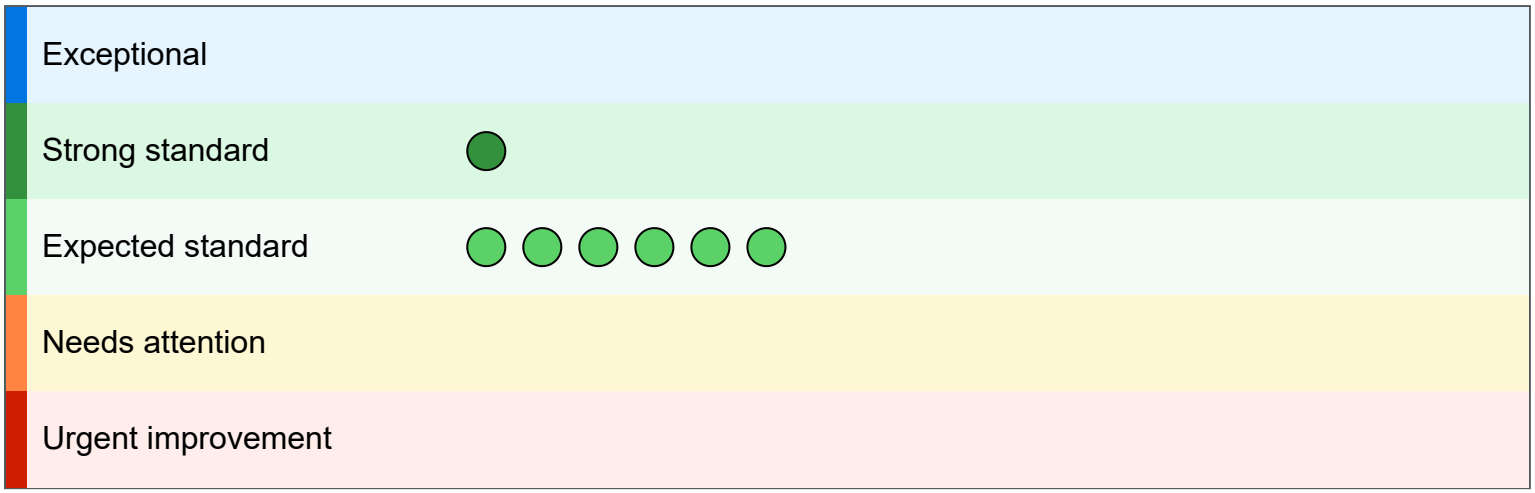
Eastling Primary School

Address: Kettle Hill Road, Eastling, Faversham, Kent, ME13 0BA

Unique reference number (URN): 118336

Inspection report: 13 January 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.

Strong standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities provided by the school. Their rates of attendance are above the national average. Leaders and governors make attendance a priority. The school works highly effectively with families and external agencies, to reduce barriers to regular attendance.

Leaders have extremely high expectations for behaviour that are understood by all. Pupils understand and respect leaders' high expectations, which enables them to demonstrate the school's values consistently well. Staff skilfully apply the school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils are courteous to adults and each other, holding doors open and speaking politely. Pupils know that treating each other with respect and kindness makes their school a happy place to learn. They learn how to take responsibility for their actions, for example, when assessing the risks of active, outdoor play in different weather conditions.

Pupils' attitudes to their learning are extremely positive. They concentrate and focus equally well when learning independently or with peers. Pupils help each other during lessons, discussing their learning and sharing ideas. They play cooperatively at social times. Bullying is extremely rare, but if it happens staff help pupils to address concerns immediately. Pupils who need help get highly effective support to manage their emotions.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve well. A higher proportion of pupils in this school pass the phonics screening check and the multiplication tables check than pupils nationally. By the end of key stage 2, pupils attain well in reading and writing. The school has taken effective action to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics, which in the past had been below national expectations. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, now develop secure knowledge of mathematics. They share this knowledge confidently in lessons and in the work that they produce.

Across a range of subjects, pupils' work demonstrates that they secure appropriate knowledge and skills. They enjoy learning technical vocabulary in, for example, science and history. They use ambitious vocabulary confidently. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well from their starting points. The school supports pupils who are disadvantaged effectively. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The school has developed a broad curriculum that builds in logical order towards ambitious goals. Leaders check how well pupils achieve and refine the curriculum and teaching accordingly. The school provides high-quality training. Staff understand how pupils learn from the Reception Year to the end of key stage 2. This helps them to teach the curriculum

well. Staff model new ideas in ways that pupils can understand. Pupils are confident to contribute during lessons. They benefit from opportunities to practise applying new learning as well as to recall previous learning and make connections with larger ideas. For example, pupils regularly practise their speaking and listening skills. They learn and use subject-specific vocabulary to deepen their understanding.

Staff adapt their teaching so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically build their knowledge well. In the majority of subjects, staff routinely check pupils' understanding. However, at times, teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. When this is the case, pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they could.

Reading is prioritised. Phonics is taught well and pupils learn to read securely. Pupils throughout the school enjoy a wide range of books and acquire ambitious vocabulary. By the end of key stage 2, they typically achieve above national expectations and are ready for secondary school.

Early years

Expected standard

Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers support the successful transition of children into the Reception class. The Reception curriculum is carefully designed so that children master the essential skills and knowledge that they need. The environment is well resourced and helps children to develop their understanding across the curriculum. Pupils choose the materials they need independently and sustain their interest in learning. Staff get to know children and understand the care and support that helps children develop. They identify any barriers to learning and provide highly effective support for those that need it. Any children at risk of falling behind in the curriculum catch up quickly.

