

Watchfield Primary School

Address: North Street, Watchfield, Watchfield, Wiltshire, SN6 8SD

Unique reference number (URN): 140301

Inspection report: 20 January 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders track and analyse pupils' attendance rates closely. They have a clear understanding of the barriers faced by pupils in this highly mobile community. They work well with families and external agencies to address these challenges. This includes for disadvantaged pupils, newly arrived pupils and those from military families. Some pupils have had a lot of absence. While this is the case, leaders now have a well-considered, targeted approach to helping pupils attend school routinely. As a result, numbers with high absence have fallen. Staff appropriately adapt support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to support their attendance.

Leaders prioritise building warm and fair relationships with pupils, which underpins the schools' behaviour management approach. This is reinforced by leaders emphasis on developing pupils' sense of belonging. Leaders draw effectively on external expertise to support the implementation of consistent behaviour management strategies. This has led to a marked reduction in serious incidents over time. Leaders deal with bullying and discrimination swiftly. Suspensions are used appropriately. Numbers of these have declined. Pupils typically behave well. The environment is generally calm. However, on occasion leaders' expectations are not applied and low-level behaviours are not addressed as quickly as they could. This is particularly regarding routines. Now and again this leads to some pupils losing focus on their learning. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning can vary. A few do not experience a consistently orderly environment.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately. They draw on a secure understanding of the school's high pupil mobility and the needs of some groups of pupils. Clear systems and processes enable staff to recognise pupils' needs. This includes pupils who are new to the country and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff use this insight to build trusting relationships with pupils and families. Those who face the greatest barriers feel known and that they belong.

The support in place typically reduces barriers to wellbeing. Leaders support the welfare of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils successfully. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) generally get the help they require. Provision for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans is carefully considered. Leaders plan this provision in detail and review the effectiveness of adaptations to learning. Where needed, they increase the level of support. More tailored teaching, out of the classroom, helps pupils at the early stages of English to access learning more confidently.

Staff receive relevant training to put in place leaders' inclusive approach. Leaders seek specialist advice where appropriate. However, some approaches are not fully embedded, including consistent use of resources and maintaining ambitious expectations, which means learning is not always adapted as well as it could be. This includes for pupils who face barriers, such as those with SEND. As a result, the quality of some pupils' work is not as high as it might be.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's context, strengths and areas for development. They have acted decisively to address the most pressing priorities. They have restructured leadership roles and refined systems. This means improvement work is sharply focused. Leaders' actions are beginning to make a measurable difference. Attainment in writing has strengthened. Last year's key stage 2 outcomes showed a significant rise. Improvements in attendance, reductions in suspensions and greater consistency in staff's application of behaviour expectations demonstrate the impact of leaders' work.

Governance fulfils statutory responsibilities. Governors provide informed support and challenge to hold leaders to account. Governors and trustees work with leaders to match strategy with the needs of the highly mobile community. They ensure that resources are deployed in the best interests of pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and others who face barriers. Leaders ensure that the pace of improvement is appropriate. They consider staff workload and wellbeing carefully.

Leaders understand the circumstances of pupils who join throughout the year. This includes many from service families or families new to the school and local community. Rigorous early assessment procedures enable staff to identify new pupils' educational and emotional needs promptly. This allows staff to plan appropriate provision so pupils feel safe and settle quickly.

A programme of professional learning supports leaders' ambitions. For example, leaders use coaching well to improve practice. Staff value the clearer guidance now in place. However, refinements to teaching and curriculum implementation are not embedded consistently.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a coherent, age-appropriate programme of personal development. It is embedded across the curriculum and wider opportunities. Pupils follow an appropriate personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. This develops their understanding of relationships, health and online safety. Leaders engage parents and carers proactively. The school ensures materials are accessible. This includes for pupils and families who are new to English. Assemblies, inclusive religious education and the school's music-rich provision contribute effectively to the programme. Pupils develop their understanding of important content. For example, pupils learn about fundamental British values. They speak confidently about respecting difference, preventing bullying and showing kindness. Pupils take pride in belonging to a diverse, highly mobile community.

The wide array of experiences available to pupils broadens and nurtures their talents and interests. Events such as 'Arts Week' help pupils develop confidence, independence and citizenship. Opportunities for performance, visits, visitors and leadership roles extend this further. Leaders track participation carefully. They fund places to ensure disadvantaged pupils can access clubs and activities. They are quick to spot when pupils are not participating or when they would benefit from a particular activity. They take targeted action so pupils experience a wide and balanced enrichment offer. Pupils know how to make healthy choices. They build resilience. Pupils contribute positively to the school and local community.

Pastoral provision is effective. A specialist team delivers well-considered support. Staff provide tailored interventions for pupils who have experienced instability or conflict. Provision helps pupils feel connected and fosters belonging, for example the lunchtime nurture groups and groups for service families. Reflective workshops with local partners further promote wellbeing. Pupils know how to seek help. They can identify trusted adults and understand how to keep themselves safe both online and offline. Leaders check the impact of the provision, checking in with pupils as part of these reviews. This ensures the programme continues to reflect the needs of pupils in the school.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has not been as high as it should be over time. Outcomes in national curriculum tests in 2025 show improvement, particularly in writing. However, this is not consistent across key stages and subjects. Disadvantaged pupils continue to have gaps in important knowledge. These are not consistently addressed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not consistently make the progress needed to keep pace with the curriculum.

