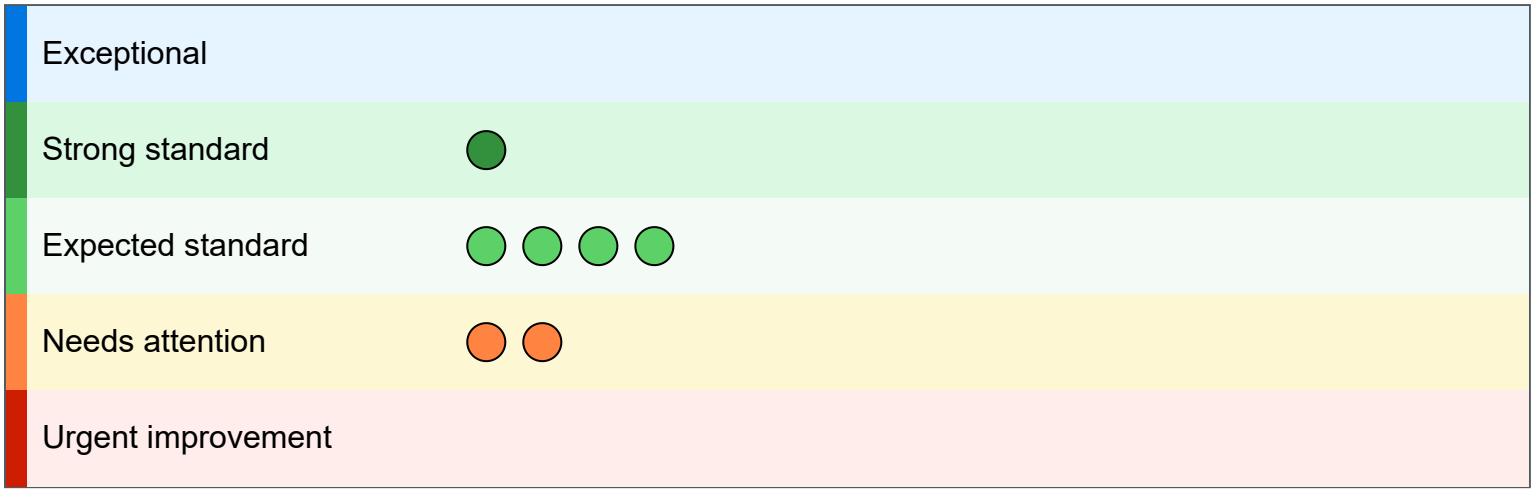
Norwood Primary School

Address: Norwood Crescent, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 7DU

Unique reference number (URN): 104865

Inspection report: 6 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

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Leaders provide an ambitious and broad personal development programme. This includes an effective relationships and health education programme that prepares pupils well for life beyond school. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the wider world. For example, pupils develop a detailed understanding of the risks associated with sharing images online.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of equality. They are familiar with the protected characteristics, demonstrate a meaningful understanding of fundamental British values and know about different faiths. They respect others and understand the extra barriers that some people face, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils say that everyone is welcome and valued at their school.

Leaders think proactively about how to support pupils' wellbeing, including their physical and mental health. The pastoral support that leaders provide is comprehensive, timely and well matched to individual needs. For example, staff provide daily check-ins, safe spaces and ‘chill zones’. This support helps pupils to flourish.

Leaders provide an extensive programme of enrichment. Pupils go on visits, enter sports competitions and attend extra-curricular clubs. The popular ‘production club’ performs shows at The Atkinson theatre in Southport. Pupils are committed to the various leadership roles that they are given, including as school captains, reading ambassadors and table tennis monitors. Every pupil in Year 6 is trained to be a playtime activity leader. These opportunities also extend to younger pupils. For example, Year 5 work on community projects with Merseyside Police, and the ‘Norwood rockets’ in Years 2 to 4 promote resilience and kindness. Leaders check who takes part and they adjust their offer so that all pupils are included. For example, leaders create new clubs to match the interests of pupils with SEND. These experiences help pupils to become confident and independent. They cooperate very well with each other.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Pupils attend school regularly. They enjoy school and do not want to miss the many experiences and opportunities that leaders provide. Attendance is typically above the national average, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Few pupils miss school regularly. Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance to families. They check pupils’ attendance carefully and provide effective support when concerns arise. This includes working with external partners to support families. This means that attendance continues to improve, including for pupils who may be disadvantaged.

Pupils behave well. This is because leaders have established clear and consistent expectations such as ‘wonderful walking’, ‘legendary lines’ and ‘heroic hands-up’. These are well understood by pupils and staff. As a result, classrooms and corridors are calm and orderly. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They focus on their work in lessons and listen carefully to staff. Pupils respect each other and value the differences that may exist between people. Bullying and discrimination are rare and dealt with effectively by leaders. Staff address any poor behaviour appropriately and consistently well. They adapt their approaches carefully for pupils who need specific support, including for some pupils with SEND. This support is effective and helps these pupils to thrive.

Early years

Expected standard

Children settle quickly at the start of the Reception Year. Staff establish warm relationships with children and care for them very well. This helps children to feel safe and valued. Staff work closely with parents, carers and previous settings to identify the potential barriers that children may face. They use this information to adjust their transition arrangements to meet children's needs, including those of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these children are fully included in learning activities.

Leaders have planned an appropriate curriculum across the 7 areas of learning. They use children's starting points and interests to adapt this curriculum. Teaching is effective. There is an appropriate focus on communication and language. For instance, staff introduce new vocabulary during class discussions about the ‘autumn treasures’ they have collected. During activities, staff use their recent training to develop children’s vocabulary and engage them in back-and-forth conversations. However, they do not make the most of every opportunity to extend learning.

Staff prioritise independence. They teach routines and expectations carefully and support children to follow these. For instance, children carry their trays in the dining hall and collect the cutlery that they need. This means that children are well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders ensure that pupils are valued and included in the life of the school. They quickly identify the barriers to learning and wellbeing that pupils may face, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. When needed, leaders work closely with professionals to understand these barriers and to identify the precise support that pupils need. This helps leaders to design effective individual plans, including for children known or previously known to social care. Staff follow these plans carefully to reduce the barriers that pupils may face. For example, they provide extra adult support, make adaptations to the classroom environment and use well-chosen visual resources to make activities more accessible. Where appropriate, they also provide short, structured movement routines to help pupils focus their minds so that they are ready to learn. This support helps pupils who face significant barriers to succeed at school.

Leaders identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils with accuracy. They use additional funding appropriately to provide support and to ensure access to the same additional opportunities as other pupils. However, leaders do not review the impact of some

strategies with as much precision as they could. This means that they do not consistently make skilful adjustments to strategies to maximise their impact.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders make thoughtful decisions about how to improve the school. The impact of their actions is clear in many areas of the school's work. For example, leaders have refined the school's behaviour policy and strengthened the teaching of handwriting. Leaders' work to refine some areas of the curriculum is ongoing.

Governors are committed to their work and know the school well. They fulfil their statutory duties and review important information. Governors have the knowledge that they need to provide an effective balance of support and challenge to leaders. This helps to drive an ambitious culture.

Staff appreciate the consideration that leaders give to their wellbeing and workload. They feel valued because leaders seek their views. Leaders provide a purposeful professional learning programme that meets the needs of staff. This includes for teachers at the beginning of their careers, who benefit from effective mentoring.

Leaders have developed an appropriate system for communicating with parents and carers. This includes detailed newsletters that promote attendance, celebrate successes and share important information about the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders work positively with community partners across Southport. They make the most of these links, such as their partnership with West Lancashire Yacht Club, to enhance the experiences of pupils.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Many pupils do not achieve as well as they should in English and mathematics. Year 6 pupils' attainment in national tests is typically below the national average. This means that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not as well prepared as they should be for Year 7. In other subjects, pupils generally achieve well. They remember the important knowledge that they have been taught and use subject-specific vocabulary with confidence. For example, they can recall their knowledge of the Vikings, including where they came from and why they settled in Britain.

