

Samuel Cody School

Address: Ballantyne Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SN

Unique reference number (URN): 116640

Inspection report: 9 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	●
Urgent improvement	

✔ **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 ●

Pupils have many chances to learn and grow, in lessons and through school life. The personal development programme is broad and well planned. Pupils learn how to keep safe, make healthy choices, build positive relationships and understand consent, boundaries and risk. They also learn how to stay safe online and ask for help. These topics are taught carefully, using resources suited to pupils' needs. Tutor time, circle time and assemblies help pupils revisit these ideas and grow in confidence.

The school helps pupils to become more confident, responsible and independent. Pupils take on roles such as house captains, ambassadors, school council members and monitors. Leaders listen to pupils and have made changes because of their views, including creating a quiet reading area and adding construction to the wider curriculum. Pupils also help others through fundraising and enterprise activities.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. Careers advice is matched to their needs. For example, older pupils meet a careers adviser, with parents involved in discussions. Pupils benefit from employer visits, talks and practical activities, and the school works hard to find the right opportunities. Almost all pupils move on to suitable placements, supported by visits and careful transition planning.

The enrichment programme gives pupils wider experiences for their personal development. Each year, they take part in fishing, singing at Winchester Cathedral, sports events, performing arts and residential trips. Pupils also benefit from the school's off-site curriculum centre, Cody Coppice, where they learn through outdoor experiences. These opportunities help pupils try new things, manage different situations, build confidence and prepare for adult life. Futures Week helps pupils practise skills such as travel training. Pastoral support is well organised. All pupils receive help for their wellbeing, with extra support when needed, including emotional coaching, mental health support and therapy. This helps pupils feel ready for their next steps.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils typically join the school with very low starting points. This is sometimes because they have gaps in their knowledge that developed earlier in their education, alongside their special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, pupils typically make progress through the curriculum, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils know and can do more over time across the different subjects they learn.

Some pupils do not develop their communication and language skills as quickly as they might. Leaders have made recent improvements to the support that these pupils receive. For example, they have ensured that pupils with more complex needs receive support that

reflects their starting points more accurately. These improvements are beginning to have a positive impact.

Pupils typically make progress that is appropriate to their individual needs, as a result of the effective support that staff provide. Pupils in the primary phase take national tests, such as those at the end of key stage 2. Pupils in the secondary phase study GCSE subjects, and many successfully complete these national examinations. Similarly, pupils who attend Cody Coppice successfully complete other appropriate accreditations. By the time they leave the school, pupils are typically well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils are happy at school and most attend regularly. This is often true of pupils who previously missed long periods of education and whose attendance was very low when they first joined the school. The school has effective systems to follow up on absences. This helps leaders to monitor attendance closely and spot patterns and trends that may indicate a barrier to attendance. The school organises effective support that helps pupils to attend more regularly. While the attendance of individual pupils and groups of pupils is improving, the attendance of pupils who are persistently and severely absent is improving more slowly.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently, adapting it as needed for individual pupils. Well-established routines help pupils to know what to do and when. As a result, pupils typically behave well. When pupils become dysregulated, staff give timely, effective support, so pupils quickly return to learning. This has led to a significant decrease in the use of restrictive physical intervention. Bullying is dealt with swiftly. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, want to do well and enjoy celebrating their work. Leaders have built a culture of respect, so pupils know when something is wrong and report it to staff. Any discriminatory behaviour is dealt with quickly.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders understand what is working well and what more they need to do to develop the curriculum across the different parts of the school. Since the last inspection, they have rightly strengthened the primary curriculum, including the phonics programme and the way that it is taught. This is leading to better outcomes for pupils. Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics progress well from low starting points. Pupils' communication and language development is not as embedded as it could be.

Leaders have made recent improvements to the school's curriculum pathways so that the curriculum better meets the specific needs of every pupil in the school. They have ensured that the curriculum is carefully designed and well sequenced. This means that pupils build knowledge and skills steadily during their time at the school. Leaders have focused on improving the teaching of the curriculum. In most subjects and classes, teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn. They explain new ideas clearly and give support that helps pupils to become more independent. They ask questions to check pupils' understanding, so

they can adapt learning to suit each pupil precisely. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across all subjects and phases.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The number of pupils has increased rapidly in recent years. The range of pupils' needs has widened over time. Leaders have ensured that the school has adapted well to these changes. The school carefully identifies pupils' needs and supports pupils well. This includes disadvantaged pupils, for whom the school makes effective use of the pupil premium funding. Pupils who have struggled to attend school regularly in the past receive effective support to re-engage in education, for example, through Cody Coppice, the school's off-site outdoor education centre.

Staff use a wide range of strategies to support pupils. These strategies help to remove barriers to learning. Flexible seating arrangements, 'now and next boards', regulation tools and visual timetables are just some of the ways the school helps pupils to stay focused on learning.

Staff are knowledgeable. They benefit from professional learning that helps them in their roles. The school actively seeks specialist support and advice, where necessary, in order to meet pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that staff have opportunities to develop as experts too.

