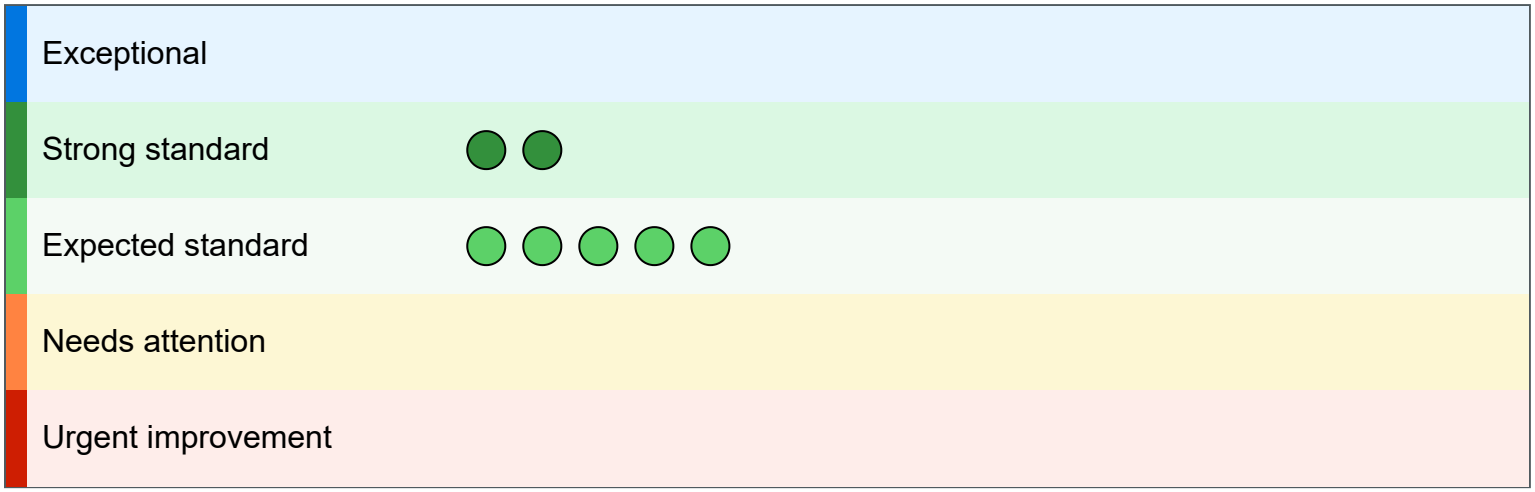
# Castle Batch Primary School

**Address:** Rawlins Avenue, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, BS22 7FN

**Unique reference number (URN):** 145630

# Inspection report: 13 October 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

## Early years

**Strong standard**

Children get off to a highly positive start in the Nursery and Reception Year. Leaders know children's starting points well and use this knowledge to ensure children receive the support they need to thrive. Staff quickly establish routines so that children know the expectations for their learning and behaviour.

Leaders have an ambitious vision to support pupils to achieve the best start in life. Teachers skilfully plan the curriculum across the 7 areas of learning to achieve this vision. They prioritise the development of children's foundational knowledge of early reading, writing and mathematics very well. Children build their fine and gross motor skills through a carefully sequenced approach to muscle development. This ensures that children are well prepared to write.

Children show high levels of sustained engagement. Staff maximise opportunities through high-quality interactions to extend children's understanding and to widen their vocabulary. They carefully monitor how well children engage in their learning and actively seek out those who need more support. Staff use ongoing assessment with precision to shape teaching for groups of children and individuals. They identify children who need extra help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and ensure they swiftly get the right support. This prepares children extremely well for Year 1.

## Personal development and wellbeing

**Strong standard**

Leaders have established a well-considered personal development programme for pupils. Staff tailor this in response to pupils' context and aspirations. The curriculum aligns with the school's vision of 'happy, confident children learning to learn'. Leaders structure the programme around the school's 6 values of 'kindness, inclusivity, resilience, respect, honesty and trust'. Pupils develop a secure and detailed knowledge across the personal, social, health and relationships curriculum. They confidently explain how what they have learned impacts their lives. Assemblies and lessons provide high-quality opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking about positive citizenship.

Pupils develop a deep understanding of protected characteristics, fundamental British values and cultural diversity in modern Britain. They enjoy learning about themselves and the world around them. Older pupils articulate their learning with maturity. Pupils recognise the risks to their wellbeing and safety online and offline. They know how to keep themselves safe, including in relation to their local environment. For example, pupils learn about the dangers of rip tides.

