

Bruton Primary School

Address: Higher Backway, Bruton, Somerset, BA10 0DP

Unique reference number (URN): 123899

Inspection report: 14 July 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

Early years

Strong standard 

Children get off to an excellent start in the Reception Year and pre-school. They flourish. Leaders have been proactive and strategic in their approach to those at the start of their learning. The recent introduction of the pre-school has enhanced the development of the children who attend. The planned curriculum between the early years classes is seamless. The relationships staff build with the children are highly effective. Care practices are meticulous.

In pre-school, leaders prioritise communication and language. Children can explore rich opportunities to develop fine motor skills and curiosity all day. As a result, children develop their confidence and positive relationships with ease.

Children in the Reception Year start with early reading and phonics. They then demonstrate confident writing and mathematical skills. This helps them with future learning in the wider curriculum. The early years provision is a buzz of development and excitement. A plethora of activities spark children's curiosity. They experiment with painting and mixing colours and create detailed flags from different materials. They listen closely to peers performing 'Punch and Judy' shows. There is a maturity about the way the children go about their independent activities. As a result, children typically achieve very well at the end of Reception Year and are more than prepared for the demands of Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Bruton Primary School is a highly inclusive school. Leaders promote a sense of belonging for all pupils. Leaders keep the needs of pupils firmly at the centre of their decisions. When pupils join the school, staff promptly identify their individual strengths and needs. Staff work closely with external agencies, such as health professionals. They ensure that there are ambitious and personalised support plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff know pupils very well. They are alert to any changing barriers to pupils' wellbeing. For example, they support pupils through bereavement and any caring responsibilities they may have. Leaders use additional resources, such as additional funding, to support pupils to engage positively with education. For example, funded mental health support enhances pupils' wellbeing.

Staff use their knowledge of pupils' strengths and needs to make appropriate adaptations. These support pupils with barriers to learning to access the curriculum as their peers do. Pupils who find reading hard receive additional support, such as with phonics. Leaders meticulously monitor the progress of pupils over time. They evaluate the impact of all interventions so that they can celebrate success and adjust support when required. Consequently, pupils make progress from their starting points.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

School leaders have devised a vibrant and coherent personal development and wellbeing programme for the pupils of Bruton. They make sure that pupils, including those

with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who are disadvantaged, fully benefit from this exciting offer. Highly effective pastoral support ensures that pupils feel safe and listened to. Pupils can access a lunchtime club and the school's 'Nest' to help them manage their feelings. Pupils talk confidently about staying safe, including online risks. They show a secure understanding of relationships and consent.

The school's personal, social and health education curriculum ensures that pupils learn to stay physically and emotionally healthy. Pupils enjoy many sports resources during breaktime and lunchtime. These activities support their physical growth and help them make strong friendships. Pupils have a deep understanding of British values. They have a real understanding of different religions. Trips such as a recent visit to an inner-city synagogue strengthen curriculum learning. Pupils have a secure understanding of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. The school council is just one example of democracy in action at the school.

Leaders have devised a rich range of experiences for the children. These are woven into everyday learning. Visits to a local garden and art gallery enable pupils to experience cultural and artistic diversity. For example, pupils are able to talk in depth about various sculptures and what they mean. Visits from fire fighters, geologists and cartographers widen pupils' experiences. Regular science workshops, yoga sessions and singing lessons help pupils grow their characters and talents. Older pupils actively raise money for local charities and food banks. As a result, pupils are extremely well prepared to be active and thoughtful citizens of modern Britain.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum. This is reflected in pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 national tests, which are consistently in line with national averages. This means pupils are generally equipped with the knowledge and skills they need for their next stage of education. They gain secure foundations in reading and mathematics.

Across the curriculum, pupils recall important knowledge with confidence. Older pupils speak knowledgeably about dissecting a heart in science. This helped them understand how the heart works. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other barriers to learning typically progress well through the curriculum from their starting points. However, some pupils' letter and number formation is not as well developed as leaders expect. Pupils' handwriting is, at times, inconsistent. Leaders have recently introduced a new handwriting policy to address this. However, it is still too early to see the impact of this work.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have raised expectations for attendance and punctuality. They communicate these clearly with families. Most pupils attend well. Leaders have recently developed absence monitoring systems. They use this information to identify any attendance barriers for individual pupils. While this work requires further refinement, it is enabling staff to select

appropriate support for pupils and their families. Leaders challenge families when pupils are late to school as this too means pupils miss learning. Leaders' work is beginning to make a difference, and the overall attendance is in line with pupils nationally. Nevertheless, some pupils are still missing too much time in school.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupil conduct. Pupils appreciate when staff consistently follow the school policy so that they can learn without disruption. Leaders have robust systems to monitor any behaviour that falls below the standard they expect. They swiftly help pupils who need additional support to improve their behaviour. This work is effective. The school is calm. Pupils typically behave well. Bullying, and any form of unkind behaviour, is not tolerated. Pupils are confident to share concerns with adults.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders understand where strengths lie within this curriculum. For example, their work on the teaching of phonics benefits pupils because staff clearly present new sounds to pupils. The teaching of early reading and phonics is well structured. Staff address misconceptions quickly. Teachers provide targeted support to any pupils who struggle, helping them keep up. Leaders have a keen focus on early writing. For example, they insist on secure pencil grips.

