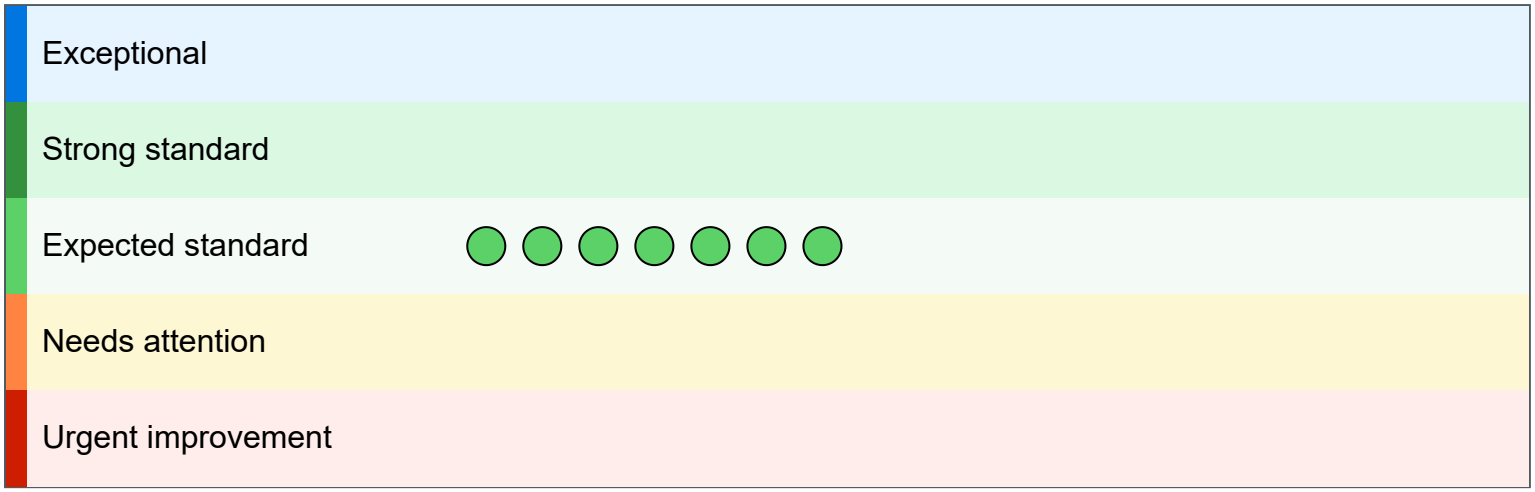
Queen Elizabeth's School

Address: Blandford Road, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 4DT

Unique reference number (URN): 141526

Inspection report: 29 September 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Typically, pupils make secure progress through the curriculum as they move through year groups. Leaders make thoughtful use of baseline assessments when pupils join the school in Year 9. This informs teaching and focuses additional support.

Leaders and teachers have considered how to introduce and teach complex vocabulary. As a result, pupils can increasingly apply their knowledge to more complex tasks. Over time, most pupils build knowledge securely. This is reflected in the high-quality work that they produce. Pupils with additional barriers to learning benefit from effective support. This helps them to learn the curriculum successfully alongside their peers. Pupils at key stage 4, including disadvantaged pupils, currently achieve in line with national averages.

In the sixth form, published examination results dipped below average in 2025. Leaders took effective action to improve the quality and consistency of teaching. This has led to current students achieving well. Their work demonstrates a sound understanding of the curriculum.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders ensure that attendance is a high priority for pupils, teachers, parents and carers. Thorough tracking and monitoring enable leaders to intervene quickly to reduce any emerging barriers that hinder pupils from attending school regularly. Leaders have listened to pupils' feedback to ensure that the school is a place pupils want to be. For example, they have changed how the school day starts. As a result, pupils' attendance has risen and overall attendance rates align with the national average. Rates of persistent absenteeism have fallen. Attendance among disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. However, attendance for these pupils remains too low.

Leaders have implemented effective behaviour systems. The school environment is calm and orderly. Teachers use consistent strategies to ensure that pupils behave well. Leaders have established clear routines both in lessons and during social times. Older pupils appreciate how much behaviour has improved. Pupils are respectful to each other and to adults. This is because of the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Staff resolve any instances of bullying or discriminatory language decisively. In lessons, learning proceeds with little interruption. When leaders need to adapt the behaviour system, they support pupils well. Leaders ensure that pupils get the support they need to behave and thrive in lessons.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They are also clear about the actions needed to continue improving. Leaders have increased rigour and quality in teaching. Pupils know what to expect in lessons. Older pupils say that the quality of teaching has improved. Leaders have designed the curriculum to give pupils the most important knowledge they need for their next steps. Leaders have thought carefully

about the sequencing of the curriculum. Generally, this helps pupils to build knowledge in logical steps.

The school's agreed approach to learning is embedded. Overall, staff use these teaching strategies effectively. Explanations of new information are clear and easy for pupils to understand. Teachers check what pupils understand. They routinely assess how well pupils have secured key knowledge. However, at times, they do not use this information effectively to inform future teaching. Consequently, sometimes misconceptions are not addressed as swiftly as they could be.

Leaders prioritise key foundational knowledge. Opportunities to read, write and use mathematics are embedded into the curriculum. Teaching helps pupils to read and use subject-specific language. Leaders ensure that pupils at the earliest stages of reading access individualised support.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have prioritised ensuring that all pupils are known and valued. This helps pupils to feel a deep sense of belonging to the school community. Leaders have put systems in place to identify pupils' additional needs and any barriers to learning. Leaders share comprehensive information with staff. Staff are trained to use a range of strategies to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. Leaders use careful evaluations to track pupils' progress and review the impact of any extra support provided.

Leaders reduce barriers to learning through targeted pupil support. For example, they use their 'Success Centre' to creatively support pupils to reintegrate into school following absence, suspension or when they face other barriers to attending school. Staff tailor support to pupils' needs to create a climate for success. The pupil premium strategy forms part of everyday practice. Careful tracking of disadvantaged pupils' progress, alongside effective staff training, helps these pupils do well.

Leaders promote an inclusive culture and a shared commitment to supporting all pupils well. Effective work with external agencies helps ensure that pupils known to social care receive appropriate and ambitious support. Alternative provision is commissioned appropriately and is used only when it is in the pupil's best interests.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Pupils, their parents and carers, and staff recognise the clear improvements leaders have made since the previous inspection. Those responsible for governance have taken effective action to ensure that they have the expertise needed to raise standards. School leaders have worked closely with the trust and the local school committee to make improvements. The impact of leaders' actions is evident across all aspects of provision. For example, standards of behaviour have improved and the curriculum is more ambitious. As leaders have improved the school, pupils have come to enjoy being there and value their education.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and where it needs further improvement. This informs careful prioritisation of actions. Pupils are at the heart of leaders' decision-making. Leaders check carefully that strategies are implemented

successfully. Their checks also highlight where staff need more support. This informs a well-structured professional development programme.

Leaders have successfully stabilised staffing with support from the trust. Despite much change, staff are overwhelmingly positive about their experience at the school. They appreciate the changes leaders have made. These have positively affected their workload and wellbeing. Early career teachers say that the support they receive helps them to develop their skills and confidence. Overall, parents and carers view the school positively. Leaders continue to engage with parents to help them understand the reasons for and impact of their actions to improve the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have built a coherent personal development programme that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Much of this is delivered through 'curriculum for life' lessons. The curriculum carefully responds to local and national issues. For example, leaders ensure that water safety features in the curriculum in the summer term. Pupils learn how to stay safe, lead healthy lives and maintain positive relationships. Leaders ensure that pupils receive age-appropriate lessons on relationships and sex education. Overall, pupils recall this curriculum well.

Pupils, regardless of faith, understand and find meaning in the school's values. They show respect for differences between people. Pupils typically gain a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They have regular opportunities to explore and celebrate diverse cultures and beliefs. These opportunities also deepen pupils' tolerance and understanding of others. Leaders pay close attention to pupils' views, using questionnaires and feedback from the student council. This leads to changes, such as policy updates and new clubs offered to meet pupils' interests.

The school offers pupils a wide range of opportunities. Leaders carefully track pupils' participation in enrichment activities. This ensures equitable access to these opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils benefit from the rich offer. Pupils have access to a wealth of clubs, from dance fitness and chess to jazz band and badminton. Pupils are especially proud of the performing arts on offer. They speak effusively about the school's inclusive productions.

Leaders have implemented a high-quality careers programme. Pupils gain valuable careers guidance. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, benefit from work experience. Through this, they gain an appreciation of the skills needed for the world of work. Events such as careers fairs, visits to further education providers, talks by guest speakers and careers interviews prepare pupils well for their next steps. The vast majority of pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training.