The school ensures that pupils receive academic, therapeutic and social and emotional support in a timely way. Leaders continue to refine their overview of the barriers to learning that each pupil faces, the use of additional funding to address these barriers, and the support that pupils receive. This is helping leaders to develop a clearer understanding of the impact of this support. Pupils who are looked after receive appropriate support. Leaders make careful use of alternative provision, where appropriate, to enhance the curriculum offer for some pupils.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have managed the school's recent growth well and adapted to pupils' changing needs. They know the school's strengths and what still needs to improve. Since the last inspection, leaders have acted effectively to improve the primary curriculum and phonics teaching. The school development plan is clear and shows how leaders will continue to improve the school, including by developing curriculum pathways that better meet pupils' needs.

Leaders have created a positive working culture. Most staff feel well supported with their wellbeing and workload. New teachers, including those at the start of their careers, receive effective help and training. Staff also benefit from coaching and professional learning, which are helping to improve practice. Leaders and governors make decisions in pupils' best interests, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged and those who face other specific barriers. Governors know the school well. They bring useful skills and experience to their

roles. They challenge and support leaders and make sure their statutory duties are met. Parents are positive about the school and the difference it makes.

Needs attention

Early years

Needs attention 

Children in the early years do not do as well as they should. At times, staff do not understand children's needs clearly enough. Because of this, the activities that they design are not always matched closely to what children need to learn next. Sometimes, staff do not focus their assessments sharply enough on the knowledge that they particularly want children to learn. This makes it more difficult for them to identify the smaller next steps that children need to make in each area of learning.

Leaders have carefully considered the books and stories that they provide for children. This helps to ensure that children are exposed to different types of literature, such as those that focus on different cultures. Leaders have provided learning environments that enable children to learn indoors and outdoors. However, children do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their developing number, fine motor and creative skills. Children receive teaching that is designed to promote their learning of language. However, sometimes, there is a lack of clarity about the intended learning in these activities. Where this happens, children's learning is hindered. Leaders know what needs to improve in the early years. They are taking appropriate action to address these issues. However, it is too early to see the full impact of their work.

Children new to the early years receive support from staff to help them settle in. For example, staff get to know children and their parents and carers when they visit them at home or in previous settings. Staff work closely with parents and communicate with them well. They use approaches such as daily communication and home-school books so important information is shared. Staff observe children carefully when they start school, and they use this to begin to build a picture of what children can do. Leaders liaise effectively with professionals such as speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, and contribute appropriately to annual reviews of children's education, health and care plans. Leaders ensure that welfare and safety requirements related to the early years foundation stage, including first aid, are met. However, on occasion, some routines are unclear for children. Where this happens, children can lose focus or become upset.

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

Pupils are happy and safe. Their life here is summed up well by one of the school's many values: 'all different, all equal, all achieve'. This value encapsulates what it is like to be a pupil here.

The number of pupils joining the school has grown significantly in recent years. Their needs are more varied and wide-ranging than they have been in the past. The school caters for

pupils who have moderate and severe learning difficulties, as well as for those who have social, emotional and mental health needs. Regardless of their needs, all pupils receive the warmest of welcomes at Samuel Cody School.

Pupils often join the school with very low starting points. Many have had negative prior experiences of education, including periods of time out of school. They may have gaps in their knowledge. Carefully planned transitions for pupils mean that they settle in quickly and get to know staff well. They develop positive relationships with their peers. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils' needs are identified swiftly and accurately. Pupils receive personalised and targeted support. For some pupils, this means spending time at Cody Coppice, where they enjoy outdoor learning at a nearby outdoor activity centre.

Pupils follow a well-planned and sequenced curriculum. Their reading, writing and mathematics all develop well over time. As a result, they achieve highly in national tests and examinations. While leaders have begun to improve how well pupils' communication and language develop, there is still more for the school to do to ensure that every pupil's communication and language needs are fully met.

In the early years, children do not benefit as much as older pupils from a carefully designed, well-taught curriculum. Instead, they sometimes receive learning activities that are not matched precisely to their needs. This hampers their learning.

Next steps

- The school should ensure that assessment in the early years takes account of children's specific starting points and abilities so that staff can match learning activities more precisely to each child's individual needs.
- The school should continue to strengthen pupils' communication and language development so that pupils make more rapid progress from their starting points.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Stephen Preece.

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.

During the inspection, inspectors spoke with the co-headteachers, other senior leaders, a wide range of staff and pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is led by co-headteachers.

All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes pupils who have moderate and severe learning difficulties, as well as pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school has its own offsite outdoor education centre. This is called Cody Coppice and is located at Runway's End Outdoor Centre, 1 Laffan's Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2RE.

The school makes use of 27 alternative provisions, all of which are unregistered.

Co-Headteachers: Sharon Chinnappa and Rebekah Brumby.

Lead inspector:

Shaun Jarvis, Ofsted Inspector


Team inspectors:

Maria Roberts, Ofsted Inspector

Penny Bullen, 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

336

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.

School capacity

340

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.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

41.07%

What does this mean?

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

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

100.00%

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.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0.00%

What does this mean?

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

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)

SEN unit

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty, SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

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
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2023 leavers (revised)	93%
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2022 leavers (revised)	94%
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2021 leavers (revised)	85%
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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
2024/25 (3 term)	15.1%
2023/24 (3 term)	15.1%
2022/23 (3 term)	13.9%

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school
2024/25 (3 term)	39.1%
2023/24 (3 term)	38.6%
2022/23 (3 term)	38.0%

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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