

Hyde Park Infants' School

Address: Hyde Park Road, Mutley, Plymouth, PL3 4RS

Unique reference number (URN): 150037

Inspection report: 2 June 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 ●

Leaders prioritise attendance and track it carefully. High attendance is an expectation for all. Leaders use various tools effectively to analyse trends and patterns. If attendance rates fall, they address it quickly. Leaders build strong relationships with families to understand individual circumstances. This helps them take timely actions to remove barriers. As a result, attendance rates have improved consistently over time. They now exceed national averages for all pupils, including those who have found it difficult to attend in the past. Rates of persistent absence have drastically reduced and are below national averages. This success comes from leaders' determination to create a place where pupils feel they belong.

Behaviour is very positive. Leaders have created a calm environment where pupils show excellent learning behaviours. Pupils are kind and polite to each other and to adults. Learning is the focus in classrooms. Pupils respond well to embedded routines and expectations. Leaders monitor behaviour closely. Where appropriate, individualised support is used, leading to clear improvements for specific pupils who are at risk of suspension. Bullying is not an issue because leaders take effective action to prevent it.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Leaders have significantly improved the early years provision. They have crafted a warm, inviting environment that is stimulating and helps children succeed.

Leaders provide staff with frequent opportunities to develop their skills. This leads to high-quality interactions that help children build their vocabulary and speaking and listening skills. Children learn key skills in reading, writing, and mathematics from the start. Staff use every chance to improve accuracy, correct misunderstandings and build fluency.

Staff follow children's development closely. Leaders use targeted actions to close gaps quickly. This helps children succeed, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

Children sustain their engagement very well, using taught ways to be independent. Staff know the children and their level of development well. Adults intervene skilfully at key moments to maintain their concentration.

Children's transitions from pre-school are well managed. Leaders make sure children are known before they start school and build positive relationships with families.

Leaders have a deep knowledge of early years education. They have skilfully developed a highly effective programme. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders are passionate and highly committed to developing the whole child. Their thoughtful programme for personal development helps pupils gain valuable experiences. This prepares

them well for key stage 2 and life beyond.

Pupils develop a secure, detailed knowledge of the curriculum and can confidently describe what they have learned. They understand the fundamental British values well. They show respect for diversity and appreciate protected characteristics in a way that is suitable for their age. They accurately recall learning from religious education and personal, social and health education lessons.

Clear strategies, steady routines and high expectations have helped pupils behave and develop well. Pupils across the school, even in the early years, show great determination and independence in their learning.

The curriculum includes planned elements, like RNLI visits tailored to pupils' local context. Pupils have many chances to explore their talents and interests. These include careers day, film club and musical theatre clubs. Leadership roles, such as the Eco Council and Sport Council, provide pupils with meaningful responsibilities. These roles help them develop character and understand citizenship.

Staff emphasise a secure sense of belonging. This is evident in various aspects of school life. For instance, the military club supports children from service families. The school has achieved 'School of Sanctuary' status confirming it is a safe and welcoming place for asylum seekers and refugees. Pupils celebrate diversity and show genuine respect for others. One pupil said, 'It's ok for people to be different. If we were the same, it would be boring.'

Leaders have created a culture that focuses on pupils' emotional wellbeing and resilience. Pupils receive individual emotional support when needed. They enjoy the school's 'windows and mirrors' approach to curriculum design. This helps ensure that all pupils feel represented in what they learn.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils generally achieve well across the school. The proportion of pupils who pass the Year 1 phonics screening check is consistently above the national average. Reading is a clear priority and pupils make good progress through the school's phonics scheme. A large proportion of pupils often reach reading levels higher than expected for their age.

Pupils who have gaps in their reading, writing or speaking and listening skills catch up quickly. This is due to effective assessment and targeted work.

Pupils who join mid-year, including those who may be new to the country and those learning English as an additional language, benefit from well-embedded assessment systems and consistent teaching approaches. This ensures that the majority make sound progress and achieve well, regardless of their varied starting points.

Across the wider curriculum, most pupils demonstrate increasing ability to recall what they have been taught, although this is not yet consistent across subjects.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have embedded effective teaching strategies based on best practice and research-informed methods. Pupils become resilient, independent and reflective learners.

The core skills of reading, writing and mathematics are prioritised and taught well. Staff are skilled and consistently use the school's agreed approaches. As a result, pupils develop accuracy and fluency in these areas.

Training has ensured that teachers deliver high-quality phonics lessons. The most skilled practitioners support the least confident readers. Consequently, weaknesses in pupils' phonics knowledge are addressed systematically.