Some pupils do not build on what they know successfully enough. This is due to variability in how well staff deliver the curriculum. Leaders have taken appropriate action to strengthen teaching and tackle gaps in pupils learning. However, this work is at an early stage and has not yet led to sustained improvement. Consequently, too many pupils are not securely prepared for their next stage of learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Some pupils do not develop the essential knowledge they need in early reading and mathematics rapidly enough. This is because key elements of teaching are implemented inconsistently. For example, paired reading routines in key stage 1 are not reliably established. Adaptations to teaching that are intended to help all pupils keep up are not carried out consistently. As a result, some pupils are unable to apply their knowledge of letter sounds securely in order to read words confidently. In mathematics, some aspects of teaching are variable. For example, not all staff use equipment to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. This means pupils are not always learning fully because they do not consistently get the help they need to understand things well.

Some pupils struggle to grasp key learning at important points in lessons, particularly pupils with additional needs or who are at the early stages of learning English. Sometimes, adaptations to teaching for these pupils are effective, for example resources that assist and guide their learning. However, these strategies are not used widely across the curriculum. This hinders how securely some pupils develop vital knowledge. Leaders have constructed a broad curriculum and are developing staff expertise, deploying them thoughtfully. However, leaders ambitions are not consistently realised in practice.

Children do not benefit from a consistently well-joined-up curriculum in the early years. Some key routines and expectations for children are not embedded well enough. Variability in daily practice means children do not always build knowledge in a secure, sequential way, which hinders the progress they could make. The outdoor environment is also underdeveloped. This limits some opportunities for children to deepen their learning across the curriculum. As a result, some children do not develop the knowledge to secure foundations in order to be fully ready for Year 1.

Leaders have a clear understanding of what should improve. They have begun a phased plan to strengthen provision. Early changes are taking hold. Where leaders have introduced new approaches, these are beginning to have a positive and increasingly consistent impact. Staff promote children's language and vocabulary effectively. Staff implement some focused activities with fidelity, such as 'Drawing Club'. This builds children's fine motor and early writing skills. Leaders prioritise early reading and use a consistent approach to teaching phonics. This learning is matched to children's stage of development and different starting points. Children who need extra help to keep up with the pace of the phonics programme receive targeted support. Leaders' use of assessment is enabling staff to identify gaps in children's learning across the curriculum accurately. Leaders work well with parents to ensure children settle well.

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

Pupils are part of a uniquely diverse and highly mobile community. Many pupils join the school community at different times of the year. Despite this, pupils feel welcomed and that they belong. They build trusting relationships with staff. This helps them settle well into school life. Pupils understand how to stay safe, including online. They seek help from trusted adults when they feel worried.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They take pride in belonging to such a vibrant community. They enjoy a coherent personal development programme. It helps them understand one another, appreciate different cultures and develop resilience. This includes when they move schools or join mid-year. Events such as 'International Week', music-rich assemblies and a wide range of trips help them be included and feel connected with their peers.

Pupils generally behave well. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Pupils appreciate how staff deal with bullying and discrimination quickly and effectively. Social times are inclusive. Some pupils, such as those with particular needs, receive carefully structured pastoral support. This helps them manage their emotions and develop socially.

Not all pupils, however, experience consistently high-quality teaching. Variability in classroom practice means that some pupils do not secure the foundations they need in early reading and mathematics quickly enough. As a result, gaps in essential knowledge slow progress for some pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A minority are not as well prepared for their next stage as leaders intend. Inconsistencies in early years routines and curriculum implementation

limit how securely and sequentially some children build knowledge. This affects children's readiness for Year 1.

Attendance is improving. Pupils understand why being in school matters. Many who previously struggled now attend more regularly because of strong relationships and tailored support.

Next steps

- Leaders should secure consistent implementation of the phonics programme, including reliable key stage 1 paired reading routines, and ensure that the teaching of reading is rigorous and well sequenced.
 - Leaders should continue to reduce variability in teaching and embed their agreed approaches, ensuring that teachers present information clearly and effectively adapt teaching, as necessary.
 - Leaders should embed consistent routines and expectations across early years and strengthen the outdoor environment so that children make connections in learning across the curriculum and secure essential knowledge in readiness for Year 1.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Cambrian Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Cook.

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 head of school, executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENCo, staff and pupils. They met with trust representatives. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer, school improvement partner, a trustee and governors from the local governing committee.

The school also, under the same registration, runs a pre-school for 3- and 4-year-olds.

The school does not use alternative provision.

Head of School: Nick Hatcliffe

Lead inspector:

Ian Howie, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Charlotte Wilson, Ofsted Inspector

Julie Hiddleston, 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

346

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

420

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)

23.40%

Close to 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

3.47%

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

15.03%

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

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).

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	45%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	56%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	26%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	54%	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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	81%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	53%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	29%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	57%	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	67%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	70%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	65%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	24%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	38%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	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	51%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	85%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	23%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	44%	60%	Below

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	29%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	54%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	0%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	58%	Below

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 (revised)	46%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	56%	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	24%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (revised)	38%	69%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	0%	67%	-67 pp
2022/23 (final)	33%	66%	-33 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%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	85%	81%	4 pp
2023/24 (final)	23%	80%	-57 pp
2022/23 (final)	44%	78%	-34 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	29%	78%	-48 pp
2024/25 (revised)	54%	78%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	0%	78%	-78 pp
2022/23 (final)	33%	77%	-44 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 (revised)	46%	81%	-34 pp
2023/24 (final)	38%	79%	-41 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	56%	79%	-24 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 (2 term)	5.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	Close to average
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 (2 term)	18.7%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	16.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	21.8%	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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