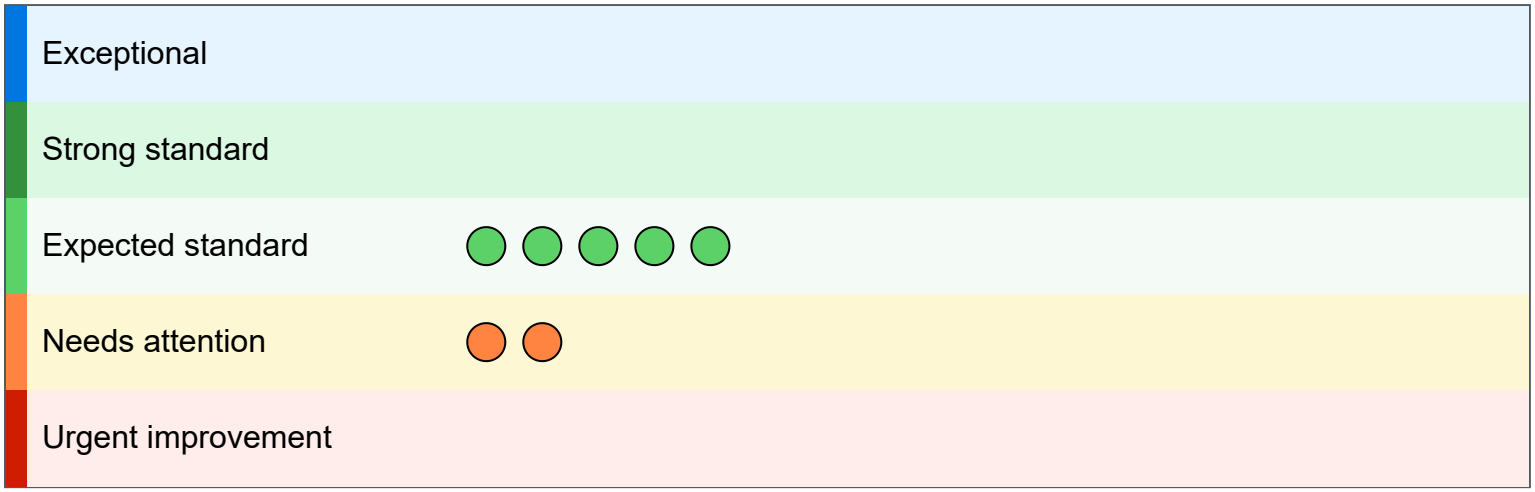
Ashton-under-Hill First School

Address: Elmley Road, Ashton-under-Hill, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 7SW

Unique reference number (URN): 116650

Inspection report: 3 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

Achievement

Expected standard

By the end of Year 5, pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for middle school. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils. Pupils make secure progress through the reading and mathematics curriculum. Year 1 phonics outcomes are broadly in line with the national average. Outcomes in the Year 4 multiplication tables check are above the national average. However, some pupils are slower to secure the foundations they need in writing. Younger pupils do not secure accuracy in handwriting and spelling as quickly as they should.

Pupils gain rich knowledge across the wider curriculum. They are able to talk in detail about what they have learned in history and geography. For example, younger pupils can describe the travels of Christopher Columbus, while older pupils can describe features of the world's oceans such as the Mariana Trench.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance. They understand the reasons why a small number of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. Leaders work closely with families and put in place effective strategies to support these pupils to improve their attendance. Leaders make regular checks on pupils' attendance and are quick to respond if attendance levels start to decline. As a result, attendance overall is in line with the national average.

Leaders have established suitably high expectations for pupils' behaviour. There are clear routines in place to support pupils to behave well. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly. Most pupils listen carefully to adults and to each other in lessons. They settle to their work quickly and concentrate on their learning. Pupils understand the school rules and take pride in following these.

Leaders put in place effective strategies to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, manage their own behaviour and emotions successfully. These strategies ensure that all pupils are ready to learn. Pupils of different ages interact well and older pupils enjoy helping younger pupils. Pupils feel safe from bullying.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders and staff work closely with families to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other vulnerabilities. This process starts as soon as children start in Nursery. The positive relationship with families continues as pupils move through the school. Leaders ensure that pupils get the help they need. They provide staff with training to support them in reducing any barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Staff use clear, one-page plans to guide the support they provide for individual pupils. They put in place effective strategies to reduce pupils' anxiety and help them learn how to manage their own behaviour. For example, some pupils benefit from regular ‘brain breaks’ during the day. Other pupils benefit from resources such as wobble cushions, which help them to concentrate. Leaders make regular checks to ensure that the support pupils receive is effective.

Leaders make appropriate use of additional funding for the small number of disadvantaged pupils who attend the school. This ensures that these pupils can take part in all aspects of school life. When pupils need to attend alternative provision, leaders choose this carefully. They make sure that the provision meets pupils' needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders know the school and pupils well. They have an accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement. Since taking up their leadership roles, leaders have made positive changes to help pupils learn more effectively. For example, they have introduced a new phonics programme and a new approach to the teaching of writing. Leaders have prioritised the right areas. Their actions are having a positive impact.

Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They provide appropriate support and challenge for leaders. Governors make regular checks on the school’s work. However, the evaluations that leaders share focus on the actions they have completed rather than on the impact of those actions on pupils. This means that leaders and governors are not always clear about whether their actions are having the intended effect.

Leaders have improved the way they identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. They make appropriate use of additional funding to meet these pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils receive the support they need.

