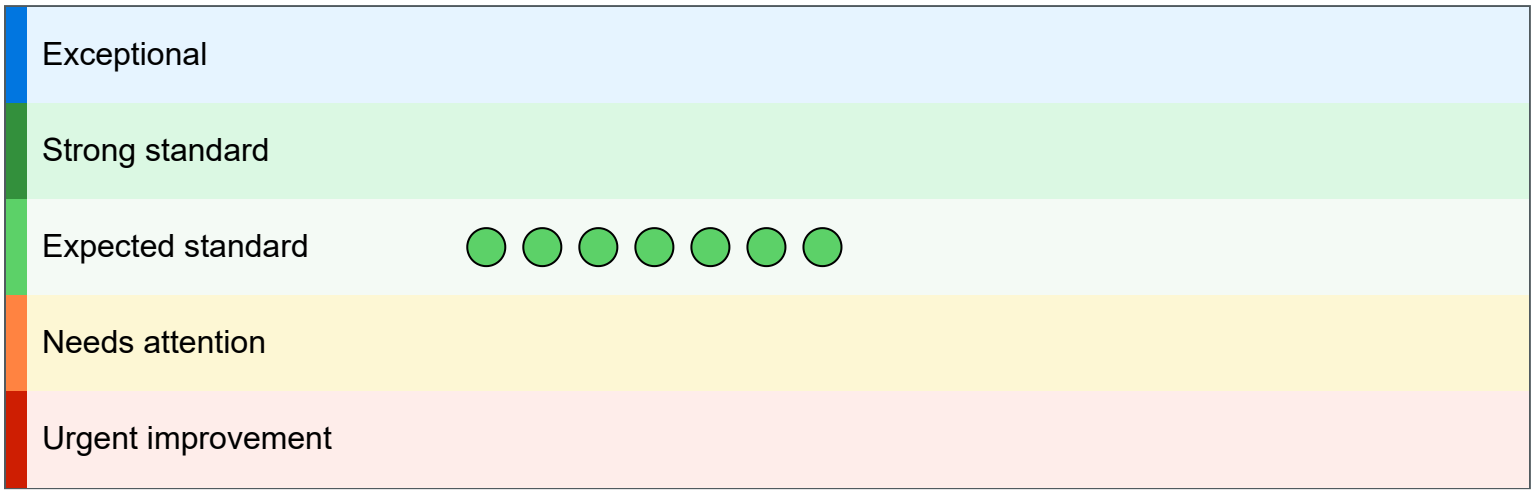
Caister Infant With Nursery School

Address: Kingston Avenue, Caister-on-Sea, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR30 5ET

Unique reference number (URN): 120796

Inspection report: 12 May 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

Published outcomes in early reading reflect the school's consistent approach to teaching phonics and reading. From the nursery onwards, children build secure foundations in communication, language and early reading. Staff identify pupils who need additional support quickly. They provide effective help to ensure that pupils keep up successfully. As a result, pupils read with increasing confidence and fluency.

Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum from their individual starting points. Leaders have prioritised building a coherent curriculum and upskilling teachers to teach the curriculum well. Pupils build on secure mathematical understanding and early language knowledge learned in the early years. Across the school, pupils talk positively about their learning and explain new knowledge clearly. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about learning about castles in history lessons. Pupils take pride in the improving quality of their handwriting and presentation. Leaders make sure that pupils' transition to junior school feels familiar and positive.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise attendance and have established a clear and consistent approach to promoting high attendance. They work closely with families, including those whose children face barriers to regular attendance. Leaders use a range of strategies, including home visits, to support pupils and secure improvement. Leaders maintain a visible presence and communicate clear expectations about punctuality and attendance. Attendance, including for those pupils who are persistently absent, is improving.

