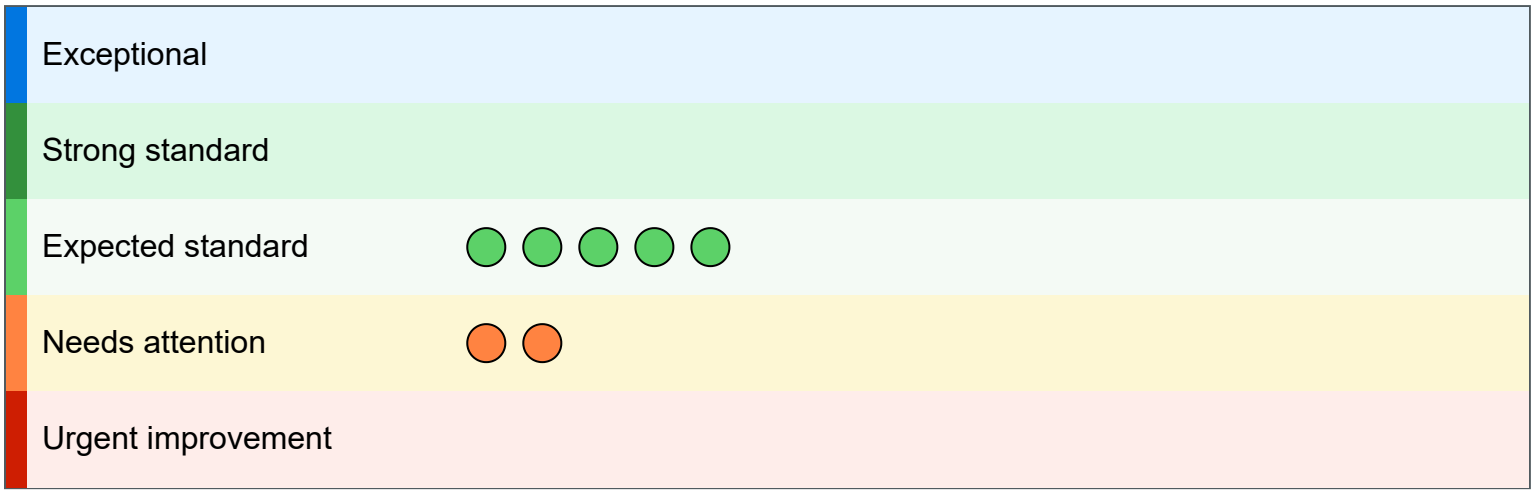
Janet Duke Primary School

Address: Markhams Chase, Laindon, Basildon, Essex, SS15 5LS

Unique reference number (URN): 144351

Inspection report: 30 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 have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It is well sequenced from early years to Year 6. The curriculum clearly sets out the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn in each subject and year group.

Leaders provide staff with training. This helps staff to teach the curriculum increasingly well. The quality of teaching is generally effective. However, teachers do not consistently use the most effective teaching strategies or have high enough expectations for pupils' work. This is particularly true in writing. Therefore, pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Leaders place a strong focus on securing firm foundations in reading. Pupils follow a well-taught phonics programme. Staff match books closely to pupils' reading knowledge. Leaders provide structured support for any pupils who fall behind. As a result, most pupils progress well with learning to read.

Leaders prioritise the development of spoken language and vocabulary across the curriculum. They ensure that pupils use subject-specific vocabulary accurately. Pupils revisit important knowledge so they can recall it well. They can explain key concepts with confidence. This shows that pupils effectively build their learning over time.

Teachers provide effective adaptations and support so that most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn successfully alongside their peers.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for giving children the best possible start to their education. Leaders have improved the early years curriculum and teaching since the previous inspection. Leaders identify the key knowledge, vocabulary and skills that prepare children well for Year 1. Staff regularly check children's learning. As a result, staff increasingly match teaching to children's needs.

Staff build positive relationships with children and their families. Children settle quickly into routines. They become increasingly independent. Children are safe and happy.

