

Huish Episcopi Academy

Address: Wincanton Road, Huish Episcopi Academy, LANGPORT, Somerset, TA10 9SS

Unique reference number (URN): 150038

Inspection report: 6 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.

Strong standard ●

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have made rapid and sustained improvements to the quality of provision that pupils experience at Huish. A positive culture permeates the school. Pupils now achieve, belong and thrive. Leaders are relentless in their approach to maintaining standards and continuing to drive further improvements. They take decisions that are rooted in the best interests of pupils, including for students in the sixth form.

The trust, and local governing body, support and challenge school leaders effectively. They have a visible presence at the school. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's areas of strength and those that need further development. They fulfil their statutory duties diligently.

Staff, including early career teachers, treasure working at this school. They feel highly valued and are well supported with managing their workload. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of staff. For example, they enable staff to take time away from school, known as 'personal days', in term time. Staff benefit from highly effective professional learning. This is personalised to support individual, curriculum and whole school priorities. As a result, staff develop secure subject knowledge and expertise.

Most parents and carers are positive about how the school has improved in recent years. They appreciate the visibility and approachability of leaders. The school has established strong links with external professionals and the wider community. This benefits pupils, including students in the sixth form. For example, pupils receive additional support for their mental health and increased access to a range of local employers.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school has a coherent, high-quality programme of personal development. This extends across the taught curriculum to include an extensive range of wider opportunities and experiences that are available to all pupils. Pupils follow a character education programme that aligns with the school values. They are rewarded for demonstrating these traits. Pupils receive timely pastoral support if they need it, for example, to help them to maintain positive mental health.

Leaders encourage pupils to learn the personal, social, health and economic curriculum within a real-life context. For example, pupils learn about fundamental British values in a practical way by working with the police force and a local member of parliament. Students in the sixth form learn about democracy by developing an understanding of the current local elections. Pupils participate in role play which helps them to understand and challenge the notion of being an 'active bystander'. Pupils are confident in their understanding of healthy relationships and are aware of potential risks online.

Leaders consider the needs and interests of all pupils. For example, leaders create specific opportunities for the personal development of pupils who have a family member serving in the armed forces. Pupils who are young carers are enabled to meet regularly to share their

experiences and receive much appreciated support. Pupils engage in ambitious trips, such as to China as part of the school's Aspire programme. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those that are disadvantaged, participate equally in the range of extra-curricular clubs and trips that are available.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, benefit from a wide range of opportunities to learn about careers. For example, pupils participate in work experience. They benefit from employer and apprenticeship service visits to the school, and are able to access the 'careers hub' in the library. As a result, pupils feel empowered to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils at Huish, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. This is shown in published outcomes and in the high-quality work that pupils usually produce across the curriculum. As a result, they are well prepared to move into the sixth-form or to another destination of their choice.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make positive progress from their starting points. Leaders ensure these pupils receive personalised support and guidance to help them secure their desired pathway into education, employment or training.

Most pupils develop the foundational knowledge they need, especially in reading and numeracy. Leaders also identify where pupils have weaknesses in spelling, spoken language and handwriting. Leaders have made recent improvements to the support that pupils receive to develop these aspects of literacy. However, this support is not fully embedded. Therefore, for some pupils, this knowledge is not as secure and detailed as it could be.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise improving the attendance of pupils. Staff take responsibility for highlighting the importance of regular attendance to pupils and their families. Leaders carefully monitor pupils' attendance and put appropriate support and intervention in place as required. As a result of this work, pupils' overall attendance is in line with national averages, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged or face other barriers. The number of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing. Leaders recognise that further work is needed to sustain this improved attendance over time, and ensure all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, attend regularly.

Leaders have established a calm and safe learning environment. Pupils consistently display positive attitudes to learning. Low-level disruption in classrooms is not tolerated. Pupils move around the school sensibly. They interact politely with each other and with staff. Leaders do not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying. If any incidents

occur, pupils are sanctioned and receive education and guidance to ensure the behaviour is not repeated. Pupils with SEND are supported with pertinent reasonable adjustments, enabling them to meet the high expectations set by leaders and staff. The number of suspensions and permanent exclusions has significantly reduced, as a result.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and how it is taught. The curriculum is well planned for each subject and year group. The school has adopted the trust's curriculum, but adapted it appropriately to meet the school's context. Core knowledge that pupils need to learn is set out clearly for them. Learning is carefully sequenced to build on what pupils have been taught before.

Leaders ensure the curriculum is typically taught well. All pupils benefit from consistent learning routines as part of the 'Huish Lesson Structure'. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Where some teach out of their usual subject area, they are well supported to do this confidently.

Generally, teachers use assessment well. In the strongest practice and in most subjects, misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed in a timely manner. However, on occasions in a few subjects, this practice is less consistent so gaps can persist for some pupils.

Staff know and understand the needs of pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Staff make adaptations to their support as required. For example, they consider carefully how pupils learn most effectively so that they learn the curriculum successfully.

