

St John's Church of England Primary School, Lacey Green

Address: Main Road, Lacey Green, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0PL

Unique reference number (URN): 145422

Inspection report: 16 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

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.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Pupils' achievement in statutory tests is above national averages consistently.

Pupils establish foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics securely. They learn to read fluently. They write at length with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils become fluent at solving mathematical calculations. They apply their knowledge to reasoning and problem-solving tasks. Pupils with SEND receive personalised programmes of support. These pupils make steady progress alongside their peers.

Pupils, including those at the earliest stages of their education, develop detailed knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum. Pupils in key stage 1 confidently explain how learning about Picasso contributes to the creation of collages in art. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use scientific vocabulary to describe the formation of fossils. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' attendance is celebrated. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend regularly. Persistent absence is consistently below national levels. Leaders have a sharp focus on attendance. They ensure that expectations are communicated clearly and reinforced consistently. Leaders analyse attendance information closely. This helps them to intervene early, where patterns of concern are noted. Leaders work closely with parents and carers and external agencies to support pupils to attend more regularly. For example, they put in place targeted support to reduce social, emotional and mental health barriers.

Pupils behave well. Leaders and staff have established high expectations of behaviour. These are underpinned by respectful and caring relationships. This helps pupils to feel that they belong. Pupils demonstrate highly effective learning behaviours. They listen carefully and actively participate in discussions and activities. Staff provide timely support and adaptations to pupils who need them. Pupils understand that some pupils need more help than others to behave well. Older pupils are positive role models. They interact politely and respectfully with adults and their peers. Pupils say that children behave well at St John's and bullying is rare. They assert that adults sort out any problems quickly.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Teaching is of a high quality. Staff model learning consistently well. They ask questions to check for understanding expertly. This enables staff to identify and address misconceptions quickly. Pupils practise what they have learned through tasks that are closely aligned to the learning. For example, after reading 'George's Marvellous Medicine', pupils practise using instructional language to write their own recipe.

Foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics are prioritised. Phonics is taught well consistently. There are regular opportunities to read for pleasure. Staff develop pupils' language and communication skills highly effectively. They model language precisely. They teach pupils how to use new and complex vocabulary. As a result, pupils become skilled young communicators.

Staff have the skills they need to deliver the curriculum effectively as a result of professional learning that prioritises teaching and learning. For example, leaders have focused on further improving the teaching of writing. Consequently, pupils are taught to write well. Staff ensure pupils establish a comfortable pencil grip and form letters correctly. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are addressed consistently.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully sequenced. Leaders have mapped learning precisely from early years through to Year 6. Pupils benefit from adaptations to the curriculum that are sharply aligned with their needs. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive a personalised programme of teaching. As a result, pupils thrive in the classroom. They develop subject-specific interests.

Early years

Strong standard 

Children thrive in the early years. Leaders have prioritised this crucial stage of children's development. They understand how secure foundations inform future success. The curriculum and learning environment are sharply aligned to children's needs. Staff respond quickly to children's learning and development. They make purposeful adjustments to the environment and their teaching to maximise children's progress.

Children's communication and language skills are developed precisely. Staff engage children in high-quality interactions that develop language and vocabulary. Modelling is highly effective. Consequently, children become confident young communicators. For example, children use accurate terminology, when describing a moth's chrysalis.

Children develop foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics consistently well. Children demonstrate how they use their knowledge of sounds to help them to write independently. They use frogs on a lily pad to count and calculate with increasing fluency. Staff make personalised adaptations for children who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They address emerging gaps in learning quickly. Consequently, children achieve well.

Children are happy and safe in the early years. They demonstrate a thirst for learning. They play confidently and cooperatively with one another. Children, including those who are disadvantaged or have SEND, are proud of their achievements. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

This school is inclusive. Leaders are aspirational for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders' actions are characterised by a highly intentional, coherent and consistently applied approach.

Leaders get to know pupils and their families quickly. They develop a comprehensive understanding of pupils' needs. This enables them to identify barriers to learning swiftly. Adaptations for pupils are fluid, subtle and skilfully implemented in the classroom. For pupils with the highest level of need, there is a personalised programme of teaching and support. For example, some pupils benefit from one-to-one learning in the snug. This enables pupils with SEND to access learning fully, achieve well and feel they belong.

Leaders use additional funding effectively. The strategy to support disadvantaged pupils is thoughtfully considered. It focuses on individual needs. For example, leaders provide tailored support to pupils from service families. Staff with expert knowledge of the needs of this group oversee support. This ensures that pupils and their families are supported effectively. Leaders ensure that staff are well equipped to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Training is considered carefully. This enables them to deliver interventions and support effectively.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders are highly effective. They are ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have a detailed understanding of the school and their pupils. They are responsive to the developing context and needs. Leaders develop robust school improvement plans. These are underpinned by a trust-wide strategy, current educational research and the needs of pupils. Leaders monitor the impact of their work closely.

