

Surlingham Primary School

Address: Walnut Hill, Surlingham, Rockland St Mary Primary School, Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 7DQ

Unique reference number (URN): 144973

Inspection report: 7 July 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 achieve highly. This is reflected by published outcomes in national tests. Pupils secure and use key reading knowledge. They develop into fluent readers. High-quality teaching helps pupils transition this reading knowledge into writing. Pupils learn how to spell accurately. Where pupils show signs of falling behind, they are expertly helped to keep up.

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve a deep understanding across a wide range of subjects. They draw knowledge from across the curriculum to construct thoughtful and considered responses. They develop a rich lexicon of subject-specific language. This adds a layer of richness and depth to their writing. Pupils become highly effective mathematicians. They confidently apply mathematical concepts to a range of different situations. This helps them to reason solutions to difficult problems.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are extremely well prepared for the challenges of a secondary school curriculum.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

All staff consistently reinforce how important it is to attend school. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are eager to learn. As a result, pupils attend school regularly. Leaders use their knowledge of pupils to check on their attendance. Leaders swiftly intervene if there is a risk that pupils' attendance becomes too low. Recently, a number of pupils have joined the school with lower rates of attendance. Leaders have implemented carefully considered plans to support these pupils to overcome their barriers to regular attendance. Consequently, the attendance for these pupils has risen since they joined the school.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are polite and engaging. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. These are rooted in the school's values and modelled consistently by all staff. This helps pupils learn how to meet these high expectations. Children in the early years quickly learn important learning routines. These routines mature into highly positive learning behaviours and habits. Learning is rarely disrupted. If they are needed, staff interventions are swift, consistent and fair. At social times, pupils eat and play together considerately. They respect each other's space. Older pupils are role models for younger pupils. They make sure nobody is left out. Pupils possess an unwavering sense of respect and kindness. This self-determination to ensure everyone is welcomed and included means bullying is rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a broad, ambitious curriculum. It provides pupils with the knowledge they need for their next steps, while maintaining a sense of local relevance. Leaders have a rich insight into the curriculum and how it is taught. They use this to maintain the highest standards of teaching.

Leaders ensure that teachers have a deep understanding of subject knowledge. This helps

teachers explain new ideas with clarity. The teaching of new content is logically ordered. This enables teaching to help pupils link new knowledge to what they already know. Teachers ask questions that probe pupils' understanding, while at the same time deepening their thinking. Teachers use these checks to spot misconceptions in pupils' knowledge. These are swiftly addressed.

Reading, writing and mathematics are foundations of the curriculum. From the very beginning of the early years, children learn the sounds letters make. High-quality phonics teaching helps pupils blend these sounds into words and sentences. Pupils become confident, fluent readers who develop a passion for books and stories. Teaching helps pupils understand and use subject-specific vocabulary. Similarly, starting in the early years, pupils learn important mathematical concepts. Over time, teaching develops the complexity of these ideas and how to apply them to solve problems.

Early years

Strong standard 

Children in the early years get off to a flying start. Leaders ensure that the transition into the school is smooth and supportive. Children quickly learn important routines. They settle into learning. During play, they share and take turns. They thrive in a safe, happy environment.

The curriculum is ambitious. The cornerstone of the curriculum is communication and language. Children learn the basics of reading as soon as they start. They secure key phonics knowledge. They put this into good practice as they increase their reading fluency. Teaching supports children to learn the core elements of writing proficiency. They learn effective pencil grips and develop excellent fine motor skills. If children need additional support, this is swiftly provided. Consequently, children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make excellent progress from their starting points.

Play activities complement children's formal learning. They provide children with the opportunity to practice and embed key knowledge. Staff are highly knowledgeable and skilled. They know when to interject and when to leave children to their own devices. Interactions are highly effective. They help children learn and use important vocabulary. There are strong partnerships with parents and carers. This means that parents have an up-to-date understanding of what their children are learning and how to support this at home. By the end of the early years, children are ready and excellently prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders accurately diagnose the needs of pupils. Leaders analyse a wide range of information. This includes pupils' academic, social and emotional needs and their backgrounds. Leaders draw in expertise from external agencies, when it is appropriate. They listen to the voices of pupils and their families. As a result, leaders identify the precise barriers that hinder pupils' personal or academic progress. This leads to the development of carefully considered strategies. These approaches successfully support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff know pupils very well. They use this information, alongside their teaching expertise, to adapt their approaches. Consequently, teaching supports pupils with SEND to access the

curriculum. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress from their starting points. Leaders use the pupil premium funding well. They ensure that disadvantaged pupils do not miss out. Leaders make sensitive and subtle adjustments. These help disadvantaged pupils achieve highly and enjoy life-defining experiences alongside their peers.

Leaders routinely check on the impact of their strategies. They monitor the progress of vulnerable pupils. Where necessary, leaders make alterations to accommodate any new or changing needs of pupils. This means that pupils' specific challenges are successfully tackled. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils flourish.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders know their school and community extremely well. There is a clear vision rooted in the best interests of all pupils. All staff understand and work tirelessly to successfully make this vision a reality. Leaders routinely measure the impact of their improvement actions. They pay particular regard to how they support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders make regular assessments of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. This helps leaders design professional development programmes. These target the most important areas for improvement. As a result, the outcomes of leaders' actions make a positive impact on pupils' learning and lives.

