

# Aerodrome Primary Academy

URN: 139094 | Inspected: 11 November 2025

## 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.

## Achievement

Expected standard

Typically, pupils achieve well. They demonstrate secure knowledge of their current learning and make meaningful links between subjects. On the whole, pupils securely develop the foundational knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils struggle with fluency in their writing. This is often due to incorrect letter formation and pencil grip. Leaders know that writing is not consistently of a high quality and have started to address this. Attainment in national tests shows that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, typically achieve in line with national averages. This is reflected in pupils' attainment at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. At the higher standard, pupils' attainment at key stage 2 in reading and maths is consistently above average. Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening test improved considerably in 2025 and are broadly average.

## Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum is broad and designed well. Leaders focus on the knowledge and skills pupils need to develop in each of the subject areas. They ensure pupils have opportunities to apply their knowledge across the curriculum. Leaders keep the curriculum under careful review and refine it when necessary to help pupils learn better. In early years and key stage 1, foundational knowledge is taught effectively through consistent approaches to reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in key stage 2 build on this essential knowledge. In mathematics, for example, they apply their secure knowledge of concepts like place value to successfully solve problems. The school-wide focus on vocabulary helps pupils as they progress through the curriculum to express ideas with precision and understand texts. There is a clear and purposeful drive to improve writing across the school. However, this has yet to consistently impact on the teaching of writing, specifically handwriting and sentence structure. Through careful checks on pupils' learning, staff are quick to spot pupils who need help to catch up. They provide effective support for pupils, particularly in reading and mathematics. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. They typically provide clear explanations and use consistent strategies that help pupils to learn key knowledge as intended. Leaders' routine checks ensure that teaching is well matched to pupils' individual needs.

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## Early years

### Expected standard

The curriculum in early years is well thought through and focused on developing foundational knowledge progressively across Nursery and Reception. Children benefit from high-quality interactions with staff who consistently model clear language and listen and respond to children. The school-wide focus on vocabulary starts here. Leaders plan learning around key words, such as using the words for mathematical shapes when creating playdough vegetables. 'Foundational facts' sessions help children to embed number facts they need for future learning. Early reading is a priority and ensures that children develop phonics knowledge effectively. Children's writing skills are less secure, in particular around letter formation. Staff work closely with parents and carers and other teachers, especially when considering children's transition into Year 1. Leaders ensure that teachers in key stage 1 know what individual children know and where there are gaps in children's knowledge. This is used effectively by teachers to adapt teaching in Year 1. The early years team is highly experienced, and leaders ensure that staff have the expertise and knowledge needed. This enables a consistent approach across the setting with a focus on positive relationships and interactions with pupils. Routines and expectations are well embedded and understood by children.

## Inclusion

### Strong standard

Leaders show a real commitment to making this a place where all pupils can thrive both personally and academically. They use information from a variety of sources, including external specialists, to ensure that barriers to learning and/or wellbeing, including special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are identified quickly and accurately. Well-considered training for staff ensures that they have the expertise needed to support all pupils. Leaders check with precision the impact of school-wide and individual approaches to support pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. As a result, barriers are addressed for these pupils. The nurturing environment and care by staff ensure that pupils who struggle with their wellbeing are very well supported. The school gives great consideration to its organisation of staffing and classes so that pupils' barriers to learning are addressed. The Meadow and Typhoon classes provide targeted support for some pupils with SEND. This helps these pupils progress through the curriculum. The specially resourced provision for SEND is well-structured and expert staff deliver excellent personalised support. Wherever possible, pupils from this provision access mainstream lessons successfully alongside their peers. Teachers make adaptations skilfully to ensure that all pupils access the same learning. Personal development and well-being Strong standard The school's personal development programme is comprehensive and very well-considered. It provides pupils with a wealth of opportunities that develop their character and prepare them for life beyond the school. Educational visits enhance the curriculum and develop pupils' understanding of the wider world. For example, the school ensures that, during their time here, pupils will visit three restaurants, a farm, the seaside, a theatre show and a different county. This is in addition to the trust-wide '11 before 11' programme, which broadens pupils' experiences. Leaders ensure that all pupils fully benefit from this offer. They overcome any barriers, such as funding trips for

