

Northfleet School for Girls

Address: Hall Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 8AQ

Unique reference number (URN): 118788

Inspection report: 21 April 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 ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Attendance is a very high priority in this school. Pupils and their families are clear on the reasons why attending school is so important. Leaders analyse patterns and trends carefully, so that they can put in place highly effective support where it is needed. Pupils generally attend highly. The tailored work of leaders has led to significant improvements, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is extremely positive. In corridors and classrooms, there is a sense of purpose and calm. Pupils show self-discipline as a result of the well-embedded structures and routines that are applied consistently across the school. This creates an environment in which pupils feel safe, treat one another well and show respect for their community and their school. Bullying is rare, and pupils are confident that, were this to take place, it would be dealt with quickly. For the small numbers of pupils who need more support with their behaviour, leaders make appropriate interventions. For example, the creation of the 'ASU' provision in school supports pupils to reflect on their conduct, learn about their triggers and develop better strategies in the future. A recently introduced 'PACE' provision supports pupils who need more bespoke pathways to success. As a result, a demonstrable difference is made for pupils who go through these programmes.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusive approaches sit at the heart of leaders' vision and are woven into the practices of staff across the school. Pupils' needs are identified carefully and are well understood by staff. Effective training ensures that staff make effective adaptations to learning in lessons, so that pupils can engage readily and achieve well. Additional interventions, for example morning support sessions tailored to their needs, further support pupils who need additional input. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school considers how it uses additional funding, for example, for those in receipt of the pupil premium. This spending is carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure that pupils have the support they need to reduce barriers and help them thrive.

Leaders are responsive in adapting their provision so that it supports pupils' changing needs. For example, the 'transition' and more recently introduced 'pre-transition' groups ensure that, where pupils need more tailored support, they receive the right input to aid them in accessing the curriculum. This bespoke support aids pupils in making effective progress from their starting points.

Leaders are agile in refining this inclusive offer, responsively adapting their approaches to changing circumstances. For example, additional provisions within school such as 'Thrive' and 'PACE', as well as the appropriate use of external alternative provision, offer further support so that pupils' barriers can be overcome successfully.

The wider development of pupils is a significant priority of leaders' work, and one that contributes significantly to the school's strengths. A well-considered curriculum for personal, social, emotional, health and relationships education helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and the importance of tolerance and respect. These lessons have a positive impact on pupils' knowledge and they develop a well-informed understanding of the world both within and beyond their school gates. Pupils are supported to develop the characteristics of confidence and resilience, empowered by their experiences in school to be very well prepared for life beyond it.

Pupils contribute to their school community in a range of different ways. Leadership opportunities are numerous, and pupils readily seek out the chance to support their peers, for example in becoming positive relationship ambassadors or members of a range of pupil leadership teams.

The 'Dream Big' vision of leaders underpins the school's culture. A vast range of clubs and activities harness pupils' interests across a diverse breadth of areas. The take-up of these opportunities is high, and leaders ensure that the most disadvantaged pupils make good use of this offer. Pupils also develop their aspirations for when they leave the school through workshops, careers fairs and visiting speakers which supplement the school's curriculum, as well as more bespoke opportunities that link to the school's local context. For example, all Year 10 pupils recently had real-world experience of practice interviews with one of the industrial companies involved with the lower Thames crossing. These, and many other opportunities, instil in pupils a culture of aspiration and success, which is impacting positively on the ongoing destinations that pupils aspire to. For example, increasing numbers are aspiring to go to university, and exploring careers such as architecture and medicine.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils are supported to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills across subjects, including foundational knowledge, so that they can access the curriculum effectively. Regular retrieval techniques, such as quizzes and 'do now' tasks, are helpful in supporting pupils in connecting their learning and remembering it over time.

Typically, pupils achieve well in this school, with most outcomes sitting at or around national averages. This is especially the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, who progress well from their starting points and achieve positively. In the small number of areas where this is not the case, leaders take effective actions to bring about improvements. These are showing a positive difference, but some of this work needs further time to embed fully, for example in supporting the most able pupils to achieve to their full potential.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment and training.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

An ambitious curriculum has been planned to support pupils to develop their knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. They take steps to address areas where there need to be improvements, which show an impact.

Pupils are typically taught well by staff with subject expertise. Staff know the needs of pupils well, meaning that they can make appropriate adaptations so that all pupils can access the curriculum effectively.

Staff are skilled at breaking down tasks so that pupils build their knowledge and confidence in most subjects. Staff generally make appropriate checks on pupils' understanding. In the strongest lessons, these checks are used to rapidly inform the next steps of the lesson. However, this is not as consistently sharp across all areas of the school. At times, some pupils, particularly those who are most able, are ready to move on to more demanding tasks which could stretch them further. Leaders recognise where this needs to develop further and are putting appropriate steps in place so that this becomes more consistently embedded across the school.

Pupils are well supported to develop the foundational skills and knowledge they need to access the curriculum. For those who need additional support, for example to become fluent and confident readers, appropriate support is put in place.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Staff and leaders alike are united in their vision to ensure that every pupil reaches their potential and develops increasingly positive aspirations for their futures. This is underpinned by their 'Dream Big' programme, which is woven through the fabric of the school.

