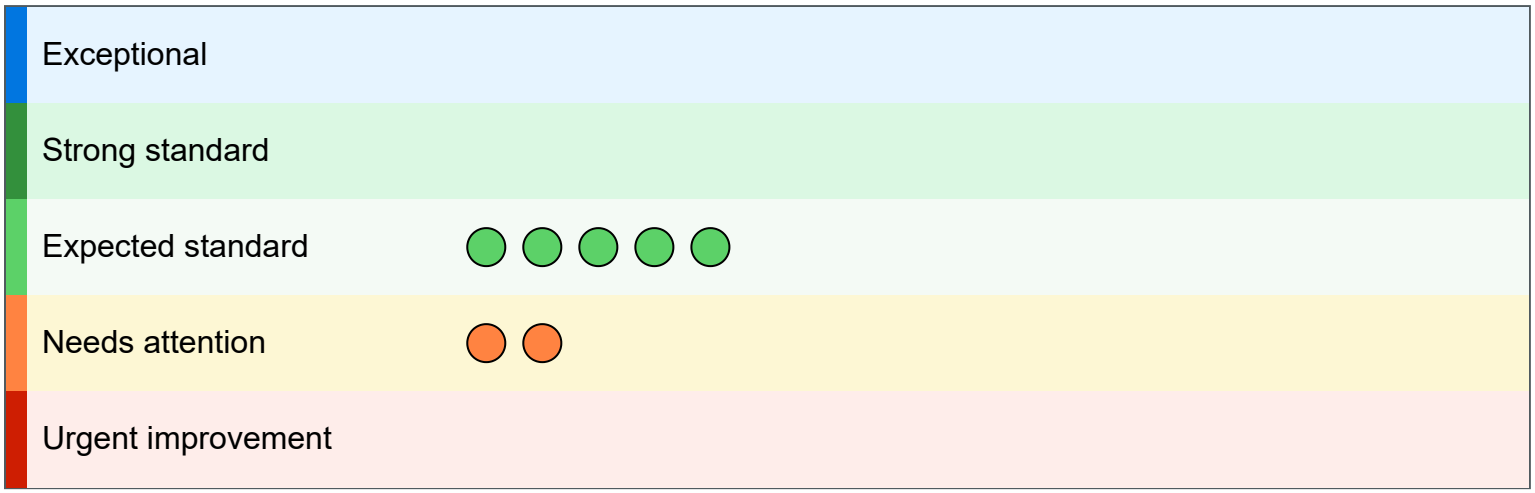
Water Orton Primary School

Address: Plank Lane, Water Orton, Birmingham, Warwickshire, B46 1SG

Unique reference number (URN): 125620

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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Improving the attendance of pupils remains a priority for leaders. Overall attendance shows a rapid improvement over the last twelve months and now, for most pupils, in most weeks, it is in line with the national average. For some groups of pupils, including those at risk of becoming persistently absent, leaders work proactively and effectively with external agencies. Leaders are quick to identify barriers to attendance and put in place tailored support to help overcome these. For the majority of pupils, this work increases the number of days they attend school. For a small minority of pupils who face barriers to their learning, there is still some work to secure continued improvement in attendance and therefore ensure that all pupils fully benefit from all the school has to offer.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning. Leaders have established clear expectations and staff apply them consistently. This creates a calm and respectful environment where pupils feel safe. Staff make thoughtful adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can engage positively with routines. Incidents of poor behaviour are managed effectively. The school helps pupils to successfully resolve their differences and understand the consequences of any unkind behaviour. As a result, pupils feel valued and listened to. Bullying seldom happens. Discrimination is not tolerated and leaders respond swiftly when concerns arise.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have created a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects the school's context. There are many strengths within the curriculum, especially in writing. Leaders recognise that there are still some aspects of reading and mathematics to further improve. They know precisely what actions they need to take to ensure that teaching is of a consistently high quality in all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum, overall, is well sequenced and builds pupils' knowledge successfully over time.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge to develop the understanding that pupils need for later learning. For example, personalised targets are typically used effectively to support pupils' progress. Staff generally explain subject content clearly and, for the most part, learning activities are well matched to pupils' needs. However, leaders recognise that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This means that some pupils do not have the opportunity to extend their learning and reach their potential.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) successfully access learning alongside their peers. Careful choices are made about how this learning is adapted so that they can succeed. Pupils with more complex SEND are provided with a bespoke, individualised curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise their offer for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Highly skilled and well-trained staff provide effective support for pupils with more complex needs. For example, in the school's resourced provision, 'Evergreen', pupils learn from a carefully tailored programme of learning, which ensures that they make progress through the curriculum, while developing their confidence and independence. Any help pupils need to manage their feelings and behaviour is in place.

