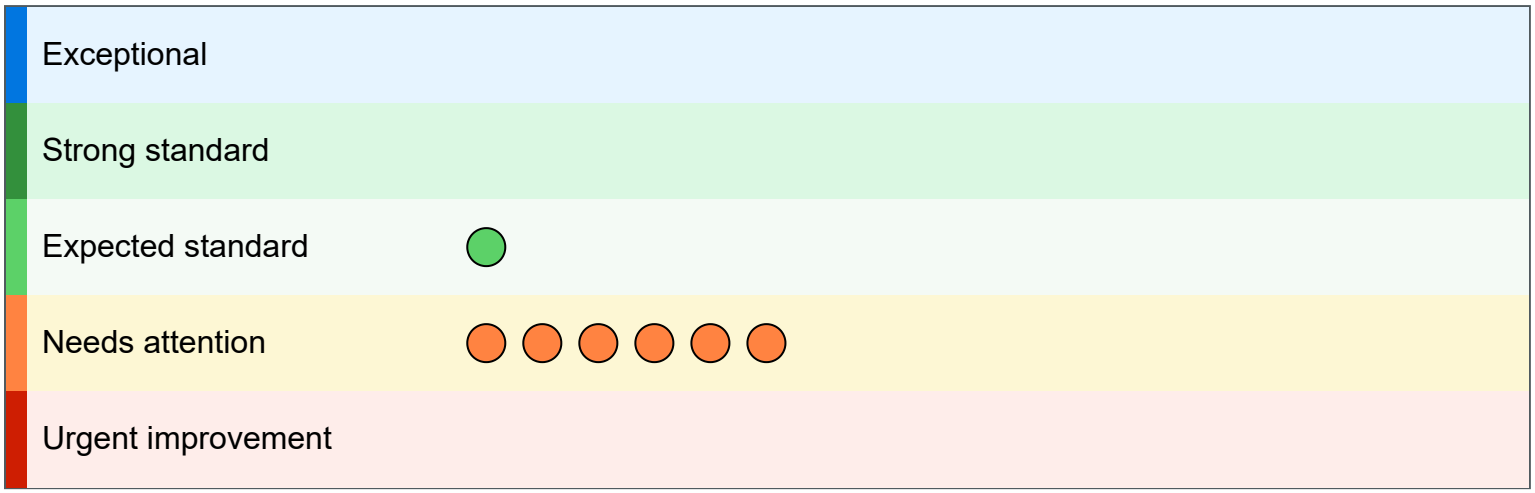
Greatstone Primary School

Address: Baldwin Road, Greatstone, New Romney, Kent, TN28 8SY

Unique reference number (URN): 118864

Inspection report: 9 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.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard

A well-planned curriculum is in place to support children in Nursery and Reception. Within both the indoor and outdoor provision, carefully designed activities support children's learning and development effectively. Children are enthused by a range of well-judged activities that help develop their understanding as they engage in them.

Relationships are very positive and, even at the very early stages of the academic year, a warm, supportive culture has already been established. This demonstrates the secure practices of staff to support the wellbeing and welfare of children.

Typically, effective interactions between staff and children help support their growing vocabulary, leading to children being able to use these with increasing confidence themselves. Phonics is taught well as a result of confident staff who are trained in its delivery. Children are supported to develop their social skills, learning how to interact with one another positively as staff model for them how to take turns and share, which they then replicate.

Staff know and anticipate children's needs effectively. Typically, staff adapt their input to support these children in accessing their learning. As a result, children generally achieve well and are well prepared for the next steps of their education.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Over time, pupils have not achieved sufficiently well, with most outcomes sitting below national averages in end of key stage assessments. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Weaknesses in the curriculum over time have meant that pupils are not supported as well as they should be to develop the knowledge and skills that they need. Children achieve more positively in the early years, gaining appropriate knowledge of phonics and writing especially. However, these early foundations are not then built on effectively enough as pupils move up through the school. Gaps in learning are not identified and filled rapidly or securely enough. This means that, while pupils engage readily in activities in lessons, their learning is inconsistent. They are not able to talk with confidence about what they have learned or accrue their learning over time.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Around the school, pupils' behaviour is typically settled. Pupils generally treat one another with kindness and respect. They have positive and supportive relationships with the staff, who know them well. In most lessons, pupils are focused and engage readily in their learning, although this is not consistently the case across all classes. At social times, pupils

engage in well-considered activities that support their play, and they cooperate well with one another. As a result, they treat one another well and show respect for their community and their school. For the small numbers of pupils who need more support with their behaviour, leaders make appropriate interventions.