Children achieve well from their starting points. Staff identify additional needs quickly. Staff use this information to provide effective support. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully in learning and make good progress.

Most children develop secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. Daily phonics sessions support children to learn to read successfully. Children use their phonics knowledge confidently. They become increasingly fluent readers. Children learn how to write letters correctly and begin to independently write simple sentences. Children develop vocabulary and comprehension because staff use a rich range of high-quality texts, songs and rhymes. Staff engage children in purposeful conversations. These extend children's language and thinking.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have established an inclusive culture across the school. The school identifies pupils' needs accurately, including those of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders use information from early years settings and families before pupils join the school to start identifying needs early.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need. The school uses a range of adaptations and interventions to make learning accessible. Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise to implement strategies to do this. Pupils who are not able to access classroom learning full time receive well-tailored support. They make strong progress. Leaders arrange alternative provision when it is in pupils' best interests. Pupils who attend alternative provision improve their attendance, behaviour and achievement.

Leaders regularly check the progress of pupils receiving extra support. They use this information to ensure that support remains effective and meets pupils' changing needs.

Leaders use additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The school provides small-group sessions to develop pupils' language, communication and understanding. Leaders also provide tailored pastoral support for pupils' emotional wellbeing. This helps pupils understand their feelings, build confidence and manage their behaviour successfully.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders keep pupils' best interests at the heart of everything they do. Leaders have a strong understanding of the community they serve. Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved a number of areas. These include early years, inclusion, the curriculum, the teaching of reading and reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Leaders, the trust and governors have correctly identified areas across the school that are strengths and areas that require further development. They have a clear focus on ensuring that the actions they take benefit all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities or experience other barriers to learning.

Leaders recognise where improvement work is at an early stage or where changes have not been implemented consistently enough. For example, leaders recognise that the teaching of writing requires further improvement, as does increasing the number of pupils who attend school regularly.

Leaders provide professional development that is founded on evidence about what works well. This supports all staff, including those at the start of their career, to build expertise over time. Morale is high, and staff value the opportunities they receive to develop their practice. Leaders take effective action to manage staff's wellbeing and workload. They ensure that expectations remain manageable and that staff feel supported.

Local governors have an appropriate understanding of the school's work. They use reports and their own monitoring to challenge and support leaders effectively. The trust provides effective support and challenge for school leaders. Trustees fulfil their statutory duties.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders place pupils' personal development and wellbeing at the centre of the school's work. They have designed a broad and ambitious programme. Pupils develop confidence, resilience and independence through a wide range of carefully planned experiences. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils develop an understanding of democracy and leadership. They take on meaningful responsibilities as members of the school council, 'eco captains' and head boy and head girl. These roles help pupils build communication skills and a sense of responsibility. Pupils understand how they can make a positive contribution to their school and wider community. Pupils know they benefit from the many clubs, leadership opportunities and enrichment activities available.

Leaders ensure that all pupils can access enriching experiences. The school funds a curriculum visit for every year group, enabling all pupils to take part. Visits to places such as the beach, forests and local libraries enhance learning and broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils also benefit from projects that involve families. These include design and technology activities that develop practical life skills, such as cooking and sewing.

Pupils develop their knowledge about healthy relationships, equality and personal safety. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. They value diversity and show respect for people from different backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and family structures. The school supports pupils to manage their emotions and resolve conflict successfully. Leaders provide additional pastoral support to pupils who need it. As a result, pupils are happy and know where to seek help when they need it.

Leaders raise pupils' aspirations and broaden their horizons. Pupils benefit from local initiatives, theme days and partnerships with national arts organisations. Leaders support pupils to develop creativity through working with an artist in school. Pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities particularly benefit from this.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Pupils have not achieved as well as they should in national tests and assessments. The biggest barrier to some pupils' achievement is poor attendance. As a result, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not achieve as well as they should because they miss out on too much learning.