Post-16 provision

Expected standard

Leaders have ensured that the school's sixth form is inclusive. Students take a broad range of well-designed courses of study. Those following vocational qualifications generally achieve close to the national average. However, A-level examination results have historically been below the national average. Leaders have taken effective action to improve standards

in the sixth form. National examination outcomes are now on a secure upward trajectory. Teaching continues to improve. Teachers design thoughtful learning activities that help to deepen students' learning. A more consistent approach to teaching is helping students to retain their learning. The impact of these recent strategies is evident in the high-quality work produced by current students. They generally progress well through the curriculum.

Students are actively engaged in the life of the school. For example, they contribute to the student council and mentor younger pupils. Students benefit from a programme that covers relationships, ethics and financial planning. These experiences help them prepare well for adult life.

Students receive valuable careers advice that helps them to navigate and plan for their next steps. Students who face additional barriers to learning are supported with care. Students use careers guidance to make mature decisions about post-18 pathways. The school engages well with universities, apprenticeship providers and employers. This ensures that students are well informed about their options.

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

At Queen Elizabeth’s School, pupils feel part of a caring school community rooted in its Christian ethos. Leaders have created an environment where pupils feel that they belong and can learn well, including those who are disadvantaged. Leaders’ increased expectations have led to clear improvements across the school. Pupils and parents recognise these raised expectations. They comment positively about improvements in teaching, behaviour and the school’s culture.

Warm and trusting relationships between pupils and staff are a characteristic of school life. Staff know pupils well, which helps them to identify and reduce barriers to pupils’ learning and wellbeing. Pupils value the care and pastoral support they receive from staff. If they have worries or concerns, they know there is always someone to speak with.

In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well and respect others. Pupils speak confidently about how bullying and discrimination are not tolerated, which helps them to feel safe. Pupils increasingly value their education and understand why regular attendance is important for their learning and achievement.

Teachers’ delivery of the curriculum enables pupils to build secure subject knowledge. The school identifies pupils' barriers to learning, and staff work to minimise them. Across the curriculum, pupils generally achieve well, including disadvantaged pupils. This reflects improvements that leaders have made to teaching and assessment. As a result, pupils are prepared well for aspirational next steps in education, employment or training.

Pupils learn about the wider world and experience a range of opportunities. They build teamwork skills and enhance their wellbeing by participating in various extra-curricular activities. Pupils speak positively about taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, which develops their leadership skills and resilience. Pupils showcase their talents and forge lasting relationships with their peers through the school's regular productions. These

opportunities foster their sense of belonging. Pupil leadership plays an important role in leaders' decision-making. Pupils' opinions matter.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all teachers use assessment information precisely and routinely to adapt their teaching.
- Leaders should maintain a sharp focus on improving attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

About this inspection

This school is part of Initio Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, Brian Boyes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Deborah Fleming.

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

This inspection took place on the 29th and 30th September 2026.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also spoke with teaching staff, support staff, trust executive leaders, local governors, representatives of the trust board and a representative from the diocese.

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.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Salisbury. Its last section 48 inspection took place in July 2026.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of 8 alternative provisions, including 5 that are unregistered.

Headteacher: Thomas Neill

Lead inspector:
Frances Bywater, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Gary Schlick, Ofsted Inspector
Nic Blunsum, Ofsted Inspector
Jonty Archibald, Ofsted Inspector
Helen Kerr, 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 29 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,375
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: 1,063

School capacity

1,580
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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

17.30%
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: 30.4%

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

2.98%
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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.76%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 14.0%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

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 (final)	37.5%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42.8%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43.2%	45.3%	Close to average

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 (final)	43.3	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45.2	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45.1	46.3	Close to average

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)	-0.17	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.07	-0.03	Close to average
2021/22 (final)	-0.14	-0.03	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' 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 (final)	17.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	21.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	18.9%	25.2%	Close to average

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 (final)	29.2	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.1	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	34.0	35.0	Close to average

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)	-1.27	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.56	-0.57	Close to average
2021/22 (final)	-0.65	-0.55	Close to average

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 (final)	17.2%	53.1%	-36.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	21.6%	53.1%	-31.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	18.9%	52.4%	-33.6 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 (final)	29.2	50.4	-21.3
2023/24 (final)	32.1	50.0	-17.9
2022/23 (final)	34.0	50.3	-16.3

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)	-1.27	0.16	-1.44
2022/23 (final)	-0.56	0.17	-0.73
2021/22 (final)	-0.65	0.15	-0.80

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 (revised)	93%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	96%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	94%	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 (final)	31.05	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.27	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.30	34.16	Close to average

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 (final)	-0.3	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
2025/26 (1 term)	9.2%	7.8%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	12.7%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	13.3%	8.9%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	27.1%	21.5%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	35.2%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	38.8%	25.6%	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