

Kingston St Mary Church of England Primary School

Address: Greenway, Kingston St Mary, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8JH

Unique reference number (URN): 123795

Inspection report: 6 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.

This school requires special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Most pupils attend school regularly. They enjoy being in school and benefit from the school's welcoming culture. This is particularly true for pupils who are more vulnerable, such as those who are disadvantaged and/or those known to social care. Pupils who are new to school settle quickly. Leaders monitor the small numbers of pupils who find regular attendance a challenge. Where pupils' attendance falls below the school's expectations, the school works closely with families. This work is often successful.

Pupils behave well. Staff promote high expectations and have established a calm environment. Leaders have established clear routines for pupils to follow. Staff understand these rules. They ensure that they are applied effectively and consistently. Leaders make appropriate adjustments for pupils who need support to manage their behaviour. Beyond the classroom, older pupils actively support and encourage younger pupils to meet the school's expectations of behaviour and to adhere to the school's values. Pupils say that bullying is not a concern. Pupils trust that staff will help them and will manage any worries they may raise.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Although some pupils achieve well, some do not. For example, some pupils do not make the progress that they should in areas of learning such as writing and mathematics. For some pupils, such as those who are disadvantaged, their achievement in national tests taken at the end of Year 6 has begun to improve. However, these improvements are not consistent over time.

Although pupils take pride in the presentation of their work, across several other subjects pupils' recall of what has been taught is inconsistent. This subsequently hinders their future learning. As a result, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for the next steps in their education.

Leaders have taken recent action to improve how younger pupils learn to read. However, it is too early to see the impact of these changes.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Staff generally identify the barriers to learning that individual pupils face. However, for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), the support provided to address these barriers lacks consistency. Leaders are unclear about how effective this support is. Weaknesses in the support provided hinder the progress that some pupils with SEND make. The support currently provided is often poorly targeted.

For other pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, the support provided is more beneficial. This support enables pupils to learn alongside their peers. The school has an effective strategy to identify and tackle the barriers that disadvantaged pupils encounter. Leaders have carefully considered the school's context in developing this strategy. This work has begun to impact positively on how well some pupils learn and achieve. This approach is complemented by an effective pastoral provision that meets pupils' social and emotional needs. Staff work closely with families and external agencies to inform the strategies put in place for pupils.

Staff have been supported to develop their knowledge and expertise to help them meet the additional needs that some pupils have. However, leaders have not evaluated how successful this has been. There is variable impact from this professional development work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Leaders have not formed an accurate oversight of what is taught, and when, through the school's personal development programme. This includes aspects of personal, social and health education, as well as learning about world religions. Much of this work is poorly linked and not intentional in its design. Pupils currently learn too many important concepts, such as different types of families, in their later years at the school. They do not build this knowledge progressively over time.

Some important knowledge, such as an awareness of fundamental British values such as democracy, is not as well understood by pupils as it needs to be. This means that pupils are not as equipped as they need to be in order to be active participants in their communities. Although leaders have previously supported pupils to share their views on life at school, these opportunities have not been maintained over time.

Despite these issues, pupils demonstrate many qualities that are covered in some aspects of the school's personal development programme. Pupils are supported, for example, to be caring, self-assured and polite individuals who respect difference and value friendships. Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn from the staff they hold in high esteem. Pupils benefit from a variety of opportunities to enhance their learning and development, and to broaden their interests. During this inspection, for example, pupils demonstrated on the playground their guitar skills from recent music lessons. Equally, they talked animatedly about their visits to the pantomime and the beach.

Pupils receive effective pastoral support to help them feel positive about any day-to-day worries they may have. This support equips pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to feel comfortable and develop resilience.

Urgent improvement ●

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement ●

There is a lack of oversight and coherence to the curriculum across the school. Teaching across the curriculum is overly reliant upon individual staff expertise and skills. There is not a clear, shared approach to what pupils learn, and when and how they will learn it. This has led to inconsistencies in teaching. It impacts negatively on how successfully pupils learn. It also affects how well staff are able to make adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These issues have collectively created additional workload for staff.

Leaders recognise a need to redesign the curriculum, so that learning across all subjects builds on some of the school's most effective practice. The pace and success of this development has been hindered by a range of different factors in recent times. In addition, leaders recognise that there is a lack of shared understanding about how pupils learn most successfully. Staff have not been well supported to have the required subject knowledge to support pupils in some subjects, including in the early years.

While the overall approach to teaching lacks coherence, there are some examples of effective practice. For example, pupils are supported to become accurate, fluent readers as they move into the final years of key stage 2.

Early years

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders do not have a secure understanding of how children learn and develop in the early years. Leaders do not have a clear vision for improvement in this area of the school. Staff have low expectations of children's learning in the early years. Staff do not respond well to the high levels of curiosity and eagerness that children demonstrate to know and do more. Consequently, the early years provision does not support children to build well on their starting points.