However, over time some pupils do not consistently attend school well enough. While there have been some improvements at points, these have not been as substantive or as rapid as they need to be. New leaders have hit the ground running, recognising the need to establish and develop relationships with families so that they can identify the specific barriers to positive attendance and work to tackle them. An appropriate attendance strategy has been established, with approaches identified to ensure a more systematic approach to supporting good attendance. However, these plans are very new, and therefore the outcomes of these approaches are not evident.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. They have recognised the weaknesses in the previous curriculum and, despite their short time in the school, have already put in place new curriculum plans that map more specifically the knowledge and skills that pupils need to develop. However, this work is very recent and the renewed curriculum has only just begun to be taught in the school.

In lessons, the implementation of this curriculum is not as effective as it needs to be. While activities in lessons engage pupils' interests, there is not a consistently sharp enough connection between the activities planned and the intended learning. This means that pupils are not able to explain their learning from these lessons or develop this understanding over time.

Teachers do make checks both in lessons and in pupils' work to identify what pupils have understood in their learning. In the more effective examples, staff then use this information to make adjustments to tasks or to explanations so that any misconceptions are corrected quickly. However, this practice is not as sharp or precise as it needs to be across the school. Too often, staff miss opportunities to spot misconceptions or correct errors. As a result, misconceptions are not addressed rapidly enough and persist for some pupils, hampering pupils' ability to build their knowledge securely.

Staff have the information they need about pupils' individual needs, and there are some effective adaptations made to support specific pupils. However, this is not consistently effective across classroom practice. Where this is less effective, this information is not being routinely used well enough to help pupils to access their learning.

Inclusion

Needs attention

Leaders identify pupils' needs and have an understanding of the barriers to learning that pupils face. Recent training has prioritised how staff input in lessons can be adapted to more effectively support pupils to access their learning. However, this work is very recent and is not yet being realised in practice. While pupils' needs are shared with staff, adaptations in lessons are not consistently effective in supporting pupils to thrive in the way that they need to be. The checks made by staff on how well pupils understand and remember their learning

are not routinely effective enough, meaning that staff do not have a consistently accurate picture of where further support is needed.

Leaders recognise the need for a more systematic approach to supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and other barriers to learning. They recognise the need for further training so that staff can more effectively adapt their input to support pupils. Leaders understand the need to monitor this robustly so that they can see if these actions are having the impact they need to, or where further support is needed. This includes how the school uses additional funding, for example for those in receipt of the pupil premium. However, this work is only just beginning.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention

New leaders recognise the work that is needed to improve the school, and drive forward a more rapid pace of improvement. Despite having started very recently, they already have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in practice in their school. Renewed curriculum plans are already in place, and they know that the implementation of this curriculum needs to be consistently effective to support improved pupils' outcomes. They have begun to identify the actions that are needed to bring about improvement. Plans in place are logical and well considered. However these are at the very early stages.

Leaders are undertaking careful work to ensure that staff are supported through the significant changes that have taken place. Their approaches have galvanized staff, and staff feel positive about the direction and purpose in their school. Staff feel valued by leaders, feel that leaders are present and invested in their development, including developing their professional expertise.

Governors have an awareness of their statutory duties and fulfil these. They undertake visits and employ external advisers to help to identify areas that require further work and have challenged leaders around the areas that need further improvement. However, they recognise that the pace of improvement has not been sufficiently rapid. As new leaders' work embeds, there is recognition that more specific and measurable outcomes need to be set by governors and monitored more robustly to drive forward the necessary improvements to the school and its outcomes for children. This more refined accountability is needed so that governors can assure themselves that the actions being taken are having the impact that they need to. Development plans already in place are beginning to identify these specific actions and impact measures, though it is too early to see the fruits of this labour.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school's personal development offer and the areas that need further development. Changes to the curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health and economic education are being undertaken. Leaders recognise the need for a more joined-up and coherent approach so that pupils' learning builds and can be remembered over time. Key messages are woven through the planned assembly programme so as to further remind and reinforce the ways that pupils can keep themselves safe, healthy and part of a supportive community in their school and beyond the school gates.