Where leaders turn their attention, positive impact follows. Together with governors, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and where they want to develop further. Decisions are made with the best interests of pupils in mind, and this is especially the case for the most disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders make careful checks so they can be assured that the actions they take have the impact they intend. Purposeful steps are taken to address any areas that need further work, and improvements happen as a result. Leaders recognise where more recent approaches need to embed with further consistency. They forge supportive professional connections with the other schools and leaders in their cooperative trust, and use these to further support their own and others' school improvement.

Staff benefit from meaningful professional learning opportunities that enable them to develop. Leaders refine this offer and ensure it meets the needs of the school. For example, staff engage in action research to both develop their interests and contribute positively to improvements in the school.

Leaders are especially considerate of staff wellbeing and workload. Staff are united in valuing the open-door policies of leaders that make them feel valued and included in decisions made about their school.

Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school. They praise the 'holistic approach' that allows 'all pupils to be included' and value how staff and leaders are 'dedicated to pupils' wellbeing and progress'.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Students in the sixth form access a broad and varied curriculum which is well designed to meet the needs of the students it serves. The post-16 provision has grown significantly over the last few years, and students are increasingly drawn to this breadth of curriculum opportunities, the extensive facilities, and the supportive pastoral care they receive from staff.

Teaching is broadly effective and staff have assured subject knowledge, explain with clarity, and support students to develop appropriate knowledge and skills in their subjects. Students with additional barriers to learning have their needs identified rapidly, and staff make effective adaptations in lessons to support their learning.

Students broadly achieve well, particularly across applied and technical qualifications. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development. In the small number of subjects where achievement is not as effective, leaders have taken appropriate actions to address this. These are beginning to embed and show positive improvement.

Of particular strength is the offer to support students' wider personal development. Sixth-form students contribute to the wider community of their school through a range of leadership opportunities, acting as role models to those in the younger year groups. The support for students' future careers is very well designed and tailored to help students decide on their next steps. As a result, students are very well prepared for the next stages of their education, training or employment. This is evident in the numbers going on to increasingly aspirational destinations, including an increasing number applying to and gaining places at Russell Group universities.

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

Pupils are encouraged to 'Dream Big' throughout their time at Northfleet School for Girls. They are supported to become confident and empowered, with a desire to take their place confidently in the world when they leave.

Pupils here feel safe, behave especially well, and treat staff and one another with high levels of respect. Bullying, on the rare occasions when it arises, is dealt with effectively. Pupils flourish as a result of the positive relationships they have with staff and the highly supportive pastoral care they receive. They attend school well.

Pupils enjoy learning, and are keen to engage in lessons. Those with additional barriers to their learning are well supported by staff who anticipate their needs. Typically, pupils achieve well here.

A strong sense of community is fostered through the colleges within the school, and pupils are keen to earn points that contribute to the college cup, through their work, their conduct, or the vast array of different competitions and challenges that bring them together.

A wealth of different opportunities are woven into the fabric of this school. Their talents and interests are fostered through clubs and extra-curricular activities that they engage with readily. Pupils are encouraged to be ambitious about their futures, both in terms of further study and careers. They benefit from visits from external speakers and alumni who inspire them. While in school, pupils readily take on leadership roles, representing their school and helping their peers through roles such as being school ambassadors in areas such as reading, wellbeing and performing arts, as well as being peer mentors and school council representatives. The community farm, based on the school site, is a place of interest and study for pupils.

Next steps

- Leaders should embed their work to ensure that all pupils, but especially the most able, are appropriately stretched and challenged in lessons to support them in achieving well.
 - Leaders need to continue to develop the consistency of quality of teaching in the sixth form, embedding the improvements to the curriculum areas where achievement has not been as effective, so that all students are supported to achieve their potential.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Fiona Collingridge.

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 a range of leaders during the inspection, including the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers and members of the extended leadership team. The lead inspector also held meetings with the members of governing board, including the chair, as well as some representatives from the cooperative trust that the school works collaboratively with. The lead inspector also held a telephone meeting with a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The school currently uses one form of registered alternative provision.

The school works as part of a local cooperative trust with several local primary and secondary schools.

Headteacher: Chris Norwood

Lead inspector:

Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Mike Boddington, Ofsted Inspector

Michelle Lawson, Ofsted Inspector

David Stevenson, His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Whitmore, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,302

Above 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

1,145

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

38.20%

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

1.38%

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

15.28%

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 (revised)	36.8%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.4%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	37.4%	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 (revised)	43.0	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	41.4	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	44.3	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)	-0.17	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.15	-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 (revised)	25.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	23.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	25.2%	Close to average

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 (revised)	38.7	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	33.1	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.6	35.0	Close to average

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)	-0.50	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.21	-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 (revised)	25.8%	53.1%	-27.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	23.8%	53.1%	-29.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	52.4%	-27.4 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 (revised)	38.7	50.4	-11.7
2023/24 (final)	33.1	50.0	-16.9

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	39.6	50.3	-10.7

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)	-0.50	0.16	-0.66
2022/23 (final)	-0.21	0.17	-0.38

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 (provisional)	90%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	88%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	91%	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 (revised)	27.61	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.46	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	28.10	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 (revised)	-0.3	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.3	0.0	Below

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 (2 term)	8.2%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.4%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.0%	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 (2 term)	23.6%	21.9%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	30.9%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	30.8%	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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