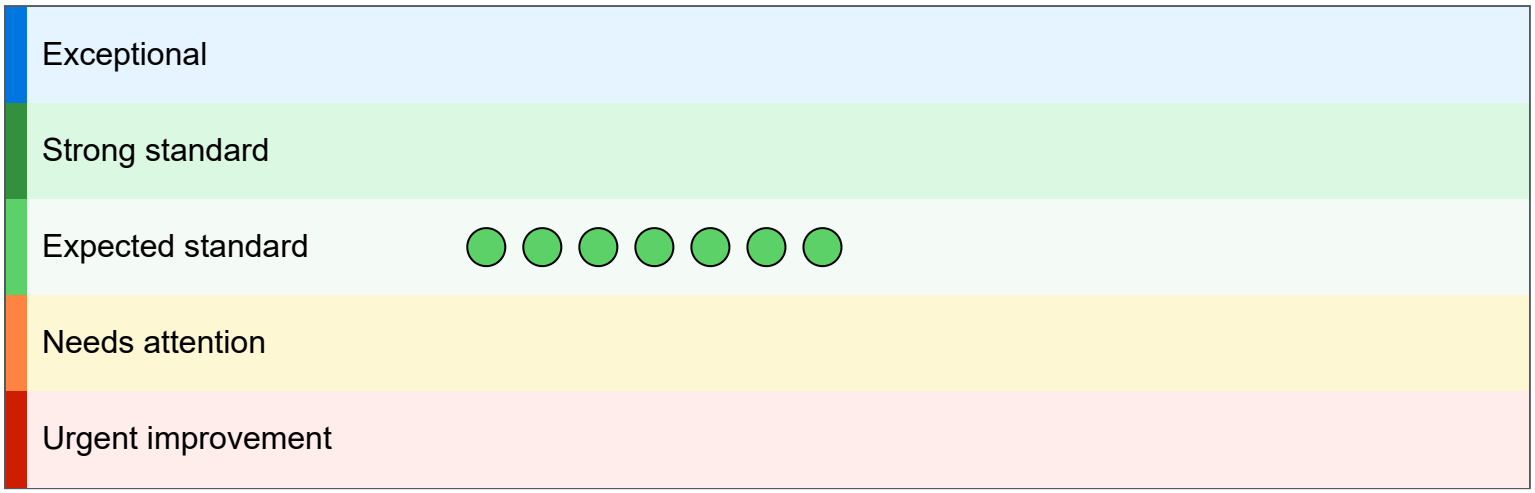
Marine Park First School

Address: Park Road, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, NE26 1LT

Unique reference number (URN): 108589

Inspection report: 31 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, typically achieve well from their starting points. Pupils generally acquire the knowledge and skills they need to help them read and write. This is reflected in the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check, which have been significantly above the national average over time. Overall, many pupils become confident and fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.

Leaders have focused on ensuring that pupils secure the important knowledge they need in mathematics, such as the multiplication tables. The impact of this is reflected in pupils' achievement in the Year 4 multiplication tables check which has improved over the past 2 years and is close to the national average. In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, pupils generally achieve well. Overall, pupils leave the school well prepared for their next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Pupils attend school regularly. Overall, attendance has been consistently above the national average for a number of years. This includes the attendance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Persistent absence is low. Leaders analyse attendance information in a timely manner. They use this information to identify any attendance concerns. Leaders support parents and carers well to overcome barriers to regular attendance. This has a positive impact on reducing absences and maintaining positive attendance over time. Parents appreciate the support provided.

Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. Leaders have created a calm school where the vast majority of pupils feel safe. Pupils generally know the school rules and follow them. Leaders have established a restorative approach to improving pupils' behaviour. This gives them time to reflect on the effect of their behaviour. A very small number of pupils feel that they have been impacted by discrimination from other pupils. Leaders have taken steps to address this.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The school’s curriculum is well sequenced. Leaders have developed the curriculum to reflect the school's locality and inspire pupils' interests. For example, they learn about the Wilkinson's lemonade factory air-raid shelter disaster during World War 2. They also conduct research using historical attendance registers on the evacuees who attended the school during this period. Teachers have the subject knowledge they need and the curriculum is generally taught well. On a small number of occasions, the design of some learning activities limits pupils' opportunities to deepen and extend their knowledge.

Leaders have developed approaches that enable teachers to check what pupils know and remember about the content they have been taught. Typically, teachers quickly identify and address any gaps in key knowledge that pupils have. There remain a small number of

subjects where these checks are not as consistent as they could be. This includes writing for a small number of pupils, where some misconceptions go unaddressed over time. This impacts these pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work. Staff teach the phonics scheme accurately. They effectively identify and support pupils who need extra help to secure their knowledge.

Staff have high expectations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In phonics, there are clear expectations that barriers to reading will be overcome. Across the curriculum, extensive support and suitable adaptations are provided to help pupils access the learning and make progress from their starting points.

Early years

Expected standard

Children make a positive and successful start to their education in early years. Leaders ensure that children are happy and settled. In Nursery, staff have high expectations. They take the time to meet parents and carers before children start, so that their needs can be met right from the beginning.

Children across the early years sustain their concentration, work well together and enjoy the various activities provided for them. Leaders have developed the outdoor provision. The creative use of different areas enables children to grow flowers, play imaginatively and develop their understanding of the world. At times, activities provided outside are not always as carefully planned to ensure progression from Nursery to Reception. On occasion, there are missed opportunities to extend children’s learning.

