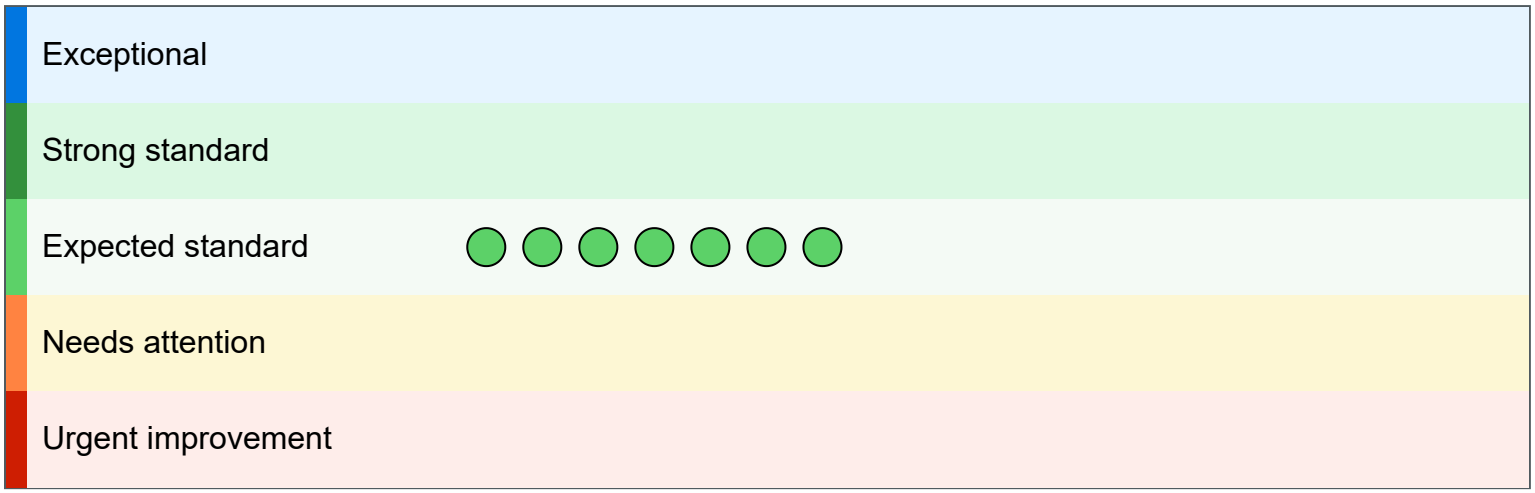
# Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery School

**Address:** Marlborough Road, Great Bradfords Estate, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9LW

**Unique reference number (URN):** 114989

# Inspection report: 22 September 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**

Most pupils learn phonics successfully. This begins in the early years. Pupils gain the confidence to read simple words with increasing fluency. The proportion of pupils meeting the standards expected in phonics by the end of Year 1 is consistently in line with the national figure. Generally, pupils develop secure spelling and handwriting skills and recall number facts accurately and fluently.

Pupils also progress well in other areas of the curriculum. Typically, pupils learn new and important words linked to their learning. The quality of pupils' work demonstrates how well they achieve. Pupils are also keen to share the knowledge they remember from their learning. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well from their varied starting points.

Some pupils produce work of the high standards that leaders have set. However, this does not happen consistently across all classes and subjects. Nevertheless, leaders ensure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to move successfully to junior school.

## Attendance and behaviour

**Expected standard**

Leaders have systems to track pupils' attendance and monitor absence closely. They use this information to provide appropriate support, so that pupils' individual barriers to attendance are generally reduced or removed. This includes support from a home-school liaison officer. When appropriate, leaders challenge parents and carers about their children's absence. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving over time. Most pupils attend school regularly, with attendance similar to that of pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also attend school regularly.

Pupils understand the school's expectations for behaviour. They typically demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Classrooms are generally calm and purposeful, enabling pupils to focus on their learning. Pupils work independently and collaboratively, responding well to the clear routines and expectations that staff establish from the early years. In the dining hall, pupils behave well, creating a calm and orderly environment. Pupils usually play safely and respectfully with others during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They know that bullying is rare and that adults address any behaviour concerns effectively. Leaders provide effective support for pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour and emotions. This helps pupils to feel safe and be safe. Adaptations support pupils' engagement and concentration effectively.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Expected standard**

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum that is structured so that pupils build securely on what they already know and can do. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is generally taught well across the school.

