvement journey of the school. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to high-quality professional development programmes. For example, staff have benefited from training in the teaching of early reading and how to best support pupils with special educational needs/disabilities. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing when introducing change.

Trustees understand their statutory duties and carry them out effectively. They use high-quality evidence to support and challenge leaders. Trustees hold leaders to account effectively.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have carefully designed the school's personal development programme. Leaders base the programme on their analysis of the needs of the 'Felix child' which include resilience, ambition and sense of identity. Pupils generally demonstrate inclusive and tolerant attitudes. Pupils understand what fundamental British values mean. Leaders make effective use of weekly lessons and assemblies to respond to immediate local issues such as unsafe behaviour in the car park.

Leaders provide all pupils with wider experiences. This includes through activities, such as litter-picking, and local and county events, which focus on nature and farming. Staff help pupils learn more about future careers through specially designed events. Pupils access a range of visits. These include younger pupils visiting the local library and bakery. Leaders listen to pupils' views when they plan visits for them. Pupils attend a number of clubs. Some clubs, such as library and gardening club, are run at lunchtimes so that pupils can easily attend them. Leaders develop the range of clubs, in response to pupils' views. Leaders use pupil premium funding well to provide tailored support and broaden eligible pupils' experiences beyond the classroom.

The school offers pupils a number of leadership opportunities. Pupils value their leadership roles of sports leaders, play leaders, and head boy and girl. These roles support pupils' wider development and sense of responsibility.

Leaders have established a well-structured programme for relationships and health education. The programme supports pupils to understand the importance of consent and puberty. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They also learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

Pupils receive very effective pastoral support. They can access different levels of help, including from trained staff. Targeted activities help pupils to build confidence and manage their behaviour.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Over time, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have not achieved as well as they should. Though pupils' outcomes in national tests and assessments at the end of Year 6 show improvement, pupils' achievement across the school is inconsistent. Current pupils' achievement has improved recently. This is because leaders have taken some effective action to improve the quality of teaching and curriculum.

In the past, pupils have not gained the phonics knowledge expected by the end of Year 1. Leaders have recognised this. They have introduced a new phonics programme. This helps teachers follow a clear sequence, making it easier for children to build their reading skills step by step. This is securing improvements in pupils' use phonics knowledge

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) usually make appropriate progress through the curriculum. This is particularly the case for pupils in the school's special educational needs (SEN) unit. However, a small number of pupils with SEND in the main school do not make the progress they are capable of.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They have improved the curriculum so that it builds knowledge more effectively over time. They have taken steps to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching. However, teachers' implementation of the curriculum remains inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers use secure subject knowledge to model learning clearly. However, this is inconsistent. The teaching of writing and some mathematical knowledge is sometimes not effective.

Staff sometimes do not check pupils' understanding or correct misconceptions quickly and precisely. Therefore, staff do not know when they need to revisit important learning so that pupils can remember and use essential knowledge. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics. Leaders recognise this issue. They have taken steps to address this but this work is at an early stage.

Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support to help them to be ready for learning. However, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils experience the same variation in the quality of teaching as other pupils.

The recently relaunched phonics programme is a notable strength. Staff are well trained and deliver the scheme. Teachers ensure that pupils who need extra help with reading receive it promptly. As a result, pupils gain the reading knowledge required for the next stage of learning.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this school. Typically, they form positive and respectful relationships with staff and with one another. Pupils are well known by staff. They are well cared for, which helps them feel safe. The school's values of pride, achievement, resilience and kindness are woven through every aspect of school life. Pupils in the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and mainstream classes are encouraged and supported to develop these values. This helps to create a nurturing environment, where all pupils feel they belong.

More pupils are being well prepared for their next stage of education because leaders are improving the curriculum and teaching. Nevertheless, some pupils, including pupils with SEND in the school's mainstream classes, do not achieve as well as they should. This is especially so for writing and mathematics. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not closing quickly enough.

Pupils usually behave well, in and out of class. Pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their behaviour receive effective help. This helps them manage their emotions and make the right behaviour choices. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that staff will support them should they experience difficulties. Pupils attend school more regularly because leaders have improved how they reduce barriers to attendance.

Pupils are encouraged to challenge and develop themselves academically and personally. They benefit from the wider opportunities that the school provides to follow their interests and try new things, such as those related to music and the arts. This is regardless of the needs or any challenges that pupils may face. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect for others' beliefs. The school effectively supports pupils' emotional well-being through strong partnerships that help them move confidently to their next stage of education.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers and staff consistently and systematically check pupils' understanding and use this to address pupils' misconceptions quickly, support pupils' learning of important knowledge and inform future teaching.
- Leaders should ensure that teaching is consistently effective, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that pupils learn and achieve well across the curriculum.

About this inspection

This school is part of the Sapientia Education Trust. This means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jonathan Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Rout.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and trust leaders. They also spoke with trustees and the CEO of the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

In September 2024 Felix Primary School moved muti-academy trusts and joined the Sapientia Education Trust. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was a part of The Seckford Education Trust (SET). Some of SET's schools were approved to transfer to the Sapientia Education Trust. Felix Primary School was one of those schools.

The headteacher took up their post in September 2025. The deputy headteacher took up their post in Autumn 2024.

The school includes a special educational needs (SEN) unit for 40 pupils. All pupils in the SEN unit have an education, health and care plan and are on the school roll.

The school currently makes use of one registered alternative provision and one unregistered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Leon Hall

Lead inspector:
Mark Carter-Tufnell, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Rowena Simmons, Ofsted Inspector
Vicki Webber, 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

240
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

363
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)

40.00%
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

23.33%
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

11.25%
Below 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 and SEN unit

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

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	35%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	32%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	36%	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	51%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	41%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	53%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	57%	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	48%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	51%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	49%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	45%	71%	Below

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	52%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	51%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	57%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	47%	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	25%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	27%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	26%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	22%	44%	Below

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	44%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	36%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43%	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	35%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	22%	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	46%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	59%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30%	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	25%	68%	-43 pp
2024/25 (final)	27%	69%	-42 pp
2023/24 (final)	26%	67%	-41 pp
2022/23 (final)	22%	66%	-45 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	44%	80%	-35 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	81%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	80%	-28 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	78%	-35 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	35%	78%	-42 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	35%	78%	-43 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	22%	77%	-56 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	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	59%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	48%	79%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	30%	79%	-49 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)	8.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.6%	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)	21.8%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	27.7%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.6%	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.

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