

Stanstead Flying High Academy

Address: Stanstead Avenue, Rise Park, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG5 5BL

Unique reference number (URN): 144686

Inspection report: 7 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 make a happy and confident start in the early years. Leaders know children's starting points well. They use this knowledge to plan learning that meets children's needs.

The curriculum gives children strong foundations in communication, reading, writing, mathematics and physical development. Staff plan learning in a clear order from Nursery to Reception. They use books, rhymes, talk and purposeful play to build children's vocabulary and confidence.

Staff teach phonics and early mathematics well. They model language clearly and ask questions that help children think and explain. Children practise writing in many ways. They write labels, recipes, designs and sentences. They also develop fine motor skills through art, mark making and handwriting practice.

Children behave well. They follow routines and move calmly between activities. Staff support children's emotions with care. This helps children feel safe and ready to learn.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children get the help they need. Staff use visual prompts, sensory support, adapted tasks and close adult interaction. This helps children join in and make progress with their friends.

Children achieve very well. They are well prepared for Year 1.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils' outcomes in national tests are close to national averages overall. Published outcomes in reading are lower, including for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have acted quickly and strengthened the reading provision in the school. Pupils now read more often and talk positively about books. Pupils' current reading shows improvement.

Children in early years build secure foundations in language, phonics, writing and number. Year 4 pupils attain above national averages in the Year 4 multiplication times tables check. Younger pupils use phonics to decode, segment and blend with confidence. Older pupils use vocabulary, inference, retrieval and context clues to understand texts.

Across the wider curriculum, pupils remember important knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils access the curriculum with support. They make secure progress from their starting points. Pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need for secondary school.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders make attendance a clear priority. They track absence closely and act when concerns arise. Staff work with families and outside agencies to understand why pupils miss school. They offer support and challenge in a timely way. This work has improved attendance over time. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) still face barriers to regular attendance. Leaders use part-time timetables only when pupils need them. They set clear plans, involve parents and the local authority, and review next steps. Systems to monitor and analyse attendance are clear and used consistently. Current attendance is close to the national average.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They follow the school's values to be responsible, respectful and kind. Classrooms remain calm. Pupils listen, work hard and respond well to routines. Pupils say bullying rarely happens. Staff act quickly when concerns arise. Staff respond quickly to any harmful behaviour, online or offline. Sports coaches and pupil leaders help pupils play well at lunchtime. Staff adapt routines for pupils with SEND. Staff use clear rules and routines. They help pupils manage their behaviour calmly. This means pupils stay settled and learning continues.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have planned a broad curriculum for pupils from Nursery to Year 6. This sets out what pupils should learn and when. Leaders have addressed weaknesses in reading provision. They check lessons and books. They use this information to improve teaching.

Leaders ensure that pupils secure the necessary foundations in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics. Staff teach phonics clearly. Pupils practise sounds, handwriting, vocabulary and reading often. Many pupils read with accuracy and confidence.

Teachers usually teach the curriculum clearly. They model new learning, revisit prior knowledge and ask questions to check pupils' understanding. In mathematics, pupils practise fluency and explain errors. In reading, teachers teach new words carefully. The wider curriculum, including science, history and geography, is planned so that pupils learn the content in a logical order.

Teachers adapt learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they use communication supports and adapted texts. Pupils follow a clear structure that supports them to write successfully. This helps pupils learn alongside their peers.

Current teaching helps pupils learn well, but published reading outcomes remain low. Leaders have strengthened reading this year. However, some pupils, including higher-attaining pupils, do not deepen their knowledge as well as they could.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders know pupils and families well. They identify pupils' needs quickly. They use assessment, family views and advice from specialists to develop strategies to support

pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get clear help. Staff use a range of support to help pupils understand what is happening in school and what they need to do. Staff use a range of strategies to help pupils access learning. These include visual timetables, sensory circuits and soft starts. These help pupils understand routines, manage feelings and join in with learning.

Some pupils have complex needs. Staff support them in the 'starshine room' when they need the help that this provision gives them. Staff use a range of support to help children understand what is happening. Pupils know what will happen next. They stay calm and ready for learning. This helps pupils communicate, settle and learn.

Leaders use pupil premium funding to help disadvantaged pupils. This funding supports reading, pastoral care, trips, clubs and family needs. This helps pupils take part in school life and keep up with learning.

Staff also support pupils who are known, or previously known, to social care. They work with families and outside agencies. They provide pastoral help when pupils need it.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders know the school well. They understand its strengths and its main priorities. They have acted in pupils' interests, especially in reading and attendance. Leaders have tackled weaker reading outcomes directly. They have strengthened teaching and increased their monitoring of the quality of the provision Leaders use trust support to improve provision.

Leaders have built a positive staff culture. Staff understand the school's priorities. Subject leaders receive time and support to lead their areas. Staff use training, visits to other schools and professional development to improve their practice. Staff welcome these professional learning opportunities. They help staff grow in confidence and skill.