The school focuses on communication and language as a priority. Staff teach children to read using the school's phonics programme effectively. Children enjoy reading and they practise early phonics skills as they learn indoors, and through outdoor play. They quickly get to grips with the knowledge they need to read and write. Staff help children to understand and remember ambitious technical vocabulary so that they can apply it in discussions about their learning. Above average proportions of children reach the good level of development. Disadvantaged children, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, get the support they need and are well prepared for transition to Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

The school has careful transition arrangements in place for pupils. This includes visiting pupils in nursery, at home or in previous schools. As soon as pupils start at school, staff get to know them well. Staff swiftly identify pupils’ needs, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school works in partnership with families to develop appropriate support for pupils. Staff have the training and expertise needed to help pupils overcome barriers to learning.

Communication and language development is prioritised. Staff work in tandem with external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to develop effective support for pupils. The school has well-established systems in place to check how well pupils are

progressing. Pupils' support is regularly reviewed, and the provision is adapted so that pupils have the resources and help that they need to achieve personally and academically. Leaders create a culture where all pupils, no matter their barriers to learning, feel welcome.

The school uses pupil premium funding effectively, to ensure that pupils achieve well and feel a sense of belonging at the school. For example, pupils are extremely well supported in how to nurture their emotional wellbeing and resilience. They access a wide range of clubs and activities to develop their talents and interests.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders work closely with governors to create a positive, professional culture, where expectations are high for all. Governors understand their roles and provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. They are well equipped with a range of skills and expertise that benefit the school. Leaders focus the school's resources on areas that benefit pupils most. Leaders and governors broadly understand the school's strengths and areas for development. However, sometimes leaders' evaluations, in relation to curriculum and teaching, for example, lack sharp focus. This means that they are not always able to evaluate precisely how the school's offer could develop even further.

Leaders have established positive relationships throughout the school community. They know children and families very well. The school considers the views of parents, carers and staff, when making changes. When developing policy, leaders are mindful of the impact on staff workload and wellbeing and listen to any concerns. Everyone feels valued and knows that their voices are heard. Leaders provide appropriate training so staff have the skills and expertise they need. Staff are unanimous in their support for the school, and proud to be part of the team.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils' views are valued. They are empowered to make a positive difference in the school community through the school council, the police cadets and many other roles of responsibility. These opportunities help pupils to understand the fundamental British values.

All pupils benefit from extensive opportunities to learn and play outdoors. For example, pupils develop the strength and dexterity needed to master early skills, such as holding a pencil correctly, including through outdoor activities. Pupils build self-confidence and stamina as they socialise and explore in the school's well-developed outdoor play environment.

The personal development programme prepares pupils well for the future, particularly in understanding the risks of online and personal safety. Pupils learn to respect themselves and recognise positive relationships. Older pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of consent both physically and online, such as sharing images. Pupils learn about different families and have an appreciation and respect for different ways of life. Pupils have a secure understanding and know the importance of maintaining their positive physical and mental health.

The school has closely matched the personal development offer to pupils' needs. This particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils. Pupils learn how to stay safe in the local context of the countryside and the coast. They learn to swim and stay safe at the beach. Visits to the farm teach pupils about the risks of farm machinery. Learning to cycle safely on rural roads and using public transport prepares pupils for transition to secondary school.

Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and know the difference between right and wrong. They learn about many religions and beliefs. The school has developed an equitable culture, where pupils respect each other's different views. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and the next stage of their education.

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

Pupils thrive in this school's welcoming and supportive environment. Staff greet pupils and their families warmly each morning. Everyone is made to feel welcome. Pupils rightly trust adults to help with any concerns. Pupils are safe and feel a strong sense of belonging. They attend well.

Pupils enjoy learning and relish frequent opportunities to learn outdoors. The curriculum is enhanced through trips and activities, such as visits to museums, the seaside and the farm. Pupils enjoy wider opportunities that help them to understand the curriculum more deeply. The well-designed outdoor environment helps pupils to build social skills, resilience and confidence.

Staff swiftly identify any barriers that children may face. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well from their starting points. Leaders recognise that in the past, pupils have not achieved as well as they should in mathematics. They have refined the mathematics curriculum and teaching, and this has had a positive impact on current pupils' achievement. By the end of their time at the school, pupils read and write above national expectations and are ready to move on to secondary school. The curriculum is well taught, however, in some subjects, staff do not consistently check that all pupils understand the learning, before moving on to more difficult ideas.

Pupils embrace the school's high expectations for behaviour. Pupils focus well during lessons and conduct themselves calmly, considerately and responsibly around the school. Staff act as highly professional role models for the school's values. Pupils treat everyone equally and kindly. Bullying is not tolerated and hardly ever happens. If there are any behaviour concerns, staff address them swiftly.

Next steps

• Staff should consistently check for understanding during lessons and ensure that the work pupils are given enables them to progress securely through the curriculum from their starting points.

• Leaders should ensure that they have the information that they need in order to accurately and promptly identify the priorities and related strategies that will have the most impact on pupils.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Nicola Allen.

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, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority during the inspection.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Melanie Dale

Lead inspector:
Jo Brinkley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Mark Rivers, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

105
Well below 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

105
Well below 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)

21.90%
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

0.95%
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

7.62%
Well below 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	61%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	59%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	82%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	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	84%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	82%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	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	64%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	65%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	62%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	64%	73%	Below

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	33%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	67%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	83%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	33%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘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	33%	68%	-34 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	67%	80%	-13 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	83%	78%	6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

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	33%	80%	-46 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘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 (2 term)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.8%	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 (2 term)	7.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	12.4%	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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