

Thomas Knyvett College

Address: Stanwell Road, Ashford, Surrey, TW15 3DU

Unique reference number (URN): 136832

Inspection report: 9 June 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

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, at all levels, have a thorough understanding of the school's contextual challenges, its strengths and priorities for improvement. While leaders have not yet made the necessary impact across many areas of their work, they have focused on the most urgent and significant priorities first. Leaders have ensured that the right foundations are in place so that their actions can have sustainable impact over time. Leaders closely and accurately monitor how effectively improvements are being embedded. They adapt their approaches where needed. Leaders consistently take decisions that are in the best interests of children. Through effective partnership working between the school and trust, leadership has been strengthened across all areas of the school's work.

Leaders recognise the importance of building community relationships and confidence in the school. They proactively seek to understand and address any concerns that stakeholders may have. Leaders work in effective partnership with external professionals and specialist services, to meet pupils' needs. Leaders are considerate of staff wellbeing and workload when making important improvements to the school's work. Leaders provide well-considered and appropriate professional learning opportunities for staff. Teachers at the earliest stages of their career are well supported and make a positive contribution to the school community.

Trustees are highly effective in their roles. They understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. Trustees hold leaders to account appropriately. They ensure that leaders have sufficient capacity to address the school's challenges and to deliver positive improvements.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement across the curriculum is varied. Sometimes, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are insufficiently high. Where this is the case, pupils do not deepen or develop their knowledge as well as they could. Some pupils have notable gaps in their knowledge, including important mathematics skills. Often, staff do not identify and address these knowledge gaps in a timely manner. Where this is the case, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not progress as positively as they could from their starting points. In turn, where knowledge gaps persist, pupils are less well prepared for their next steps as they need to be.

In subjects where leaders have improved the curriculum, pupils achieve better. Similarly, where teachers use assessment effectively, pupils are beginning to deepen their knowledge more securely. Typically, pupils who are behind in their reading or writing catch up over time.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance is not as high as it needs to be. Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are absent too often. While leaders have made important improvements to attendance over time, this has not been sustained recently. Leaders have taken appropriate action in response to this decline, however. Leaders understand the factors affecting poor attendance. They provide helpful support to pupils and their families, to reduce any attendance barriers.

While many pupils have positive attitudes to learning, this is not consistent amongst all pupils. For example, some pupils are repeatedly late to lessons. A small but significant minority of pupils do not behave as well as they should. Leaders do take appropriate action to address repeated poor behaviour. As a result, the school is typically calm and orderly. The vast majority of pupils behave well and follow agreed rules and routines. Mostly, staff reinforce expectations and challenge any incidents of poor behaviour. Generally, leaders make appropriate reasonable adjustments to help pupils with SEND to manage their behaviour effectively. Leaders do not tolerate bullying, abuse or discrimination. They take effective action to address any such incidents. As a result, this type of behaviour is increasingly rare and is reducing over time.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching in the school varies. Sometimes teachers are insufficiently clear of pupils' starting points and any misconceptions they may have. When this is the case, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. Some pupils do not develop their learning as deeply or ambitiously as they are able to. There is inconsistency in how effectively staff adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not access the intended learning as successfully as their peers.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is suitably ambitious and allows pupils to build their knowledge over time. Leaders have a clear and accurate oversight of where teaching is not as effective as it needs to be. They are taking appropriate steps to address this and to upskill staff where needed. Staff respond well to professional learning opportunities. As a result, some aspects of learning are becoming more consistent. For example, teachers regularly revisit previous learning at the start of lessons to improve pupils' confidence and engagement.

Leaders have broadly appropriate systems in place to identify gaps in pupils' reading, writing or mathematics skills. There is variability in the precision of support pupils receive, however. Leaders are refining their approaches to ensure that all pupils who need to catch up are supported to do so effectively.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged are not as consistently well supported as they need to be.

Leaders understand the barriers that some pupils face to their learning and/or wellbeing. They accurately identify when pupils may need additional support. Leaders put appropriate plans in place to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Sometimes, these plans are not communicated to staff effectively. Some staff are still developing their expertise to meet pupils' needs in line with recommended support strategies. Leaders are taking appropriate action to address this variability in the support provided to pupils with SEND.

Leaders use pupil premium funding to improve the engagement and experiences of disadvantaged pupils. Sometimes, the impact of this work is not as positive as it needs to be. When this is the case, leaders adapt their approaches. For example, they have recently put more successful strategies in place to reduce attendance barriers for disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders understand the needs of pupils who are known, or have previously been known, to social care. They provide effective support and work collaboratively with wider professionals to ensure pupils' needs continue to be met.

