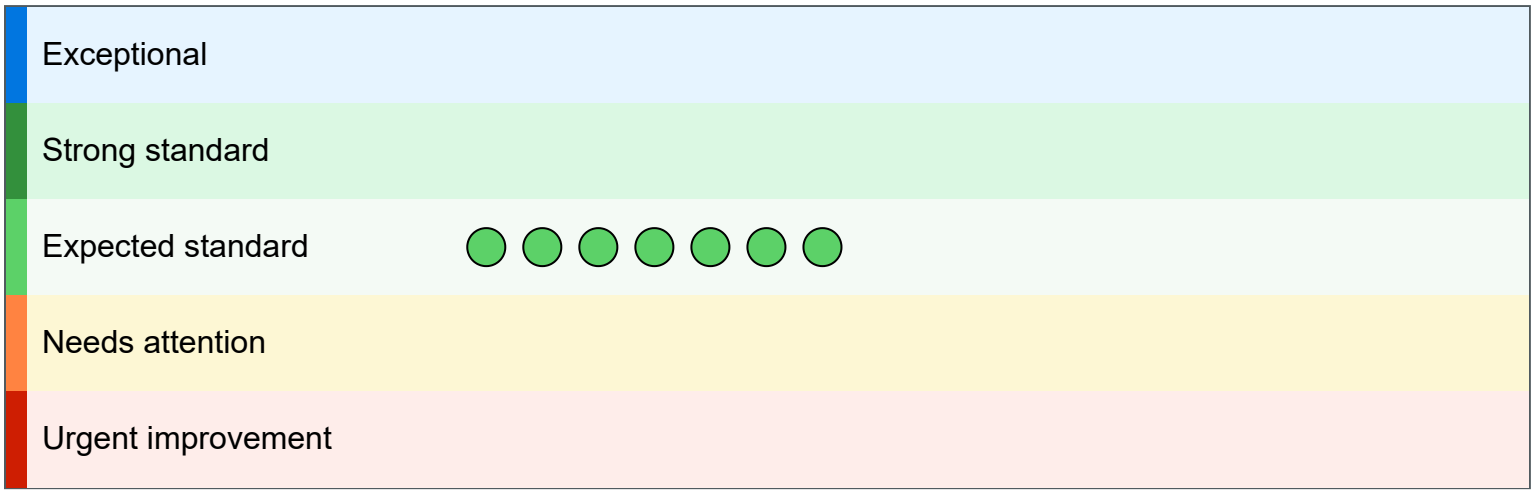
Potters Gate CofE Primary School

Address: Potters Gate, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7BB

Unique reference number (URN): 145278

Inspection report: 30 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

By the end of key stage 2, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Published test data is often in line with or above national averages, with very positive achievement in reading and mathematics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), progress well through the curriculum across subjects from their starting points. Pupils are ready for their next stage of education.

Pupils' work in books is generally of a high quality. Pupils can talk confidently about their learning, such as describing different empires in history or retelling poems and rhymes in Reception Year. Subject curriculums impact well on pupils' learning, such as science, where work in books is of a consistently high standard. Pupils, including those with SEND, develop their topic vocabulary and use subject language with increasing confidence. However, some pupils' achievement in writing is not as secure as it could be, particularly for a proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders track and monitor attendance well so that they know patterns of absence at the school. Leaders support parents and carers through initiatives such as wraparound care and activity clubs to help secure positive and regular attendance for most pupils. On the whole, these strategies are successful. Persistent absence and overall levels of attendance are generally in line with national averages.

Leaders emphasise the importance of positive relationships between staff and pupils at the school. They establish clear routines that help pupils know what is expected of them. Adaptations for pupils who present more challenging behaviour are thoughtful, inclusive and caring. There is a whole-school focus on pupils being ‘ready, respectful and safe’, which is revisited consistently and known by pupils well. Breaktime and lunchtime play is filled with joy. Pupils play with their friends and enjoy the school resources, climbing areas and school field respectfully. Bullying is not a regular feature of school life, and any forms of harassment or discrimination are dealt with appropriately. Pupils feel safe and are happy. In lessons, most pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are positive, although occasionally, where teaching is less effective, pupils' behaviour is also not as focused and self-disciplined as it could be.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development in curriculum and teaching. The school and subject curriculums are appropriate, and staff teach the curriculum effectively across year groups. In subjects such as mathematics and English, staff model and explain new language clearly and check pupils’ understanding systematically. This helps pupils to secure the foundations of learning that they need. Teaching is inclusive. Staff know pupils’ needs well and put in place effective adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as additional individual adult support or teaching new lesson content to pupils individually before lessons start.

