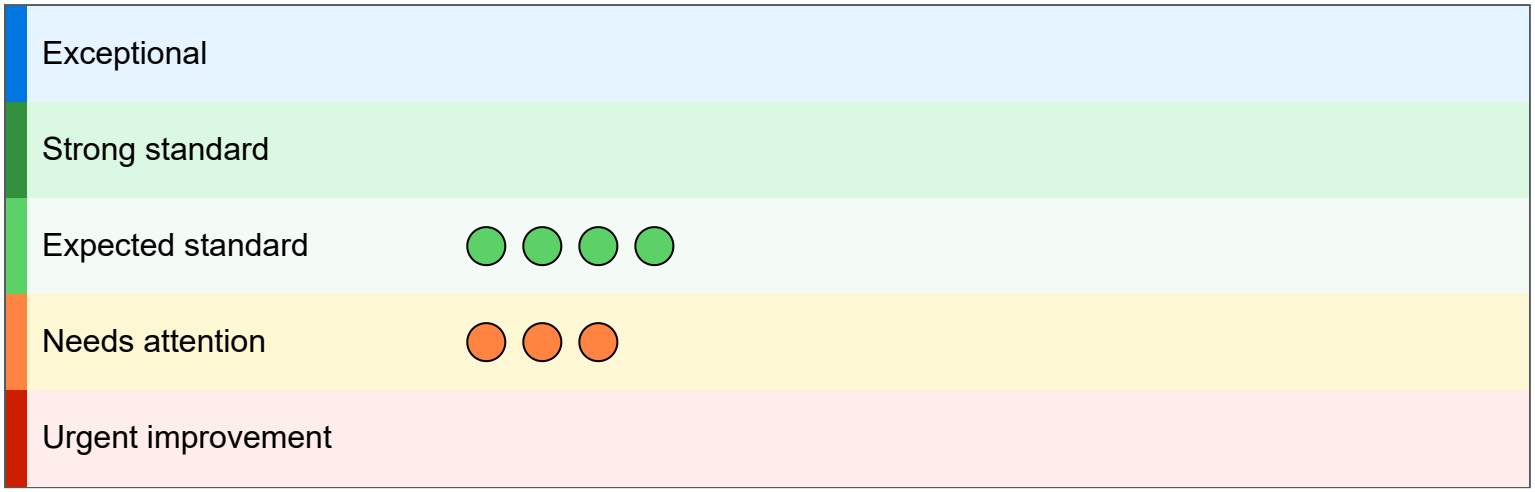
Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Address: Windsor Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 2AH

Unique reference number (URN): 114722

Inspection report: 12 May 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

In the early years and key stage 1, pupils mostly secure the necessary accuracy and fluency in reading, spelling, handwriting and number facts. Pupils' achievement in phonics is in line with their peers nationally. Typically, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils' progress through the curriculum is generally secure. They build a coherent body of knowledge in all subjects as they move through the school. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who make suitable progress from their individual starting points.

A small proportion of disadvantaged pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not addressed as quickly as they could be. For example, a small number are less secure in their handwriting and spelling skills. Letter formation errors persist because staff do not correct them quickly enough. In some cases this means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum in all subjects is well sequenced and ambitious. Leaders have set out precisely the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. Pupils build a broad appreciation of different subjects through a range of experiences, such as going on visits. Pupils learn how animals are cared for when visiting a farm, for example.

Leaders carry out checks on how well the school’s curriculum and teaching are working. They review and refine what pupils learn. For example, leaders have ensured that pupils have more opportunities to speak in grammatically correct sentences. Leaders have also strengthened the school's phonics programme and checked that it is securely embedded. Staff deliver this particularly well. Reading has a high priority in the school. Leaders make sure that pupils who need extra help with their reading are supported well and therefore catch up quickly. Staff promote pupils’ love of reading. Generally, teachers make suitable adaptations where needed to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. This is also typically the case for disadvantaged pupils, though sometimes teachers do not spot or address gaps in their knowledge.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They teach pupils the important content they will need for later learning, such as number knowledge and skills. Pupils recall their knowledge of these topics because teachers revisit them frequently.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise reading. Staff teach the school's phonics programme systematically, typically delivering it clearly and accurately. They ensure that children access the phonics

programme successfully. As a result children build their phonics knowledge over time.

The curriculum in the early years is well thought through. It focuses on children developing important knowledge across Nursery and Reception. Typically, the curriculum is taught well across all areas of learning. Provision for 3-year-olds is appropriate. It helps children to be ready for their next stage of education. Generally, by the end of the Reception Year, children learn the knowledge and skills that they need to transition successfully into Year 1.

Children recall their previous learning well. They are enthusiastic about the stories they have learned. When staff model language and engage children in high-quality talk, children develop their communication skills effectively. However, this does not happen consistently well.

Children feel cared for and safe. This is because staff focus on children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff enable children to form positive and trusting relationships with the adults in the Nursery and in Reception. Children are calm, happy and keen to talk about what they are doing. Staff identify which children need additional support and are quick to put this in place. This helps children to progress well.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders and staff care passionately about pupils' wellbeing. They have prioritised building a community where everyone belongs. Governors, leaders and staff are committed to supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils access effective pastoral support from caring and knowledgeable staff.

The personal development of pupils begins from their first days in school. In the early years, children learn to concentrate, cooperate and show respect for one another. They develop skills to manage their emotions and to resolve minor conflicts. Pupils learn the knowledge they need to prepare them well for life in modern Britain. They demonstrate accepting attitudes of cultural differences in society. Pupils who are school ambassadors relish this role because it gives them a sense of responsibility. Pupils know that school ambassadors make a positive difference by helping them to be safe and well looked after.

