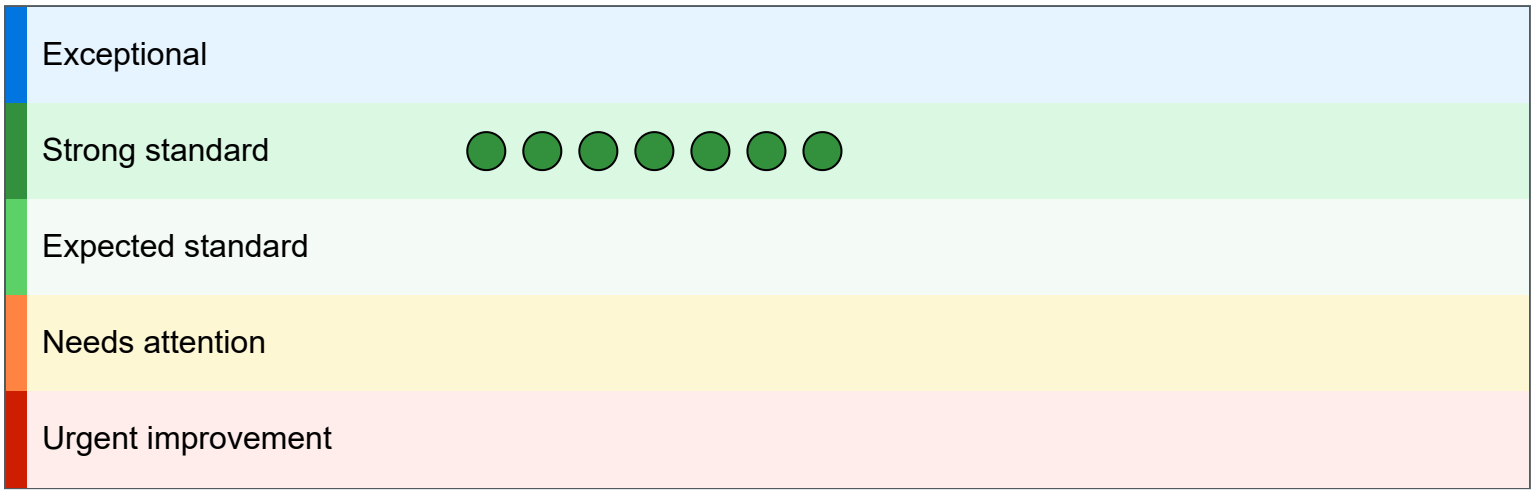
Bursted Wood Primary School

Address: Swanbridge Road, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 5BS

Unique reference number (URN): 140443

Inspection report: 16 June 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

Achievement

Strong standard

Pupils achieve very highly in national examinations at the end of key stage 2. Their work consistently demonstrates a high level of understanding across all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged meet their teachers' ambitious expectations.

Teachers ensure that pupils' understanding of essential knowledge is secure. Pupils grasp key concepts, apply them accurately and explain their thinking clearly. They confidently draw on prior learning when learning new content. This is particularly evidenced in reading and mathematics. Staff identify and close gaps swiftly through highly effective interventions. As a result, pupils make sustained progress from their starting points. Attainment in the phonics screening and multiplication tables checks is significantly higher than the national averages.

Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of education. By the end of Year 6, pupils have secure knowledge and are ready for beginning their secondary school with confidence.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders have very high expectations for pupil attendance. They analyse any absences carefully and act quickly when patterns emerge. Leaders use evidence-based research to maintain high attendance. They work with families and the community to remove any potential barriers. The school provides targeted help for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They communicate clearly and regularly with parents about attendance. As a result, pupils have very high attendance at school.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very positive across the school. They are polite, respectful and kind. Pupils play cooperatively and show dedication towards their learning. Staff establish clear routines that support all pupils. The behaviour policy is child-friendly, which ensures pupils' understanding of the fair rules. Staff make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND. Parents receive prompt updates and know who to contact if there is an issue. Pupils focus well during lessons. Disruptions to learning are rare. Pupils move calmly during transitions and follow staff directions swiftly. They are able to manage their behaviour independently. This is because leaders respond quickly to any barriers pupils may have. Pupils feel safe and that bullying is addressed quickly on the rare occasions it occurs.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

The school has an ambitious curriculum. It sets out clearly the vocabulary and knowledge pupils must learn. The curriculum reflects the school community. For example, pupils use the woodland to make connections locally and globally to enhance their study of geography and science. Lessons are deliberately designed to engage and build upon pupils' existing knowledge.