Leaders have not ensured that staff have the expertise required to design and deliver a curriculum that meets children's developmental needs. This results in learning activities that are matched poorly to children's learning and that do not challenge children sufficiently. Well-considered, intentional and high-quality interactions are not demonstrated successfully by those working in the provision. Interactions do not do enough to develop children's language and problem-solving skills. Gaps in children's basic skills and knowledge, particularly in phonics and early writing, are not addressed quickly and often remain over time. Consequently, many children are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

There are a range of learning activities for children to participate in within the early years learning environment. However, children are not clear about the expectations of these activities and do not consistently benefit from the intended impact.

Staff ensure that families are suitably informed about how they can support children's learning outside of school.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement 

Over time, leaders, including governors, have not maintained an accurate oversight of the school. They have failed to identify the improvements needed in several aspects of the school's work. Where school development work has been actioned, it has often been slow and ineffective. Many current improvement priorities have only recently been implemented and are not established across the school. Leaders, including governors, do not have an accurate knowledge of how significantly some of the issues at the school are impacting on the quality of education that pupils receive.

Leaders have supported staff to develop their knowledge in some areas, such as in ways to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the impact of this support has not been evaluated. Leaders are not fully aware of where this is having the intended impact, and where it is not. There is limited capacity for leaders to work strategically and provide support in areas where they have the skills to do so. This includes in developing the curriculum in individual subjects and improving how it is taught.

Leaders are in the process of securing external support. This support is being explored to help develop staff's subject knowledge to support pupils to learn and achieve more.

In spite of the weaknesses in aspects of the school's work, the school community is positive. For example, staff, parents and carers recognise the strengths in the school's pastoral care. Staff value the support they provide each other with in getting the best from the pupils, socially and emotionally. However, leaders also recognise that too much of the school's academic provision happens in isolation. This adds unnecessarily to staff workload.

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

The poor quality of the curriculum and teaching at this school mean that pupils do not do as well as they should. Although many pupils enjoy their learning, the curriculum lacks a clear and well-structured design. This impacts on the effectiveness of teaching. Pupils are not provided with opportunities to practise and link what they learn. They are not supported to retain new learning. Too much time is given to filling gaps in pupils' knowledge and learning as they move through the school.

Children in the early years do not benefit from a curriculum that supports their development in aspects such as communication, language and number. Expectations in the early years are low. This leads to children underachieving.

Despite weaknesses in the quality of education they receive, pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They behave well. They are keen to learn, and show curiosity and an eagerness to know more. Pupils' positivity continues into how they support each other and play together. Pupils are supported to develop a clear set of values, which include kindness,

empathy and respect. Pupils demonstrate this in abundance, and this provides firm foundations for their lives beyond primary school.

Pupils show pride and a clear sense of belonging to their school and its community. They are appreciative of the nurture and care that they experience. This comes from the relationships that staff build with them. Parents and carers recognise these strengths, and value the focus that staff provide so that their children feel safe and are keen to attend. While this provides an important part of each pupil's education, the school's academic provision does not match this pastoral offer well enough. Equally, the impact of the school's taught personal development programme is limited. As a result, pupils are not equipped as well as they should be for their next steps.

Next steps

- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that there is sufficient capacity for strategic working to drive the necessary school improvements.
 - Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that they gain the necessary assurances about the quality of education pupils receive and use this to inform actions and decision-making.
 - The school must ensure that there is a coherent and well-structured curriculum in place, across the school, to enable pupils to benefit from effective and cohesive teaching and learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff have the required subject knowledge and have a secure understanding of how pupils learn most effectively, including children in the early years, so that they can support pupils to learn and develop with greater success and achieve more ambitious outcomes.
 - Leaders must ensure that there is a coherent and well-sequenced curriculum in place for children in the early years so that they are well prepared for learning in key stage 1 and beyond.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers have the expertise and resources that they need to adapt learning and make the necessary adjustments to pupils' provision, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They should ensure this expertise allows pupils to learn successfully and overcome the barriers to learning or development that they face.
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About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Steve Meredith and Kirstie Lord.

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, class teachers and the school's improvement partner during the inspection.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next focused monitoring inspection. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in November 2023.

The school does not use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Kim Greenslade

Lead inspector:

Leanne Thirlby, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Paula Marsh, 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 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

115

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

119

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)

22.61%

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

1.74%

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

6.96%

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

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	62%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	45%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	78%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	78%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	73%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	82%	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	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	82%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	89%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	89%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	76%	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		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

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

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 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

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 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

'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 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

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 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

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 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

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

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 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

'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)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.5%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.6%	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)	14.1%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.1%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	17.4%	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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