Leaders have established a highly consistent approach to behaviour. Staff apply agreed routines and expectations consistently across the school. Pupils understand the school's behaviour systems and can explain what respectful and positive behaviour looks like in practice. Bullying rarely occurs. In lessons, pupils are engaged and focused on their learning. Transitions between activities are orderly and efficient because routines are well established. Leaders identify and help pupils who need additional support to regulate their behaviour. Positive relationships between staff and pupils help pupils feel safe and well-supported.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have refined the curriculum so that pupils build knowledge and skills in a more coherent way from the early years onwards. Curriculum leaders have identified the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. Staff revisit this learning regularly. This supports pupils to learn more and remember more over time. Leaders have also sharpened systems for checking how well a pupil is doing so that staff identify pupils who need additional support more precisely. This helps pupils to develop more secure foundations for their future learning.

Typically, staff support pupils effectively to take part in learning and complete the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Staff build pupils' confidence and engagement through clear explanations, established routines and positive relationships. Staff present learning clearly and pupils engage positively in lessons. Pupils settle quickly to familiar routines. Purposeful early morning activities help them practise number, handwriting and fine motor skills well. Teachers use subject-specific vocabulary and meaningful links between subjects to help pupils deepen their understanding. New approaches to supporting pupils' handwriting, spelling and writing are having a positive impact. However, these approaches are not yet implemented consistently across the school. As a result, some pupils do not receive the same precise support to help them develop fluent and accurate writing across different classes and subjects.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years settle quickly into warm and positive routines. Staff build caring relationships with children and help them to feel safe, confident and ready to learn. Children know who to speak to if they need help. They respond well to the clear expectations established by staff. Home visits, discussions with families and a range of assessments ensure that staff understand children's needs well from the start. This supports children to settle smoothly into Nursery and the Reception Year.

Leaders have improved the early years curriculum so that learning is well sequenced from the start. Staff receive useful training. Recent improvements to developing communication and language have had a positive impact. Children develop confidence in speaking and listening through regular discussion, carefully chosen stories and purposeful interactions with staff. Staff often model language effectively and encourage children to answer in full sentences. However, this aspect of practice is not yet fully consistent across all classes. The school's approach to oracy is not securely implemented.

Across the early years, staff support children to learn and play together successfully. Activities help children develop their understanding across different areas of learning. Children enjoy exploring, building, counting and creating. They develop early mathematical understanding through practical resources and staff-supported number work. Children with additional needs receive appropriate, caring support so that they take part successfully in learning alongside their peers.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have established a culture in which pupils receive thoughtful and carefully tailored support. Staff work closely together to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully involved in school life. They learn successfully alongside their peers. Teachers adapt learning intelligently. For example, pupils benefit from visual prompts, structured vocabulary support and carefully timed staff guidance. This helps pupils to work with increasing confidence and independence.

The school responds quickly when pupils' circumstances or needs change. Leaders work effectively with external agencies, outreach teams, therapists and the local authority to refine support and strengthen provision. Detailed plans help staff understand pupils' strengths, difficulties and next steps clearly. Typically, staff use these plans well. Leaders

use additional funding well. For example, targeted work in reading and well-being helps pupils gain skills and participate more successfully in school life.

The specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND contributes fully to pupils' achievement and personal development. For example, pupils who access the school's Lighthouse provision receive targeted academic and pastoral support in a range of developmental areas. This includes learning how to sustain friendships and cooperate with others. In the Cove provision and the school's specially resourced provision, staff use a carefully designed sensory curriculum to develop pupils' communication, interaction and self-regulation. Staff model language skilfully. They encourage pupils to engage purposefully with activities and with one another.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have established a clear and collaborative approach to improvement across the federation. Recent changes to leadership structures and the expansion of the federation have increased opportunities for shared expertise and support between schools. Leaders have worked carefully to bring greater consistency and coherence to the curriculum, assessment and wider school systems. This supports their vision to ensure that the youngest pupils get the best possible start to their education.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and identify appropriate priorities for further development. Current work to strengthen pupils' attendance, early reading, writing and communication is having a positive impact. Due to leaders' collaboration, foresight and expertise, the school is able to swiftly adapt provision for pupils' changing needs.

Leaders place emphasis on professional development and learning for staff. Staff value the training and support they receive, including opportunities to work alongside colleagues from across the federation and with external partners. This has helped staff to deepen subject knowledge and develop greater consistency in agreed approaches. Staff appreciate the consideration leaders give to their workload and wellbeing.

