

Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Address: Ongar Hill, KT15 1BP

Unique reference number (URN): 143368

Inspection report: 6 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

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 ●

Pupils revel in coming to school. Their enthusiasm for learning is reflected in their high rates of attendance. Leaders take highly effective actions to support pupils and their families. They work proactively with appropriate agencies to remove barriers to attendance and swiftly resolve any issues. Consequently, pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average and persistent absenteeism is low. This unwavering focus on attendance ensures that pupils form positive friendships and blossom both academically and personally. It also ensures that pupils develop a profound sense of belonging here, regardless of their needs.

The school has a tangible atmosphere of togetherness and compassion in all areas. Pupils are courteous and behave extremely well. They follow instructions with thought and care. Pupils look forward to their learning and engage enthusiastically in classroom discussions. Staff take every opportunity to nurture and celebrate positive behaviour, which pupils appreciate. Pupils trust adults to deal efficiently with any worries or concerns they have. Leaders identify pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour or emotions and provide timely and highly effective support.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a clear vision for the school. They understand the school's strengths and areas of development, taking action quickly if any aspect of the school's work falls below expectations. Together with trust experts, leaders have worked highly effectively to secure rapid and sustained improvement in pupils' achievement, the early years provision and teaching in recent years. Leaders have successfully embedded a culture of high aspirations for staff and pupils. As a result, there is a clear ethos of collaboration and teamwork in all areas of the school.

At all levels of leadership, there is a determination that all pupils will succeed, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders identify appropriate areas for development, ensuring that pupils' interests are always at the forefront of decisions. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the impact the school has on their child's educational experience.

Trustees are knowledgeable in their roles. They provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support to ensure that the school continues to move from strength to strength. They fulfil their roles and responsibilities to a high standard.

Leaders ensure that teachers receive high-quality training to strengthen their expertise. They are considerate of staff workload and wellbeing. Staff appreciate reductions to their workload and the high-quality training and professional development they receive from the trust and leaders.

The school's work to promote pupils' character is noteworthy. Pupils have an impactful knowledge of the curriculum in this area. They are thoughtful, responsible and resilient citizens who demonstrate a genuine respect for others. Their work on projects such as fair trade and conservation helps them to develop a deep appreciation of the significance of looking after the environment and being self-reliant.

Pupils are very knowledgeable about their rights and those of others. They talk maturely about differences and similarities between religious celebrations. Pupils discuss topics such as equity, disability and individual liberty thoughtfully and with great sophistication. Younger children learn to take turns, share resources and resolve minor conflicts with increasing maturity. They show empathy towards others and develop a clear sense of right and wrong.

Pupils perfect their leadership skills through their roles as school councillors, eco-warriors and digital or sports leaders. They learn how to work together, solve problems and manage disagreements calmly. For example, when undertaking group decisions, pupils share tasks fairly and talk through hurdles to find a solution together.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy taking part in a wealth of enrichment opportunities. These contribute significantly to pupils' experiences and build their character and resilience. Pupils willingly extend their support for the different causes they choose. For instance, they sponsor a daily hot lunch for children in another country.

The personal, social and health education curriculum enables pupils to develop a detailed knowledge of important aspects. This includes how to take care of their mental health and wellbeing, including age-appropriate relationships education. Pupils learn how to stay safe, both online and offline.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience meaningful opportunities to engage with music, art and sports, which enrich their understanding of the world around them. They participate in careers fairs, which help to raise their aspirations for the future.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils generally make secure progress through the curriculum and achieve very well in national outcomes at the end of key stage 2. Leaders check carefully that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who are disadvantaged, succeed in their learning. As a result, pupils leave school confident to take on the challenges in the next stage of their education.

Overall, across different subjects, pupils experience a curriculum that is purposeful, ambitious and positive. This enables pupils to secure their foundational knowledge, particularly in reading and mathematics. Typically, teachers provide opportunities that encourage pupils to apply their learning across the curriculum. However, sometimes, pupils

do not secure their understanding thoroughly. This means that in some aspects of their learning they do not embed their knowledge as well as they could.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is well sequenced and ambitious. Leaders have set out precisely the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. Pupils build a broader appreciation of different subjects through a range of experiences. This helps them to use and apply their knowledge with increasing confidence. Where required, the curriculum is typically suitably adapted to cater for the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The vibrant curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge and skills they need for future success. This includes in the foundations of reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the curriculum, there is a deliberate focus on ensuring that pupils develop technical vocabulary to discuss and explore their ideas. Reading has a high priority. Leaders make sure that pupils who need extra help with their reading are supported well so that they catch up quickly. Staff take every opportunity to promote a love of reading.

Leaders have a sharp understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They use this well to inform staff training. Consequently, teachers have strong subject knowledge. However, sometimes, teaching does not check well enough what pupils understand before moving on to new work. Where this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that the early years curriculum is interesting and is designed carefully. This ensures that children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access learning in all areas effectively. Staff quickly identify any barriers to learning that children may have. This includes children with SEND.

Staff build nurturing relationships with children and respond sensitively to their individual needs. Leaders also work well with parents and external agencies to ensure that children have the right help and support to make progress in their learning.

Typically, children learn well from the start and leave reception well prepared for their future learning. There is a deliberate focus on building children's communication and language skills. Staff emphasise and effectively model appropriate language and vocabulary. This helps children to learn, practise and secure the language that they use. However, sometimes, staff do not check and address gaps or misconceptions in children's learning well enough.

Staff introduce children to phonics from the moment they join in Reception class. They check carefully that children learn to use their phonics knowledge to read and write with growing confidence. Staff inspire children to use and apply their phonics knowledge confidently and independently in the provision.

Leaders have created a culture of high ambition that permeates the school. They are resolute in their determination to ensure that all pupils receive the support required to achieve success, regardless of their individual needs or starting points. Leaders' decisions are made in pupils' best interests. Leaders use additional funding efficiently so that disadvantaged pupils and their classmates are successful in their learning.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies and with colleagues across the trust to support pupils who face challenges or barriers to learning. Staff benefit from regular training, which develops their expertise in areas such as speech, language and communication.

Leaders have established effective systems to identify pupils' needs quickly, including for those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or have previously been involved with children's social care. Leaders routinely check, evaluate and review pupils' progress. Where necessary, teachers adapt the curriculum and teaching to provide purposeful and effective support. For example, staff typically adapt tasks well in response to pupils' emerging needs. However, there are variations in the quality of support to reduce barriers in some aspects of pupils' learning, such as spelling and handwriting.

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

Pupils are proud members of their happy and welcoming school. They value the warm relationships that they have with staff, which help them to feel, and be, safe. Pupils know there is always an adult in school they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns, including about bullying. They look after each other. Pupils attend school regularly. They are pleased about how they improve their behaviour over time and become independent.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff take every opportunity to nurture and celebrate pupils' achievements and wider success. There is a tangible buzz of excitement in every classroom as pupils eagerly join in with activities. They leave school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders make sure that pupils develop a deep sense of their place in the wider world. For instance, pupils debate and explore a range of topics, such as animal extinction, global warming, homelessness and immigration. They demonstrate a mature appreciation of individual rights and mutual respect. One pupil captured the views of many saying, 'Our differences are the thing that makes us all unique and special.'

Pupils relish the wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities that help them to stay active and healthy. They are particularly pleased with their role in creating and managing the 'OLAF' play programme. Pupils develop their hobbies and talents through the wide range of after-school clubs, such as singing, crochet, acrobatics and karate.

The extensive careers programme enables pupils to learn about the different jobs they can pursue in the future. Pupils also learn about the wider world through an interesting range of trips and visits that bring learning to life.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to ensure that teachers skilfully identify and address key gaps or misunderstandings in pupils' learning, so that all pupils, including the youngest children, secure and embed the important knowledge they need.
 - Leaders should continue to ensure that staff are well trained to make timely adjustments in teaching, so that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities develop fluent spelling and handwriting skills.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Xavier Catholic Education 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), James Kibble, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mirek Gliniecki.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff members. The lead inspector also spoke with the CEO, directors from the trust, the chair of trustees and four governors during the inspection. An inspector also spoke on the telephone with an officer from the diocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection was in July 2019.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher : Zelia Munnik

Lead inspector:

Shazia Akram, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Mineza Maher, Ofsted Inspector

Michael Eggleton, Ofsted 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 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

219

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

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)

8.68%

Well below 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

3.20%

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

6.85%

Well below 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	80%	61%	Above
2024/25	79%	62%	Above
2023/24	85%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23	76%	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	88%	74%	Above
2024/25	85%	75%	Above
2023/24	91%	74%	Above
2022/23	88%	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	91%	72%	Above
2024/25	94%	72%	Above
2023/24	91%	72%	Above
2022/23	88%	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	94%	73%	Above
2024/25	97%	74%	Above
2023/24	88%	73%	Above
2022/23	97%	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	62%	46%	Above
2024/25	S	47%	S
2023/24	S	46%	S
2022/23	S	44%	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	77%	62%	Above
2024/25	S	63%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	S	62%	S
2022/23	S	60%	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	85%	59%	Above
2024/25	S	59%	S
2023/24	S	58%	S
2022/23	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	85%	60%	Above
2024/25	S	61%	S
2023/24	S	59%	S
2022/23	S	59%	S

'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	62%	68%	-6 pp
2024/25	S	69%	S
2023/24	S	67%	S
2022/23	S	66%	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	77%	80%	-3 pp
2024/25	S	81%	S
2023/24	S	80%	S
2022/23	S	78%	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	85%	78%	7 pp
2024/25	S	78%	S
2023/24	S	78%	S
2022/23	S	77%	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	85%	80%	5 pp
2024/25	S	81%	S
2023/24	S	79%	S
2022/23	S	79%	S

‘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
2024/25 (2 terms)	3.2%	5.2%	Below
2023/24	3.7%	5.5%	Below
2022/23	4.3%	5.9%	Below

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 (2 terms)	5.8%	13.3%	Below
2023/24	3.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23	6.3%	16.2%	Below

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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