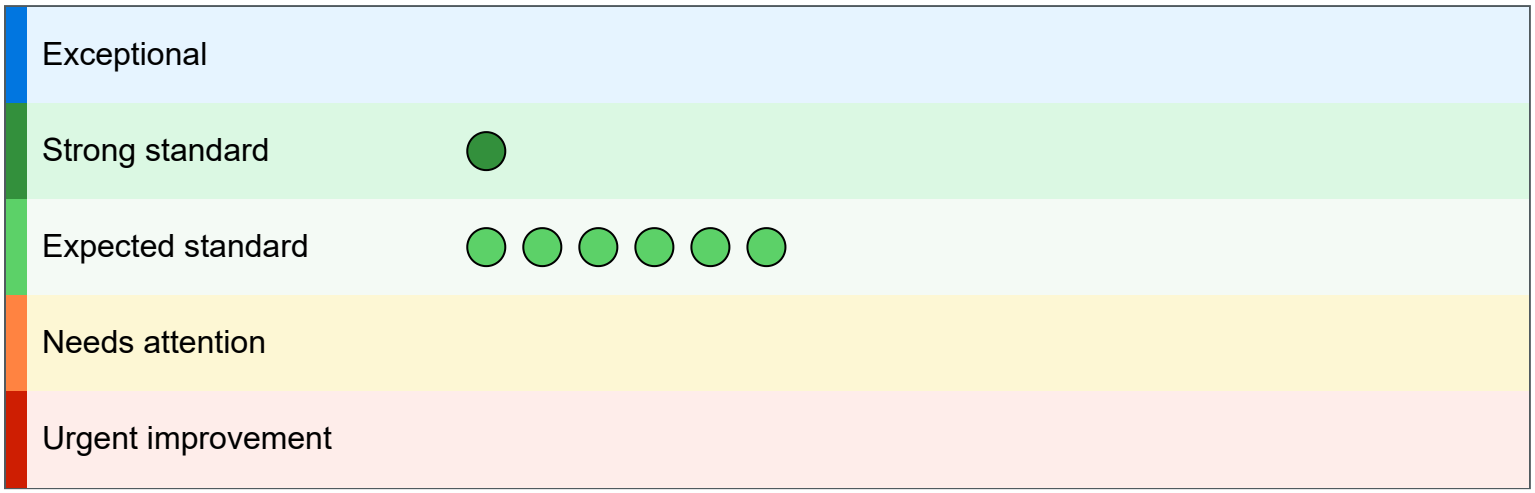
Westfield Primary School

Address: Durrants Lane, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 3PJ

Unique reference number (URN): 117254

Inspection report: 6 October 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.

Strong standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Leaders have created a rich and highly responsive programme that reflects the needs of their pupils and community. They are alert to issues that affect local children and adapt provision accordingly. For example, when leaders identify emerging risks within the local area, they work with external organisations to provide timely and relevant education that helps pupils keep themselves safe.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is carefully planned and relevant to pupils' lives. Pupils do not simply remember what they have been taught. They understand why it matters. For example, younger pupils explain how kindness, respect and listening help them to be a good friend. Older pupils speak confidently about online risks and how to keep themselves safe. Leaders have adapted the programme carefully to suit the school's mixed-age classes while ensuring important themes build progressively over time.

Pastoral support is a notable strength. Leaders provide timely support for pupils who may experience difficulties outside school. Counselling, nurture provision and therapeutic support help pupils manage their emotions, remain safe and stay focused on learning. As a result, pupils feel valued, listened to and well supported.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is intentionally promoted. For instance, roles for pupils are purposeful rather than tokenistic. Pupils apply for positions such as school councillor, kindness ambassador, digital ambassador and sports leader. They contribute to fundraising, support younger pupils and help improve school life. These experiences bring democracy, responsibility and service to life.

The wider enrichment offer is extensive, particularly given the size of the school. Pupils access extra-curricular clubs, sport events, artistic opportunities and educational visits. Leaders track participation closely. They take action when barriers emerge. For example, additional staffing has increased participation for pupils with additional needs, while low-cost provision helps remove financial barriers for disadvantaged pupils. Parents and carers greatly appreciate this.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils' achievement has moved in the right direction. Still, leaders remain ambitious for further improvement. Pupils with additional needs build knowledge and confidence through tailored support, such as picture-based communication and same-day mathematical practice. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, typically recall their learning well across the curriculum, including in subjects such as science and geography. Reading is becoming a strength. Pupils read with growing confidence and understanding. Leaders appreciate how pupils who find reading challenging need regular opportunities in school to practise with staff.

Work to strengthen pupils' mathematical fluency and communication skills is also paying off. Leaders remain focused on improving writing. Some older pupils get confused with punctuation, while some younger pupils struggle to apply their phonics knowledge when spelling. Handwriting is improving, but leaders recognise that pupils need stronger writing skills so they can communicate their ideas clearly and accurately across the curriculum.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders have placed attendance firmly at the heart of their work. They know families well. Leaders combine support, challenge and partnerships with external agencies to help to raise attendance. Their efforts are beginning to make a difference. Attendance has improved overall, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Persistent absence has also reduced for these groups. Leaders are not standing still. As attendance improves, they are rightly refining their approach and streamlining their systems. They want to understand more clearly which timely actions have the greatest impact on improving attendance.

Pupils behave well. Classrooms are purposeful places to learn. Outside, pupils play happily together, sharing jokes and enjoying each other's company whatever the weather. This positive culture has not happened by chance. Leaders and staff have worked hard to build positive relationships with pupils and their families. As a result, pupils understand expectations, feel a strong sense of belonging and typically rise to those expectations. Fair and thoughtful adaptations support pupils with SEND to succeed. For example, some pupils work in smaller groups during lessons they find particularly challenging. This helps them feel confident, remain engaged and get the most from their learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have thoughtfully chosen curriculum resources that support both teachers and pupils. Many include training videos and practical guidance that help teachers deepen their subject knowledge and present new learning effectively. For example, in art, resources include video demonstrations of techniques. Teachers use them to develop their subject-specific teaching. Consequently, teaching typically supports pupils' learning.

Leaders and staff worked together to develop ‘The Westfield Way’. It is a set of research-informed teaching approaches that generally serve pupils well, including those with barriers to learning. For example, teachers explicitly model how to apply knowledge and skills, before guiding pupils through shared practice and then independent application. This helps pupils feel confident completing tasks.

Leaders and staff have fostered pupils' enthusiasm for reading, helping pupils to develop rich vocabulary and creative ideas for writing. However, over time, the teaching of writing has not consistently enabled some pupils to develop secure knowledge of the mechanics of writing. As a result, inaccuracies in areas such as spelling, punctuation and grammar tend to hinder how well they write for their intended audience. Leaders recognise this. Following their successful work to secure the teaching of reading and mathematics, they are now prioritising similar improvements in writing.

Early years

Expected standard

The curriculum gives children a broad range of experiences across the Nursery and Reception Years. Leaders are continuing to refine what children should learn and when. The aim is to build up a clearer picture of children's development to inform teaching and raise achievement and readiness for Year 1.

Leaders work well with external professionals. They act on advice to strengthen teaching. For example, staff changed the organisation of the classroom to make resources easier for children to access independently. Consequently, children engage more readily in imaginative play and develop important social skills through interactions with staff and classmates.

Children's wellbeing sits at the heart of the provision. Staff create a warm and welcoming atmosphere where children quickly feel safe and settled. Thoughtful routines support this. For example, children wash their hands before snacks and sit together at a table to eat. It promotes good hygiene and helps children learn good manners around mealtimes.

Staff recognise their role in spotting children with additional needs. For example, early checks of children's speech and language mean support can be put in place quickly. Meanwhile, staff continue to develop their expertise, adding to the range of strategies they already use to develop children's communication.

Inclusion

Expected standard

In a short space of time, leaders have worked tirelessly to establish systems that help to identify barriers to learning and wellbeing for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have ensured that staff are equipped with practical strategies and evidence-informed approaches to help pupils overcome these barriers. For example, some pupils are supported to complete carefully structured independent tasks that are broken down into manageable steps. This helps them sustain attention, experience success without constant adult prompting and develop the confidence to tackle increasingly complex learning. Because leaders are outward-facing, they draw effectively on the expertise of external professionals to meet pupils' needs. For example, they may arrange a short placement at an alternative provision or seek updated advice from a social worker to secure the right support for a pupil. Consequently, both the provision available to pupils and the network of professionals available to support them have grown considerably. Parents and carers have noticed these changes. They greatly appreciate how leaders and staff do all they reasonably can to help pupils thrive and succeed. Leaders continue to evaluate and refine their approach, with an increasing focus on checking the impact of additional support and identifying the most effective practice to further strengthen inclusivity.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Since the last inspection, governors have brought together a valuable blend of expertise, energy and commitment. They are ambitious for the school's future and actively support its development. They balance thoughtful challenge with first-hand insight. In other words, they

know when to seek information through meetings and when to see the school's work for themselves.

Leaders are clear about what needs to improve. They prioritise change well. Leaders' communication and people skills are a notable strength. Parents and carers recognise the positive difference leaders are making as the school continues to go from strength to strength. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example, particularly appreciate the way leaders champion their children and help secure the support they need.

Staff echo the positive views of parents. They are a stable and collegiate team who have confidence in leaders and the school's direction of travel. Staff value the opportunities leaders provide for professional growth. These include staff working towards national professional qualifications and the recent introduction of peer-to-peer support. These opportunities are helping to further strengthen teaching across the school. Staff appreciate the thoughtful ways leaders support workload and wellbeing. For example, leaders are firm in their belief that family matters. They show flexibility when staff wish to attend important events in the lives of their children or grandchildren. This creates a strong sense of goodwill. It is reflected in the willingness of staff to go the extra mile, including by running popular extra-curricular clubs.

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

Lessons are calm and conducive to learning. The introduction of mindfulness activities at the start of the day has supported this. Pupils' positive attitudes and the typically effective teaching they receive are helping to improve achievement, including in national assessments. Pupils with additional needs are supported well. Simple adaptations, such as extra opportunities to practise new learning, help them overcome barriers and experience success. Pupils are keen to share what they know, explaining, for example, how the Earth's tilt causes the seasons or how artists use charcoal to create effects that differ from pencil sketching.

Pupils know their views count and help shape school life. Almost all attend after-school clubs, where they enjoy activities such as baking, singing and sewing, as well as sports including football and netball. They are proud to represent the school in tournaments and always strive to give their best. Pupils relish the chance to take on responsibility and proudly wear the badge that reflects their role. For example, the gardening team helps keep the grounds looking their best, while librarians keep shelves organised and books easy to find. In doing so, pupils make a positive contribution to school life. It makes it a pleasant place to attend for pupils and staff.

Changes to behaviour are making a real difference. Pupils rarely raise concerns about bullying. Younger pupils speak thoughtfully about what it means to be a good friend, while older pupils enjoy their role as kindness ambassadors, putting on their hi-vis jackets and seeking out anyone who may need a friendly chat. Pupils are equally clear that, if they do have a worry, they trust leaders and staff to help sort it out to keep them safe. This growing

culture of care is reflected in improving attendance and a playground where pupils play happily together and readily include others in their games.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen the teaching of writing so pupils secure and apply essential knowledge, and staff identify and address gaps in spelling, punctuation and grammar effectively.
- Leaders should sharpen how they identify, support and monitor pupils who are frequently absent to better evaluate impact and further reduce persistent absence.
- Leaders should further refine the curriculum in the early years so it more clearly identifies what children should learn and when to enhance teaching and assessment.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Kathryn Gorman.

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

This inspection took place from 6 October to 7 October 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.

During the inspection, inspectors spoke to leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, office manager and four governors. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative working on behalf of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

The school also, under the same registration, runs a nursery for children age three to four.

The school is a one-form entry primary school. However, at the time of the inspection, alongside single-year classes in Years 3 to 6, there were two mixed-age classes: one for children in the Nursery and Reception Years, and one for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Headteacher: Emma Leach

Lead inspector:
Daniel Short, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Mark Sim, 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 6 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

140
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: 268

School capacity

210
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)

30.23%

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

4.29%

Close to 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

27.14%

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

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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	30%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	60%	61%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	61%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	48%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	60%	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)	43%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	67%	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)	25%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	58%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	33%	59%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	33%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S

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.

‘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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	25%	69%	-44 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	58%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	33%	81%	-47 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

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.

‘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
2025/26 (1 term)	8.4%	5.1%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	8.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.2%	5.5%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	20.2%	14.4%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	19.1%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	24.9%	14.6%	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.

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