The pastoral support for pupils in the school is effective. Pupils feel safe in school and have trusted relationships with the staff that look after them. They know that they can share any worries they have and that, where additional support is needed to support their emotional wellbeing, it will be readily available. Pupils know when they are doing well, receiving recognition for their work and efforts both through praise in class and in initiatives such as coming to the headteacher to have their name entered into the 'golden book' that celebrates their achievements. They feel proud when their work is recognised and celebrated with their peers. Pupils have opportunities to support others, for example by being a 'young governor' or by taking on key responsibilities in their class. More recently introduced roles, such as being 'learning ambassadors', are starting to take place in school, and pupils are keen to engage with more opportunities as they grow in the school.

Leaders are keen to increase participation in clubs and enrichment activities, particularly for more vulnerable pupils. Leaders have started to gather pupils' views about the clubs and activities they would like to see so that future provision is shaped to meet pupils' interests and needs.

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

Pupils arrive happily to this warm and supportive school, keen to get inside the school gates and play with their friends. Despite recent changes in leadership and some staff, a supportive and close-knit environment persists here. Parents and carers place trust in staff and leaders to take care of their children. Parents know that staff have pupils' best interests at heart and are invested in preparing them for the future. Parents describe the 'caring staff', the sense of 'warmth' and how they are 'pleased to be part of the school's community'.

Pupils typically behave well and treat one another with kindness. They play together well at social times, taking advantage of the wide array of play equipment that is set out for them to enjoy. Although bullying happens occasionally, pupils are generally confident that staff will deal with it quickly.

Pupils benefit from warm, trusting relationships with staff. This helps pupils to feel safe in school. Pupils are proud to share their successes in their work, including the chance to get their name recognised in the 'golden book' for their hard work or achievements in lessons.

However, despite these positive relationships, over time pupils have not been supported to develop the knowledge and skills that they need as effectively as they should. Lessons, while engaging, are not consistently as effective as they need to be to prepare them for their futures.

New leaders have clarity about how they intend to improve the school. Targeted, appropriate plans are being established to develop these aspects. This includes engaging with parents to ensure effective relationships between home and school. However, this work has only just begun, and therefore it is too early to see the impact of this work.

Next steps

- Leaders, including governors, need to enact their plans to drive forward school improvements, ensuring they carefully evaluate their work against measurable milestones so as to check that their actions are having the impact they intend and so that they can refine their approaches where needed.
- Leaders should ensure that staff's use of assessment is consistently precise and effective so that any misconceptions in pupils' understanding or work can be identified and remedied rapidly to support pupils to achieve well.
- Leaders need to ensure that, in teaching, staff design activities that are more sharply linked to their intended learning so that the work they undertake consistently moves forward pupils' understanding and their development of knowledge and skills.
- Leaders need to embed a systematic approach to inclusion, ensuring that staff adapt the curriculum to support pupils' needs more effectively and that the impact of these approaches is measured and refined appropriately to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders need to develop their work to support pupils in attending more fully, identifying the specific barriers to positive attendance and supporting pupils and families to overcome them.
- Leaders need to implement their plans to support pupils' personal, social, health, economic and relationships education systematically, and monitor the impact this has on what pupils know and remember over time.

About this inspection

This school is one of two foundation schools that form a hard federation called 'Lightyear Federation'. They share a governing body.

The chair of the board of governors is Wayne Wills.

The headteacher and assistant headteacher of the school took up their posts in September 2026, just prior to the inspection.

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

The inspection took place from 9th to 10th September 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with a range of leaders during the inspection, including the headteacher and assistant headteacher. The lead inspector also held meetings with the members of governing board, including the chair. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no forms of alternative provision.

Headteacher: Beth Spaul

Lead inspector:
Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Cathy Reid, Ofsted Inspector
Gavin Thomas, 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 9 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

215
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

250
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)

31.67%
Close to 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

1.86%
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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.02%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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	34%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	25%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	35%	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	59%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	62%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	61%	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	58%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	69%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	57%	71%	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	47%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	49%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	41%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	15%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	33%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	7%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	0%	44%	Below

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	42%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	46%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	40%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	38%	60%	Below

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	41%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	21%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average

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	25%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	27%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	0%	59%	Below

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	15%	68%	-53 pp
2024/25 (final)	33%	69%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	7%	67%	-60 pp
2022/23 (final)	0%	66%	-66 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	42%	80%	-38 pp
2024/25 (final)	46%	81%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	80%	-40 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	78%	-41 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	41%	78%	-37 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2023/24 (final)	21%	78%	-56 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 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	25%	80%	-55 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	81%	-42 pp
2023/24 (final)	27%	79%	-53 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	0%	79%	-79 pp

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)	7.7%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.4%	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 (3 term)	26.3%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	25.7%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	30.4%	16.2%	Above

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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