

Norbury High School for Girls

Address: Kensington Avenue, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 8BT

Unique reference number (URN): 137754

Inspection report: 19 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils generally achieve in line with national averages in national tests and examinations. This prepares them adequately for their next steps in education or training. Pupils who are disadvantaged typically achieve more highly than national averages for disadvantaged pupils, which is a credit to the school. Dedicated improvement and reflection time in lessons typically helps pupils to correct errors. This supports their achievement.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities broadly achieve well from their starting points. The work produced by these pupils shows that they are securing knowledge as they progress through the school.

Pupils generally develop appropriate knowledge and skills across the curriculum. On occasion, the academic progression of high attainers is not as consistent as it could be.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is well ordered and taught by staff with secure subject knowledge. Information is generally presented clearly. Pupils' knowledge of the most important aspects of their learning is typically secure. Subjects such as art and music demonstrate thoughtful curriculum development. Typically, staff use temporary support that is gradually removed, set appropriate tasks and ask questions that extend pupils' learning. Generally, pupils use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and engage confidently in discussion and deepen their understanding of key concepts. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions. However, there is some variability in the school's approach to teaching strategies. The use of checks on pupils' understanding is variable. Sometimes, staff are less securely aware whether pupils are ready to move on in their learning. This leads to misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Sometimes, teaching to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is uneven. On occasion, staff do not have a secure understanding of pupils' barriers and needs and teaching is not as consistently well adapted to meet the needs of these pupils. Some support is focused on task completion rather than learning new concepts and skills. Opportunities to assess individual pupils' knowledge precisely are sometimes missed. Similarly, there is some variability in how routinely the learning of the most able pupils is deepened.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Support for pupils' social and emotional development is typically effective. Staff know pupils well. Working relationships are warm and respectful between most pupils and staff. This helps to ensure that pupils are cared for appropriately, especially pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders promote a welcoming ethos where differences, for example in culture, beliefs and background, are recognised and respected. As a result, a safe and supportive community has been created. The majority of pupils feel listened to, valued and able to build positive relationships. In a small number of cases, there is some

variability in how well staff respond to concerns. This can affect pupils' confidence in the support available.

Pupils welcome opportunities to share their views. They value opportunities to take on leadership roles and the skills that they learn from these responsibilities. Leaders have established a coherent personal development programme that provides a range of extra-curricular activities. These include outings, clubs and cultural events that extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Pupils speak positively about these experiences, particularly in areas such as art and debating. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, receive additional support to help ensure that they can take part in these activities. Leaders have identified the need to track participation and increase uptake among less well represented groups.

The school's personal, social, health and relationships programme meets pupils' needs well. It is comprehensive, age-appropriate and designed to build pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders recognise the need to evaluate more systematically how well pupils are learning the personal development curriculum. Pupils articulate key learning, especially around mental health, relationships, fundamental British values and protected characteristics. They understand how to keep themselves safe online and offline. They build secure social and moral values. Careers education is well structured. Pupils are suitably well informed to make decisions about their next steps in education or training.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

The sixth form provides a supportive, cohesive and inclusive community. Care and support for students' needs are effective and students feel known and valued. Careers guidance is tailored to each student and leaders promote ambitious next steps for students. Students benefit from a wide enrichment offer with well-tracked participation in leadership, trips, debating and the arts.

Achievement in the sixth form is starting to show much improvement, although national averages are yet to be matched. Students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who face additional barriers to their learning are supported through adapted teaching and checks on their understanding. Students produce high-quality work. They show positive attitudes and respond well to feedback on their work.

The curriculum is broad and responsive, offering academic, vocational and transitional pathways. Teaching is generally of high quality. Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge and present information clearly. Assessment is typically used effectively to address misconceptions and support higher order thinking. On occasion, opportunities are missed to extend and deepen students' understanding. Bursary funding is used appropriately and progress-tracking systems are being refined. Leaders' work to improve student recruitment and retention is showing success.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

There have been recent improvements in pupils' attendance rates. Attendance is slightly above the national average. However, levels of persistent absence and rates of absence for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities remain low. Leaders have a clear understanding of the reasons for pupils' absence. Their actions to improve attendance are beginning to have an impact. However, some variability in rigour limits the impact on securing rapid improvements needed across the school.

Behaviour across the school is generally positive. Pupils are typically focused and attentive in lessons. They respond well to clear routines and high expectations. Achievement points are linked to the school's values system and pupils appreciate this. Secure working relationships between staff and pupils support pupils' engagement and success. Low-level disruption is rare. On occasion, when it does occur, it is not always addressed as effectively by staff. Around the school, pupils are calm and regularly treat one another with kindness. Bullying is rare. Leaders respond swiftly and effectively to negative incidents. Targeted behaviour support is in place, where appropriate. There has been a significant reduction in the use of suspensions. Overall, improved pupil conduct demonstrates the positive impact of leaders' behaviour strategies.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Pupils' needs are identified swiftly and accurately. Leaders provide staff with information about these additional needs. However, monitoring how staff use this information does not take place often enough. This means that leaders are not routinely clear whether pupils are supported appropriately.

Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, receive the support that they need in lessons. However, staff training to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known or previously known to social care is limited. This results in weaknesses in how effectively teachers support these pupils in lessons, meaning that some do not access learning fully. Leaders do not have consistently high expectations for these pupils.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. They use additional funding effectively to provide timely and considered support. When alternative provision is required, leaders commission it appropriately in pupils' best interests.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders have a broad understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, their actions lack the precision and timeliness needed to ensure necessary improvements. Leadership structures lack clarity, which results in variable oversight of systems and a lack of rigour when evaluating the impact of improvement work. Leaders' actions do not consistently identify the root causes of weaknesses. This limits the school's capacity to improve.

In some aspects of the school's work, such as support for disadvantaged pupils and personal development, systems enhance practice. In weaker areas, including attendance and teaching, leaders' thinking lacks the same clarity. Areas for development are not consistently well identified, meaning that precise plans for improvement are not always in place. The school's professional learning programme is designed to build the expertise of staff. However, it is not always exactly targeted to staff's needs. This limits the impact on the quality of the provision that pupils receive.

Those with responsibility for governance fulfil their statutory duties and provide challenge to school leaders. However, members of the governing body do not have a securely clear understanding of the school's areas for improvement.

Staff feel that leaders are approachable and involve staff in decision-making. There is a tangible sense of community, reflected in positive staff morale. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of staff and provide support with workload when needed. Parents and carers are generally positive about the school.

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

Pupils at this school feel safe. They are clear where to go if they need additional support and feel confident to ask for it. In lessons, pupils largely behave well. They respond to clear routines. Lessons are generally calm. Pupils listen to their teachers and value the achievement points that they receive. When bullying occurs, pupils report it and it is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils know that attendance is important. However, the school is not yet secure in ensuring that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), attend the school on a regular enough basis.

Pupils enjoy their learning in many classes. However, they have a mixed experience across the school. Staff do not consistently check pupils' understanding and, at times, misconceptions are not picked up precisely enough. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge that are left unaddressed. Some pupils get left behind when learning more complex topics. Leaders promptly identify pupils with SEND. However, with the exception of the in the sixth form, adaptations to learning do not meet pupils' needs well enough. Conversely, staff support disadvantaged pupils effectively. These pupils make positive progress through the curriculum. They benefit from teaching that is adapted to their needs.

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities beyond the curriculum. They understand fundamental British values and celebrate the uniqueness of different cultures. Pupils value opportunities to develop their leadership skills such as through the prefect system and by serving on the executive team.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve the consistency of teaching to ensure there is systematic checking for understanding in lessons, and the learning of most-able pupils is routinely extended.
 - Leaders should ensure that adaptive strategies for teaching pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are understood and used by all teachers.
 - Leaders should continue to raise levels of low and persistently low attendance across all pupils groups, including in post-16 provision, by ensuring support is closely targeted to pupils' needs.
 - Leaders should improve clarity around leadership roles and structures, so that oversight facilitates improvement.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Wandle Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by co-chief executive officers (CEOs), Christian Kingsley and Mark Siswick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sian Mathias.

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.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, trustees and trust representatives, including a CEO, the chair of the local governing body and governors during the inspection.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

Headteacher: Markieu Hayden

Lead inspector:

Emily Leonard, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

David Bromfield, Ofsted Inspector

Lascelles Haughton, His Majesty's Inspector

Nathan Cole, Ofsted Inspector

Joseph Sparks, His Majesty's Inspector

Sophie Cavanagh, Ofsted Inspector

Olivia Page, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,173

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

1,370

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)

37.49%

Above 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

1.36%

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

16.03%

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

Well 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)

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)	44.7%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	49.5%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	43.0%	45.3%	Close to average

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)	46.4	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50.1	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	48.0	46.3	Close to average

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)	0.27	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.14	-0.03	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' 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)	38.9%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	36.4%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	41.9%	25.2%	Above

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)	44.2	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	46.4	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	47.7	35.0	Above

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)	0.06	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.03	-0.57	Above

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)	38.9%	53.1%	-14.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	36.4%	53.1%	-16.8 pp
2022/23 (final)	41.9%	52.4%	-10.5 pp

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)	44.2	50.4	-6.2
2023/24 (final)	46.4	50.0	-3.6
2022/23 (final)	47.7	50.3	-2.6

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)	0.06	0.16	-0.10
2022/23 (final)	0.03	0.17	-0.13

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	95%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	93%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	96%	94%	Average

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)	25.09	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.94	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30.25	34.16	Below

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)	-0.2	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.3	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)	9.8%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.3%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.9%	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)	36.1%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	39.9%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	36.0%	26.5%	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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