Leaders ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of online safety. Pupils also know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils can talk about what they have learned but this knowledge is not consistently detailed or embedded.

Governors and leaders share an ambition to prepare pupils well for the wider world. Pupils' interest in a range of careers is sparked through careers week and regular visits from people who work in different professions. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, have opportunities to develop their talents and interests through extra-curricular activities. The growing range of clubs includes sports, music and gardening. There are educational visits to local places of interest which enrich the curriculum. Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from a range of wider opportunities that enhance their learning. These opportunities include theme days and visits to the local church and library. Some pupils even benefit from a sailing trip.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Over time the school’s persistent absence rates have remained high. They have been increasingly high for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This means that too many pupils are missing school. Pupils' overall attendance is lower than in most schools. Historically, leaders have not used attendance information to plan an effective way to improve. Leaders' recent actions have started to have a more positive impact on pupils’ attendance.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. This contributes to a supportive school environment. Typically, pupils are enthusiastic about learning.

Leaders have established clear behaviour routines and expectations. Staff apply these consistently. Pupils usually follow school routines and respond well to staff guidance. Their behaviour in lessons is calm and focused. Behaviour outside of lessons is usually orderly. Pupils feel safe and confident moving around the school. They enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes, using the resources that the school provides for them. Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. Staff address any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying effectively. Adaptations are made for pupils who need bespoke support to help them to meet the school's behaviour expectations. Discriminatory language or behaviour is not tolerated. Staff help pupils resolve worries or minor disagreements, and pupils know who to approach if they need help.

Inclusion

Needs attention

Leaders do not analyse the impact of their work to help disadvantaged pupils well enough. As a result, leaders are not sure whether the support in place is effective in meeting the needs of these pupils.

However, leaders have identified some of the barriers that pupils face, such as being hungry when they start the school day. They provide a breakfast club to support those pupils. Staff provide individual reading support as well as additional pastoral provision. This helps to reduce the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared to their peers.

Leaders use assessment information well to inform their support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders monitor the impact of provision for individual pupils with SEND. Leaders are increasing the precision with which they monitor and evaluate this work.

Staff use information that identifies the barriers to learning that pupils with SEND face. Leaders ensure that appropriate targets are set for pupils and that they are reviewed in a timely manner. Typically these targets are precise. Staff have received appropriate training to support pupils with SEND achieve these targets. The impact of this can be seen in how staff make suitable adaptations to resources and provision, which aid pupils' wellbeing and academic progress.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention

Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness lacks precision. This hinders them in responding quickly and effectively to the areas they need to improve the most. These include attendance and support for disadvantaged pupils. Despite these deficits, leaders are dedicated and proud of their school. They have made some meaningful and positive changes to the school. These include developing the school’s curriculum and enhancing the teaching of early reading.

Governors provide support to leaders but not enough challenge. This is because governors do not ensure they get the information they need from leaders. Leaders and governors are in the early stages of addressing this. Governors are not clear about leaders' efforts to improve attendance nor how leaders use pupil premium funding to help their most disadvantaged pupils.

Staff value the support they receive. They appreciate leaders being approachable and available. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and wellbeing. They have put in place a programme of staff training that is informed by evidence.

Leaders know their community well and build positive relationships with parents and carers. Leaders support families to have trusting relationships with school. They also help parents to build rapport with professionals beyond the school. This helps to keep pupils safe.

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

Pupils arrive happy and keen to start their day. They receive a warm welcome from staff. Staff build trusting relationships with pupils, which underpin all aspects of the school’s work. Pupils are polite and respectful. They know that staff will help them if they have a problem. They trust staff to deal quickly with issues such as bullying. As a result, pupils feel safe.

Pupils settle into routines and understand the school's high expectations for behaviour and learning. This starts in the early years. Typically, pupils behave well in lessons and demonstrate a commitment to their learning. They enjoy playing together at break and lunchtimes. Pupils appreciate the range of equipment they can use on the playground and field.

In lessons, pupils generally enjoy learning and try their best. This helps them to make progress and to be prepared for the next stage of their education. Children in the early years make a positive start to their education.

Pupils take part in wider opportunities beyond the curriculum. For example, they enjoy outdoor learning. They build dens, explore nature and develop their teamwork skills. Pupils like attending the clubs that staff provide for them. The school's pupil ambassadors contribute positively to the safety and wellbeing of other pupils. Pupils and staff alike value the ambassadors' contribution to the school. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. They show tolerance and know that it is acceptable to have different beliefs and views.

Some pupils attend school regularly. A much higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not attend school regularly enough. Some disadvantaged pupils do not get the support they need to overcome barriers to regular attendance. This limits how well they learn and how much they can achieve.

Next steps

- Leaders should evaluate the impact of the school's pupil premium strategy more effectively to ensure that initiatives regarding attendance and academic support benefit disadvantaged pupils as fully as possible.
- Leaders need to better analyse attendance information so that they can improve their work to increase the attendance of all pupils, including those with high rates of persistent absence.
- Leaders and governors should take a more strategic approach to improvement so that they consistently and quickly identify and improve aspects of provision which are not at the expected standard.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr Robert Galvani.

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 leaders during the inspection. An inspector spoke with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body as well as a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Kathy Maguire-Egan

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

Team inspectors:
Sally Nutman, Ofsted Inspector
Aimee Bray, 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 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

326
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

360
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)

50.87%
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

3.37%
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

6.75%
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 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).

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)	10.3%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.4%	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)	33.2%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	31.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	31.3%	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