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pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils' individual needs are considered at every point. For example, pupils from the specially resourced provision attend the same trips but in a smaller group so that they do not find it too overwhelming. Pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of concepts taught in personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils are acutely aware of how to stay safe online and that families all look different. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. They demonstrate a clear understanding of fundamental British values. Events and activities such as the 'cultural carnival' celebrate difference and bring the diversity of the school community together. Pupils are given and create opportunities to contribute to society through fundraising and volunteering. For example, pupils make and serve meals for the local church lunch. The school raises pupils' aspirations, for example through career development days for older pupils. The school provides a wealth of pastoral support that benefits all pupils. Well-targeted support is used for pupils identified as vulnerable, including looked-after children. Leaders maintain a close oversight of these pupils to ensure that interventions and support are highly effective. Expected standard

## Leadership and governance

### Expected standard

School leaders and those responsible for governance form a cohesive team. Together, they accurately identify the key priorities for the school. They quickly put well-considered plans in place to address them. Leaders review and evaluate their actions regularly to ensure these have the required impact. They are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils can achieve and thrive here, no matter their background or barriers to learning. This commitment is shared by staff. Through clear communication of whole-school priorities, everyone knows the particular role they play in making the school successful, and they do their jobs well. Both the trust board and governors work together to provide effective governance. They use a range of mechanisms to assure themselves of the school's strengths and weaknesses and to fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Trustees and governors provide challenge and support in equal measure to school leaders, with a firm focus on safeguarding, inclusion and equity for all pupils. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working here and the support they receive to manage their workload. The collaborative and supportive environment contributes to high staff morale and high staff retention. Leaders provide regular professional learning opportunities for all staff. They ensure these are meaningful and impactful. Leaders use their knowledge of the school to focus and develop aspects of pedagogy. Staff, including early career teachers, feel trusted and confident to try out new ideas and teaching approaches to support their pupils.

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

The school fosters a sense of belonging and high aspirations for every child. It is proudly inclusive, offering highly effective support for all pupils. From early years through to Year 6, leaders and staff remain focused on ensuring that every pupil is treated as an individual and their needs are met. As a result, all pupils make positive progress from their different starting points. Pupils value their learning, attend well and are highly engaged in lessons and activities. Their behaviour reflects this. Pupils show kindness and respect for others. Older pupils demonstrate maturity and act as excellent role models. Bullying is rare, and any incidents are dealt with swiftly. Pupils benefit from the consistency of a staff team that knows them and their families well. Community events bring staff,

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pupils and parents and carers together to share in pupils' achievements. For example, they enjoy cakes baked by pupils when they celebrate 'stars of the week' at the weekly 'community café'. Staff care deeply about pupils. They notice the smallest changes in pupils' behaviour or mood and respond with kindness and reassurance. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to talk and be listened to, from sessions with specialist staff to taking the school dog out for walks. Pupils in the specially resourced provision (SRP) for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are represented in the school's many councils. In addition to joining many mainstream lessons, this gives further opportunities for pupils in the SRP to feel part of the school and have their voice heard. Pupils have a wealth of experiences that help to develop character and prepare them for life beyond school. The school has well-established links with external partners to give pupils experiences that they may not otherwise have, including trips to Mansion House and esteemed universities.

## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum and its teaching across the school continue to strengthen pupils' writing fluency.
- Leaders should continue their work to secure consistently high attendance for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.

## Attendance and behaviour

### Expected standard

Leaders take a strategic approach to improving attendance. Overall, attendance is in line with the national average. Leaders continue to prioritise securing higher rates of attendance for all pupils. They intervene at an early stage to target any patterns they have identified, such as occasional absences. Communication with parents and carers is clear and consistent, complemented by strong partnerships with external agencies. Rewards and initiatives, such as 'Never Off November', promote the importance of attendance. Pupils typically attend well. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is close to average. Leaders' strategies to improve attendance are particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), whose attendance is above average. Leaders' efforts have also resulted in reduced holiday absence. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Their conduct reflects the culture of high expectations, respect and tolerance that leaders have created. Leaders have well-considered processes in place to support and encourage a positive behaviour environment. Pupils appreciate that their different needs are considered and met, such as their use of the 'Sunshine Room' as a calm space. Leaders have developed a culture where bullying is not tolerated. In the rare case where it happens, as with any incidents of poor behaviour, it is quickly sorted. Consequences are well understood by pupils, and leaders adapt these as needed for pupils with SEND.

**For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:**

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<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/aerodrome-primary-academy-croydon>