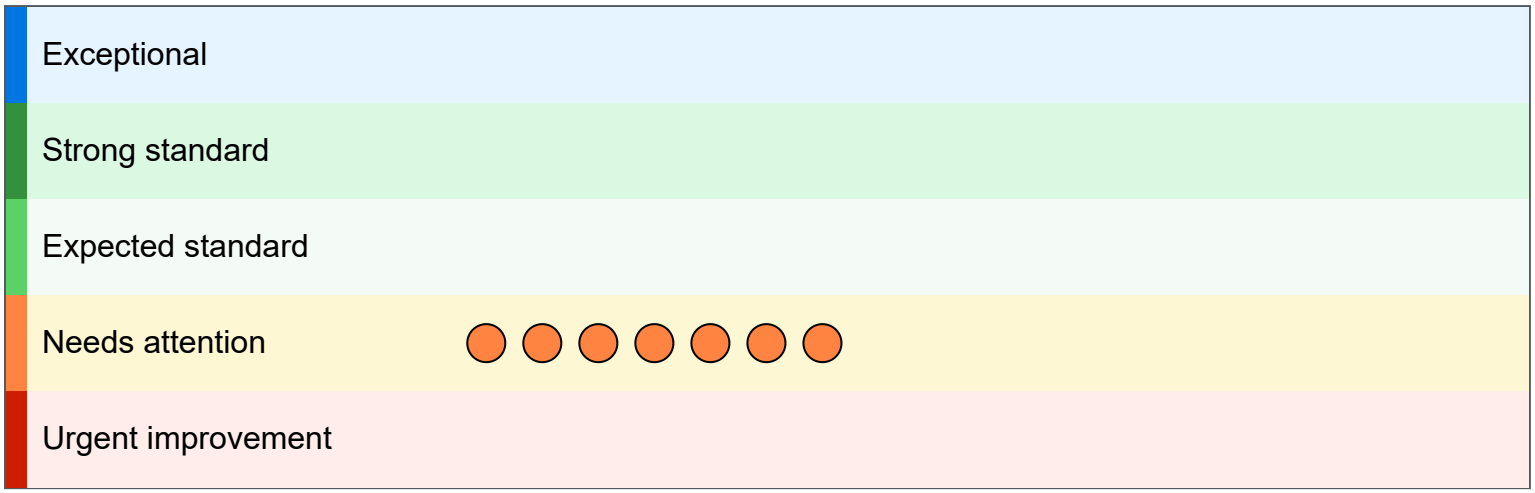
Orchard Meadow Primary School

Address: Wesley Close, Oxford, OX4 6BG

Unique reference number (URN): 146380

Inspection report: 29 September 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.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Pupils are not achieving well enough. Attainment in statutory tests has been consistently below national averages. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, have gaps in their learning. Progress is not as rapid as it needs to be. Consequently, many pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders are taking the necessary action to secure improvements but their work is at an early stage. They are focusing on improving the quality of teaching. They are prioritising reading, writing and mathematics. There are early signs of improvement. Children in reception are better prepared for Year 1. More pupils are achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check. Pupils are beginning to write and solve mathematical problems in line with age-related expectations.

Pupils' knowledge across the wider curriculum is limited. Pupils typically recall educational experiences rather than what they have learned. For example, pupils recall creating pieces of art. They cannot name artists or describe artistic techniques.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. Too many pupils are persistently absent. Leaders are taking appropriate action to address this. They consistently reinforce high expectations. They analyse attendance information closely to understand barriers. Universal strategies create a sense of belonging to the school community. Staff greet pupils personally. Morning music and activities encourage pupils to arrive on time. Personalised strategies are tailored to individual needs. Mentoring sessions, lunchtime provision and resilience workshops are thoughtfully implemented. As a result, overall attendance is improving. Groups of pupils that leaders have focused on are beginning to attend more regularly. This improvement is yet to be seen and sustained across all groups.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have taken decisive action to improve behaviour. There are clear rules and routines that everyone understands. Staff reinforce high expectations consistently. Consequently, classroom environments are calm and focused. Pupils listen carefully to adults. They are respectful. Social times are playful and fun. Pupils cooperate with one another well. They say that bullying is rare at Orchard Meadow. Leaders respond to incidents quickly should they arise. Pupils receive suitable adaptations and adjustments to help them to behave well. The Nest and Eyrie provide nurturing spaces where pupils can regulate before returning to class.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Teaching is not effective enough. Staff are beginning to use assessment to identify pupils' starting points. Teaching does not yet respond to these assessments consistently. Consequently, teaching and tasks are not closely matched to pupils' starting points.