Teachers have the expertise to deliver the curriculum very effectively. They introduce new topics clearly and revisit previous content regularly to strengthen pupils' understanding. Teachers check pupils' learning carefully and correct any misconceptions. As a result, any gaps in essential knowledge and skills are addressed promptly. Teachers adjust their teaching thoughtfully. They provide effective support to help all pupils succeed. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, acquire secure knowledge across the curriculum.

The phonics programme is delivered consistently and accurately. Reading is integrated throughout the curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to explore different texts and expand their vocabulary. This is evident in the quality of their spoken and written work. In a few instances, books do not show sustained accuracy in pupils' formation of letters. Leaders ensure that pupils gain confidence in mathematics. Pupils are engaged and eager to learn. They are prepared very well for their future learning.

Early years

Strong standard

The curriculum in the early years is ambitious and well structured. It builds up children's knowledge and skills successfully. Children learn through purposeful play, for example by exploring numbers and shapes. They use new vocabulary confidently during outdoor learning. Staff know each child's needs and adapt and respond their approaches effectively when support is needed. They set clear, consistent routines. For example, daily wellbeing checks take place before learning that settle children well for the day ahead.

Adults interact with pupils effectively to enhance their understanding. They promote the development of language skills by introducing new words during play and routines. In Reception Year, the teaching of phonics is consistent. Daily sessions help children recognise sounds and develop early reading skills quickly. However, early writing and fine motor tasks are sometimes not consistent enough to support children's handwriting.

The teaching of the different areas of learning is highly effective. Children explore nature. For instance, they plant seeds in the outdoor provision. These activities boost their communication and language skills. Resources are carefully chosen to support all areas of the curriculum.

Children's wellbeing is a priority in the early years. Leaders put in place inclusive practices to ensure that all children can learn and develop their social and emotional skills with growing confidence. As a result, children are very well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard

The school has a highly inclusive culture. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and act with precision to remove any barriers to learning. Inclusive wellbeing approaches are embedded consistently. Leaders provide meaningful support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to social care. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Enhanced pastoral care supports each pupil to access the ambitious curriculum successfully.

Leaders ensure that pupils' progress is checked regularly so that they can use accurate information to refine their provision. This ensures that pupils receive the right support at the right time. Leaders use additional funding effectively to remove barriers for vulnerable pupils. For example, they have created an ‘enabling passport’ tracker that enhances support for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders communicate effectively with families so that there is a joined-up approach to supporting their child.

Pupils benefit from a range of teaching adaptations and resources. Nurture spaces such as the 'nest' and the 'den' provide precise academic and emotional support. Teachers adjust their teaching approaches during lessons. Carefully planned outdoor learning boosts engagement for all pupils and promotes communication.

Leaders work closely with external agencies. Support is targeted, so pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points. In the early years, adults interact with pupils with considerable care to develop important communication skills.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders know the school community very well. They have identified the key strengths and set priorities for further improvement. Leaders focus clearly on delivering the highest quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others who may have additional barriers to their learning and engagement. They ensure that sufficient time and resources are allocated for sustained school improvement.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all their pupils. They base their careful choice of actions on evidence-based research. Staff, including early career teachers, benefit from a high-quality professional learning culture. This deepens their subject expertise and refines their teaching practice. Partnerships with local networks enrich the school's provision. Leaders share their expertise beyond the school and draw on external support when needed.

Trustees understand the school’s work well. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements remain robust. Trustees carry out their duties with care and integrity. They support the school and offer constructive challenge by checking that actions have a positive impact on pupils’ outcomes and experiences. They stay highly informed about school performance and fulfil their statutory duties rigorously.

