

Christchurch Infant School

Address: Addiscombe Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2AE

Unique reference number (URN): 150991

Inspection report: 30 June 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

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils typically achieve well. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have the knowledge they need to be ready for their move to junior school. The proportion of pupils passing the phonics screening check is close to what is typical nationally. As a result, the majority of pupils develop the reading skills they need to help them to learn the wider curriculum. In mathematics, staff focus on supporting pupils to develop a confident understanding of number. Staff show pupils what they need to do to be successful mathematicians. This supports pupils to make secure progress from their starting points. Pupils' work typically shows that they have learned the curriculum successfully. However, more work is needed to strengthen the development of pupils' handwriting and spelling across the curriculum.

Children in the early years benefit from a consistent focus on early reading, writing and number. This builds their confidence, knowledge and skills and prepares them well for Year 1.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders have established high expectations for pupils' attendance at school. As a result, pupils attend broadly in line with what is typical nationally. Leaders know their pupils well and work closely with families. They consider individual circumstances and provide tailored support. For example, leaders offer workshops to help parents and carers to establish effective routines at home. Leaders and staff build positive relationships with parents, which strengthens this work. Nonetheless, leaders recognise that there is further work to do to support pupils who miss school frequently to attend more regularly.

Pupils settle quickly in lessons and show they are ready for learning. They feel valued and recognised for following the school's rules and values. Pupils respond well to staff and interact well with each other, including during social times. Pupils feel safe and report that bullying is rare. Staff help pupils to recognise and manage their emotions. As a result, the environment throughout the school is typically calm and focused on learning. Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour are given the support they need to be successful. This ensures that lessons are rarely impacted by instances of low-level disruption.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum is generally sequenced in a way that supports pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. It builds on what they already know and prepares them for what they will learn next. Leaders accurately evaluate how well teachers support pupils to learn the curriculum. As a result, they have made improvements to the teaching of phonics, English and mathematics, in particular. Staff have the expertise they need to teach phonics effectively so that more pupils learn to read fluently.

Teachers use a range of strategies to help pupils to learn, such as showing pupils examples of how they can write effectively. Teachers identify pupils who need extra help, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. They

make changes to the way they teach the curriculum so that pupils receive the support they need quickly. This means that all pupils learn the curriculum successfully. They are proud of their learning and talk confidently about their work.

However, at times, teachers do not recognise early enough when pupils are confident in what they have learned. As a result, some pupils do not move on to new learning quickly enough. This slows the progress that some pupils make.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders place a high priority on ensuring that children get off to a positive start in the early years. Staff have created an inspiring environment to help children to be imaginative and creative. Staff build positive relationships with children and know them well. They welcome children warmly and ensure that they have a calm start to the day. As a result, children feel safe and respond well to the nurturing relationships established by staff.

Leaders ensure a smooth transition for children when they join the early years so that they have a successful start. For example, children who need additional support benefit from extra visits to the school. Staff check early for gaps in children's knowledge so that they can provide the support that they need. Staff use their insight into children's interests to shape their learning. They also make sure that provision is well suited to meet children's social and emotional needs.

Children learn phonics right from the start of their time in Reception. Staff receive ongoing training so they know how best to extend children's language and deepen their thinking over time. As a result, the majority of children achieve well and develop the knowledge and skills needed for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a culture of high expectations for all pupils. They quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Staff use what they know from their assessment of pupils' work to make sure that pupils get the right support. Leaders also use resources effectively to support pupils with additional learning needs. This means that pupils with SEND typically make progress from their starting points. Pupils with more complex needs also receive support from external professionals. This includes for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Leaders use the additional funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils to help reduce barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Staff also support the wider needs of pupils, such as the individual circumstances of those who are young carers. For example, leaders arrange activities to provide these pupils with opportunities for respite.

Leaders ensure all pupils can benefit from clubs and wider enrichment. For example, staff model positive play and communication through activities at lunchtime. Staff also encourage

creativity and independence. As a result, lunchtime is an inclusive and productive part of the school day.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those from the trust, have supported the school through a period of change. Leaders are role models of high expectations and professionalism. This has created a culture in which all staff and pupils feel valued and understand expectations. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Leaders and those responsible for governance fulfil the duties expected of them. They know the school well and have a detailed knowledge of its context. There is a clear vision and high aspirations that all pupils should achieve well from their starting points.