Leaders have created a step-by-step approach to help pupils who are working below their expected level in writing. This approach allows specific gaps in pupils' understanding to be filled.

The wider curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils spoke excitedly about the artists they have studied and the techniques they have tried. Teaching methods are helping pupils remember more of the knowledge they have covered. Pupils are starting to link their current lessons to what they have learned before, but this is not consistent for all groups.

Teachers use assessment effectively in lessons. However, assessment information gathered at the end of units could be used more effectively to help some pupils build on what they have learned over time.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff know pupils well. This supports the school's inclusive culture.

Leaders typically identify any barriers to learning that pupils may face. This begins when children first start at the school. This early identification allows for support to be set up right away. Leaders check these pupils' progress to ensure support is effective. However, leaders tracking sometimes lacks the precision required to ensure that pupils make the progress they are capable of.

Staff training enables teachers to adjust their teaching approaches. This helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside their peers. Parents, especially those with children who have speech and language needs, see real progress and value the school's support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support. Leaders are ambitious for them and they learn well.

Pupils with the highest levels of need are provided with tailored resources and adaptations so that they can succeed. The school has set up its own provision for these pupils, offering a

nurturing environment where they can access a more personalised curriculum when needed. This provision helps pupils with the highest needs to thrive in school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Those responsible for governance are active and well informed. They offer effective support and challenge to leaders.

Since the school opened in 2023 as part of the Learning Academies Trust, leaders have steadily improved the quality of its work. Trust support and leadership investment have contributed to this improvement. Senior leaders at both the school and trust level have set high expectations. This has led to better teaching and higher-quality practice throughout the school.

Leaders show professionalism and a clear commitment to improve the school. They have acted promptly to establish a high-quality education for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well served. However, the rigour of performance monitoring in some areas is not precise enough to support the progress of some groups of pupils.

Leaders are helping staff build the skills they need for their roles. Staff appreciate these opportunities and value the accompanying focus placed on their wellbeing in this period. Parents, pupils, and staff are positive about the school and support the changes that leaders have made. This shows that leaders are successfully guiding the school through a time of change.

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

This school is in a striking Victorian building in the heart of Plymouth city centre. It is inclusive and welcoming. Pupils see their school as a safe place to learn. They feel comfortable and relaxed. One pupil said, '[It] helps me see who I am and is a place where I can be myself.' Pupils enjoy coming to school, and this results in high rates of attendance.

Classrooms are friendly and calm, allowing pupils to concentrate on learning. Leaders have focused intently on creating a school environment that is welcoming. Low lighting and plants create inviting areas for learning. Leaders have deliberately designed the colour palette, devised learning walls and created quiet nooks. This ensures that pupils are engaged but not overstimulated and have spaces to unwind when needed.

Teaching routines are consistent and clear. Pupils understand what their teachers expect of them and learn well. Teachers create focused classrooms where pupils engage in their learning. Year 1 phonics screening checks show above-average results. This reflects the benefits of improved teaching, staff training and careful tracking of pupils' progress.

Pupils thrive in this inclusive environment. They build a strong sense of belonging. The school has earned the title 'School of Sanctuary'. This shows its focus on building empathy

and ethical awareness. Pupils that find learning difficult get the extra help they need. Many benefits are available to all pupils, but when appropriate, more tailored support is available.

Pupils become familiar with their next phase of education because the local junior school is on the same site. Pupils from both schools can take up leadership roles, such as joining the school council. They can attend breakfast club and after-school club together. These opportunities help them socialise and work together. This allows friendships to form early.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they carefully check the progress of all pupils who face barriers to their learning with greater accuracy and precision in order to ensure their progress is maximised.
 - Leaders must ensure that information about what pupils have learned and can remember is used effectively to adapt future learning in order to successfully build greater knowledge over time.
 - In order to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils, senior leaders should continue to embed and further expand the skills of others who take lead roles in school. This will ensure a greater level of precision across all areas.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Learning Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Simon Spry, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Debbie Taylor.

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 head of school, SENDCo, early years lead, executive headteacher, directors of education, chief executive officer, chair of the board of trustees, vice chair of the board of trustees, chair of governors and three members of the local governing board.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Head of school: Emma Foster

Lead inspector:

Sophie Hillson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Craig Hayes, Ofsted Inspector

Kate Mitchell, 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

214

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

270

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)

7.01%

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

0.47%

Well below 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

13.55%

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).

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)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.3%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.5%	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 (3 term)	13.6%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.2%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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