

# Walton-on-the-Hill Primary School

Address: Walton Street, KT20 7RR

Unique reference number (URN): 124939

## 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.

## Strong standard ●

### Early years

Strong standard ●

Children in the Reception Year feel safe, welcome and valued. They settle quickly because staff build positive relationships and establish clear routines. These routines help children to behave confidently, become more independent and transition smoothly into key stage 1. Staff interact skilfully with children to develop their communication skills. They model language purposefully through songs, stories and skilful questioning. This enables children to explain their thinking and use increasingly ambitious vocabulary.

The curriculum is carefully designed. Early mathematics teaching is effective, with misconceptions identified and addressed promptly. There is a clear emphasis on developing secure foundations in communication, language and literacy. Reading is prioritised from the start. Daily phonics teaching and regular opportunities to practise with closely matched texts help children to apply their learning confidently. Staff successfully encourage a love of reading. Children recall stories, recognise favourite authors and join in enthusiastically with rhymes. Well-embedded routines support children to focus, remember sounds and apply new vocabulary securely.

Leaders understand children's starting points well and adapt provision effectively. Swift support is provided for children who need additional help, including those with speech and language needs, while maintaining high expectations for all. Partnerships with parents and carers are well developed and support smooth transitions.

### Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders are determined that all pupils in this school have fair access to education. In recent years, the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has increased. This includes a significant rise in pupils with an education, health and care plan. Leaders have responded robustly to these changes in the school context. They have developed effective systems to identify both emerging and changing needs promptly. This benefits pupils with SEND and those who face other barriers to learning.

Leaders take a clear and step-by-step approach to meeting pupils' needs. They carefully track the progress of all groups of pupils. This enables them to review the impact of the support provided and make informed decisions about next steps. Staff develop their skills through purposeful professional learning. They support pupils to achieve well.

Leaders work constructively with external professionals and develop very positive relationships with pupils' parents and carers. Parents are highly positive about the support their children receive in school. Leaders' evidence-based approach to using the pupil premium funding benefits pupils eligible for this funding. Where alternative provision is used, it is suitable and regularly reviewed. Leaders take full responsibility for pupils' education and welfare.

## Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's personal development and wellbeing programme is carefully planned and well matched to the needs of pupils and the school's context. It makes a highly positive contribution to pupils' readiness for the next stage of education and for life beyond school. Staff are trained to confidently deliver the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Leaders strengthen this further through assemblies, external visitors and targeted programmes. Barriers to participation are removed so that disadvantaged pupils can access enrichment opportunities alongside their peers.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They explain democracy as everyone having a fair vote and know that new laws are voted on in parliament by MPs and the prime minister. Leaders use events such as general elections effectively to bring learning to life. Pupils also understand that democratic systems differ between countries. They can discuss wider issues, such as unequal access to education for girls in some parts of the world.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported. Through PSHE, religious education (RE) and assemblies, pupils learn to respect others, reflect on their own beliefs and value difference. They confidently engage in discussion, listen to different viewpoints and show tolerance and empathy. Leaders further enhance this by inviting parents to share their cultures. Pupils are excited about an upcoming trip to a Hindu temple. They explain how learning about different religions in RE helps them to be welcoming and respectful to all.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They understand the risks linked to smoking and drug use and how this learning supports healthy choices. Wellbeing is monitored carefully. Pupils learn practical strategies to support their self-esteem, including talking about worries and understanding the potential impact of mobile phones and social media.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well here. This is seen in both their day-to-day learning and their performance in statutory assessments. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain very well in national tests. Over time, significantly more pupils than the national average meet the expected and higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils typically achieve better in this school compared to disadvantaged pupils nationally.

On the whole, pupils remember their learning well. Many recall what they have learned before and make links to new learning. For example, some pupils explained how buildings from Mayan times compared with Roman structures. However, at times, pupils find it harder

to talk about their learning in wider curriculum subjects. In some subjects, pupils do not produce work of the same high quality as in their reading, writing and mathematics lessons.

## **Attendance and behaviour**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders place a high focus on attendance and monitor it closely. They frequently promote good attendance with pupils and their families. Overall, attendance is typically in line with national averages. In the previous academic year, the number of pupils who missed school more regularly increased. This was particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In response, leaders strengthened their work with parents and carers to remove barriers to regular attendance. Leaders' actions are having a positive impact on attendance for these key groups, as well as across the whole school.

Behaviour across the school is a clear strength. Pupils develop warm and cooperative relationships with one another and with staff. They arrive at school happily and settle quickly into their learning. Pupils enjoy talking about their work and take pride in what they do. This helps to create a calm, positive and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are respectful of each other and say that they can usually resolve disagreements themselves.

Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. Even so, leaders maintain a strong focus on tracking behaviour. Staff consistently apply clear expectations and provide appropriate support so that all pupils are helped to meet these high standards.

## **Curriculum and teaching**

**Expected standard** 

The school's curriculum is broad and well structured, starting in the early years. It gives staff and pupils a clear understanding of what is taught and when. Leaders gather clear and varied evidence to check the quality of the curriculum. This includes an increased focus on gathering pupils' views about their learning.

Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure across different subjects. They choose a wide range of suitable activities that help pupils to make progress. Teachers usually use assessment well to check pupils' understanding and identify misconceptions. Staff know pupils well and use this knowledge to adapt teaching. All groups of pupils, including the relatively high number of pupils with an education, health and care plan play an active part in lessons. Where needed, pupils benefit from skilled additional adult support. Pupils receive interventions that are well targeted and help to address gaps in their learning.

Teaching in reading, writing and mathematics supports pupils' spoken and written language development. Teachers use questioning, discussion and clear explanations when delivering the curriculum. Reading is a priority for the school and is taught very well. Handwriting is often a focus in lessons. However, pupils' errors in writing are not always addressed quickly. This limits how securely some pupils develop their writing skills.

Leaders evaluate the school's work with honesty and accuracy. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities, which supports purposeful and well-sequenced improvement planning. Leaders use this evaluation to focus their actions sharply on improving outcomes for pupils.

Leaders show a thoughtful and sustained focus on improving teaching and learning. They ensure that staff benefit from high-quality training opportunities. These are closely aligned to school priorities. For example, leaders have developed the school's agreed approach to teaching, which is known as the 'Walton Walk'. They support staff to use this approach effectively, including through the use of coaching.

Governors have a great deal of experience. They bring useful skills to their work. They keep a clear focus on their strategic role, making sure they do not repeat the work of leaders. Instead, they provide effective challenge and support, holding leaders to account for the impact of their actions. As a result, governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well, including those related to safeguarding.

Leaders are mindful of the challenges posed by the school's small size and the pressure this places on resources. They draw on relevant research to inform decision-making. They actively seek ways to strengthen provision further, including exploring partnerships with local organisations.

Staff appreciate that leaders are considerate of their workload and wellbeing. They feel valued and supported. In turn, staff are highly supportive of leaders and have trust in the school's vision and direction. Parents and carers are also extremely positive about leaders. They describe the school as welcoming, inclusive and emotionally supportive.

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

Pupils speak with real pride about the school's values of belong, learn and shine and about what makes their school special. Even the youngest children in the early years talk confidently about belonging and about the things they enjoy at school. A conversation with a small group of pupils in the playground quickly grows as more pupils flock to join in, eager to share their ideas.

Pupils feel known and cared for. They are delighted that senior leaders know them by name and greet them warmly each morning. Pupils describe the school as calm and friendly. They know that adults respond quickly to any infrequent incidents of unkindness. Pupils show consistently positive behaviour in classrooms, at playtimes and when they learn with different members of staff. Pupils say this helps them feel safe and ready to learn.

Older pupils act as confident role models, such as when they lead singing in whole-school assemblies. Clear routines are evident as each class stands to sing with pride. Pupils enjoy seeing staff join in too. They also value wider chances to perform, including for the school community in the local village hall.

Pupils learn with enthusiasm, both in and out of the classroom. Outdoor learning sessions support the curriculum for all age groups, such as when pupils use compasses for orienteering. Trips add further richness to learning. For example, Year 6 pupils explained how a recent educational visit helped make their writing more vivid. Pupils understand that regular attendance is important because 'every minute matters'. They know that each day at school brings new learning that prepares them well for the future.

Pupils benefit from an impressive enrichment offer. A wide range of clubs, sports and performance opportunities helps pupils develop their talents and interests. Leaders track participation carefully to make sure that all groups of pupils can benefit.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure consistent implementation of the handwriting curriculum across year groups and that staff routinely identify and address errors, so pupils embed early writing skills securely.
  - Leaders should continue to focus sharply on attendance, sustaining and refining actions to reduce persistent absence for key groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the governing body in this school is Sarah Asher.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority and spoke with pupils and parents and carers.

A number of new staff have been appointed since the previous inspection. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2025.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Richard Laing

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### Lead inspector:

Katie Hancock, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Owen McColgan, Ofsted Inspector

Gillian Lovatt-Young, 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

**205**

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

**210**

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)

**6.83%**

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

**3.90%**

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

**20.00%**

## Above 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	76%	61%	Above
2024/25	79%	62%	Above
2023/24	69%	61%	Above
2022/23	79%	60%	Above

### Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	87%	74%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	93%	75%	Above
<b>2023/24</b>	90%	74%	Above
<b>2022/23</b>	79%	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	87%	72%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	93%	72%	Above
<b>2023/24</b>	83%	72%	Above
<b>2022/23</b>	86%	71%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	86%	73%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	82%	74%	Above
<b>2023/24</b>	83%	73%	Above
<b>2022/23</b>	93%	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	44%	46%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	S	47%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	46%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	62%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	S	63%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	62%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	78%	59%	Above
<b>2024/25</b>	S	59%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	58%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	56%	60%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	S	61%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	59%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	44%	68%	-23 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	S	69%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	67%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	80%	9 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	S	81%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	80%	S
<b>2022/23</b>	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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	78%	78%	0 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	S	78%	S
<b>2023/24</b>	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	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
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	56%	80%	-24 pp
2024/25	S	81%	S
2023/24	S	79%	S
2022/23	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 terms)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23	4.7%	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 (2 terms)	9.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24	9.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23	9.8%	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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