Leaders are well respected by staff, pupils and parents. They have identified the key priorities and work to embed the areas they feel are most important. Staff, and the majority of parents, value the work of school leaders and appreciate the positive impact this is having.

Leaders record key aspects of their work to keep children safe. While they analyse trends and patterns, they do not always capture the detailed actions they have taken or make connections with other pieces of information that the school holds. This reduces leaders' ability to evaluate whether their actions are having the intended impact.

Leaders ensure that professional learning focuses on the school's priorities. They also ensure that they introduce it at an appropriate pace. Staff appreciate the quality of this professional learning and the careful consideration leaders give to their workload.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a high-quality, well-sequenced programme for pupils' personal development and wellbeing. The curriculum teaches pupils about the values that will prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils generally have an age-appropriate understanding of these values and recognise the importance of treating everyone equally. Pupils gain real-life experiences to help them deepen their understanding. For example, they learn about democracy by voting for pupils to join the school council. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They talk confidently about key features of these faiths and places of worship.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and well, including looking after their physical and mental health. They learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils also learn about local risks. For example, they know how to keep themselves safe when visiting the beach.

The school's pastoral support is highly effective. There is a positive approach to supporting pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. The school's commitment to pupils' development is evident in its pastoral care. This includes support for pupils with additional needs, young carers and those who have faced trauma.

Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Experiences such as tennis, karate and acro dance help to develop pupils' talents and interests. Leaders use the additional funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils to enable those facing barriers to attend. Leaders are refining their oversight of club attendance to assure themselves that all pupils experience all that the school has to offer. Pupils take part in trips and visits that enrich what they have learned in the curriculum. For example, pupils visit the local church, farm and library to help them to connect with their community.

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

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their time at Christchurch Infant School. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. As a result, pupils feel safe and attend regularly. They settle quickly at the start of the school day because of the consistent morning routines.

Pupils benefit from the decisive and rapid action that leaders have taken to tackle areas of improvement. These changes have had a positive impact on how well pupils behave, communicate and achieve. Leaders show high ambition for pupils. Pupils rise to this and live out the school's values of 'aspiration, citizenship, courage and team spirit'. They are polite and respectful, as shown through their daily interactions with each other. Pupils know that any form of bullying or unkindness is not tolerated as staff take swift and appropriate action. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if they are unhappy or have concerns.

Pupils generally achieve well. This begins in the early years where children get off to a successful start to their education. Across the school, any pupils who need additional help with their learning are supported by well-trained, caring staff. Teachers make changes to the way they teach the curriculum so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn successfully alongside their peers.

The school's values make a powerful difference to pupils' character. This helps to prepare them for their transition into junior school. Pupils learn how to contribute to their school through pupil leadership roles, such as being a member of the eco council. Pupils take part in a range of experiences. These include visits to the library and local lifeboat station. As a result, pupils develop a wider view of the world around them. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, such as when they are online and when crossing the road.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the school's record-keeping, including aspects relating to safeguarding, is sufficiently detailed so that their actions and decisions can be reviewed thoroughly.
- Leaders should continue to strengthen the school's work to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum, particularly in handwriting and spelling.

- Leaders should continue to develop teachers' expertise to check pupils' understanding, so that teaching helps pupils to deepen and extend their thinking throughout the curriculum.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Twynham Learning multi academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gareth Morris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Turvey.

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 and school staff. The lead inspector met the chair and vice-chair of the trust board, the executive leadership consultant, trustees and representatives from the school ambassador committee.

Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and spoke to some parents. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has undergone significant staffing changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2024.

The school joined Twynham Learning multi academy trust in September 2024.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Laura Tobin

Lead inspector:

Andrew Wilson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jo Walker, Ofsted Inspector

Jo Hicks, 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

303

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

360

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

11.22%

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

1.98%

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

10.23%

Below 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).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.0%	5.2%	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 (3 term)	12.2%	13.0%	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.

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.

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