Trustees and governors have a detailed understanding of the school. They use this knowledge to provide appropriate support and challenge. Governors focus on pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities relentlessly. They share leaders' ambitions for all pupils to thrive. Statutory duties are fulfilled. Governors are skilled in their knowledge of inclusion and safeguarding. This ensures that monitoring procedures are robust.

Leaders are committed to professional development. They ensure that staff are well equipped to deliver high-quality provision. The professional learning offer is comprehensive and responsive. It is informed by school priorities, staff voice and pupils' emerging needs. Peer observation has a meaningful impact on teaching. Staff are empowered to refine their practice through professional dialogue and personalised objectives. This ultimately strengthens outcomes for pupils.

Leaders build productive relationships with parents and carers, professionals and the wider community. They continue to strengthen their communication as the school develops so that all stakeholders understand the school's work. Leaders ensure that staff are supported well. Workload and wellbeing are prioritised. Discrimination is not tolerated and everyone is treated equally. Opportunities for ongoing training, development and collaboration are encouraged. As a result, staff say that they are proud to work at St John's.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Pupils develop detailed knowledge through the personal development programme. Leaders have designed an extensive programme of teaching and enrichment. It is expertly woven

through the school's ethos, curriculum and wider experiences. Leaders make adjustments and allocate funding appropriately so that all pupils can participate and benefit fully.

Pupils explain how to keep safe, online and offline. They learn how to establish and maintain positive relationships. They develop skills that enable them to cooperate effectively with others. Leaders adapt the personal development programme in response to pupils' needs. For example, teachers deliver additional water safety sessions following reports of increased water-related incidents.

Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing. Pupils learn how to keep mentally and physically healthy. The school's walk and talk initiative provides pupils with the opportunity to build relationships with their peers. Pupils' mental health is supported through universal strategies, such as worry sharing and circle time. Leaders identify pupils who require additional pastoral support quickly. Interventions are timely. Many pupils benefit from therapeutic interventions, such as emotional literacy support and the visiting therapy dog.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities, day trips and residential. The pupil passport scheme ensures that pupils take part in a broad range of experiences before they leave primary school. Pupils in reception visit a farm. Pupils in Year 6 watch a sunset and learn how to write and deliver a speech. Pupil voice and leadership opportunities are encouraged. Pupils benefit from being house captains, playground buddies and members of the school council.

Fundamental British values are embedded. Pupils behave with integrity and respect. They develop secure moral values. Pupils are highly inclusive and show pride in differences. Pupils explain how adaptations enable them and their peers to thrive. Consequently, pupils say that they feel included, supported and proud to belong at St John's. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

Pupils are confident and happy at St John's. They arrive at school enthusiastically and they are greeted warmly by staff, who care about them. Pupils build positive and constructive relationships with staff and their peers. As a result, pupils feel they belong here. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend school regularly. Few pupils are persistently absent. Pupils who need additional support to attend more regularly get the help they need.

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. Teaching is of a high quality, consistently. Staff model learning clearly and pupils have purposeful opportunities to practise their skills. Pupils learn to communicate well. They are introduced to ambitious vocabulary from an early age. Pupils become increasingly independent in their learning. The youngest children navigate the early years environment with confidence. They focus intently on their learning. Pupils achieve well. They make steady progress from their starting points. Pupils' outcomes in national tests are to be celebrated.

Pupils behave well. They are respectful and polite. Pupils listen carefully during lessons. They are self-disciplined and dedicated to their learning. Pupils play together successfully

during social times. They notice if someone needs a friend to play with and they invite them to join their games. Pupils say that bullying happens rarely at St John's. They say that when pupils have disagreements, adults resolve problems quickly. Pupils know who they can go to for help. They feel confident to do so.

Pupils benefit from an extensive personal development programme. It is adapted to respond to pupils' needs. Pupils learn how to keep safe, online and offline. They know how to take care of their physical and mental health. Pupils engage in a wide range of enrichment activities through the school's pupil passport initiative. Pupils learn to be tolerant and empathetic. They are highly respectful of differences. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for their next steps and life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to respond to the changing circumstances and needs of the school community so that high standards are maintained across all areas, including pupil behaviour.
 - Leaders should continue to enhance their communication with all stakeholders so that there is a shared understanding of all aspects of the school's work.
 - Leaders should continue to embed carefully tailored approaches to personal development and wellbeing, such as the pupil passport, so that impact can be sustained and contribute towards trust-wide development.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sulina Piesse, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Mill.

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 senior leaders during the inspection. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, local governing board and diocese, pupils, staff and parents.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection was in May 2019.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

At the time of the inspection, there were 214 pupils on roll.

Lead inspector:

Anneka Fisher, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Kimberley Kemp, Ofsted Inspector

Ian Elkington, 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

201

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

270

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)

6.47%

Well 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

1.49%

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

17.91%

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

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).

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	75%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	68%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	60%	Above

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	89%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	90%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	91%	73%	Above

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	82%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	83%	71%	Above

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	86%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	90%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

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		62%	
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

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		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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%	
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

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		78%	
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

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		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.9%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.7%	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 (3 term)	7.8%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	8.7%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.2%	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.

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