From the early years, staff prioritise the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils learn to read well because staff teach phonics in a clear and well-structured way. Staff provide additional support for pupils who fall behind with reading. This helps them catch up quickly and gain confidence. Teaching ensures that pupils learn to use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and apply it in different contexts.

Teaching is generally effective. Typically, teachers use resources, modelling and explanations well to help pupils remember important knowledge. Generally, teachers make effective use of resources and adaptations to support pupils' learning. Alongside clear routines, these resources and adaptations help pupils to learn well. Support staff usually contribute positively to learning, both in class and in small group work.

Leaders recognise that some aspects of teaching need to be more consistently effective. Leaders know that expectations of pupils' written work vary between classes, which means pupils do not always produce work of consistently high quality. They are addressing these issues through targeted training and regular checks on teaching.

## Early years

**Expected standard**

The Nursery and Reception give children a nurturing and effective start to school. Staff create a calm, purposeful and welcoming environment. They use clear routines that enable children to settle quickly and feel safe. Over time, children grow in confidence.

Staff build positive and trusting relationships with parents and carers. This helps them gain a clear understanding of children's starting points. Staff plan learning with care. They provide high-quality activities that build children's knowledge and understanding. Staff support children to make choices, take informed risks and develop their independence. They provide children with a broad range of experiences that help them to understand the world around them. Staff thoughtfully adapt activities for individual children when needed, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged.

Staff support children's communication and language well by modelling precise vocabulary, extending children's responses and revisiting key language. Reading is a priority from the beginning. Staff teach phonics consistently well.

Leaders have established an effective curriculum in the early years that prepares children well for their next stage of education. As a result, children, including those who are disadvantaged and children with SEND, develop the knowledge and skills they need for their learning in Year 1.

## Inclusion

**Expected standard**

Leaders prioritise pupils' sense of belonging. Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately, whether they join in the early years or later. Leaders provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with support that generally helps to reduce their barriers to learning. Staff have the expertise needed to use specific resources and provide additional support to meet pupils' needs. Typically, pupils with SEND progress well from their starting points.

Leaders use pupil premium funding carefully to meet disadvantaged pupils' differing needs. They use the funding to provide additional support for learning or emotional well-being where pupils need it. Overall, the use of this funding is effective. As a result, disadvantaged pupils often achieve well in their learning. Occasionally, staff do not tailor support closely enough to some pupils' individual needs. As a result, these pupils sometimes do not make as much progress as they could. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils have full access to the wider experiences the school offers.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language learn well. Staff systematically teach the vocabulary that pupils at the early stages of speaking English need to understand and talk about their learning. Leaders' strong focus on developing pupils' spoken language supports these pupils effectively.

## Leadership and governance

**Expected standard**

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school: 'Through challenge, fun and friendship, we are the best we can be.' Governors and school leaders understand the school's context and the needs of its pupils. They use this knowledge to make strategic decisions, such as how best to use the school's budget. Leaders foster effective relationships with parents and carers. These relationships help to ensure that pupils receive effective support.

Leaders refine how they evaluate the impact of their actions and identify priorities for further improvement. They make decisions in pupils' best interests. Leaders secure improvements to their inclusive practice and the design and implementation of the curriculum.

Leaders promote staff's professional learning. They provide staff with the training they need to develop their expertise. For example, leaders, teachers and other staff have the knowledge to teach phonics effectively. Leaders and staff benefit from collaboration with the local authority and external advisers. This enables them to learn from effective practice and from others. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders treat them fairly and with respect.

Governors know the school's improvement priorities and bring appropriate knowledge and skills to their role. They meet their statutory duties. Governors hold leaders fully to account for their actions, including in relation to safeguarding and pupils' achievement. This provides leaders with effective support and challenge.

