

Dunnington Church of England Primary School

Address: Pear Tree Lane, Dunnington, York, North Yorkshire, YO19 5QG

Unique reference number (URN): 144713

Inspection report: 22 September 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

By the end of key stage 2, pupils attain highly in reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes are stronger than national patterns and have remained positive over time.

The wider scrutiny of pupils' books provides compelling evidence of strong achievement throughout the curriculum. Pupils produce high-quality work that reflects the breadth and depth of their learning. They retain knowledge, apply subject vocabulary and communicate ideas clearly. Their writing shows effective composition and increasingly secure transcription. In mathematics, pupils apply their knowledge to a demanding range of work and explain their reasoning.

Most pupils read confidently and use reading to learn across subjects. Work in key stage 1 shows that pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need for key stage 2. Older pupils' work demonstrates that they are well prepared for secondary education.

Expected standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Overall attendance is high and persistent absence is low. Leaders promote regular attendance and contact families promptly when difficulties arise. They work constructively with parents and carers to understand individual circumstances and plan support.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those facing other barriers attend less regularly than their peers. Leaders work with families and external services to help these pupils attend more regularly. The impact of these actions across the groups concerned requires closer evaluation. Staff confirm with the alternative provision each day that pupils have attended as expected.

Pupils behave well. They move around school calmly and lessons are orderly. Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful. Pupils understand the school's rewards and consequences. They know the difference between bullying and one-off disagreements and are confident that adults will respond to concerns.

The outdoor play programme provides purposeful choices at social times. Pupils cooperate, play imaginatively and enjoy being active. The low number of recorded behaviour incidents has reduced further as this work has become established. Leaders use suspension only as a last resort. They use reintegration meetings and individual plans to help pupils return to school successfully. Leaders respond promptly to discriminatory language and use specialist support to reinforce expectations of respect.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a broad and ambitious curriculum. The curriculums in English and mathematics in particular, set out clear end goals for pupils to work towards. Work in pupils' books shows that learning builds across year groups and becomes increasingly sophisticated. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary and make connections with earlier learning across the curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain new ideas clearly and give pupils time to think and discuss their answers. Effective questions help pupils explain their reasoning. Teachers use practical resources where these help pupils to understand abstract ideas. Mathematics teaching gives pupils opportunities to calculate, reason and solve problems. Physical education is purposeful and develops pupils' skills.

Reading is prioritised. The school follows a systematic phonics programme. Staff make regular checks that help them to identify knowledge that pupils need to revisit. Additional practice supports pupils who need to strengthen decoding and fluency. Pupils encounter carefully chosen stories and increasingly demanding texts.

Teachers use plans and information about individual pupils to organise additional support. Adults provide focused teaching and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders review teaching and provide professional development. This supports a shared understanding of the curriculum and helps staff refine their practice.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children are happy and settle well into the Reception Year. Adults establish warm relationships and help children to learn classroom routines. Children listen attentively, play cooperatively and share resources. The considered environment enables them to make choices and become increasingly independent.

Leaders prioritise communication and language. Staff use the information from assessments and specialist advice to identify children who need additional help. Adults model vocabulary and extend children's thinking during focused activities. Visual support and carefully planned individual help enable children with additional communication needs to participate.

Books are central to the provision. Children encounter a set of important stories and enjoy discussing illustrations and events. Daily phonics teaching introduces the knowledge children need to begin reading. Adults also support children's early writing and fine-motor development.

Mathematical learning is practical and engaging. Children sort, count and compare objects. They explain their choices and encounter mathematical language through stories and play. Physical education supports coordination and gross motor development.

Leaders work closely with families and specialists. Thoughtful transition arrangements help children to become familiar with new adults and routines. The organisation of Reception and

Year 1 enables staff to provide targeted support and continuity as children move into key stage 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders establish a welcoming culture in which pupils are known, valued and accepted. Staff identify barriers to pupils' learning and wellbeing. They work closely with parents and carers and draw on specialist advice when pupils' needs change.

Individual plans identify priorities for pupils' learning and emotional regulation. Staff use targeted teaching and visual support to help pupils to participate in lessons. Leaders are refining provision to ensure it continues to meet pupils' evolving needs. As such, recent changes are still becoming established across classrooms. Leaders' priority is to ensure that staff use agreed strategies consistently and respond swiftly when barriers arise.

Leaders involve families when reviewing pupils' individual plans. They seek early reviews when an education, health and care plan no longer reflects a pupil's needs. They work constructively with local services and virtual schools. Carefully selected alternative provision gives individual pupils additional experience while maintaining their valued connection with the school.

Disadvantaged pupils receive support with learning, attendance and access to wider opportunities. Leaders know the circumstances of looked-after pupils and maintain regular communication with carers and other professionals. This coordinated work helps pupils to feel that they belong.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's context and set appropriate priorities. They know the school's strengths and the needs of its pupils. Their work sustains high achievement, generally positive attendance and calm behaviour. Leaders place inclusion, relationships and wellbeing at the centre of school life.

Leaders have refined curriculum plans and strengthened professional development. Training supports staff to teach pupils with additional needs and respond to emotional barriers effectively. Leaders draw on specialist services and trust expertise when the school requires additional capacity. Subject leaders review provision and support colleagues to develop their practice.

Staff value the consideration leaders give to workload and wellbeing. They describe a supportive team and feel able to seek help. Stable relationships with families contribute to the school's positive culture. Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors value staff's approachability and the support provided to their children.

Governors understand the school's context and statutory responsibilities. Headteacher reports and link visits keep them informed about safeguarding, provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), attendance, reading, the early years and outdoor play. They receive information about behaviour and safeguarding patterns.

Governors use visits and meetings to understand leaders' priorities and the experiences of pupils.

Trust leaders provide school improvement support and recognise the implications of changing pupil numbers, financial pressures and increasing levels of pupils with SEND. They work with school leaders to strengthen inclusion and curriculum provision. Leaders also work positively with the diocese and local services. This collective support gives the school capacity to sustain improvement.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school supports pupils' wider development through a broad range of experiences. Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activity. Educational visits and residential experiences extend learning beyond the classroom. Pupils speak warmly about these opportunities and the confidence they gain from them.

Pupils contribute to their school community. Older pupils model positive attitudes to others and help at social times. The junior leadership team gathers ideas from other pupils and supports events. Class voting gives pupils experience of making collective decisions. These roles develop pupils' sense of responsibility and service.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum teaches pupils about healthy relationships, puberty, medicines, harmful substances and online safety. Pupils identify trusted adults and understand how to seek help. They discuss the difference between joking and language that causes harm. Older pupils can explain why discrimination, sexism, misogyny and homophobic language are unacceptable.

Religious education reflects the school's Christian character. Pupils recall aspects of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They discuss fairness and respect for difference. Some explain democracy through familiar experiences of voting in school. The depth and precision of pupils' knowledge of different faiths, cultures and fundamental British values varies. Some pupils demonstrate confidence and accuracy when speaking about life in modern Britain, but for others this is less so.

Staff support pupils' emotional wellbeing. Daily check-ins, pastoral support and work with outside services help adults to respond to individual circumstances. Pupils experiencing bereavement, anxiety or family difficulty receive sensitive help. Pupils feel valued and understand that adults will listen to them.

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

Pupils are proud to belong to this welcoming and caring school. They arrive calmly, settle quickly and understand the routines that help each day begin well. Adults know pupils and their families well. Warm, respectful relationships help pupils feel secure and ready to learn.

Pupils behave well. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils listen to adults, cooperate with classmates and take pride in their work. They feel safe and know that adults will help them if

they have a concern. Pupils understand how to report unkind behaviour and how to keep themselves safe online.

The school has an inclusive culture. Pupils understand that everyone is different and should be treated fairly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are welcomed as full members of the community and take part equally in school life. Staff provide sensitive support when pupils face difficulties with learning, attendance or wellbeing.

Pupils achieve highly. Their books contain accomplished work across the curriculum. Pupils increasingly use subject vocabulary accurately, explain their ideas and apply what they have learned. Reading has a prominent place in school. Pupils enjoy books and read widely across different subjects.

Pupils value the many experiences available beyond lessons. They enjoy educational visits, residential experiences, sport, music, choir, dance, drama and cooking. The well-developed outdoor play offer encourages imagination, cooperation and physical activity. Pupils speak enthusiastically about these opportunities.

Older pupils contribute to school life through the junior leadership team and trust-wide initiatives. They suggest improvements, help younger pupils and support school and community-wide events. The school's Christian values promote kindness, respect and service. Pupils recognise these values in the way adults care for them and in the way they are encouraged to care for one another.

Next steps

- Leaders should further embed their changes to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so that staff consistently deal with any barriers to success swiftly and effectively.
- Leaders should deepen pupils' understanding of different faiths, cultures and fundamental British values so that all pupils can speak with knowledge, confidence and precision about life in modern Britain.
- Leaders should continue to improve the attendance of groups of pupils, such as those with SEND and/or those with other barriers to their learning and evaluate whether those actions are working.

About this inspection

This school is part of Yorkshire Learning 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), Ian Yapp, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Sheppard.

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

This inspection took place on 22 and 23 September 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, the senior leadership team and other school staff. An inspector met with the chair of trustees, representatives of the local governing board and the CEO from the Yorkshire Learning Trust. Inspectors also met with a representative of the Diocese of York. Inspectors engaged with pupils throughout the inspection. They spoke to some parents and carers at the start and end of the school day. They considered responses to pupils', parents' and staff surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The headteacher took up her role in September 2024.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. Its last section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was on 26 November 2025.

The school makes use of one alternative provision. This is an unregistered provider.

Headteacher: Clare Thompson

Lead inspector:

Marcus Newby, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Lynda Florence, Ofsted Inspector

Scott Grason-Taylor, 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 22 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

170

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: 268

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)

4.12%

Well 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

2.35%

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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.00%

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)

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)	80%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	66%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	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 (final)	89%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	91%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	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	80%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	83%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	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	82%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	79%	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	S	46%	S
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	S	62%	S
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	S	59%	S
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	S	60%	S
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	S	68%	S
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	S	80%	S
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	S	78%	S
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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	S	80%	S
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)	4.2%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.7%	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)	5.6%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.7%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	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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