

Godalming Junior School

Address: Hallam Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 3HW

Unique reference number (URN): 125044

Inspection report: 7 July 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 have an astute awareness of the barriers that can hinder pupils' attendance. They address these effectively through their work with families and the school community. The focus on making school a joyful place to be means that pupils want to attend and enjoy being part of this kind and caring community. As a result, attendance rates for all groups of pupils are high and persistent absence remains low over time. This is due to the deliberate and diligent approach taken by all stakeholders. The school's inclusive culture supports this work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care are particularly well supported to attend well.

Behaviour is underpinned by a clear values-led, restorative approach. This promotes positive relationships and a calm, respectful school culture. There are consistently high expectations of behaviour across the school. Parents appreciate the nurturing environment which supports a highly effective learning ethos. Pupils know that they do not need to worry about bullying here. Rare incidents of unkind behaviour are dealt with swiftly through the school's well embedded systems. Antibullying stars aid pupils at social times to resolve friendship issues. As a result, there is a harmonious atmosphere which permeates throughout the school. This helps all pupils to thrive. Leaders' robust knowledge of individual pupil's needs allows them to adapt the approach accordingly while maintaining rigorous standards.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

This is a wholly inclusive school. A culture of aspiration and ambition for all pupils permeates the school. Leaders establish strategies that consistently enhance the opportunities and experiences of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those known to social care and those who may face other barriers to their learning and wellbeing.

Pupils who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing benefit from highly effective and well embedded systems. This means that individual needs are swiftly identified and addressed. Well-considered adaptations and targeted interventions help pupils with SEND to keep up with their peers. This precise support helps pupils access the curriculum successfully and make progress from their starting points.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of the needs of vulnerable pupils. Rigorous monitoring systems enable staff to evaluate the impact of support. Leaders skilfully adapt this provision as needed. Well established transition arrangements mean that tailored help can be put in place as soon as pupils start the school. This enables pupils to settle quickly and get off to a flying start.

Leaders use additional funding strategically to remove barriers to learning and increase participation in wider opportunities. They carefully evaluate the impact of this funding.

Leaders work effectively with other professionals and registered alternative provision to support attendance and participation of vulnerable pupils.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders are passionate and committed to the achievement and wellbeing of the whole school community. This is reflected in their pursuit of excellence and high ambition. They have embedded a positive and inclusive culture across the school.

Leaders have a robust understanding of the school's strengths and precisely identify priorities for improvement. They take swift action to address these. They make decisions that place pupils' best interests at the centre. Their actions improve the experiences of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care. This reflects their commitment to making a genuine difference to the lives of all pupils and providing the best possible educational experience.

Governors are highly knowledgeable about their role. They use meticulous systems to ensure they have an in-depth understanding of the school's achievement and next steps. They provide targeted support and challenge for leaders. This helps the school to continuously improve. Governors undertake training. This enables them to carry out their role and fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

Staff feel valued and well supported. Leaders foster high levels of collaboration and professional trust within the staff team. As a result, staff are proud to work at the school and share leaders' commitment to achieving the best outcomes for all. Their development is enhanced by the structured programme of professional learning. They access a wide range of high-quality training linked to school improvement priorities. Leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to staff wellbeing and workload management. Well-considered initiatives contribute positively to staff morale and reduce unnecessary workload.

Parents and carers are effusive about the school. They appreciate the relentless focus on providing the best possible education for their children and the wider enrichment opportunities on offer.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Personal development and wellbeing is firmly embedded throughout the school and has a significant positive impact on pupils' development. Leaders have carefully crafted a highly responsive personal development programme. This reflects the needs of the school community. This is strengthened by enrichment weeks, external partnerships and meaningful pupil leadership opportunities such as being antibullying stars and nurture ninjas. These opportunities enable pupils to develop confidence and leadership skills.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education is meticulously planned and consistently well taught across the school. Staff ensure that any barriers to learning this content are successfully addressed. As such, pupils have an in-depth understanding of healthy lifestyles, relationships and online safety. Pupils maturely reflect on individual rights

and responsibilities. This enables them to have a deep-rooted sense of respect and an awareness of world issues including democracy.

Pastoral support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health is a strength of the school. Warm, caring relationships exist between adults and pupils. Staff know pupils well. This means they can anticipate when additional support may be needed. Parents praise the bespoke pastoral support offer and the impact on their children.

