



Orchard Primary & PRE-SCHOOL

14th May 2026

Dear Parents,

Subject: Ofsted report

I am writing to share the recent Ofsted report for Orchard Primary and Pre-school and to explain what it means for our school and for your children.

You will be aware that this inspection report has been a long time coming. We raised formal concerns about aspects of the process and the outcomes. We were and continue to be disappointed with some of these gradings as we do not believe that the judgements fully reflect the school we know or the broad range of education and opportunities your children receive each day, however we always want to improve what we are doing and as such I want to be clear about what the report does say and how we are already responding.

Here are the key highlights:

Safeguarding: Ofsted confirm that the safeguarding standards are met. Leaders and governors have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Pupils are made safer and say they feel safe. This is an important validation of the day-to-day care and vigilance of our staff.

Early Years and Personal Development: The report recognises the strengths of our early years provision, including warm relationships, well-planned play and a strong focus on reading and phonics. Our programme for personal development and wellbeing is described as broad and carefully sequenced; pupils learn about safety, healthy habits and respectful relationships, and benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities.

The other graded areas were described as "need attention". We welcome constructive criticism but want to be clear about how this phrase should be interpreted, like an MOT advisory — highlighting important areas to improve to ensure everything runs consistently well, rather than indicating an urgent or critical safety failure. We have already translated them into focused, timebound actions to deliver steady and sustainable improvements.

Context on assessments: The judgements on attainment, teaching and the curriculum draw heavily on national measures at the end of Year 6. These national indicators understandably shape headline outcomes, but they do not capture all the positive progress seen across the school. For example, our Year 1 phonics screening and Year 4 multiplication check results are significantly above national averages, and our writing outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have been consistently strong. These successes show the school's capacity to secure high standards in important areas despite the advisory points raised.

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Curriculum, teaching and inclusion: The inspection notes variation in curriculum implementation and in the adaptation of teaching for pupils who need additional support, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. We do not recognise this as inconsistency within the school; rather, the variation reflects staff who are learning new skills and adopting new teaching programmes — processes that naturally take time to embed. Inspectors acknowledged that several staff had been with us for only a term at the time of inspection. We had introduced a new mathematics curriculum at the beginning of the academic year as well as more structured approaches in reading and spelling in KS2 to create greater consistency, and our school development plan addresses these areas.

Pupil Premium Grant (PPG): The comments about disadvantaged pupils are similarly drawn from end of Year 6 data rather than reflecting the full picture of progress made across all year groups. We know there is always more to do to ensure funding has maximum impact, and we accepted the recommendation that our pupil premium strategy needed a sharper focus and more rigorous evaluation. We have already published a revised strategy with measurable success criteria and clearer reporting to governors and the school community.

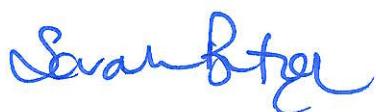
Attendance and behaviour: Ofsted highlight that attendance has been below national averages and that persistent absence is too high. We agree this must improve. Several pupils have been on part-time timetables or in alternative provision for substantial periods, which affects continuity of learning and attendance data. We had already prioritised attendance and behaviour in our school development plan, with targeted actions and improved communication with families. These include earlier intervention for rising absence, strengthened support for pupils with complex needs, and clearer routines that support positive behaviour. It will take time to see sustained improvement, but these actions are underway and will be monitored closely. This is an area that we really need your help in!

Leadership and governance: Ofsted recognise clear strides in leadership and governance and could see signs that recent changes are beginning to strengthen oversight. Because several initiatives were newly introduced at the time of inspection, inspectors could not yet see sustained impact. Governors and trust partners are working with senior leaders to sharpen their evaluation, ensure improvement plans target the most urgent priorities with precision, and improve governance support and challenge.

What you can expect next: This years' current School Development Plan was already prioritising the areas identified in the report- attendance, combined outcomes at the end of key stages, curriculum consistency, the effective use of pupil premium funding, and staff development for inclusion. Specific actions include, focused CPD on adaptive teaching and SEND provision, revised monitoring of pupil premium impact, and a refreshed attendance strategy. We will be able to share the impact of these initiatives at the end of the academic year along with the 26-27 School Development Plan.

Finally, thank you for the many positive comments parents have shared about the school and our staff. Your support matters to us and to the pupils. We remain proud of the caring environment at Orchard Primary and Pre-school and are committed to acting decisively to address the advisory points raised so every pupil achieves their best.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Bitcon
Head Teacher



Suzanne Clarke
Chair of Governors



Phil Hanson
CEO Avonreach Academy Trust