## Personal development and wellbeing

**Expected standard**

Leaders have designed a comprehensive personal development programme. They ensure that this programme reflects the school's context and meets pupils' needs.
Pupils benefit from regular personal development lessons. Leaders build further opportunities into the wider curriculum. For example, teachers use carefully chosen books to help pupils explore age-appropriate themes, such as friendship and loneliness. Leaders set out a clear programme of assemblies. These help pupils to understand the school's values. Pupils learn about values like equality and diversity in an age-appropriate way. They understand that everyone should be treated with respect. They learn that families take many

different forms. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in their local community and online.

Leaders ensure that any pupils who need it receive effective support for their wellbeing. From the early years, staff teach children to recognise and manage their emotions and develop strategies that help them.

Pupils take pride in the roles and responsibilities that they hold, such as being school councillors. These opportunities help pupils to develop confidence and leadership skills. Pupils develop an understanding of democracy through opportunities to vote and make decisions, for example, when using polling booths to vote for the playground equipment they would like the school to provide. Pupils value belonging to one of the school's five teams. This helps them to learn how to cooperate with others and contribute to their school community.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities that enrich pupils' experiences beyond the classroom. Pupils take part in clubs, including choir, drama and a range of sports. These opportunities help pupils to develop their interests and talents. Leaders monitor pupils' participation in clubs and other activities. They take appropriate action so that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from these opportunities. Educational visits, such as those to the local library, places of worship and a farm, broaden pupils' experiences and help them to understand the wider world. As a result, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education and for their future lives.

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

Pupils are happy, proud and independent. They settle into school quickly at the start of each day and show enthusiasm for the day ahead. In the early years, children receive a warm welcome from staff that helps them to feel settled and secure. Typically, pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to attend school regularly. Most pupils do so.

Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to share their ideas and talk enthusiastically about their learning. Pupils who need additional or adapted teaching and support receive the help they need to learn well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Staff support pupils who speak English as an additional language effectively. Most pupils achieve well. They secure the knowledge and skills they need for their move to junior school by the end of Year 2.

Pupils benefit from opportunities beyond the classroom, including trips out of school and visits from people who share their experiences and expertise. These opportunities develop pupils' interests, broaden their horizons and support their personal development well.

Pupils understand the school's rules and routines. They usually follow them successfully. For example, in the early years, children share resources and treat them with care. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that staff deal with any bullying or unkindness quickly and effectively. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. Children in the Nursery and Reception Year know how to use the climbing equipment safely, for example.

Pupils belong to an inclusive community. Pupils participate fully in school life. Staff know pupils well. They tailor pastoral support carefully to pupils' individual needs. Parents and carers speak positively about the care and compassion that staff show to pupils. They value the caring community that leaders and staff create.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching consistently enables pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to produce work of a high standard.
- Leaders should ensure that support staff consistently provide well-targeted support that develops pupils’ knowledge and skills, particularly in writing.
- Leaders should continue to refine their use of monitoring information to evaluate the impact of their actions and identify priorities for further improvement, particularly in relation to inclusion.

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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Barry Crawford.

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.

The inspection took place from 22 to 23 September 2026.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority, the chair of governors and other members of the governing board during the inspection.

Inspectors visited lessons to look at pupils' work and the curriculum and to speak with pupils about their learning and wider school activities. Inspectors also spoke to pupils at social times and met with groups of pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

The school runs an on-site nursery for 3-year-old children.

The school runs a breakfast club managed by the school.

At the time of the inspection there were 227 pupils on roll.

Headteacher: Lisa Dale

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

**Team inspectors:**
Susan Sutton, Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Shadbolt, 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 22 September 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**269**
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: 268

### 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)**

## 19.75%
Close to average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

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

## 3.35%
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: 4.1%

**Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

## 11.90%
Below average

**What does this mean?**

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

National average: 15%

**Location deprivation**

## Close to 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)** | 5.6% | 5.2% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 6.4% | 5.5% | Above |
| **2022/23 (3 term)** | 6.9% | 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)** | 15.1% | 13.0% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 22.5% | 14.6% | Above |
| **2022/23 (3 term)** | 21.5% | 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.

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