Adaptations and adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are inconsistent. Pupils with the most complex needs receive a personalised curriculum in the 'Rashford family'. Teaching for these pupils is more closely matched to their starting points and pastoral needs but, academic support remains variable.

Leaders know that the quality of teaching needs to improve. They are taking steps to address this. A comprehensive programme of training has been developed. This work is at an early stage, however.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders have adopted trust-wide schemes of learning. They utilise the support of wider organisations to enrich pupils' curriculum experiences. Pupils talk about artistic experiences, such as the arts nest, enthusiastically. They benefit from a focus on physical activity.

Leaders are prioritising foundational skills. Phonics is taught daily. Older pupils are beginning to receive the support that they need to close gaps in learning. The teaching of writing and mathematics is becoming more systematic.

Early years

Needs attention

Teaching in the early years is inconsistent. Interactions between children and adults vary in quality. They are not precise enough to move learning forward. Leaders are taking steps to improve this, although these improvements are at an early stage. Vocabulary is displayed in the environment. Staff use prompts to guide their interactions.

Children benefit from a warm and caring environment. They are safe and secure. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Children enjoy participating in indoor and outdoor experiences. They paint sunflowers carefully. They use spray bottles and paintbrushes to wash the animals. There are squeals of joy as they feel the cool water on a hot day.

Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable. Staff do not consider children's individual learning needs closely enough. Consequently tasks, activities and interactions are not as sharply aligned to these children's needs as they could be.

Leaders prioritise foundational skills. Phonics is taught daily. Children peg washing on the line to develop fine motor skills for writing. They use tweezers to sort pom poms by colour and size in mathematics. Outcomes are improving. While children are better prepared for their transition to Year 1, pupils' progress is not as rapid as it could be.

Inclusion

Needs attention

Pupils' barriers to learning are not addressed as effectively as they should be. Leaders have prioritised addressing weaknesses in inclusive practice. They have established a culture of high expectations for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' needs are identified more quickly and accurately.

Leaders monitor pupils carefully. They seek advice and support from external agencies. They use alternative provision appropriately. Staff do not yet have the required training to implement adaptations and adjustments in the classroom effectively. This means that barriers to learning remain.

Pupils with complex SEND receive a personalised programme in the ‘Rashford family’. That said, the academic support that they receive is variable. Teaching, tasks and activities are not precisely matched to pupils' needs. These pupils receive a high standard of pastoral support, however. This helps pupils to feel that they belong.

Disadvantaged pupils are not supported as effectively as they could be. Leaders have established a strategy to reduce barriers. This is not yet implemented and monitored as effectively as it should be. The trust has put support in place to guide this work and ensure that statutory expectations are maintained.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders’ actions are not securing improvement across all areas quickly enough. While the new leadership team has identified the right priorities and are taking action, leaders' work is at an early stage. There is some evidence of impact. Pupils are attending school more regularly. Their behaviour has improved. The quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes are not yet improving quickly enough, however.

Leaders are role models of high expectations. They are ambitious for pupils at Orchard Meadow. They seek opportunities to collaborate with wider organisations. For example, pupils benefit from an established sports and reading partnership with a local independent school. Parents praise the new leadership of the school. They value leaders’ changes to the start of the day. They comment on their children’s improved attitudes towards attending. They agree that the school is improving.

Trust leaders understand and fulfil their responsibilities. They have committed to providing ongoing enhanced support for leaders. They are providing the necessary challenge to hold leaders to account. Local governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They share leaders’ determination to improve the school. They fulfil their statutory duties. They are actively involved in the strategic direction of the school.

Leaders prioritise professional development. They have developed a training programme that focuses on building teaching expertise. It is too soon to see the impact of this in practice. Leaders ensure that workload and wellbeing are considered thoughtfully. Supervision arrangements and trauma-informed support are in place. Staff are consulted on changes. For example, they work with leaders to develop and introduce the revised behaviour policy. Consequently, staff feel supported and valued.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Pupils are not as well prepared for life beyond school as they should be. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is variable. They typically recall experiences rather than specific learning. Pupils have some knowledge of online and offline risks. They know to seek the support of trusted adults if they are worried. Pupils are beginning to understand healthy

relationships. They are aware of eating well and the importance of exercise.

Leaders have taken decisive action to improve the personal development curriculum and teaching. They have invested in a new teaching scheme. They are ensuring that statutory requirements are fulfilled. It is too soon to see the impact of these changes on pupils' learning, however.