The school's pastoral offer is extensive and highly effective. Staff anticipate and identify which pupils need additional support. Staff are vigilant in identifying changes to individual circumstances. Leaders are systematic in ensuring that pupils have the support they need to be safe, healthy and well cared for.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that broaden their experiences and strengthen their sense of achievement beyond the classroom. Leaders track pupils'

participation in extra-curricular clubs and enrichment opportunities carefully. They gather pupils' opinions and use this to tailor the school's enrichment offer. This ensures that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have equal opportunities to broaden their skills in areas that interest them.

As a result of the carefully tailored personal development programme, pupils show confidence, resilience and independence. They are very well prepared for life beyond school.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

**Expected standard**

Pupils generally achieve well across the curriculum. This begins in early years when children develop important knowledge and skills. Leaders prioritise pupils' foundational skills in reading, spelling, handwriting and number facts. They generally make effective use of assessment to know where pupils have gaps in their learning. Staff have a secure understanding of each pupil and typically close gaps in learning quickly. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check and Year 4 multiplication tables check are in line with results seen nationally. Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved over time and is close to national comparators by the end of Year 6. However, too few pupils achieve the higher standard at this assessment point.

### Attendance and behaviour

**Expected standard**

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' attendance at school. They check attendance closely and take a proactive approach to reduce any barriers that pupils experience. Leaders know pupils well and work closely with parents and carers. This enables leaders to respond swiftly to emerging needs. As a result, pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils' attitudes to school are positive. Pupils know the behaviour expectations and the associated rewards and consequences. The caring relationships that staff establish with pupils strengthen the school's approach to behaviour. Staff show consistency in their expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They typically learn how to use strategies to manage their emotions. Leaders monitor incidents of poor behaviour and provide timely support.

Leaders consider pupils' views and opinions. For example, staff and pupils work together to choose the equipment that is available at breaktimes. This helps to create a positive outdoor environment where pupils play together well. They develop their creativity, resilience and individual interests through a wide range of equipment. For example, pupils enjoy using objects imaginatively for construction. Pupils are confident that bullying is not an issue and trust adults to act if any concerns arise.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Expected standard**

Leaders have designed a curriculum that gives staff a detailed framework for their teaching. It sets out the important knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need. Teachers generally teach the curriculum in a way that supports pupils to build their knowledge over time. Staff adapt teaching appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to learning. Where teaching is most effective, teachers explain new ideas clearly. They break learning into small steps and carefully check pupils' understanding. However, leaders' monitoring of teaching lacks the detail and rigour needed to ensure that teaching is of a consistently high quality across subjects and year groups. This has an impact on how well pupils learn some aspects of the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that reading is a high priority throughout the school. Staff teach the phonics programme with accuracy and consistency. The books that pupils read match their phonics knowledge closely. Pupils receive timely support when needed so that they build the necessary foundations for learning.

Staff plan educational visits and other curriculum enrichments to create memorable experiences for pupils. This deepens pupils' learning and promotes their enjoyment. For example, pupils visit an aerospace museum to learn about science and technology.

## Inclusion

**Expected standard**

Leaders establish a culture where everyone is valued. They work closely with parents and carers, alongside external professionals, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need. Teachers set appropriate targets for pupils with an education, health and care plan. These are achievable and carefully staged to support pupils' academic progress and personal development. Staff review these targets regularly to ensure that pupils make progress towards them. They typically adapt teaching, using strategies supported by credible educational research.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils who attend the specialist resource base. Staff systematically and skilfully adjust strategies as needed. This means that barriers to success are swiftly and effectively reduced, helping pupils to make progress. When appropriate, pupils in key stage 2 join their peers in lessons. However, leaders' monitoring is not rigorous enough to ensure that barriers to success are swiftly addressed for all pupils.

Leaders use the additional funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils well. This reduces barriers to pupils' learning and supports their wellbeing effectively.

## Leadership and governance

**Expected standard**

Leaders and those responsible for governance have a detailed understanding of the school's context. Although the headteacher is new in post, leaders have worked quickly to establish their vision and expectations within a positive culture of collaboration. Trust leaders have a deep understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They regularly visit the school to speak with staff and pupils. This enables them to provide appropriate support and challenge. They use a wide range of evidence to evaluate the

school's work. When they identify weaknesses, they take timely action. Improvement work is well thought out and focused on what will make the biggest difference to pupils. Leaders are role models of high expectations and professionalism. They demonstrate clear ambition and a commitment to inclusion.