Leaders identify pupils who do not yet have strong foundations in reading. They take appropriate action to support them to catch up quickly.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately and with increasing precision. Typically, appropriate support is put in place to enable these pupils to successfully learn the curriculum. Pupils with an education, health and care plan, usually benefit from carefully tailored planning that meets their needs. However, on occasions, the monitoring of pupils with SEND could be further strengthened so that barriers to pupils' learning or wellbeing are consistently removed swiftly.

Support for looked-after children and those known, or previously known, to social care is effective. Leaders maintain strong oversight of these vulnerable pupils. There is regular multi-agency contact between the school and those providing support, such as the local authority Virtual School. The personalised arrangements for pupils, such as medical placements, ensure that pupils' education is maintained wherever possible.

Leaders have developed an appropriate strategy for using additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. This strategy is rooted in evidence. Leaders review it regularly and carefully. There is clear alignment between identified barriers, such as attendance, and the

actions that leaders plan. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are attending more regularly and they achieve well in examinations at the end of key stage 4.

Alternative provision is used appropriately and in pupils' best interests. For example, leaders make considered placement decisions to prevent permanent exclusion or to meet safeguarding needs.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the sixth form. Leaders carefully monitor the quality of provision and put appropriate support in place to bring about improvements where necessary. They give careful consideration to the curriculum offer to ensure it is appropriate for each cohort of students.

Students generally achieve well. This is reflected in published information which shows outcomes over time that are broadly similar to national averages. Last year, the published information showed that progress of students was less positive from their starting points compared to their peers nationally. Nonetheless, all students went on to secure their next steps in education, employment or training.

The curriculum is well sequenced and, typically, taught well. Teachers mostly use assessment effectively to track students' retention of knowledge over time and adapt their teaching as a result. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to learning are known individually and are well supported.

The school's programme of enrichment supports students' knowledge and understanding of important issues including healthy relationships, careers and finance. There are trips and visits both locally and nationally that enrich students' experiences. For example, geography field trips and visits to university open days. Students are well supported for life beyond Huish.

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

Pupils are proud to attend Huish Episcopi. Older pupils, including students in the sixth form, say the culture of the school has been transformed in recent years. It is now a happy, positive and safe environment where pupils thrive. The school's core values of respect, ambition and resilience are modelled by staff and mirrored in pupils' behaviour. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident to report any worries or concerns to trusted staff. They feel part of a valued community. Pupils want to be in school, so attendance has improved.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their education. They learn a well-planned, knowledge-rich curriculum. Typically, they benefit from high-quality teaching which allows them to make good progress from their starting points. Published national outcomes for the end of key stage 4 show that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. A high number achieve a grade 4 or above in mathematics and English, which prepares them well

for their next steps. Students in the sixth form progress successfully on to their chosen destinations in education, employment or training.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of carefully tailored, enriching opportunities. For example, pupils enjoy the challenge of winning a golden ticket and earning the chance to attend a reward trip. The trust's pupil charter provides annual experiences for pupils to enjoy. Leaders ensure these are varied and accessible for all. Many pupils participate in extra-curricular clubs which include chess, choir and music ensemble, and many different sporting activities. Pupils learn about the value of giving to others with regular charity events. There are many opportunities to develop leadership responsibilities such as being in the school council or taking on the role of a sports leader.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently design highly effective learning, and routinely ensure pupils understand this learning, so that any needs or gaps in pupils' knowledge are addressed swiftly and successfully.
 - Leaders should ensure that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop detailed and secure foundational knowledge, particularly in handwriting, spelling and oracy.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils' overall attendance, and that for pupils with SEND and those that are disadvantaged, continues to improve, and that the number of pupils who are regularly absent reduces further.
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About this inspection

This school is part of United Learning Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Jon Coles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christian Brodie.

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 school and trust leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo). Inspectors also spoke with teaching staff, support staff, a trustee and the chair of the local governing board.

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 school currently makes use of 2 registered alternative provisions.

Lead inspector:

Kelly Olive, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Robert Coles, Ofsted Inspector


Lee Sargeant, Ofsted Inspector

Kathy Maddocks, Ofsted Inspector

Anna Mills, 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 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,250

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,570

Well above 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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

19.52%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

0.80%

Well 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.28%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	57.0%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	55.3%	45.9%	Above
2022/23		45.3%	

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	50.6	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46.6	45.9	Close to average
2022/23		46.3	

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.13	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23		-0.03	

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	35.5%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	23.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23		25.2%	

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	37.1	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	29.8	34.6	Close to average
2022/23		35.0	

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.89	-0.57	Below
2022/23		-0.57	

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	35.5%	53.1%	-17.7 pp
2023/24 (final)	23.7%	53.1%	-29.4 pp
2022/23		52.4%	

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	37.1	50.4	-13.4
2023/24 (final)	29.8	50.0	-20.2
2022/23		50.3	

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.89	0.16	-1.05
2022/23		0.17	

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	30.34	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	36.33	34.38	Close to average

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.3	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	0.2	0.0	Above

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)	7.5%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.8%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.8%	9.0%	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)	21.2%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	28.4%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	27.7%	26.5%	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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