Pupils benefit from a range of enrichment opportunities. They develop new talents and interests. Pupils talk about residential visits enthusiastically. They enjoy participating in sports festivals, swimming and art. They benefit from a partnership with a local independent school. Leaders track participation closely. They ensure that all pupils can benefit.

Leaders are helping pupils to establish life skills. They adapt their provision in response to pupils' needs. For example, pupils are taught how to cut up food independently. The toothbrushing dragon helps pupils to learn about oral hygiene in response to identified concerns. Leaders are ambitious for pupils' futures. The 'cradle to career' programme focuses on pupils' long-term success.

Pastoral support is a strength. Leaders and staff know pupils well. They monitor pupils closely. They anticipate need. The Nest and Eyrie provide space for pupils to regulate. Pupils with more complex needs receive personalised support such as counselling sessions.

Pupils are respectful and kind. They demonstrate the school's superhero values but are unsure of how these relate to British values, however. Older pupils take on leadership responsibilities. They enjoy watering the plants and helping their younger peers. They currently see these as jobs rather than active citizenship, but they are proud to contribute.

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

Pupils are at the heart of Orchard Meadow. They arrive at school to the beat of pop music. They dance, play and socialise on the playground. There is a happy buzz as pupils arrive to start the day. Staff are present and actively engage with families. They welcome pupils with a personalised greeting. They care about pupils deeply. As a result, pupils feel that they belong.

Pupils' attendance is starting to improve. An earlier start time and enticing morning activities make school a place that pupils want to be. Parents say that their children want to be at school. There is still more work to be done to ensure that all pupils attend as often as they should, however.

Pupils behave well. Conduct has notably improved. Positive relationships and high expectations are central to this. Pupils listen to adults and follow instructions. Social times are playful and calm. Pupils say that their peers generally behave well. Bullying is uncommon, but pupils know who to go to for help if they need it. Leaders respond robustly where incidents arise.

Pupils are ready to learn. Teaching does not yet meet their needs consistently well. Pupils do not always receive the challenge or support they need to deepen their understanding and

make strong progress. When pupils find learning difficult, lessons are not always adapted quickly enough to help them succeed. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils benefit from the school's wider enrichment offer. Charitable organisations provide therapeutic art sessions. Pupils receive mentoring from students that attend Oxford University and a local independent school. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities. They take on roles and responsibilities at school. This helps pupils to aspire high and develop understanding of the opportunities that are available to them.

Next steps

- Trust leaders and governors should provide robust support and challenge to ensure that leaders' plans for school improvement lead to quick, effective and sustained progress across all areas.
- Leaders should improve the quality of teaching, particularly in core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics, so that pupils establish foundational skills securely.
- Leaders should ensure that adaptations and adjustments in teaching are closely matched to pupils' needs so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well.
- Leaders should ensure that children in the early years benefit from high-quality interactions to maximise opportunities for learning.
- Leaders should ensure that the planned curriculum for personal development enables pupils to develop secure knowledge and become well prepared for life beyond school.
- Leaders should continue to improve pupils' attendance, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and those who are persistently or severely absent.

About this inspection

This school is part of United Learning, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Jon Coles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christian Brodie.

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

This inspection took place from 29 September to 30 September 2026.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the principal and other senior leaders during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with trust representatives, alternative provision providers, staff, pupils and parents.

The school currently makes use of 1 registered alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. A new principal was appointed in September 2025. There is a new senior leadership team in place. This includes a new deputy headteacher and two special educational needs coordinators.

Principal: Miss Emilie Fidler

Lead inspector:
Anneka Fisher, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Charlotte Wilson, Ofsted Inspector
Ian Howie, His Majesty's 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 29 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

209
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: 268

School capacity

472
Well above 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)

47.13%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.5%

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

6.70%
Above 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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

22.01%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above 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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	56%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	61%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	64%	75%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	70%	74%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55%	72%	Below

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	64%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	32%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	39%	46%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	37%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	56%	62%	Close to average

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	42%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	39%	58%	Below

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	37%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	61%	59%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	32%	69%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	39%	67%	-29 pp

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	37%	81%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	80%	-24 pp

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	42%	78%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	39%	78%	-39 pp

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	37%	81%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	79%	-18 pp

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

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
2025/26 (1 term)	6.8%	5.1%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	7.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.7%	5.5%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	25.0%	14.4%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	20.5%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	15.6%	14.6%	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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