Reading is taught well. Where pupils have gaps in their phonics knowledge, individual interventions ensure that these close quickly. In mathematics, staff adopt skilful approaches that help pupils to progress through the curriculum well. Some aspects of the writing curriculum, however, are not implemented as consistently and effectively as they could be. Some activity choices to support pupils building their knowledge and skills in writing do not consistently and effectively strengthen pupils' learning. A small proportion of disadvantaged pupils, in particular, need more specific adaptations to their learning to enable them to close the academic gap between them and their peers.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders have a developing understanding of the strengths of the early years provision and areas for development. The curriculum is appropriate and includes the key knowledge and vocabulary that leaders want children to learn. Staff use poems, songs and stories to help children build emotional connections to their learning. For example, a poetry basket helps children learn a poem a week, developing language skilfully, and daily story time includes acting out stories and traditional tales, which are revisited over time. Vulnerable children, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported effectively. Relationships between staff and children are very positive, and children are helped to develop a love of nature and the world around them skilfully.

Generally, staff and child interactions help children to grow in confidence and build their knowledge, skills and vocabulary effectively. In early mathematics, for example, language is promoted through water measuring and encouraging the children to say ‘more’ and ‘full’ confidently. Across the curriculum, staff use carefully scripted questions to help maximise learning opportunities in the environment. Generally, children achieve well across all areas of learning. Developing children's writing is still a focus area for the school. By the end of Reception Year, most children are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders assess and identify pupils' needs quickly. Staff are well trained in how to evaluate pupils' learning and wellbeing needs. They personalise provision effectively for more vulnerable pupils. Leaders have a clear focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), looked-after and previously looked-after pupils, and those who are disadvantaged. Where needed, staff adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND and provide them with the classroom resources and support that they need. The school adopts whole-school strategies, such as the use of visual timetables and pictures, to support pupils with their learning of new vocabulary effectively. Leaders prioritise emotional wellbeing for all, with routines that are embedded and used consistently, such as staff emotional check-ins with pupils each day.

Leaders use funding, such as pupil premium funding, in well-considered ways to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders focus on emotional wellbeing. Staff's caring approaches enable disadvantaged pupils to feel happy and participate fully in school life. The impact of premium funding on disadvantaged pupils' learning, however, is not as effective as it could be, and there is further work for leaders to do to address this.

Where necessary, the school uses alternative provision appropriately to offer help to pupils who are more vulnerable.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, governors and trustees understand the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors and trustees carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and support and challenge leaders well. They use school visits, questioning and meetings effectively to review reports and evaluate the impact of school policies systematically. Leaders have developed a culture of positive, supportive relationships and a collaborative team approach. Some school premises issues and hazards were identified during the course of the inspection, but these were rectified quickly, and appropriate risk assessments were put in place and/or shared with the inspection team, where needed.

Leaders, governors and trustees support staff workload and wellbeing thoughtfully. They meet regularly with staff and use surveys well to keep an overview of the impact of the school's ongoing improvement work. Staff and pupil wellbeing is a focus for leaders' actions. Staff enjoy working at the school. One member of staff summarised the thoughts of many others, saying, 'We know we are cared for.' Leaders engage with parents and carers very positively and help to create what is a harmonious and inclusive school community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many share that their children are happy and thriving.