Leaders carefully manage the school's transition into a newly formed trust. They ensure that any change is in the best interests of pupils. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support leaders provide and the consideration given to their workload. They speak highly about their professional learning programme and how it supports them to develop the skills they need to do their jobs well. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school.

Parents and carers are positive about the school overall. They report that staff are approachable and welcoming. One parent expressed the view shared by many, saying, ‘My child loves Castle Batch. It has a lovely atmosphere. The teachers are warm and caring and know my child’s needs well.’

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

Pupils talk positively and proudly about their school. They feel valued, respected and safe. This supports them to develop a sense of belonging. Pupils settle quickly because of the consistent routines that staff establish. This supports pupils to attend well.

Pupils benefit from positive and respectful relationships across the school. They are polite and courteous in their interactions with one another and with staff. When pupils face difficulties in their lives, staff provide the necessary support. Bullying is rare. Pupils know they can talk to a trusted adult and feel listened to. They know that staff deal with any unkind behaviour quickly.

Pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum across subjects. They see their school as a place where learning is enjoyable and memorable. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to their learning, achieve well from their starting points. Staff typically know pupils’ individual needs and ensure that they get the right support at the right time. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. For example, Year 6 pupils build confidence and resilience by completing team-building challenges on their residential trip.

Pupils look forward to a full range of opportunities that support their wider development. For example, pupils learn Makaton and use it when singing in assembly. They listen attentively to guest speakers. For example, a Paralympian spoke to pupils during sports week about equality, accessibility and inclusion. Pupils contribute to school life through roles such as librarian, school councillor and eco-club members. They look after their school environment by taking part in litter picks and planting the areas alongside visitor footpaths. Pupils raise money for charities and make donations to the local food bank to support families that need it.

## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently make highly effective choices about what to teach and when to teach it so that all pupils make progress from their starting points.
- Leaders should continue to ensure that the curriculum is taught to a consistently high quality across subjects and year groups so that pupils secure the knowledge they need to succeed and barriers to their learning are reduced.

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## About this inspection

This school is part of Pathway 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), William Roberts, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon MacSorley.

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

This inspection took place on 13 and 14 October 2026.

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, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and groups of staff during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke with the co-vice chair of the board of trustees, the chair of the community council, the CEO and other trust representatives.

Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone a significant staffing change. The headteacher was appointed in September 2026. Pathway Trust was formed in September 2026 following the merger of The Priory Learning Trust and Castle School Education Trust.

The school includes a specially resourced provision for 17 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

The school admits children from the age of 2 through its nursery provision.

The school operates a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

The school currently makes use of 4 registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Wayne Higgins

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**Lead inspector:**
Andrew Wilson, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**
Aisling Stranack, Ofsted Inspector
Mark Burgess, Ofsted Inspector
Hilary Goddard, 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 13 October 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**484**
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: 268

### School capacity

**415**
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)**

## 10.67%
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: 26.5%

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

## 7.64%
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: 4.1%

**Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

## 11.36%
Below average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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)

## SEN unit

### 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 64% | 62% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 51% | 61% | 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 82% | 75% | Above |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2023/24 (final)** | 62% | 74% | Below |

**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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 84% | 72% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 79% | 72% | 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 70% | 74% | Close to average |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 57% | 73% | Below |

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

## 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 82% | 47% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 38% | 46% | 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 91% | 63% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 46% | 62% | Below |

### 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 100% | 59% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 54% | 58% | Close to average |

**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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 82% | 61% | Above |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 46% | 59% | Below |

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

## 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 82% | 69% | 13 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 38% | 67% | -29 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 91% | 81% | 10 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 46% | 80% | -34 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 100% | 78% | 22 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 54% | 78% | -24 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** | R | R | R |
| **2025/26 (provisional)** | R | R | R |
| **2024/25 (final)** | 82% | 81% | 1 pp |
| **2023/24 (final)** | 46% | 79% | -33 pp |

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2025/26 (1 term)** | 6.6% | 5.1% | Above |
| **2024/25 (3 term)** | 4.3% | 5.2% | Below |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 5.6% | 5.5% | 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2025/26 (1 term)** | 16.2% | 14.4% | Close to average |
| **2024/25 (3 term)** | 6.9% | 13.0% | Below |
| **2023/24 (3 term)** | 14.7% | 14.6% | 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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