Leaders have carefully planned their curriculum. Children are immersed in a range of texts that help them broaden their understanding of other cultures. Staff typically engage children in high-quality interactions. This enables the children to expand their vocabulary and develop their language and communication skills. The teaching of phonics is highly effective in supporting early reading. Typically, children have the skills they need to be ready for Year 1. However, teachers do not always ensure that children write all the letters accurately.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Marine Park First School is an inclusive school. Pupils’ needs are quickly and accurately identified. Where appropriate, specialist advice is sought to ensure pupils receive the precise support they need. Pupils with social and emotional barriers, including anxiety, are very well supported. As a result, these pupils re-engage in lessons and catch up with their peers.

Leaders carefully develop individual support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work with parents, carers and pupils to ensure that they identify the actions needed to help pupils progress. Support is reviewed and adjusted to maximise its impact. Staff receive training to help them identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils are generally well supported to access the same learning as their peers. Staff typically remove barriers to learning. That said, support to help pupils develop their writing is less consistent.

Pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium take part in educational visits and other activities that broaden their experiences and deepen their learning. However, participation varies across the group. Leaders recognise this. They are considering how best to refine the school's approach to be confident that disadvantaged pupils consistently benefit from the full range of experiences that the school offers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders know the school well. They are committed to ensuring pupils are happy and develop into successful and responsible citizens. Leaders build positive relationships with parents, carers and staff. Staff and governors feel valued. Staff, including teachers at the start of their career, receive effective professional development to enhance their subject knowledge and teaching. Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school. This helps them to decide what to refine next. For example, leaders have introduced a new assessment system to help teachers identify gaps in pupils' important knowledge and skills and to check how well pupils retain and recall what they learn. Because the system is new, leaders recognise the need to embed more systematic checks on how teachers use it so that assessment reliably informs teaching.

Governors typically support and challenge leaders. They are very involved in the life of the school and show considerable commitment. Governors carefully monitor the impact of resources to check they are used effectively. Governors ensure decisions are made in the best interests of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged. Governors are knowledgeable about their statutory duties. They meet these effectively.

Leaders and governors are mindful of staff wellbeing. They have taken action to reduce pressures on staff.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have planned out an appropriate personal development and wellbeing offer. The personal, social, health and economic curriculum has been carefully sequenced. Leaders are making necessary changes to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and effective.

Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities that enrich the curriculum and broaden their experiences. The school choir is particularly inspiring and well attended. They have performed at the local theatre. Pupils' experiences are enhanced by the yearly science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and careers week. This enables pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to expand their knowledge of different careers through a range of local employers.

Pupils learn about the importance of fundamental British values, including the importance of being respectful and tolerant. Pupils have a good understanding of diversity through the books they study. They also learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils also learn about key religious festivals. Pupils' understanding of this curriculum is developing, but it is not yet secure for all pupils.

Pupils are taught about how to keep their bodies and minds healthy. They enjoy participating in local runs and a range of sports clubs, including fencing and football. Leaders also support pupils in developing positive mindsets and managing anxiety. Pupils are taught how to keep safe online and in the community. For example, they learn how to swim safely at the local beach and how to use public transport. Parents and carers are provided with a wealth of resources to help them support pupils' safe use of social media. Pupils are encouraged to raise money for local and national causes. They develop leadership skills through opportunities to serve on the school council and organise events as part of the junior apprentice initiative.

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

Pupils are happy and polite. They love coming to Marine Park First School. Pupils feel welcomed and cared for by all the staff. A sense of belonging is fostered by pupils being part of a ‘family group’. They are enthusiastic about the regular rewards they earn as part of this group. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and their needs met. When necessary, staff provide suitable adjustments to support pupils' access to the curriculum and enable them to successfully complete work.

Behaviour is typically calm and orderly. Pupils understand the school’s expectations and generally follow these. They behave well in lessons, which enhances learning time. They show respect to staff and each other. The vast majority of pupils feel safe and say bullying rarely happens. Staff deal with issues if they arise. During break times, older pupils support younger ones, helping them if they fall or need a buddy.

Pupils enjoy the varied and engaging curriculum provided for them. They also benefit from the range of visits, which enrich their learning and help make it more meaningful. For example, they make regular visits to the beach, city centre galleries and the local theatre.

Pupils have a developed understanding of equality and why it is important not to discriminate. They know how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. They learn about the importance of democracy through the school council. The school councillors visit the House of Parliament and meet their local MP. They share their experiences with all the pupils in an assembly following the visit. Pupils typically demonstrate tolerance and respect through the promotion of the school's core community values of kindness, respect, thriving happily, learning, cooperation and celebration. As a result of this work, they are prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the professional learning around assessment supports staff in using their checks on learning to shape teaching that secures important knowledge and skills and strengthens pupils’ recall across the school.

- Leaders should refine what pupils learn about people, communities and values so that pupils' strengthened knowledge secures consistent, considerate conduct.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jill Bates.

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 senior leaders, other leaders, representatives from the governing body and the local authority. Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and throughout the school day, including during break and lunch times. Inspectors considered the views of staff through formal and informal discussions. They also considered the views of parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View and as part of morning routines.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Stephen Easton

Lead inspector:
Nicky White, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Rhian Williams, Ofsted Inspector
Malcolm Kirtley, Ofsted Inspector
Graham Findlay, 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 31 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

488

Well 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

378
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)

7.44%
Well below 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

1.02%
Below 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

6.15%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below 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).

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)	2.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	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 (2 term)	4.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.9%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.4%	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.

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