Leaders model professionalism consistently and are highly reflective of their practice. Staff feel trusted and valued. They are supported well and feel proud to work at the school. Leaders build constructive relationships across the school community and engage with families positively. Parents speak very highly of the school and value the many opportunities given to their children.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils gain the knowledge and experiences needed to develop their social skills and to respect others. They develop their social, moral and spiritual awareness through their reading of books and discussions. Leaders ensure that the curriculum teaches pupils about fundamental British values. Pupils are taught to appreciate cultural diversity beyond their

school and community. They have a clear and detailed understanding of different issues and differences.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of meaningful leadership roles. They describe with pride how they donate Christmas gifts and books to those less fortunate and visit local care homes. These activities build pupils' confidence and sense of responsibility. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, talk enthusiastically about the 'rights of the child' and relate these to their daily lives. They know how to look after their wellbeing and stay healthy. Pupils explain how their lessons in personal, social and health education help them understand different types of families. They also know about healthy and unhealthy relationships. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online and in their local area. Pupils know who to speak to if they are worried and trust adults to help them.

Pupils are ambitious about their future careers. The school offers a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils discuss with enthusiasm their trips to theatres and museums. Opportunities for pupils to develop interests and discover new talents are a real strength of the school. They participate in sports competitions and enjoy various clubs, including Spanish, chess and robotics. Pupils learn to play musical instruments and develop their creative skills. They make important decisions about school changes, such as increasing the number of games and activities during playtime. The school prepares pupils very effectively for the next stage in their education and the wider world.

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

Pupils thrive at this school. They arrive each day with energy and purpose. Pupils enjoy learning and engage fully in lessons. They describe the school as inclusive and respectful. Pupils feel a real sense of belonging. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Adults act quickly when pupils raise concerns, making pupils feel safe and trusted. Bullying is rare, and, if it does occur, pupils are confident that any issues are resolved promptly. Their enjoyment of school leads to their high attendance and punctuality.

Pupils benefit from studying an ambitious and broad curriculum. They speak clearly and confidently about what they have learned. Pupils are able to connect what they have learned previously to new knowledge and skills. As a result, their achievement in national examinations has been consistently higher than the national averages for several years.

Pupils experience a very wide range of enrichment activities. These include visits to a modern art gallery, First World War trench reconstructions, theatre workshops, virtual reality simulations and residential visits. Children in the early years visit a farm and zoo, which links to their learning about animals and habitats. These opportunities broaden pupils' perspectives and deepen their curiosity. Pupils can take on meaningful leadership roles, such as joining the school council or being 'eco warriors', 'care and community leaders', and 'enrichment experts'. Leaders consider pupils' opinions carefully, such as their contribution to recent discussions on playground enhancements. Pupils also participate in charitable projects such as visiting care homes and donating books to disadvantaged schools abroad. They are taught how to look after the environment.

Pupils behave very well. They show genuine respect for different cultures and perspectives, listening carefully and responding maturely. Daily routines are well embedded, which includes an ambitious reading programme. Book monitors and reading champions promote reading throughout the school. Older pupils support younger ones during playtimes and events. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and offline. The 'friendship room' provides a calm space to strengthen relationships and pupil wellbeing.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to enhance their support for children and pupils who need additional support with their fine motor skills and early writing to promote greater independence and more accurate letter formation in their handwriting.

About this inspection

This school is part of the Bursted Wood Primary School Academy Trust, which means other members of the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Charman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Shirley Puxty.

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 principal, senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents and carers. The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Principal: Helen Charman

Lead inspector:
Sam Carnegie, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Barry Blakelock, Ofsted Inspector
Denzil Faure, Ofsted Inspector
Adam Hickman, His Majesty's 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 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

625
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: 272

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)

3.20%
Well below 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

1.12%
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

11.36%
Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs 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	80%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	73%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	81%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	86%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	86%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	91%	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	89%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	85%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	91%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	90%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	91%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	91%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	96%	73%	Above

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	88%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	46%	Above
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	94%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	62%	Above
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	94%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	58%	Above
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	94%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	59%	Above
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	88%	68%	20 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	67%	33 pp
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	94%	80%	14 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	80%	20 pp

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	94%	78%	16 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	78%	22 pp
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	94%	80%	14 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	79%	21 pp
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	5.5%	Close to average
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)	10.2%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	11.4%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.2%	16.2%	Close to average

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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