Alternative provision is used appropriately and only where it is in a pupil's best interests.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Sometimes, pupils are not as knowledgeable as they need to be about aspects of their personal development. For example, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and protected characteristics is variable. Some staff lack sufficient expertise to explore these important themes as thoroughly as they need to. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to ensure that all staff teach the personal development curriculum effectively.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about any emerging risks that are relevant to the local context. As a result, pupils understand how to stay safe in the community and online. Pupils' learning about relationships and sex education and health education is, typically, effective. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported with adapted approaches that improve their understanding about health and personal safety.

Leaders provide helpful careers education, information and guidance. Pupils learn about the range of future pathways available to them. Pupils understand what to expect as they prepare for the world of work and further education. Pupils are increasingly successful in accessing their preferred next steps.

Leaders have broadened the range of opportunities and experiences available to pupils. Pupils appreciate that their views are considered when new activities are being introduced. For example, pupils have welcomed the recent addition of a knitting club and a debate group. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles, particularly those who are part of the student council. Leaders actively seek to understand how pupils feel about their school experiences. In turn, pupils work positively with staff to help shape improvements, such as the new rewards system.

Staff provide helpful pastoral care to pupils. They ensure that pupils have access to support at the point they need it, for example through 'The Hub'. Pupils trust staff to support them with any concerns they have.

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

Pupils' achievement in the school varies. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they could in national examinations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) sometimes make insufficient progress from their starting points. Typically, pupils who attend school regularly and punctually achieve in line with expectations. Some pupils miss school too often, however. As a result, they have considerable gaps in their knowledge. Generally, pupils are prepared for their next steps and move on to appropriate employment or education pathways.

Leaders have made recent improvements to the curriculum. Pupils are beginning to learn more effectively and to enjoy their lessons. Staff understand pupils' needs. There is inconsistency in how effectively pupils' needs are met, however. Sometimes, pupils' barriers to learning and/or wellbeing are not reduced as well as they could be. As a result, some pupils with SEND struggle to participate fully in learning.

Staff develop positive and caring relationships with pupils. Mostly, pupils are respectful and behave well. They align to expectations and have broadly positive attitudes. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to improve the behaviour of a minority of pupils who do not meet their high expectations. Bullying is uncommon and incidents are reducing further. Pupils are safe and feel safe. They understand the risks they need to be aware of as they prepare for adulthood. Typically, pupils recognise the importance of equality and celebrate one another's differences. On the whole, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have to explore their interests through clubs and activities. Staff encourage pupils to widen their experiences and to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy the school productions that allow them to build confidence and showcase their talents.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to work with families to reduce absence.
- Leaders should ensure that teaching is consistently of a high quality so that pupils learn effectively across all areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are swiftly identified and addressed.
- Leaders should ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are consistently understood and met.

- Leaders should embed their approaches to improving behaviour, so that pupils consistently meet leaders' high expectations.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Howard Partnership Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Louise Lee, and the trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Wilson.

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 the school leadership team, trust leaders, members of staff, groups of pupils and representatives from the board of trustees.

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.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 4 alternative provisions, including 3 which are unregistered.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last graded inspection. The current principal was not in post at the point of the last graded inspection.

Principal: Matt Duffield

Lead inspector:

Tash Hurtado, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nicholas Simmonds, Ofsted Inspector

Gemma Piper, Ofsted Inspector

Daniel Botting, 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 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

687

Below 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

1,058

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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

36.83%

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

4.37%

Above 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

12.81%

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

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

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)	30.2%	45.4%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	41.1%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.7%	45.3%	Below

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)	38.6	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	43.1	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40.2	46.3	Below

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)	-0.39	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.36	-0.03	Below

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)	16.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	19.4%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	18.2%	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 (final)	28.4	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	31.1	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	33.1	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)	-1.02	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.69	-0.57	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' 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)	16.7%	53.1%	-36.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	19.4%	53.1%	-33.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	18.2%	52.4%	-34.3 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)	28.4	50.4	-22.0
2023/24 (final)	31.1	50.0	-18.9
2022/23 (final)	33.1	50.3	-17.2

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)	-1.02	0.16	-1.19
2022/23 (final)	-0.69	0.17	-0.85

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)	88%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	88%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	93%	94%	Average

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)	8.5%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.7%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	11.3%	9.0%	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)	27.1%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	33.5%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	35.0%	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.

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