Trustees possess high levels of experience and expertise. This helps them provide leaders, including trust executives, with robust challenge. Trustees meet their statutory responsibilities, including ensuring pupils are safe.

Trustees, trust leaders and school leaders understand the pressures of working in a small school. Staff appreciate how leaders ensure that they have a positive work–life balance. Staff feel valued. They know that leaders listen to their views when making strategic decisions. They enjoy how access to trust networks, as part of their professional development, continues to build their expertise. This includes how best to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. They value the role the school plays at the heart of village life. As one parent commented, reflective of the views of many, 'This wonderful little school is vibrant with happiness, opportunity, and rich experiences to thrive. Dedicated teachers and supportive parents foster a culture that lives and breathes the school values.'

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development programme is carefully crafted to support pupils to prepare for life in modern Britain. Leaders have designed a series of age-appropriate learning activities. This helps pupils develop a deep understanding of the fundamental values important in society. Pupils know the importance of respecting difference and being tolerant. They value diversity and welcome each other for who they are. Pupils have a deep respect for the rule of law. Pupils learn that there are some characteristics that are legally protected. They understand why it is important to protect vulnerable people in their community. Children in the early years learn the importance of having good friends. As pupils get older, this develops into how positive, healthy relationships impact on their lives.

Pupils learn about religions different to their own. Visits to different places of worship help them understand these faiths in more detail. Culture weeks provide pupils with opportunities to immerse themselves in cultures from different countries. They learn aspects of the language. They learn about important festivals and how these are celebrated. This helps pupils who are from other countries or communities feel a sense of value and belonging.

Pupils are keen to take on leadership roles. These roles provide pupils with a sense of responsibility. They help pupils see the value of contributing to their community. The school council brings democracy into real life. Counsellors provide pupils with a direct voice to leaders. This has successfully led to the development of the play equipment that all pupils enjoy. The eco-council has successfully developed the garden and pond area. They are working towards national recognition for their work.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits. These are carefully planned to enrich curriculum learning, while making unforgettable memories. These include residential visits and trips to a water park and local sites of historical importance. They provide pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, with a sense of wonderment about the community they live in. They bring theoretical learning alive and help develop wider skills such as team-building.

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

This is a small school with a huge heart. Pupils love coming to school. They value belonging to a caring, compassionate school family. Pupils, and parents and carers, know that staff know them extremely well. This helps pupils to share concerns or worries, confident they will be sensitively addressed. Pupils arrive, eagerly anticipating what experiences they will enjoy at school today. When the gates open, a warm smile from the headteacher greets them. Pupils bound into school, curious to explore the new learning their teachers have prepared for them. Pupils feel safe and valued. They know that their teachers are there to help them achieve their best.

Pupils love learning. From the very beginning of the early years, children are keen to explore the world around them. They study the minibeasts that live in the school pond. Pupils grow crops in the field next to the school. Whatever the activity, pupils excel in achieving their teachers' high expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities flourish because their teachers make highly effective adaptations to their teaching. Pupils attain highly, reflected by their published achievement in national tests.

Pupils are polite, respectful and considerate of others. The school's 'kindness crew' empower other pupils to recognise and celebrate the importance of healthy positive relationships. They have recently been recognised by winning a national award for their work. Consequently, bullying is rare. If pupils experience unkind behaviour, they know staff will deal with it swiftly.

Pupils thrive on the many memorable experiences on offer. Visits to local nature reserves bring their learning of science and geography alive. Pupils' visits to places of worship help

them understand faiths and cultures different to their own. Pupils want to make a positive contribution to their community. They are extremely well prepared for life in modern society.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to build on the strengths of the curriculum and personal development programme to sustain the high standards of teaching to achieve exceptional experiences that have a transformational impact for all pupils.
-

About this inspection

This school is part of Sapientia Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jonathan Taylor OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Rout.

The executive headteacher also oversees one other school.

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 executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, trust CEO and director of primary education, representatives of the trust board, staff, pupils and parents during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any provider of alternative provision.

Executive headteacher: Hannah Boag

Lead inspector:

Dave Gibson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Rachael Judd, 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 7 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

59

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

120

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)

15.25%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

1.69%

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

20.34%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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	73%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	89%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	45%	60%	Below

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	77%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	100%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	45%	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	85%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	89%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	71%	Close to average

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	81%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	89%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	73%	Above
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		46%	
2024/25		47%	
2023/24		46%	
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		62%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25		63%	
2023/24		62%	
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		59%	
2024/25		59%	
2023/24		58%	
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		60%	
2024/25		61%	
2023/24		59%	
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		68%	
2024/25		69%	
2023/24		67%	
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		80%	
2024/25		81%	
2023/24		80%	
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		78%	
2024/25		78%	
2023/24		78%	
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		80%	
2024/25		81%	
2023/24		79%	
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 (3 term)	4.0%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.4%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.1%	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)	5.5%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	9.1%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.1%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright