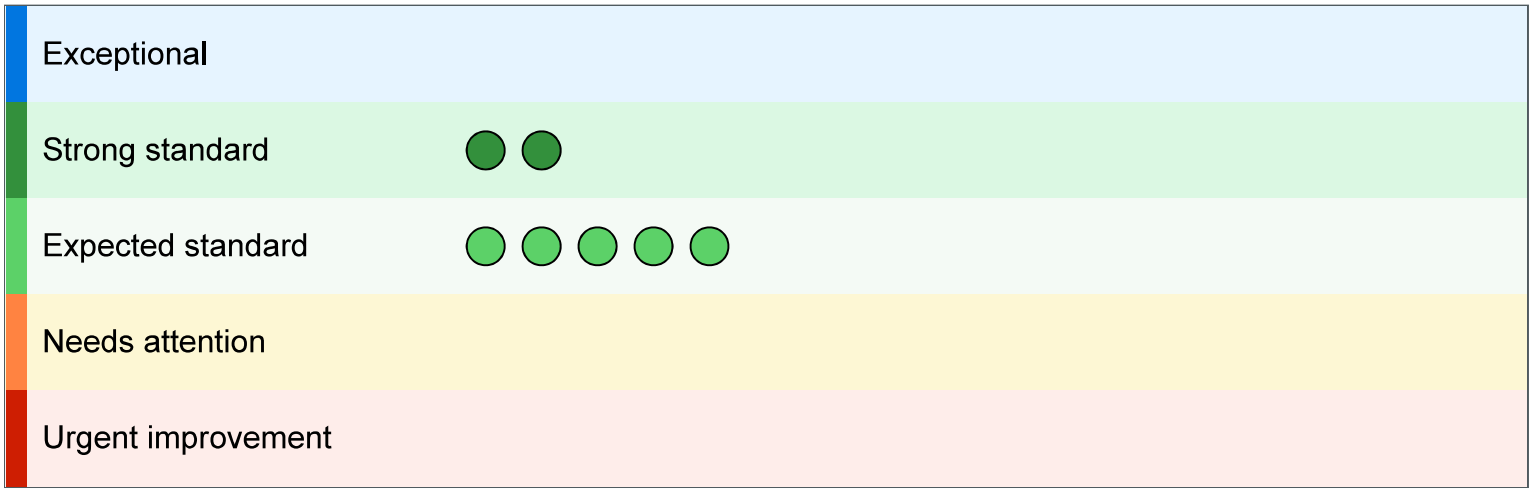
Cedars Primary School

Address: Bury Street, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, MK16 0DT

Unique reference number (URN): 110399

Inspection report: 9 June 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

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders have developed highly thoughtful and systematic strategies to managing pupils' attendance. Relationships are at the heart of the school's work. A team of dedicated staff support each vulnerable pupil. This ensures all staff know and understand pupils' vulnerabilities well. Leaders analyse attendance information thoroughly. Staff promote highly positive attitudes to learning and regular attendance. Leaders have a determined approach. They work closely with pupils and families, particularly those who are more vulnerable and those more at risk of lower attendance. Staff remove barriers to regular attendance highly effectively. As a result, pupils' attendance is in line with national averages.

Staff have consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. They adopt highly inclusive approaches which set out the school's approach clearly. Staff support individual pupils who may need extra support excellently. Staff implement agreed policies thoroughly. From the start of the school day, pupils settle quickly and are focused on their learning. On the playground, pupils play sensibly and considerately. Staff respond to pupils caringly, helping all pupils to experience success throughout the school day. Pupils know about the school's CEDARS values and that these are a fundamental part of how they learn to work together. Pupils state that bullying is rare, or does not happen, and any issues are delt with quickly.

Early years

Strong standard

The early years curriculum is sequenced highly effectively from Nursery Year to the end of Reception, building children's key knowledge and skills clearly. Learning is divided into small, logical steps that link to ambitious overarching themes. Children build their vocabulary well, for example, learning about types of leaves, different colours, textures, and then building on this to develop broader knowledge about seasons, contrasts and colour mixing. Indoor and outdoor activities are precise and deliberate. Activities constantly enrich the curriculum and children's learning.

Leaders have excellent subject knowledge and understanding of child development. The school tracks specific skills, such as pencil grip, to ensure children make the progress that they need to from their starting points. Staff have the highest expectations for children's learning. They use high-quality interactions consistently. Staff model language well, share their thinking and support children skilfully. Staff understand how to ask questions effectively to strengthen children's communication skills and deepen their learning. Staff check children's progress through the curriculum systematically. They identify children with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly and ensure that they receive the support that they need. By the end of Reception Year, children are very well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Generally, pupils are ready for their next stage in learning, with particular strengths in phonics, reading and handwriting. Typically, pupils become fluent and accurate readers, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Across reading, writing and mathematics, most pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. Many pupils make appropriate progress within the curriculum across year groups and key stages, with very positive progress in the early years.

By the end of key stage 2 most pupils are secure in their reading writing and mathematics. Historically, there have been mixed outcomes for pupils, particularly in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Although more secure now, and an improving picture overall, there is still further work to do to ensure pupils' outcomes are consistently above national averages. Leaders have been proactive to address this, and there are early indications of improvement, particularly in mathematics. However, it is too early to assess the full impact of these improvements.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear strategic overview of the curriculum and teaching. Recent school improvement work has rightly focused on handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar to help pupils secure the knowledge and skills that they need. Staff training in mathematics has created a very positive, consistent approach across mathematics lessons. Overall, teaching is fully inclusive, with a sharp focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders prioritise helping pupils to keep up with their peers and staff identify gaps in pupils' knowledge systematically.

Starting in the early years, the curriculum is designed thoughtfully. Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum where knowledge is mapped across all year groups and leads to clear end points. The teaching of reading is rigorous and sequenced well. This helps pupils to develop fluency, confidence and enjoyment in books and stories. Generally, staff have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. Resources and materials are used purposefully and in thoughtful ways. Generally, staff present information clearly and check pupils' understanding. However, at times, in some subjects, some of the checks for pupils' understanding are not as effective as they could be. This leads to some pupils not building on their prior knowledge as effectively as they could.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Across the school there is a culture of high expectations for all pupils. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified swiftly. Staff know pupils and families well, and recognise other vulnerabilities quickly also. Inclusive teaching strategies are embedded, particularly in mathematics and English. Leaders make thoughtful changes such as adaptations to the learning environment and the curriculum. Staff plan careful interventions that remove barriers to learning and wellbeing successfully. Pupils' progress within the curriculum is monitored closely so that the school can respond quickly if pupils

don't keep up with their peers. Where needed, leaders work pro-actively with the local authority and external agencies to coordinate provision, such as offering tailored speech and language support for individual pupils.

Support for pupils in receipt of government funding is detailed and targeted well. For example, the school offers an effective ‘intervention menu’ with personalised activities to support reading, mathematics and emotional wellbeing. This has a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress from their starting points. Leaders ensure that pupils open to social care receive the help they need. These pupils also access the curriculum successfully. Staff are trained effectively and have an appropriate focus on narrowing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. There is no use of alternative provision currently.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders understand the school’s strengths and areas for development well. They have worked closely with the staff team to improve outcomes for all pupils, with notable impact in phonics and early reading. Leaders and governors have detailed knowledge of how to improve the school further, and have pupils’ best interests at heart. Leaders champion success for disadvantaged and more vulnerable pupils, making a clear difference to pupils with low prior attainment. Leaders are focused and determined.

Governors are knowledgeable about their duties and responsibilities and carries these out diligently. They know the school’s priorities and their role in supporting them. Governors monitor reports, policies and data systematically and use focus visits and external reports effectively. Governors hold leaders to account appropriately, but could further strengthen the way they use their expertise to challenge and question leaders and ensure outcomes for pupils further improve.

Staff professional learning is thorough. Leaders have established a coherent programme of professional development that empowers staff without creating unrealistic expectations for workload and wellbeing. Leaders work collaboratively with other schools, often supporting other settings with areas such as teacher training and mentoring. Leaders consider staff wellbeing and workload caringly. Staff are very positive about how they are supported at school and the team ethos that leaders have developed. Generally, parents are positive about the school. Most parents appreciate leaders’ conscientious and determined approaches. One parent summarised the thoughts of many others, stating, 'This is a wonderful school that nurtures children to become resilient, caring and kind. Children are very happy’.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The personal development programme includes provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and meets statutory requirements. Pupils talk confidently about the curriculum. They learn about protected characteristics and healthy relationships. Pupils know how keep healthy, and are developing their understanding of potential offline risks, for example the negative impact of smoking, drugs and alcohol on the body. Pupils learn how to keep safe, such as learning basic first aid, road safety and water safety. Pupils are very knowledgeable about online safety and can explain about issues such as protecting

personal information and being critical of online information. Pastoral care is prioritised supportively. Pupils know who to turn to if they have any worries or concerns. The school provides targeted support that helps pupils' understanding their mental and physical health, their development and wellbeing.

Pupils enjoy assemblies which focus on respect and tolerance. They appreciate the opportunity to model processes such as elections by voting for new school councillors. Pupils learn about a range of religions and beliefs. They are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs, and those of others as part of their religious education lessons. Pupils access a range of school trips and educational visits, including residential visits in Year 4 and Year 6.

Leaders have developed a clear overview of personal development that maps out pupils' opportunities thoughtfully. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, art, choir and multi-sports clubs, which are open to all pupils. Music lessons, such as recorder, guitar and rock band lessons, inspire and engage pupils. Opportunities are varied and well-considered. Leaders plan to develop these opportunities further, and strengthen participation for a small proportion of disadvantaged pupils who currently do not access as many activities as their peers.

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

Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life. They model the school's CEDARS values routinely and are respectful towards each other and adults. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified quickly. Staff remove barriers to learning and/or wellbeing for them skilfully. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum successfully and make positive progress from their starting points. Pupils develop a clear sense of belonging and are proud of their school. They enjoy after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities and leaders are working positively to strengthen the school's offer even further.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They respond well to the school's clear routines and staff's high expectations. Relationships between staff and pupils are caring and positive throughout the school, from the beginning of Nursery Year. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Classrooms are purposeful, industrious and full of joy. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they help each other, feel safe and are kind to each other consistently. Pupils' attendance is high, and consistently above national averages. If any pupils are at risk of lower attendance leaders work closely and supportively with them and their families.

Where teaching is most effective, pupils remember the taught knowledge across the curriculum well. For example, in mathematics pupils use resources confidently to carry out calculations and solve increasingly complex mathematical problems. In writing, pupils develop neat, legible handwriting and are rightly proud of their written work. However, in some lessons, checks on pupils' understanding are not as effective as they could be. This means that a some pupils have errors or misconceptions that are not addressed before staff introduce new learning. Typically, by the end of key stage 2 pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education and learning. A small proportion of pupils, however, could achieve more highly.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work in ensuring that checks on pupils' knowledge and understanding are highly effective, addressing pupils' errors and misconceptions consistently, helping pupils to build their knowledge and skills across subjects more effectively.
- Governors should ensure that they further develop their knowledge and expertise to provide targeted, robust challenge to leaders across all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders should ensure that, by the end of key stage 2, the positive impact of the curriculum is reflected in improved published outcomes for pupils in spelling, punctuation and grammar, reading, writing and mathematics.

About this inspection

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 HMI.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Paul Wilson.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders. Inspectors spoke with the chairs of governors. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:
The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Joanne Goldsmith

Lead inspector:
Carl McCarthy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Luke Graham, His Majesty's Inspector
Richard Thomas, His Majesty's 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

255
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

361
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)

18.42%
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

2.75%
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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.25%
Close to 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	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	62%	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	76%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	84%	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	72%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	70%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	36%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	25%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	40%	44%	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	68%	62%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	57%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	60%	Above

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	48%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	71%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	38%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	40%	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	44%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	25%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	59%	Close to average

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	36%	68%	-32 pp
2024/25 (final)	43%	69%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	25%	67%	-42 pp
2022/23 (final)	40%	66%	-26 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	68%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	57%	81%	-24 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	80%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	80%	78%	2 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	48%	78%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	71%	78%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	38%	78%	-40 pp
2022/23 (final)	40%	77%	-37 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	44%	80%	-36 pp
2024/25 (final)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	25%	79%	-54 pp
2022/23 (final)	60%	79%	-19 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)	4.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.7%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.9%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	8.2%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	12.4%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	13.0%	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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