The wider curriculum is typically taught well. 'Quests' enable pupils to build their knowledge over time. For example, in the Reception Year, children experience underwater sea creatures. Activities help them understand what life is like for these animals underwater. In key stage 1, pupils learn about coastlines through well-chosen texts. In lower key stage 2, pupils explore the Ionian islands' climate and position on the globe. They compare and contrast the physical features of these places. In some lessons, some pupils do not always grasp what they are learning as securely as they do in other lessons. This is because teaching is not consistently effective. Some activity choices and feedback to pupils lack the precision that pupils need to build and improve their knowledge.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders accurately evaluate the school's strengths and areas that need further development. Their evaluation takes the school's context into account. Leaders' current improvement plans include further developing pupils' writing through the new handwriting scheme. The recent focus on pupil outcomes at the end of key stage 2 has had a positive impact. It ensures pupils are ready to move to secondary school. Leaders and staff are inclusive and ambitious for all pupils.

Governors support the school and its staff effectively. They visit the school regularly to check on staff wellbeing and workload. Governors have improved how they support and challenge the school. For example, school visits are highly focused on evaluating the effectiveness of provision. Governors understand their statutory duties and fulfil them effectively. This includes robust monitoring of the school's safeguarding practice.

Leaders develop staff expertise effectively. They prioritise professional learning. For example, staff welcomed recent training with the diocese that supported them to update the

religious education curriculum. Professional development has improved the work of staff and strengthened pupil outcomes. Staff value the support leaders give them. They appreciate how visible leaders are in the school. Leaders consider their wellbeing through the school's open culture.

The parental community is overwhelmingly positive in their comments about the school. Some parents describe the support that they get as life changing for not only their child but also for them as a family. Parents and carers appreciate how pastoral support, and support for pupils with barriers to learning, is precise, swift and meets pupils' needs effectively.

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

Pupils benefit from a vast range of opportunities to develop themselves personally. These help pupils feel part of a wider family. Pupils benefit from outdoor learning opportunities. Some children learn to swim in the on-site swimming pool. An established and meaningful link with a school in Zambia offers pupils the chance to write to pen pals. They learn about cultural similarities and differences between the schools. Leaders have ensured that these experiences ignite pupils' ambitions. Pupils access a range of exciting opportunities in school to develop their character and discover their talents. Clubs such as tennis and gardening allow pupils to develop their interests. Leaders, in collaboration with the school council, carefully consider what extra-curricular activities to organise. Pupils in Year 5 aspire to become prefects or head boy or head girl in Year 6. These leadership opportunities help pupils to develop self-confidence and learn about important responsibilities. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the transition to secondary school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe in the care of their trusted adults. As a result, most pupils attend well. In the pre-school, children get off to a flying start. This is because high expectations in early years help children swiftly reach key milestones. Pupils generally develop the school's learning behaviours well. There is an acute focus on becoming ambitious, responsible, creative, reflective and resilient. Pupils demonstrate resilience. They rarely give up when learning becomes difficult. Pupils rarely use discriminatory language because they know why it is wrong. Bullying is uncommon at their school. If it does occur, pupils are confident they can turn to an adult who will resolve it without delay.

Pupils generally achieve well at Bruton. They speak confidently about their learning and have numerous ways to apply this learning in school. As a result, those who face barriers to learning achieve well.

Next steps

- Leaders should further refine their systems for monitoring the attendance of particular groups of pupils to ensure that their actions have the desired impact.
- Leaders should improve pupils' foundational skills, especially handwriting, by ensuring consistent practice and precise modelling across year groups so that all pupils build their fluency and accuracy over time.

- Leaders should ensure that the agreed approach to delivering teaching is implemented consistently well so that pupils make as much progress as possible across the curriculum.
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About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Suzanne McCutcheon and Anna Chubb.

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.

The inspection team spoke with school leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They also held discussions with representatives of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke to staff, parents and carers and pupils.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

The school is a member of the East Somerset Federation, which includes 2 other primary schools.

Executive Headteacher: Rachael Bisset

Lead inspector:

Thomas Brewer, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sara Berry, His Majesty's Inspector

Alistair Wilson, 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 14 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

256

Close to 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

277

Close to 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)

10.55%

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: 26.3%

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

1.17%

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

8.59%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

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	63%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	71%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	60%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	60%	Close to average

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	68%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	76%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	69%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	71%	Close to average

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	75%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	82%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	73%	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 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	28%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	17%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	44%	Close to average

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	33%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	17%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	60%	Below

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)	33%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	58%	Below

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	67%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	43%	59%	Below

‘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	28%	68%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	17%	67%	-51 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	66%	-23 pp

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	33%	80%	-46 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	17%	80%	-63 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	78%	-35 pp

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)	33%	78%	-44 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	77%	-35 pp

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	67%	80%	-13 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	100%	79%	21 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	79%	-36 pp

‘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)	5.3%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	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)	13.8%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	15.5%	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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