Staff benefit from a range of appropriate professional development opportunities. They have received training to support the changes leaders are making to the teaching of phonics, writing and assessment. Leaders provide appropriate support for staff's workload and well-being. Staff are positive about the school’s direction.

Parents and carers speak highly of the changes which leaders are making. They value the nurture and care their children receive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have established a personal development programme that meets pupils' needs. Pupils have access to a broad range of experiences to support their personal, social, moral and cultural development. This helps them to grow into confident and reflective individuals. Pupils know and adhere to the school values of curiosity, resilience, friendship, working together and respect. Leaders and staff know pupils extremely well. They check in on every pupil's wellbeing at the start of each day and provide effective pastoral support.

Pupils recognise that modern Britain is diverse. They learn about different cultures, religions and characteristics. Furthermore, pupils treat each other with kindness and respect. They

develop an age-appropriate understanding of British values and can explain how these relate to their own experiences. For example, pupils understand how voting for representatives on the school council is a democratic process. All of this means that pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They know what makes a good friend. Pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe both online and offline. For example, they know to keep their personal details private online and how to stay safe in hot weather.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles, such as being members of the ‘kindness squad’ or school council representatives. Pupils are proud of the positive contribution they make through these roles. A range of clubs and activities nurture pupils' interests as well as introducing them to new experiences. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the 2 residential trips that are on offer, as well as the chance to take part in sports competitions, poetry recitals and drama activities. Leaders make sure that all pupils benefit from these opportunities.

Needs attention

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Leaders have a clear understanding of how to improve the quality of the curriculum and teaching. However, many actions are at an early stage. As a result, the quality of teaching across classes and subjects is inconsistent. Teachers do not secure essential knowledge and accuracy in handwriting and spelling early enough in pupils' learning. In some mixed-age classes, teachers do not make effective use of assessment to plan learning that builds suitably on what all pupils know and can do. This means that sometimes younger pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not have the knowledge they need to complete tasks successfully.

In reading and mathematics, the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge effectively over time. Leaders have set out what pupils should learn in each subject and year group across the wider curriculum. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly to pupils and introduce them to new vocabulary. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics and spelling. This is starting to have a positive impact. Staff have received training to support them in delivering the new programme effectively. Pupils who have fallen behind receive the help they need to catch up.

Early years

Needs attention

The early years curriculum is not as effective as it should be. Leaders have the right intentions. They are clear about what children need to know and be able to do by the end of Nursery and Reception. However, leaders have not consistently identified the small steps in learning that children need to reach these end points. As a result, staff do not always have a shared understanding of what to teach and when. This means that some children,

particularly those in Reception, do not make progress as quickly as they could. They are not fully prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Leaders have started to improve some aspects of the curriculum. For example, they have introduced more structure to the early reading and writing curriculum. Staff have received training and are teaching with more precision. Children are beginning to make better progress in these areas. Furthermore, adults interact well with children. They develop children's vocabulary well by encouraging them to speak in full sentences and introducing them to new words.

Relationships with adults are warm and positive. Adults have established clear routines, which help children to grow in confidence and independence. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This means that children enjoy coming to school and play happily with their peers.

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

Pupils are proud to be part of this small and happy school. They are keen to come to school and enjoy spending time with their friends. Staff build positive and caring relationships with pupils. They know each individual well. Leaders and staff welcome pupils each day and check on how they are feeling. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to them if they have any worries. They feel safe at school.

Pupils exemplify the school's values of curiosity, resilience, friendship, working together and respect. They are kind to each other, and older pupils act as role models for their younger peers. At social times, pupils of different ages play happily together. Bullying is rare and pupils know that adults will resolve any issues that occur. In lessons, pupils typically concentrate well and take pride in their work. Vulnerable pupils receive the support they need to overcome barriers to their learning and be able to participate fully in school life.

Pupils benefit from a range of clubs and enrichment activities that broaden their experiences and help them to develop new interests. They grow in independence and resilience as they move through the school. Pupils learn to keep going when they find things difficult. The school's mascot, 'Not Yet Yeti', reminds pupils to have a positive mindset and a 'can-do' attitude.

By the time they leave Year 5, most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils talk knowledgeably about their learning in subjects such as history and geography. Leaders are making improvements to the curriculum and teaching. However, this work is at an early stage and there is still some variability in the quality of teaching across classes and subjects. As a result, some younger pupils, including children in the early years, do not secure some of the essential knowledge they need as quickly as they should.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum sets out the small steps of knowledge and skills that children need to learn so that all staff have a shared understanding of what to teach and when.
- Leaders should continue to improve the teaching of writing so that pupils secure the essential skills they need in handwriting and spelling earlier in their learning.
- Leaders should ensure that staff make effective use of assessment to adapt learning so that it meets the needs of all pupils in each mixed-age class.
- Leaders should refine their monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that they focus on the impact their actions are having on improving the curriculum and teaching.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Geoff Mills.

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, other school leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. They also spoke with representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The headteacher was new to her role in September 2025. She was previously a class teacher at the school.

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision.

At the time of the inspection, there was a small number of pupils who had an education, health and care plan.

Headteacher: Emma Tulley

Lead inspector:
Claire Jones, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Steph Withington, 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 3 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

99
Well below 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

108
Well below 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)

7.07%
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

0.00%
Well 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

19.19%
Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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 (3 term)	4.1%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.8%	5.9%	Close to average

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)	8.0%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	10.3%	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.

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