Across the school, the needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly by staff. Leaders responsible for SEND provision in school are knowledgeable. They ensure that staff access the specialist training they need to put the right adaptations in place in the classroom. Regular checks on pupils' learning successfully inform adjustments or next steps. For example, adjustments may include whether a pupil is in or outside the classroom to help them manage their feelings and needs. Effective liaison with external agencies provides the school with any additional advice that they need to act in the best interests of each pupil.

The needs of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding, as well as those known or previously known to social care, are identified promptly by the school. Many within this group also have additional barriers to their learning. Leaders have clear oversight of the effective provision in place.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are tenacious and committed to realising the potential of all pupils. Leaders and governors make effective decisions that put pupils' learning, safety and wellbeing first. Leaders know their school's strengths well. They are realistic in their evaluation of the school's position. Through accurate reviews, leaders have appropriately prioritised their areas for improvement. The impact of leaders' actions can be seen across the school, including pupils' writing and improving attendance. However, it has not yet impacted on pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2. Most parents and carers are positive about the support that the school gives their children.

Those with responsibility for governance are kept well informed about the school's performance. They make regular checks to determine the impact of leaders' work. The needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are prioritised. Governors meet their statutory obligations effectively. They ensure that the school provides effective pastoral support to staff during periods of change. Governors' scrutiny of the school's pupil premium funding ensures that resources are well allocated.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They benefit from a wide range of professional learning opportunities, which help them to implement the school's improvement priorities. Staff, including any early career teachers, are positive about the way in which leaders help them to manage their workload and wellbeing. Staff feel that their individual efforts are recognised as part of this professional and collegiate team. Leaders and governors develop and maintain constructive relationships with parents and carers and the wider community.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have developed a coherent and well sequenced programme of personal development that extends beyond the taught curriculum. This programme makes a positive difference to pupils and enables them to make sense of the world around them. For example, through assemblies, pupils reflect on their views, respect others' values and engage thoughtfully with ethical issues.

Through an effective curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn important knowledge, such as staying safe online, managing their physical health and how to celebrate their own achievements. Pupils also learn about equality and diversity and fundamental British values well. They challenge unfairness and show tolerance in their actions. This enables them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders' inclusive approach is reflected in their commitment to pupils' wider development. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities provided by leaders. These opportunities enable all pupils to learn new skills, such as British Sign Language. Enrichment opportunities are carefully tracked by leaders to ensure that all pupils are involved. Educational visits are planned through the curriculum. Some of these help to widen pupils' knowledge of religion and faith such as 'church at Christmas'. A number of pupils hold leadership roles in school for example 'REACH ambassadors'. Pupils learn effective leadership skills, such as speaking to an audience and how to be a successful listener.

The school provides effective additional pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils. For example, specialist staff provide help to support the emotional wellbeing of more vulnerable pupils. Pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities learn through tailored sensory support. Leaders regularly reflect on how well this practice supports these pupils. This helps them to adapt the offer appropriately for individual pupils to ensure that they bloom.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

By the end of Year 6, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Published outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are often below national figures. This is due to gaps in pupils' basic skills in the core curriculum areas. These gaps limit pupils' achievement and weaken their readiness for secondary school. However, leaders are taking increasingly effective action to close gaps in pupils' basic skills.

Leaders recognise the need to further sharpen their focus on phonics knowledge in the early years and Year 1. This will help ensure that pupils have the basic reading skills to successfully access key content across the curriculum. In some areas, pupils' outcomes are improving. For example, leaders' actions have brought about improvements in pupils' writing at the end of Year 6.