Governors understand their roles. They know the scheme of delegation and carry out their statutory duties. Governors regularly check leaders' work. They encourage work with other schools and organisations. Governors check key areas that keep pupils safe and supported. They ensure that pupils get support to help them prepare for the next stages of their learning and development.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the strong sense of teamwork and the opportunities they have to improve their skills. Staff speak positively about leaders. When making decisions, leaders prioritise staff's workload and wellbeing. This helps staff feel valued and supported.

Most parents and carers speak positively about the school. They value the care and support their children receive. Leaders work with families, professionals and the local community to support pupils. This helps them build effective partnerships that enhance pupils' learning and development.

Leaders give pupils a rich personal development programme. It starts in the early years and runs through the school. Pupils learn how to stay safe, make healthy choices and build positive relationships. They talk clearly about fairness, respect and treating others well. This helps pupils think about right and wrong, respect and difference.

Pupils understand fundamental British values and protected characteristics. They link these to democracy, equality, respect and identity. Pupils know how to stay safe online. They know what to do if something worries them. They understand that the school's filters block unsuitable content. Staff teach pupils about healthy relationships, puberty and change in an age-appropriate way.

Pupils enjoy experiences beyond lessons. They join clubs such as cooking, gardening, choir and sports. They take part in visits, workshops and trips. Pupils learn about future employment. These experiences help them build confidence, develop interests and raise their aspirations. Leaders also support pupils who face barriers so they can take part.

Pupils take on leadership roles, including as school councillors, sports leaders, reading ambassadors, kindness heroes and site assistants. These roles help pupils contribute to school life. Leaders promote the school's motto, 'make every day count'. Pupils know that staff value their opinions. Leaders listen to pupils' views and act on them.

Pastoral care supports pupils who need extra help. Staff give clear, simple support so pupils can manage their feelings and join in with learning. Pupils say they feel supported and can ask for help when they need it. This helps them manage feelings and build resilience. This work makes a positive difference.

Staff support pupils' wellbeing carefully. Positive, caring relationships help pupils feel safe and valued. The school organises many events, trips and experiences for pupils. However, leaders do not track closely enough the difference these experiences make.

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

Pupils at Stanstead Flying High Academy arrive calmly and settle quickly. Staff know pupils well and help them feel safe. Pupils trust adults. They know who to speak to if they feel worried. Pupils say bullying rarely happens. They understand what bullying means and believe adults would sort it out quickly.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. The 'Stanstead way' shapes how everyone here behaves. Its 3 values, to be responsible, be respectful and be kind, give the school a clear identity. Pupils play well together at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Sports coaches and pupil leaders help all to enjoy games and manage small disagreements. Pupils listen, answer questions and try hard.

Pupils enjoy learning and generally achieve well. They talk about reading, history, mathematics and the wider curriculum. Teachers help pupils build vocabulary and remember important knowledge. Pupils say reading has improved this year. They have more time to

read and better access to books. This work needs time to raise reading achievement for pupils. Children in early years make a confident start to their education. They learn through language, books, writing, number work and purposeful play. Adults help them talk, think and explain ideas.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils take part in school life. Staff adapt learning and provide calm spaces when pupils need extra help. This helps many pupils regulate their emotions and return to learning. Pupils with complex needs make clear progress from their starting points.

Pupils benefit from trips, clubs and leadership roles. Pupils can explain what fundamental British values mean and give examples. They learn about equality, respect and online safety.

Most pupils attend regularly. Leaders have improved attendance, but some pupils, including some disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, still miss too much school.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to embed recent improvements in reading so that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and weaker readers, develop fluency, vocabulary and comprehension securely over time.
 - Leaders should continue to strengthen attendance work so that pupils who are persistently absent, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend more regularly.
 - Leaders should continue to ensure that teaching helps pupils, including higher-attaining pupils, deepen their knowledge and produce work that reflects the full ambition of the curriculum.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Flying High Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Chris Wheatley OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neil Robinson.

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 headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing board, including the chair of governors, members of the trust and the chief executive officer.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Tanya Smith

Lead inspector:

Rob Della-Spina, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Steve Tague, Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Atkins, 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 7 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

208

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

210

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)

38.62%

Above 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

1.44%

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

14.42%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support 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	57%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	54%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	59%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	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	61%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	57%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	73%	Below

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	79%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	78%	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)	64%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	86%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	78%	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	53%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	38%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	62%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	44%	Above

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	56%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	46%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	60%	Close to average

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	74%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	62%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	92%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average

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	68%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	54%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	85%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average

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	53%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	69%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	67%	-6 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	66%	-4 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	56%	80%	-24 pp
2024/25 (final)	46%	81%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	80%	-18 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	78%	-16 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	74%	78%	-4 pp
2024/25 (final)	62%	78%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	92%	78%	15 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	77%	-15 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	68%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	54%	81%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	85%	79%	5 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	63%	79%	-17 pp

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)	7.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.8%	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)	27.2%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	23.6%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	27.2%	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.

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