Some pupils do not develop fluent and legible handwriting as they move through the school. This limits how well they record their learning. Some pupils do not develop the knowledge they need to solve mathematical problems. Consequently, pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they could be.

In lessons, pupils generally demonstrate appropriate knowledge in all subjects. Pupils make links between subjects, for example between what they have learned about percussion instruments in music to their learning about sound in science. Pupils' books show that achievement is improving.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Pupils' attendance has consistently been below the national average. Leaders use some systems to monitor and review pupils' attendance across the school. However, these are not as well developed as they could be. This is because leaders do not evaluate well the effectiveness of their strategies. In response to suggestions from the school council and from parents and carers, leaders are developing their rewards for regular school attendance. These, and support and challenge to individual families and pupils, have resulted in fewer pupils being persistently absent from school.

Leaders have established a positive learning culture across the school. The school has clear behaviour expectations. Staff apply these consistently. Leaders have embedded clear routines that provide structure and consistency throughout the day. Pupils typically demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and generally behave well around the school. Leaders analyse behaviour patterns closely. They use this information to provide timely and effective support. Pupils who find behaving well or managing their emotions difficult receive tailored support. This helps them learn to behave better and to manage how they are feeling. Leaders deal with the rare instances of bullying quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident that staff will address concerns fairly and consistently.

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

Pupils, staff, parents and carers value being part of Janet Duke Primary School. Pupils enjoy learning in a welcoming, inclusive school where everyone is encouraged to succeed. Pupils know the school motto, 'Together We Learn, Together We Achieve, As One', and demonstrate it through their actions and relationships. Pupils who join the school during the school year are made to feel welcome quickly.

Pupils are happy, safe and well cared for. They show a strong sense of belonging and take pride in their school. Pupils build positive relationships with staff, who know them and their families well. Pupils typically behave appropriately in lessons and play well together at social times. Pupils are confident that bullying is rare and that adults deal with it quickly when it occurs.

Pupils, including those who face barriers to learning, are fully included in school life. They play an active role in shaping the school, for example as nature warriors and librarians. Pupils understand the importance of academic achievement, emotional health and wellbeing. They enjoy opportunities that broaden their experiences and develop their talents, such as working with an artist in residence and completing the school's '100 Life Experiences'.

For too long, many pupils, including the most disadvantaged, have not achieved as well as they should. However, pupils' books and responses in lessons show that achievement is improving. It is more positive than published performance data suggests, particularly in reading and mathematics. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, progress well from their starting points. However, some pupils do not attend regularly and do not achieve as well as they should. Attendance is particularly low for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. These pupils do not learn as well as their peers who attend regularly.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), so that more pupils benefit fully from the school's provision and achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders should continue to build on improvements in teaching so that pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress so that they achieve as well as they can, particularly in writing.

About this inspection

This school is part of Cresco 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, Damian Pye, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jude Gibbon.

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. They also spoke with representatives of the trust board and local governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses 2 registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Harriet Phelps-Knights

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

Team inspectors:
Sally Nutman, Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Brock, Ofsted Inspector
Jason Carey, 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

629
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

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)

54.53%
Well 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

4.77%
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

19.24%
Above 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)

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	39%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	39%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	41%	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)	58%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	54%	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	58%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	51%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	56%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	57%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	53%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	59%	73%	Below
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	30%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	28%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	30%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	31%	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	51%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	54%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	49%	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	49%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	41%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	46%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	44%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	48%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46%	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	30%	68%	-38 pp
2024/25 (final)	28%	69%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	31%	66%	-35 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	51%	80%	-29 pp
2024/25 (final)	54%	81%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23 (final)	49%	78%	-29 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	49%	78%	-29 pp
2024/25 (final)	41%	78%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	78%	-34 pp
2022/23 (final)	61%	77%	-17 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)	44%	81%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	48%	79%	-31 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	46%	79%	-33 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)	9.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	9.3%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.8%	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)	29.9%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	32.0%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	34.5%	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.

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