Refinements to the curriculum now support many pupils to move through the curriculum at an appropriate pace. This helps some pupils to secure the knowledge they need to be ready for secondary school. However, some of the school's work to raise achievement is at an early stage and it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this.

Early years **Needs attention**

Further work is needed in the early years to ensure that any variations in teaching and expectations do not hinder what children can achieve. Inconsistencies in the delivery of phonics and the quality of adult interactions, limit how effectively children's learning is extended and consolidated. As a result, some children do not get the support that they need at the right time.

Leaders, including those responsible for the early years, have a clear vision for providing high-quality education. They have prioritised improvements, which have been significant since the last inspection. A carefully designed curriculum outlines what the school wants children to achieve across the 7 areas of learning. This incorporates opportunities to develop language as well as supporting children to secure early reading, mathematics and writing knowledge. Generally, children are ready for their learning in Year 1.

Relationships between staff and children are positive. Staff know the children well. They support children to develop social skills as they play alongside their friends. The school's high expectations for behaviour and routines are typically in place. Children are delighted to share and to explain information they have learnt with visitors.

Parents and carers speak highly of the support and care their children receive. Leaders form effective relationships with parents to ensure that they are fully involved in their children's education.

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

Pupils feel highly valued, included and supported at Water Orton. They learn in a safe, nurturing environment where staff know them well and help them to grow in confidence. Pupils value the school as a family where learning and personal development are shared as one community. Pupils demonstrate the school's values of 'REACH' consistently, including showing respect and honesty. Staff build positive relationships with pupils. They know pupils and their families well. This allows staff to support pupils effectively to reduce any barriers they may have to attending school and to accessing learning.

Over time, some pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2 has been below that of their peers nationally. Leaders have acted decisively and put clear measures in place to improve pupils' achievement. Across the school, the work in pupils' books and their knowledge of the curriculum shows that leaders' actions are starting to have a positive impact.

Pupils behave very well around school. They attend regularly. Most classrooms are calm and purposeful learning environments. Pupils hold doors open for others and give a warm

welcome to visitors. Pupils are kind and caring. They are respectful of each other and bullying is very rare. If pupils fall out, staff quickly help them make up and move on.

Pupils benefit from a range of experiences beyond the curriculum. For example, they learn about careers and personal safety through ‘aspiration’ Fridays. These experiences spark pupils' curiosity well. Pupils of all ages become ‘REACH ambassadors’ on the school council. Older pupils look forward to being house captains and hall monitors. These opportunities ensure pupils give their opinions and help shape their school improvements. Pupils proudly talk about their visits to see pantomimes and local forts and the songwriting opportunities. Leaders consistently look for new ways to enhance pupils' educational experiences.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff further adapt their teaching and assessment to challenge pupils more so that they reach their potential.
- Leaders should ensure that all early years’ staff further develop their knowledge and skills, including of phonics, to improve children’s learning.
- Leaders should ensure that their attendance strategy and actions become embedded to further raise attendance, particularly for pupils who face barriers to their learning.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mr Steve Stuart.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, representatives of the local authority, the school business manager, special educational needs coordinator, staff, parents, carers and pupils.

Inspectors visited lessons, including in the early years. They looked at pupils’ work. They spoke with pupils at different times across the school day and observed behaviour in lessons and around the school site.

To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.

Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make any use of alternative provision.

Headteacher: Emma Smith

Lead inspector:
Stuart Clarkson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Roulla Gabriel, Ofsted Inspector
Christian Hamilton, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

This data is from 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

312
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

323
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)

17.95%
Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

7.05%
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

12.82%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

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	53%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	65%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	55%	60%	Close to average

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	66%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	67%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	81%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	71%	Close to average

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	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	56%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	81%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	66%	73%	Close to average

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	48%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	40%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	44%	Close to average

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	64%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	60%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	60%	Above

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	64%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	60%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average

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	48%	68%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	67%	-10 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	66%	-16 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	64%	80%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	80%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	78%	-3 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	64%	78%	-14 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	78%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	78%	-6 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 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	60%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	79%	-8 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	79%	-17 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)	6.7%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.0%	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)	16.5%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	15.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	16.0%	16.2%	Close to average

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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