Professional learning for staff is thoughtful and based on relevant research and evidence. The training offer and school improvement priorities are not as clearly linked to the existing challenges for the school as they could be, however. This means that some actions taken by leaders do not yet have the impact on pupils' learning that they intend, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and in areas such as improving writing. Trustees, governors and leaders are aware of this and have already made positive steps to sharpen actions for improvement going forwards.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school takes an innovative approach to the personal development and wellbeing curriculum, with some aspects of the programme taught very positively. For example, the justice, equity, diversity and inclusion 'JEDI' work is a focus for the school, which supports pupils positively. Through this, pupils develop an understanding of recognising themselves in the world, in texts and literature, and in jobs. Leaders support this with a wide variety of visits and enrichment activities, including assemblies and visiting speakers who are often experts in their field. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development meets statutory requirements. Pupils have developing knowledge and understanding of protected characteristics, relationships and healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn appropriately about safety, including how to stay safe when online, road safety and water safety. Leaders are passionate about pastoral care and support for pupils' mental health and wellbeing. Pupils know who to turn to if they are worried or feel that they need extra help to support their emotional wellbeing.

Pupils are very happy. They care for each other and are proud of their school. Pupils are aware of their own mental health and know that there are systems in place to keep them

emotionally well in times of increased pressure, for example when a younger sibling is born and when helping with care for others in the home. Leaders map out pupils' opportunities thoughtfully. School clubs are open to all pupils, and if any pupils face financial barriers to attending, leaders are supportive. Pupils are developing their understanding of fundamental British values. They know the school's values very well but do not yet consistently have secure and detailed knowledge across the personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum. Pupils learn about a range of religions and beliefs but are not always confident or able to remember what their lessons help them to learn and/or why it is important for life beyond school.

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

Pupils know the school's values of fellowship, resilience, justice and trust well. They enjoy school, are safe and feel safe. Pupils develop a clear understanding of, and celebrate, diversity in line with the school's motto of 'Everyone different, Everyone equal'. Pupils are proud of how they contribute to school life through their roles and responsibilities, such as prefects and school councillors. Pupils develop a clear sense of belonging. Vulnerable pupils are included and fully participate in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy a rich variety of sports and arts opportunities that occur before, during and after school. Most pupils attend school regularly. A small proportion of disadvantaged pupils have lower attendance, and the school is working closely with parents and carers to help address this. Generally, pupils' behaviour is appropriate and most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. Bullying is rare but dealt with quickly if any incidents occur.

Most pupils learn the curriculum well. By the end of key stage 2, published results in reading and mathematics are often above national averages. Where the curriculum and teaching are most effective, pupils build on their prior knowledge and develop deeper understanding of their subjects. However, currently, the curriculum is not implemented consistently well across all year groups and subjects. Some of the activities to help some pupils know and remember more are not matched to pupils' starting points as precisely as they could be. This means that by the end of key stage 2, some pupils, in particular disadvantaged pupils, do not achieve as securely as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported appropriately. Pupils' learning and wellbeing needs are identified quickly. Most pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils make positive progress from their starting points.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the writing curriculum is implemented consistently well across year groups, including in the early years, to enable all pupils to be fully ready for their next stage of education.
- Leaders should ensure that they accurately identify, monitor and act on priorities for improvement that lead to consistently strong standards for disadvantaged pupils.

- Leaders should ensure that activity choices across the curriculum strengthen pupils' knowledge and skills and enable pupils to build on their prior learning highly effectively.

About this inspection

This school is part of The Good Shepherd Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Kennedy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne McLeod.

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

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

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders. They also spoke with the chair of trustees, other trustees, the governance professional and the CEO.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Jayne Venables

Lead inspector:
Carl McCarthy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Catherine Old, His Majesty's Inspector
Clare Vallence, Ofsted Inspector
Kate Magliocco, 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 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

542
Well above 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

540
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)

11.44%
Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

2.58%
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

9.59%

Below 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	73%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	72%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	78%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	70%	60%	Above

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	85%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	92%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	82%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Above

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	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	81%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	87%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	73%	Above

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	35%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	36%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	27%	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	59%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	63%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	60%	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	43%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	36%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	36%	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	46%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	43%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	36%	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	35%	68%	-32 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	69%	-33 pp
2023/24 (final)	42%	67%	-26 pp
2022/23 (final)	27%	66%	-39 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	59%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	80%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	64%	78%	-15 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	43%	78%	-35 pp
2024/25 (final)	36%	78%	-43 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	78%	-19 pp
2022/23 (final)	36%	77%	-41 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	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	79%	-21 pp
2022/23 (final)	36%	79%	-43 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)	4.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.1%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.8%	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)	10.8%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.4%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.3%	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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