

Halwin School

Address: Porkellis, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 0EG

Unique reference number (URN): 143980

Inspection report: 19 May 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance has paid off. Following a period where pupils' attendance was below the national average, it has improved significantly. Leaders have strengthened the school's systems for monitoring attendance. They now analyse patterns of attendance more robustly and intervene swiftly. Leaders work with families closely to understand reasons for absence. They help to remove barriers to help pupils improve their attendance or punctuality, such as utilising the school's breakfast club for pupils to attend. Pupils' attendance in the current academic year is now in line with the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is also broadly in line with other schools nationally.

Halwin School generally has a calm and orderly environment. This is established from the very start of the school day. Staff greet pupils and their families warmly. This helps them to quickly identify and support any pupils who are feeling anxious. In lessons, pupils are generally keen to learn. Most pupils work hard. However, occasionally, when pupils complete learning that is less well-matched to their needs, their attention drifts and they disengage from their learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Bullying is rare. If it does occur, staff deal with this effectively. Leaders do not tolerate poor behaviour. Suspensions of pupils are used proportionately and fairly.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have crafted a personal development programme designed to reflect the school's context. They recognise the rural isolation of the school's setting and plan many opportunities for pupils to experience the world beyond where they live. For example, pupils visit Bristol as a contrasting locality. This helps them to understand different faiths and cultures. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They typically understand key features of fundamental British values, such as democracy.

Pupils study a carefully ordered personal, social and health education curriculum. They generally learn this well, although occasionally their knowledge lacks depth. Pupils can describe the dangers of drugs and alcohol and how people can become addicted to them. Pupils learn about changes to their body in an age-appropriate way. They know how to stay safe online and offline.

Staff know pupils' pastoral needs well. They ensure that if pupils require emotional support, they provide this in a timely and nurturing way. The school actively promotes ways in which pupils can be mentally healthy through 'Wellbeing Wednesdays'. As a result, pupils feel happy in school. Pupils also learn to understand how people can be different and the importance of equity. They apply this to their school context. For example, pupils know that some of their peers require additional help with their learning or behaviour and understand why this is fair.

Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit fully from the personal development offer. They remove any potential barriers to participation in activities, such as providing equipment and clothing for

residential. The trust supports the school with transport to events to reduce costs for families.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Many pupils do not use accurate handwriting, spelling and punctuation in their written work. This is particularly the case for older pupils where gaps in knowledge have not been effectively addressed by the school. As a result, too many pupils struggle to write fluently across the curriculum. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. In addition, the quality of work pupils produce is variable and sometimes does not reflect what pupils are capable of. This means that some pupils do not have the knowledge and skills they need for their next stage of education.

Pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics are more positive. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils achieve the expected standard in these subjects. Younger pupils generally secure the phonics knowledge they need to read fluently and accurately. Nevertheless, pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities do not progress well from their starting points due to the variable quality of support they receive.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching is inconsistent. On too many occasions, staff's expectations of what pupils can do are not high enough. Their expectations do not match the ambition of the curriculum. Staff lack the expertise to use the information about what pupils already know to provide learning that is closely matched to their needs. In some lessons, staff do not notice when some pupils have already secured new knowledge and are ready to move on in their learning. Furthermore, teaching sometimes does not provide effective adaptations for pupils who are struggling with their learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This results in pupils completing tasks that are too easy or too hard. Where teaching is more effective, teachers expect more of pupils and introduce subject specific vocabulary for pupils to use in their learning. For example, pupils talk confidently about how animals adapt to their environment.

As the school's mixed-age class structures have changed, leaders have made adjustments to the curriculum. This ensures that pupils continue to learn new content in a logical order. Leaders have also made changes to make the curriculum more ambitious, with a greater focus on pupils securing correct letter formation and pencil grip. However, teachers are not rigorous enough in their teaching of the basics of writing. The teaching of phonics is more effective with staff generally following the agreed teaching approaches successfully.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Too many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the precise support they require to succeed in their learning. While pupils' learning plans

identify barriers, targets and strategies clearly, staff do not use this information effectively to make appropriate adaptations for pupils with SEND. They sometimes provide pupils with tasks that are too complex for them. When this happens, pupils' work is of a poor quality. In addition, the adaptations that staff provide for some pupils do not align to the agreed strategies outlined in learning plans. As a result, pupils with SEND do not learn well.