A wide range of clubs enhance pupils' wider development. Pupils are enthusiastic about the breadth of opportunities and activities they can participate in. This includes football, cooking, dance and choir. Leaders ensure that barriers are removed so all pupils can benefit from this varied offer. Time is taken to celebrate the achievements of pupils within these activities. This helps to engage more pupils and encourages participation further.

The school nurtures pupils' character, social skills and understanding of ethical issues. This is enhanced further through theme weeks, such as Human Rights Week and Hero Week. The impact of the personal development programme can be seen in how pupils interact with each other and with the adults who help them. Pupils speak highly of their school. They report that everyone is included regardless of their differences.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils generally achieve well in national checks and tests. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care. These pupils achieve well from their individual starting points. Typically, pupils develop a robust understanding of key content from across the curriculum. Work in pupils' books is broadly in line with expectations, although some gaps in basic writing skills remain. Leaders have robust plans in place to address this to ensure that all pupils are consistently well-prepared for the next stage of their learning.

The school's renewed focus on basic knowledge enables pupils to access the wider curriculum successfully. Some pupils, particularly those who enter the school with significant barriers to learning, have made considerable progress. Staff accurately identify where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and these are closing quickly.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of its pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care.

Teaching is generally effective across the school. It is enhanced by the calm learning environment, embedded routines and positive relationships. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and most explain new content clearly. Lessons routinely revisit foundational knowledge, helping pupils build on prior learning. Some limited variability in

teaching approaches means not all pupils secure knowledge as deeply as they could. Leaders recognise this and have robust plans in place to address this in order to embed highly effective teaching and learning across the school.

Staff ensure that appropriate adaptations are in place to support pupils to access the curriculum. This means disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND can participate successfully in lessons alongside their peers. This includes the effective use of additional adults to support pupils. There is a firm focus on developing pupils' confidence and independence as well as helping them to gain the skills and knowledge they need for their next steps.

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

Pupils at Godalming Junior School are joyful, eager and polite. Due to the school's unwavering expectations, pupils are respectful towards each other and to staff. They are dedicated to their learning and demonstrate pride in their academic endeavours. Pupils feel safe and care for each other. They behave well and attend school regularly. On the rare occasion that unkind behaviour happens, staff deal with this promptly. This means that pupils do not worry about bullying. Teachers and staff build warm, trusting relationships with pupils, parents and carers. This helps pupils to feel valued and part of the school community. Pupils know staff listen to their thoughts, ideas and opinions. There are regular and meaningful opportunities for pupils to share their views and shape the school.

Frequent opportunities to revisit learning enable pupils to remember more over time. Pupils generally achieve well across the curriculum. Leaders know that their high ambitions for the delivery of the curriculum are not yet fully realised. Leaders support staff to identify any barriers to learning pupils may have. This enables staff to make appropriate adaptations so pupils can access learning alongside their peers. As such, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care make good progress from their starting points. The majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Pupils make the most of school life. This includes the wide range of clubs and activities provided for them. Leaders ensure that all pupils can benefit from these opportunities. Pupils demonstrate their secure knowledge of fundamental British values in their interactions with each other. They are taught to be deeply aware of their own and others' rights. This awareness ensures the school is a place where everyone can live out the school's mission to 'love, live and learn'.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to ensure that highly effective teaching is consistently embedded across all subjects and classes so that any gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge are promptly identified and addressed.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr John Warren.

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 headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. They also met with members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.

Inspectors spoke with several pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of one registered alternative provision.

This inspection took place from 7 July 2026 to 8 July 2026.

Headteacher: Adam Samson

Lead inspector:

Louise Quinell, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stephen Jackson, Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Hilditch, 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 7 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

239

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

240

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)

12.55%

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: 26.3%

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

2.51%

Close to 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

10.88%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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).

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	69%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	67%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

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	86%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	92%	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	76%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	71%	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	80%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	82%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	35%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	44%	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	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	40%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	83%	60%	Above

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	55%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	55%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

‘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	35%	68%	-33 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	66%	-16 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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	83%	78%	5 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	55%	78%	-23 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	78%	2 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 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	55%	80%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	70%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp

‘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)	3.0%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.3%	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)	2.1%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.0%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.3%	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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy

Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email:
psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright