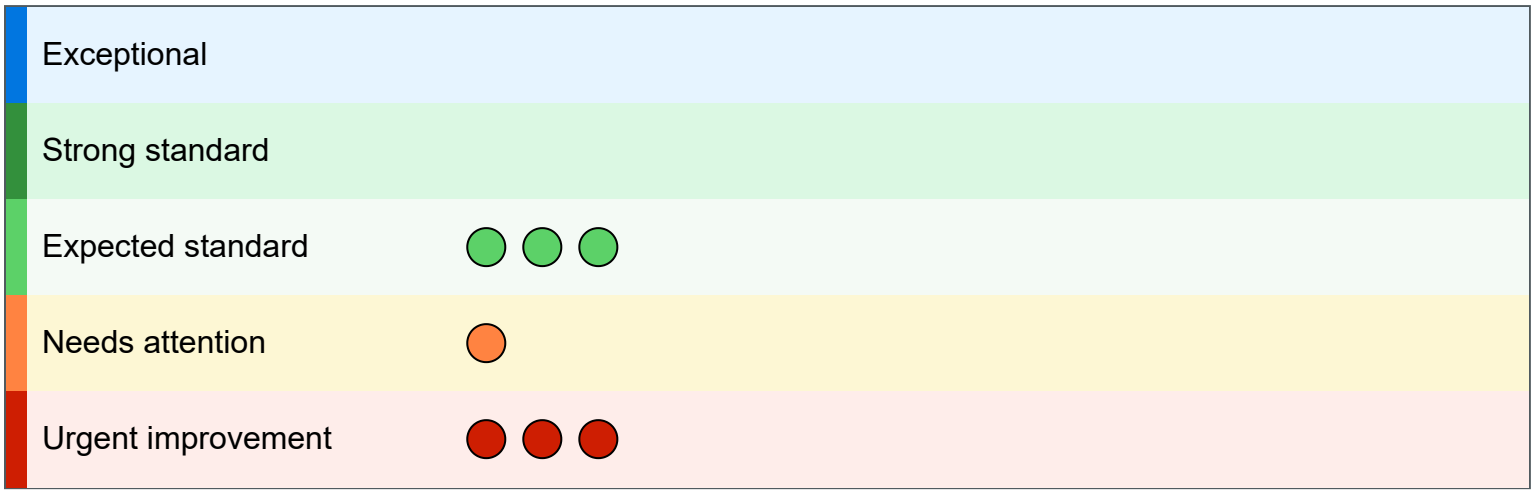
Stantonbury School

Address: Purbeck, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK14 6BN

Unique reference number (URN): 148835

Inspection report: 3 March 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.

This school requires special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders understand the needs of pupils well. They have effective systems in place to identify any barriers that pupils may have to their learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders put appropriate plans in place to outline how pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be most effectively supported. Staff use these plans to inform how they prioritise support in the classroom. While staff make regular use of the information that leaders provide, they sometimes lack the expertise to adapt the curriculum precisely and effectively. Leaders continue to provide professional development opportunities to staff who need to refine their inclusive teaching strategies.

Leaders take a research-informed approach to inform the school's pupil premium strategy. For example, leaders recognise the importance of reading in allowing disadvantaged pupils to access their learning and next steps successfully.

Leaders regularly assess the impact of interventions that are in place to meet pupils' needs. They refine provision where pupils do not benefit positively from the support in place.

Leaders collaborate effectively with external partners to ensure pupils access any specialist support they need.

Alternative provision is used appropriately and only where it is in the best interests of pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils are effectively supported in their personal development. Leaders ensure that the curriculum reflects pupils' views and needs as well as the local context. Pupils learn how to stay safe and recognise the risks they should be alert to in the wider community. They receive suitable relationships and sex and health education. For example, pupils increase their understanding of healthy relationships and positive mental health in an age-appropriate way. Pupils are alert to cyber risks and understand how to stay safe online. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged receive additional support to meet their needs. For example, pupils attend additional workshops to enhance their understanding of safety. Pupils make effective use of the 'focus' space to help manage their wellbeing and to address any anxieties they may have.

Pupils learn about the important life skills they need to help them be prepared for their next steps. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They know the part that rules and laws play in modern Britain. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate cultural diversity and to reflect on their moral perspectives through assemblies and within the curriculum. Pupils learn about different protected characteristics, such as gender and age and the importance of treating others equally and respectfully. However, they recognise that pupils across the school do not always model these values.

The school provides helpful and independent careers advice to pupils. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the different pathways available and how to reach them.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to participate in enrichment activities. Leaders regularly review this offer so that it is well matched to pupils' interests and improves their sense of belonging. Pupils enjoy attending cheerleading and bike mechanics clubs alongside more traditional sports and performing arts activities. Pupils' participation in these wider opportunities is increasing, including those who are disadvantaged.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard

Leaders have established a suitable sixth form offer that reflects the needs of students and the local community. The curriculum is well designed and taught effectively. Teachers know their subjects well. They understand students' needs and successfully remove any barriers students may have to their learning. As a result, students, including those who are disadvantaged, make positive progress through the curriculum from their starting points. Students typically achieve in line with national expectations in examinations at the end of key stage 5.

Students are well prepared for their next steps, both academically and pastorally. They secure the knowledge and skills needed for their onward destinations. Students are self-motivated, ambitious and independent. They have positive attitudes to learning and attend school regularly. Students make effective use of unstructured time to develop their study skills. Students receive well-matched careers guidance. They feel well supported in accessing their intended course of future study or employment. Students learn how to stay safe online, in relationships and in the community. They have a well-developed understanding of rights and responsibilities and embrace the cultural diversity within the sixth form.

Students welcome the range of leadership opportunities available which allow them to serve as role models to younger pupils. They support lunch duties, reading interventions and school events.

Needs attention

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Teachers do not use checks on pupils' understanding consistently well. This means that teaching choices are often not matched to where pupils are in their learning. Pupils are often

unclear how to respond to feedback that teachers provide.

Staff do not use the information they have about pupils' particular needs to adapt their teaching effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged sometimes struggle to access the intended learning.

Leaders recognise which aspects of teaching are not as secure as they should be. They have started to take steps to address this, but these improvements have not happened as swiftly as they need to.

The curriculum is well designed and considers pupils' starting points. Across different subjects, the curriculum is taught in an appropriate order to help pupils build their knowledge over time. Typically, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They demonstrate and explain new learning clearly.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the curriculum. They have put systems in place to identify where pupils have gaps in their reading and vocabulary development. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to catch up when they have gaps in their knowledge so that they can be prepared for their next steps.

Urgent improvement

Achievement

Urgent improvement

Pupils’ attainment in national examinations by the end of key stage 4 in 2025 was significantly below the national average across all subjects. This has been the case for several years and there are no signs of sustainable improvement. Disadvantaged pupils achieve poorly. Pupils who have missed learning through absence do not catch up well. They achieve significantly less securely than their peers. Often, pupils do not have the important foundational knowledge they need to help them be ready for the next stages of their education or training.

Leaders use assessments to understand where pupils need additional support in their learning. However, these systems have not yet been embedded. As a result, staff do not use assessment information as effectively as they could to address pupils' knowledge gaps. Leaders have prioritised support for pupils who need to catch up on their mathematics knowledge and reading skills. However, this work is not sufficiently ambitious. Too many pupils continue to lack the important knowledge they need to be successful in their wider learning.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement

Too many pupils are frequently absent. Over time, leaders' actions to address this have been insufficiently rapid or sustained. Persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, has remained significantly high for several years. Pupils who miss school do not achieve as well as their peers. Recently, leaders have started to make important

improvements to their attendance approach. As a result, attendance is now starting to rise, but remains below where it needs to be.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is variable. Pupils are not consistently respectful, often needing repeated reminders of basic behaviour expectations. While many pupils make positive choices and engage well in learning, there are a significant minority who persistently breach expectations and disturb the learning of others. A high proportion of school time is missed through suspensions. The support provided to pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour is not consistently effective. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are overrepresented in suspensions. Bullying is not tolerated. However, leaders do not have a clear oversight of behaviour trends, which means that sometimes unkind or discriminatory behaviours are not addressed as swiftly or consistently as they should be.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement

Leaders do not accurately or consistently review the impact of their work. As a result, areas of weakness have not been addressed as swiftly or effectively as they should be. In particular, leaders have been slow to improve poor attendance, behaviour and achievement. Leaders understand that these aspects of the school's provision need to improve. However, leaders' plans to address these priorities often lack precision.

Governors are not sufficiently thorough in the challenge they seek and the checks they make on leaders' assurances. As a result, they do not have a consistently accurate picture of the school's work. This prevents governors from fulfilling their statutory responsibilities as robustly as they should.

Leaders provide professional development opportunities for staff matched to where the school needs to improve. The impact of training opportunities is inconsistent. For example, the checks that teachers make on pupils' understanding have not improved as a result of this being an area leaders have focused on.

Staff are typically positive about working in the school. However, some staff feel that workload is not considered when new initiatives are introduced. Teachers at the earliest stages of their career are well supported and feel valued.

Leaders are committed to acting in the best interests of pupils. Leaders have a secure oversight and understanding of the needs of the most vulnerable pupils. They engage positively with external partners to ensure that specialist support and intervention are provided where needed.

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

Pupils in the school do not achieve as well as they should in national examinations by the end of key stage 4. Often, pupils do not secure the knowledge that they need to be well prepared for their next steps. There are too many pupils with high rates of absence. Pupils who miss school regularly achieve far less well than their peers.

The school has started to take steps to improve pupils' learning experiences. As a result, pupils typically follow classroom expectations and participate in learning. Pupils have mixed views about school. Some enjoy their studies and are motivated to succeed.

Leaders recognise the barriers to learning and or/wellbeing that pupils may face. They provide helpful plans to staff so that there is a common understanding of how best to meet pupils' needs. However, staff do not consistently use this information to adapt their teaching effectively. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, do not make sufficiently positive progress from their starting points.

Behaviour across the school is variable. Leaders do not have an accurate oversight of how frequently different types of behaviour occur. This affects how successful they are at preventing poor behaviour from repeating. A notable proportion of pupils are not respectful and repeatedly breach expectations. As a result, some pupils worry about the behaviour of others. However, many pupils make positive choices and understand the importance of rules. The school takes broadly effective action to address bullying and discrimination where they happen. Pupils are confident that staff provide helpful support. They appreciate wellbeing workshops and the 'focus' space that helps them to manage their emotions. Typically, pupils feel safe and understand how to stay safe.

The school provides a range of wider experiences and activities for pupils to participate in. Pupils contribute to the community through a range of leadership opportunities such as those of reading buddies.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they have an accurate oversight of any poor behaviours that happen in the school so that these are responded to swiftly and effectively. Additionally, leaders should ensure that they accurately measure the impact of their behaviour management strategy so that pupils' unacceptable behaviour rapidly reduces.
- Leaders should ensure that their work to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence is sustainable.
- Leaders should ensure that they improve the consistency of teaching across the school so that pupils achieve more securely and are better prepared for their next steps.
- Governors should ensure that the work of the school is thoroughly checked and challenged so that priorities are sharply focused where they need to be.

About this inspection

This school is part of Tove 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, Dr Jamie Clarke, and the trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Linda Brooks.

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

Inspectors spoke with the school leadership team, members of staff, groups of pupils, representatives from the board of trustees, representatives from the local governing body, trust leaders and regional improvement for standards and excellence advisers during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The school makes use of 4 alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 205, His Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

Associate Principal: Benjamin Wilson

Lead inspector:
Tash Hurtado, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Nicholas Simmonds, Ofsted Inspector
Sara Staggs, His Majesty's Inspector
Marieke Forster, Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Legg, Ofsted Inspector
Amy Newman, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,486
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: 1,067

School capacity

1,560
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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

41.99%
Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

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

2.02%
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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.06%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above 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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	26.4%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	35.5%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.3%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	32.8	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	38.8	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	35.0	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.89	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.18	-0.03	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	14.5%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	12.8%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	24.4	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.2	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	28.3	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.32	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.62	-0.57	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	14.5%	53.1%	-38.6 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	21.8%	53.1%	-31.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	12.8%	52.4%	-39.7 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	24.4	50.4	-26.1
2023/24 (final)	30.2	50.0	-19.8
2022/23 (final)	28.3	50.3	-22.0

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.32	0.16	-1.49
2022/23 (final)	-1.62	0.17	-1.78

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	93%	93%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	21.84	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	18.70	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	22.80	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below

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 (2 term)	15.9%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	14.8%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	14.5%	9.0%	Above

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 (2 term)	41.9%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	42.2%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	41.7%	26.5%	Above

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