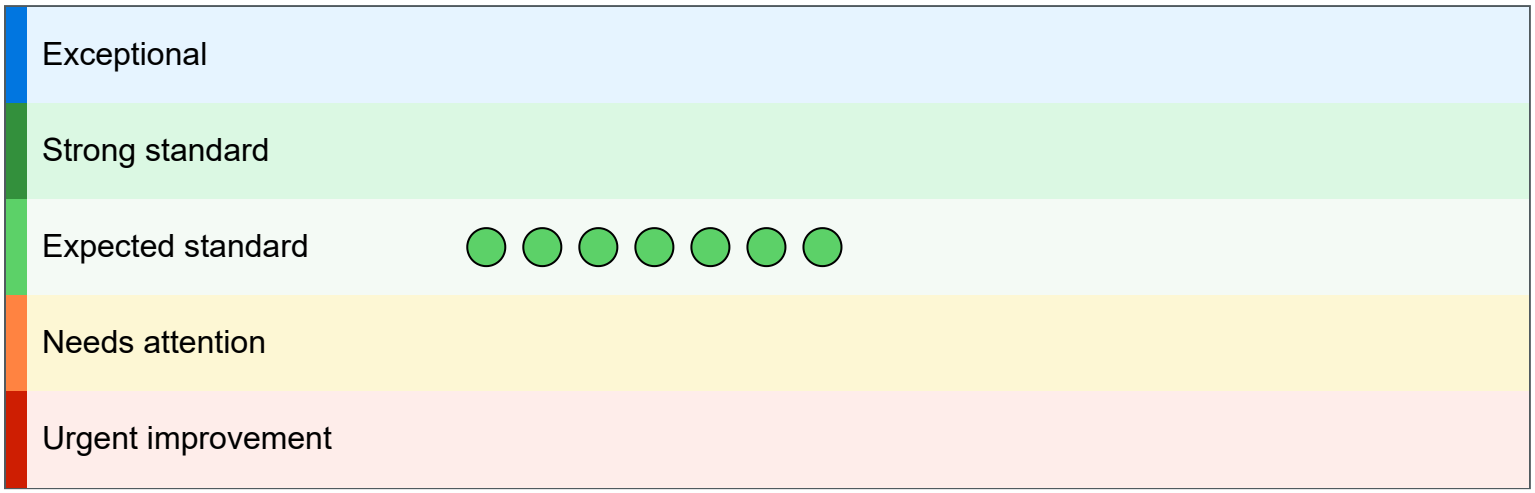
Barford Primary School

Address: Chapel Street, Barford, Norwich, Norfolk, NR9 4AB

Unique reference number (URN): 120783

Inspection report: 2 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

Pupils typically achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) generally gain the knowledge and skills they need to move successfully to their next steps of learning. Overall, pupils develop the knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils struggle to develop the knowledge required to write neatly, fluently and at length. Leaders recognise that pupils' writing is not consistently of a high quality. They are taking appropriate action to address this.

Pupils' work, and their responses to teachers' questions, show that they secure key knowledge. Pupils' achievement is stronger than recent published outcomes from national tests and assessments suggest. This includes from the Year 1 phonics screening check and writing at the end of key stage 2. This is because the numbers taking the tests and assessments are small. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, achieve well by the end of Year 6.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Most pupils attend school regularly and in line with other schools nationally. Leaders have robust systems to track attendance and monitor absence closely. Leaders provide appropriate support so that pupils' individual barriers to attendance are, generally, reduced or removed. In recent years, the school has faced challenges in ensuring that some pupils with additional needs attend as regularly as they should. Leaders have worked with these pupils, their families and external agencies to support them. This has secured improved attendance for individual pupils.

Pupils feel safe. They know that bullying is rare and that adults address any behaviour concerns effectively. Leaders provide effective support for the small number of pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour and emotions. Pupils typically demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Classrooms are calm, purposeful and inclusive environments where pupils focus on their work. Adaptations support pupils' engagement and concentration effectively. Pupils work independently and collaboratively, responding well to the clear routines and expectations that staff establish. Staff introduce these routines from the early years, ensuring consistency across the school. Relationships between pupils and staff reflect the school's values of empathy, trust and respect. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. .

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and the curriculum. They visit lessons and work alongside staff to accurately identify strengths in teaching and next steps to make things even better. Leaders act quickly and effectively when they spot areas that need improvement.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed a curriculum that enables pupils to build on what they have already learned. Leaders are further refining the curriculum for

subjects other than English and mathematics. This is so that pupils can learn consistently well across all subjects and year groups.

In the early years and key stage 1, staff teach important foundational knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics effectively. Pupils in key stage 2 build securely on this essential knowledge, meaning that they can access the wider curriculum.

The teaching of reading is a particular strength. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read do so appropriately. In phonics lessons, staff model sounds precisely and question pupils appropriately. This results in pupils learning and applying phonics knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words. Leaders recognise that the teaching of writing requires further development to be as highly effective as the teaching of reading. This is especially important for higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can fulfil their potential.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years make a secure start to school. They build warm, trusting relationships with staff in a caring setting, where all are valued. This helps children feel safe and well supported. Clear routines help children develop independence and positive learning habits.

Leaders have implemented an early years curriculum that builds children's knowledge and skills over time. Staff teach the curriculum well because leaders give them clear guidance and support. Staff know children's starting points because they spend time with children in 'stay-and-play' sessions and use ongoing checks on their learning. Staff identify accurately any barriers to learning and/or wellbeing that children may have, including any special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school places reading at the centre of early learning. Staff read stories often and help children develop a love of books. Children learn to read through a structured phonics programme.

Staff teach children the foundations they need for future learning. They use direct teaching and carefully chosen activities to build these skills. Staff's interactions help children talk, listen and stay engaged. Children develop well across all areas of learning. Children progress well from their starting points and are suitably prepared for learning in Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise high-quality, inclusive teaching so that it reduces barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff provide targeted help that reduces barriers and enables pupils to access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers. Leaders choose approaches and strategies that match pupils' needs well and maintain high expectations. Leaders work closely with parents and carers, the virtual school and external professionals. This collaboration ensures that pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders use additional funding purposefully so that disadvantaged pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points and take part fully in the school's enrichment offer.

The school provides strong support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Staff design routines and adapt learning carefully for these pupils. This enables them to access the curriculum successfully. Staff undertake training that strengthens their skills in supporting pupils with a range of additional needs. However, sometimes staff do not deliver academic interventions consistently well. At times, they do not adjust interventions or adaptations as effectively as they could, which can slow pupils' progress through the curriculum.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils and committed to the school. They work in partnership to achieve their vision of the school being a supportive and nurturing community, where pupils are motivated and inspired to achieve well now and in the future. Parents and carers speak warmly of the school and its strong sense of community.

Leaders prioritise areas for development that will be most beneficial for pupils. Leaders' actions are effective and timely. They ensure any necessary improvements are made. The school has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders have secured this progress while managing a challenging financial situation. For example, leaders have made difficult decisions about staffing and class structures at the same time as making necessary improvements to curriculum, teaching and achievement.

Governors know the school's improvement priorities and bring a wide range of skills to their role. They meet their statutory duties and ask appropriate questions about safeguarding, resources and pupils' experiences. This provides leaders with effective support and challenge.

The school promotes staff's professional learning. It provides staff with the training that they need to develop their practice. Leaders and staff benefit from working in collaboration with colleagues from other schools and external advisers. This enables them to engage with effective practice and learn from others. Leaders ensure that professional learning makes a positive contribution to the school's development.

Staff know that leaders support their wellbeing and workload. For example, staff appreciate the curriculum resources that help them to teach.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have implemented a suitable personal development programme. Pupils show a secure and age-appropriate understanding of personal development. Older pupils explain relationships, health and wider social issues with confidence. They describe the features of a healthy relationship, emphasising kindness, mutual respect and equality. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They talk clearly about treating others fairly and describe the school as an inclusive environment where everyone is valued.

Pupils learn about healthy and unhealthy choices. This includes the risks linked to smoking and drugs. Teaching about diversity and inclusion is a strength. It enables pupils to speak with maturity about different cultures and religions. Pupils do this showing respect, tolerance and an appreciation of difference. Pupils understand the concepts that underpin fundamental British values such as democracy and the rule of law.

Leaders ensure that all pupils access a broad range of enrichment opportunities. This includes learning through a bespoke arts and culture project. Such experiences help pupils develop their wider talents and interests, for example sports, art and music.

The school takes deliberate steps to ensure that all pupils can participate in its wider offer. Staff make adaptations when needed so that activities remain accessible to all. Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to provide individualised support and broaden the experiences of disadvantaged pupils beyond the academic.

The school provides pupils with a range of leadership opportunities. Pupils talk proudly about being head pupils, eco councillors and wellbeing leaders. Pupils value the chance to promote reading as reading ambassadors. These roles support pupils' wider development and sense of responsibility.

Pupils benefit from effective pastoral support. Trained staff provide targeted help that enables pupils to manage their emotions. Pupils recognise the positive impact this support has on their confidence, behaviour and readiness to learn.

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

Pupils know that leaders and staff understand them well and care for them in this small, village school. They are greeted warmly at the start of each day by leaders and staff. Pupils enter school ready to learn.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils enjoy learning and feel proud of what they achieve. This begins in the early years, where children learn routines quickly, helping them feel safe and settled. Across the school, pupils and staff take pride in being part of a community where everyone is encouraged to do their best.

Pupils are safe. They learn how to keep safe, both online and in the local community. They appreciate help and advice that staff provide. Pupils, from early years to Year 6, benefit from an environment where everyone is included, cared for and expected to do their best. Staff understand and support pupils' pastoral and/or academic needs.

Pupils know that behaviour is generally good. They have a clear understanding of what bullying is. It is rare. Pupils are confident that staff will respond quickly and effectively if any behaviour issues do arise. Pupils show that they understand respect and tolerance and why these are important. Outside of lessons, pupils play together well in a friendly manner. They enjoy using the outside equipment provided, including materials for building dens.

Pupils are eager to contribute positively to the school community. They aspire to be part of the pupil leadership team. Pupils recognise that leaders and staff value their views.

Pupils learn increasingly well because leaders and staff develop the curriculum and teaching they provide. As a result of learning better, pupils are achieving more. Pupils enjoy learning about taking risks and becoming independent when learning in the school's forest area. When pupils need help, staff provide timely and appropriate support.

Next steps

- Leaders and teachers should further develop the teaching of writing so that it consistently meets the needs of pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with previous high attainment.
- Leaders should further refine the curriculum for foundation subjects so that pupils consistently develop deep subject knowledge across all subjects.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Chris Scott.

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 executive headteacher and other leaders and staff during the inspection. They also spoke to a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has had a change in class structure since the previous inspection.

Leaders do not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher: Carla Stedman

Lead inspector:
Mark Carter-Tufnell, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Emma Davies, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

98
Well 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: 272

School capacity

110
Well 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)

15.31%
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

7.14%
Well above 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

16.33%
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

Well 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	48%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	56%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	47%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	81%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

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	55%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	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	40%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	70%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	40%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (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	50%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	40%	68%	-28 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	70%	80%	-10 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	40%	78%	-38 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	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 (3 term)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.5%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.1%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	11.4%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	18.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.9%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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