Governors know the school well and provide suitable support and challenge. They maintain oversight of safeguarding, attendance and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors visit the school regularly and use a range of information to check the impact of leaders' work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have carefully designed how the wider curriculum helps pupils to grow in confidence, understand themselves and develop positive relationships with others. The school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum is well sequenced. Staff adapt this curriculum to meet pupils' needs and the school's context. Through the curriculum, assemblies and everyday interactions, pupils learn about cultural difference, how to be healthy, and how to stay safe, including when online. Pupils talk confidently about healthy relationships, friendships and how to manage emotions.

The school is proud of its work to provide pastoral support. Staff know pupils well and respond thoughtfully to their individual needs. Pupils learn to understand and respect one another. Older pupils, for example, explain maturely that some classmates may struggle and describe how they can help others to feel included. Pupils speak positively about welcoming new pupils to the school community. Leaders ensure that pupils who require additional support receive it promptly. For example, enhancing pupils' social experiences through learning new games and friendship skills.

Leaders provide a growing range of wider opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. Clubs, including choir, dance, Zumba and musical theatre, help pupils to develop their talents and interests. Sporting opportunities also contribute positively to pupils' confidence and wellbeing. Leaders track this participation carefully. Trips broaden pupils' understanding of the world. Leaders work to refine this provision so that it links more closely to the curriculum is ongoing. Pupils contribute positively to the local community. For example, children in the early years visit a local care home. Across the curriculum, pupils develop their understanding of society. For example, selected texts in English lessons support discussions about charity.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and inclusive school. They build positive relationships with staff and each another. They feel and are safe. Pupils know that staff will listen to them if they have worries. Older pupils speak thoughtfully about helping younger or new pupils to settle in. Pupils learn to understand and respect each other's differences. This helps the school community feel calm and supportive.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Clear routines help children, including those in the early years, settle quickly in to learning. Pupils understand the school's expectations and say that staff are fair and consistent. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that if bullying or friendship issues occur, staff will deal with them quickly. Staff support pupils effectively to manage emotions, build friendships and develop confidence. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are fully engaged in school life and receive carefully tailored support to help them.

Pupils enjoy their learning and talk positively about subjects such as history, reading and mathematics. Children in the early years develop confidence through warm interactions with staff and purposeful learning activities. Across the school, pupils take pride in improving their handwriting, reading and mathematical understanding. Pupils typically achieve well from their various starting points because the curriculum is well organised and staff support pupils carefully to remember important knowledge.

Pupils benefit from a range of wider opportunities that broaden their experiences. Clubs, visits and performances help pupils discover interests and develop their confidence. Pupils also learn about the wider world through thoughtfully chosen texts, assemblies and links with the local community. Pupil attendance is improving. Leaders work closely with families and place a strong emphasis on the importance of pupils not missing out on important learning, exciting experiences and time with their friends.

Next steps

- Leaders should further embed the school's approach to communication, language and oracy so that staff consistently develop pupils' speaking, vocabulary and sentence construction across all classes.
- Leaders should ensure that agreed approaches to transcription, including handwriting and letter formation, are implemented consistently so that pupils develop increasing fluency and accuracy in writing.

About this inspection

The school is part of a federation called City2Coast Federation.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the local authority representative, governors (including the chair of governors), school leaders and federation leaders during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

In April 2026, City2Coast Federation, then called Caister Primary Federation, merged with The Hive Federation. The federation now encompasses 6 schools in Norfolk.

The executive headteacher took up their substantive role in March 2025.

The school includes a specialist resourced provision for up to 16 pupils with SEMH.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school, under the same registration, runs a nursery for two- to four- year olds.

Gemma Smith: Executive Head of School

Lead inspector:
Hannah Stoten, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Heather Hann, Ofsted Inspector
Julie Winyard, 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 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

294
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

270
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)

27.56%
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

3.06%
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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.29%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health

What does this mean?

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

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)	5.7%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.5%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.7%	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)	13.2%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	19.9%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	20.2%	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.

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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