An increasing number of pupils acquire the basic knowledge and skills that they need for future learning. Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check is close to the national average. Their handwriting is usually clear because they form and join letters accurately. However, some pupils do not securely develop their ability to work confidently with numbers.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Across many subjects, leaders have designed a broad and well-sequenced curriculum. They have identified the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils will learn and provide staff with guidance to support effective teaching. However, in English, the curriculum does not provide teachers with sufficient clarity about how reading and writing should be developed over time. This means, for example, that pupils do not have regular opportunities to practise and improve their writing. Leaders have begun to refine this area of the curriculum, but this work is not embedded. As a result, teachers do not have the guidance that they need to teach English as effectively as they could.

Leaders ensure that there is a focus on developing pupils' basic skills. Staff have secure subject knowledge to teach the school's phonics programme effectively. Leaders have improved the teaching of handwriting, and staff now teach this successfully. However, staff do not consistently teach number fluency skills as effectively as they could.

Staff typically use their checks on pupils' learning to identify and address mistakes. They provide appropriate feedback to help pupils improve. In many subjects, staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning. Staff adapt learning effectively so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, access the same curriculum.

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

Pupils form positive relationships with staff and with each other as soon as they join the school. This helps them to feel settled and happy. From the beginning of the early years, children are immersed in a nurturing and inclusive environment. Pupils know that they are valued and they have a secure sense of belonging. This helps pupils to attend regularly.

Pupils feel safe and behave well. They play happily together and have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils follow the rules and routines that leaders have established because staff teach these consistently well. Bullying is rare. Parents and carers speak positively about the school. They value the supportive staff and the nurturing ethos that leaders have developed.

Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the many positive experiences that the school offers. They enjoy a wide range of clubs, including chess, dodgeball and guinea pig club. They are particularly fond of the residential visits to Robinwood in Year 4 and Conway in Year 6. These experiences help pupils to discover new interests, overcome fears and build their confidence. Leaders ensure that these opportunities are an entitlement for all pupils.

In some subjects, pupils achieve well. They remember much of what they have learned, including about famous artists such as Frida Kahlo and about solids, liquids and gases in science. They enjoy going on visits to deepen this learning, such as geography fieldwork visits to the Sefton coast and the Lake District. However, pupils do not consistently experience teaching that helps them to achieve as well as they should in English and mathematics. This is because leaders' recent work to strengthen some aspects of the curriculum is not embedded. As a result, pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of key

stage 2 is typically below the national average. Children in the early years benefit from effective teaching that is matched to their starting points.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine the curriculum and closely monitor teaching so that pupils achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Leaders should monitor the impact of their inclusion strategies with greater precision and make skilful adjustments where necessary so that disadvantaged pupils consistently achieve well.
- Leaders should embed the improvements that they have made to the early years so that staff maximise opportunities to engage children in high-quality interactions throughout the day in order to extend their learning.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Debra Dodson.

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

This inspection took place on 6 and 7 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 senior leaders, staff, parents and pupils during the inspection. The lead inspector met with representatives of the local authority and members of the governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Mark Garside

Lead inspector:
John Coxhead, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Linda Griffiths, Ofsted Inspector
Victoria Burnside, His Majesty's Inspector
Tony McCoy, Ofsted Inspector
Liz Davidson, 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 6 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

621
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

630
Well 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)

19.32%
Close to 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

3.06%
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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.26%
Close to 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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	55%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44%	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)	71%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	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)	62%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	59%	72%	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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	74%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	64%	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)	26%	47%	Below
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)	44%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	62%	Close to average

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)	33%	59%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (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	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	52%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42%	59%	Below

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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)	26%	69%	-43 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)	44%	81%	-36 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	80%	-26 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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 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)	52%	81%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	42%	79%	-37 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)	4.2%	5.1%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.7%	5.5%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	10.2%	14.4%	Below
2024/25 (3 term)	9.2%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	14.6%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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

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