

Dilhorne Endowed CofE Primary School

Address: Godley Lane, Dilhorne, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST10 2PF

Unique reference number (URN): 141770

Inspection report: 9 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

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

School life is clearly focused on the school vision, 'Love one another, love the world'. Pupils feel valued, cared for and connected to their community. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to reflect on themselves and the world around them through activities such as supporting the local dogs' home and food bank. This helps pupils understand community need and their role within it.

British values are incorporated meaningfully through the curriculum and wider school life. For example, some leadership roles are decided by a pupil vote following speeches. Regular discussions about current affairs help pupils understand modern Britain and wider global issues. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe, both online and in the local community. Pupils understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships and can explain how they manage peer pressure. They describe in detail how to stay physically and mentally healthy.

Leaders ensure pupils access a wide range of experiences. All pupils take part in trips to museums and theatres, sing and play sports and attend a range of clubs. Pupils regularly explore the local area as part of their history and geography learning and older pupils take part in an annual residential visit. Pupils know that their views are valued. Leaders have ensured all pupils take responsibility through their participation in a variety of pupil leadership teams and councils.

The school's unique rural environment, including the farm, forest school and the 'mindful meadow', provides spaces that nurture resilience and wellbeing. Tools such as emotion cups, puppets and the wellbeing tent help pupils articulate their feelings. Effective links with care homes, local events and the village church enrich pupils' experiences. They are very well prepared for their next stage of education and beyond.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Recent published outcomes show that on average, over the last three years, pupils have achieved above the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check and in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Most pupils acquire the essential knowledge needed for the next stage of their education.

Leaders ensure that pupils secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. This supports them to access the wider curriculum with increasing confidence as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally achieve well from their starting points. Staff provide support that helps pupils to become

increasingly independent. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education and learning.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with what is typical nationally. Leaders have established clear and effective procedures to check reasons for absence. They use their detailed knowledge of families to identify barriers quickly. Leaders work sensitively with parents, and external agencies where appropriate, to resolve issues. Patterns of absence are analysed closely and information shared with trustees and families.

Behaviour across the school is positive. This is because leaders' high expectations and clear routines help pupils to understand what is expected of them. Staff are excellent role models and apply the behaviour policy positively and consistently. On the very rare occasion that a pupil requires additional support, leaders intervene effectively.

Older pupils act as positive role models for younger pupils. They consistently describe their school as a place where people care about one other. Trusting relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils feel safe, valued and supported. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that any unkind behaviour would be dealt with quickly. Pupils are polite and welcoming. They work and play together well in a calm, purposeful learning environment.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have ensured a broad and balanced curriculum is in place. Regular reviews help leaders adapt the curriculum for mixed-age classes. The curriculum is well-structured and allows pupils' knowledge to build sequentially over time. Engaging, hands-on experiences capture pupils' interests. Leaders provide teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective training and support. This helps staff understand the curriculum and what pupils need to learn.

Teachers generally demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use a range of teaching strategies. They explain things clearly, support pupils when needed and help them build their understanding of new words. Staff check pupils' understanding regularly and adapt their teaching when pupils need extra help. Pupils are given regular opportunities to revisit previous learning. All of this means that pupils build their knowledge securely as they move through the curriculum.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn the important skills and knowledge they need, including handwriting, spelling and number facts. Phonics is taught effectively, meaning most pupils gain the skills they need to learn to read. Any pupils who need extra help are supported to catch up quickly.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and the curriculum and typically act quickly when they identify areas that need improvement.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years receive a positive start to their education. There is a clear commitment to ensuring that the youngest children feel part of the wider school family. Leaders have designed a coherent curriculum that is carefully planned to meet children's needs. Children develop and apply important knowledge through purposeful play and well-designed activities. As a result, children leave Reception well prepared for Year 1.

Staff know children very well. They take time to understand children's individual needs, personalities and interests. Children's starting points are assessed accurately. Staff provide regular opportunities for children to practise key skills, such as fine-motor control. Children show high levels of engagement and concentration, especially outdoors, where activities are carefully planned to interest all learners.

The environment is well organised and supports a wide range of learning opportunities. Early reading, writing and mathematics are prioritised. Children learn to read using their phonics knowledge. Adults model language well and use prompts to encourage children to talk about their ideas. However, there is some variability in the quality of interactions between adults and children across the day. Consequently, children's language is not always developed as well as it could be.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school's welcoming and inclusive culture helps pupils feel a sense of belonging. Leaders identify pupils' needs and any barriers they face quickly and accurately when they arrive at school. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known (or previously known) to social care. Leaders use this information to put support in place for those who need it.

Clear systems and processes help staff respond to pupils' needs. Staff are well trained and know pupils well. They typically make thoughtful adaptations to their teaching and the environment, which enable pupils to access the full curriculum. Leaders work closely with parents and external specialists to ensure pupils receive the support they need. As a result, barriers to pupils' learning are identified and addressed effectively.

The needs of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding receive effective support through academic, wellbeing and extra-curricular provision. Progress is carefully tracked and leaders ensure that all pupils participate in the full range of wider opportunities. Pupils' social and emotional needs are well met, enabling them to flourish in their learning.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a clear vision where pupils are at the heart of everything they do. Their inclusive ethos helps pupils feel listened to. Parents and carers are highly positive about the school. They praise the enthusiasm, care and commitment of staff and describe a nurturing, welcoming environment where children feel valued and supported.

Leaders work closely with the trust to understand what the school does well and where further work is needed. They use information about pupils' learning and experiences to set clear priorities for improvement. They are taking appropriate action to improve consistency in teaching and learning. Leaders prioritise staff professional learning so that staff continue to develop their expertise. This includes teachers who are new to the profession.

Trustees are strategic and well informed. They fully understand the school's context. Trustees meet their statutory duties and use detailed information to challenge and support leaders effectively. They check how resources are used and ensure that decisions are made in pupils' best interests.

Leaders and trustees are committed to continuing to improve the school. They are well placed to do so because they have an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

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

Pupils at Dilhorne Endowed CofE Primary School are happy, confident and well cared for. They enjoy coming to their small, friendly school where everyone is known, loved and valued. The school values of trust, mindfulness, peace and friendship are woven through every aspect of school life.

Pupils feel safe at school because their relationships with staff are warm and caring. Bullying is rare, and pupils trust adults to support them to quickly resolve any concerns they have. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school site is very positive. Pupils respect and show empathy for one another and are proud of their school.

Staff get to know pupils and their families very well as soon as they start school. This means that any barriers pupils face are identified swiftly and support put in place to address them. Pupil wellbeing and mental health are at the centre of the school's work.

The broad, balanced curriculum is generally taught well. Pupils enjoy learning in an atmosphere where they feel confident to make mistakes and ask for help if they need it. Adaptations are made to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can access their learning. As a result, pupils generally achieve in line with national averages, or slightly above, by the time they leave the school.

All pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities such as sports and arts events, educational visits and residential stays. Pupils know their views are valued. They take on a range of responsibilities and make a positive contribution to school life including serving as farm captains and help care for the animals kept at the school. Pupils are very well prepared to become active and responsible citizens when they leave primary school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the most effective teaching practice is shared and applied consistently across the school.
 - Leaders should continue their work to raise attendance and reduce persistent absence.
 - Leaders should ensure interactions between staff and children consistently help children to develop their speaking skills and vocabulary.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Moorlands Primary Federation, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jared Eccles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lee Yates.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive school leader and other members of staff during the inspection. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, including the CEO, executive principal, and representatives of the trust board.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:
The school does not use alternative provision.

Executive School Leader: Mr Craig Broome

Lead inspector:

Claire Medhurst, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Adam Montague-Clewes, 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

45

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

52

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)

20.00%

Close to 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

0.00%

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

22.22%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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	70%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	62%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	100%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	43%	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	75%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	43%	73%	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	57%	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	90%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

‘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

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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
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

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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)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	5.7%	5.9%	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
2024/25 (3 term)	8.9%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	14.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.0%	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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