While systems for identifying needs for pupils are clear, leaders place too much emphasis on scrutinising the quality of learning plans, rather than checking how well staff implement them in the classroom. This means that weaknesses in the provision for pupils with SEND go unaddressed. However, the trust does provide appropriate specialist support where needed, such as in the assessments for pupils' speech and language needs.

Leaders understand why disadvantaged pupils do not learn well. However, the impact of the government's additional funding to improve this is variable. While the use of funding has improved pupils' attendance, it has not had enough of an impact on how well pupils learn, particularly in writing.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

The trust's view of the school is overgenerous. Despite increased levels of support for the school and leaders, it has not addressed some of the weaknesses in the school effectively enough. The trust's checks on the school's work and evaluation of the school do not paint a realistic picture of its weaknesses. In particular, its views of the quality of teaching and support for SEND does not reflect the current quality of provision in the school. However, new leadership, through their day-to-day involvement, has identified the areas that need improving. Leaders are realistic that there is much to do and determined to do their very best for pupils.

The trust has provided a range of training for staff. However, due to staffing instability, its impact on developing staff's expertise and pupils' learning has been limited. Staff appreciate the support they are given by leaders. In particular, they value the additional time they are given to complete additional duties. This helps to support staff's wellbeing and foster a pride in working at Halwin School. Parents and carers share equally positive views. They feel that staff are approachable and deal with any concerns quickly.

The local governing body are committed to the school. However, the information they receive from leaders about the performance of the school is sometimes inaccurate. This makes it hard for them to hold leaders to account for their actions and to be clear about the impact of leaders' actions.

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

Halwin School is a friendly and welcoming place. Most pupils live out the school's CARE values of 'confidence, aspiration, resilience and enjoyment'. These are underpinned by staff's compassion and focus on helping pupils to feel safe and happy. Pupils appreciate this and say that adults listen to them if they have any worries. Staff take time to understand pupils' and families' backgrounds. This enables them to offer timely advice and support

during difficult times. Pupils demonstrate kindness and tolerance of each other. Typically, they behave well. There are low levels of bullying. Staff deal with any fall outs quickly.

Nevertheless, too many pupils do not learn well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. This is because too often teaching is not matched well to pupils' needs or prior knowledge. Changes in staffing have exacerbated this. This has particularly affected older pupils who have experienced turbulence for a large part of their education. As a result, pupils' progress through the curriculum is patchy, particularly in writing. This means that some pupils do not have the knowledge and skills they need for their next steps of learning.

Pupils develop an appreciation of the uniqueness and the beauty of their locality. They represent the school proudly in a variety of community events. Pupils visit key local landmarks, such as tin mines to develop an understanding of the Cornish heritage. They develop a love of the arts through theatre trips and participating in school productions. Pupils take on leadership roles at both school and trust level. This gives them a voice in their education. Pupils with SEND play an active part in school life. They, along with their peers, enjoy pursuing their interests through clubs. Pupils learn how to be independent and to take risks through residential trips.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they develop staff's expertise in using assessment to address gaps in learning and identify when pupils are ready to move onto new learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers provide meaningful, high-quality tasks that are closely linked to the intent of the ambitious curriculum and which deepen pupils' learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support and adaptations in line with their learning plans to help them overcome their barriers to learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers support pupils to write well across the curriculum using correct spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation.
 - The trust should ensure that the school's systems for monitoring the impact of its work focus on the right areas to enable leaders to have an accurate view of the school and address any weaknesses quickly.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently establish a culture where all pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and engage well.
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About this inspection

The school is part of the Crofty Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer Simon Hague, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike Hosking.

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

Inspectors spoke with the head of school, executive headteacher and other senior leaders, the interim CEO, a trustee, two members of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

There is a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing.

The school reduced its number of classes to two in September 2025.

The head of school took up his post in February 2026.

Head of School: Daryl Riches

Lead inspector:

Jason Edge, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Lizzie Lethbridge, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

52

Well below 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

119

Well below 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)

22.92%

Close to 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

1.92%

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

23.08%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

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

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	47%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	86%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	50%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	23%	60%	Below

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	87%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	73%	Close to average

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	47%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	86%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	50%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	23%	71%	Below

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	87%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	86%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	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	33%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
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	89%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
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	33%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
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	89%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
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	33%	68%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
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	89%	80%	9 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
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	33%	78%	-44 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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	89%	80%	9 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
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)	6.5%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.5%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.8%	5.9%	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
2024/25 (3 term)	11.4%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	16.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.6%	16.2%	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.

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