

Northampton School for Girls

Address: Spinney Hill Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN3 6DG

Unique reference number (URN): 140510

Inspection report: 10 March 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

This is a school where pupils achieve highly across the broad and ambitious curriculum. Performance in public examinations at the end of Year 11 is strong, with many measures significantly above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils have made rapid gains. Many gaps are narrowing across English, mathematics, science, humanities and several other subjects. Low and middle prior attainers achieve particularly well. High prior attainers perform significantly above national averages in many areas of the curriculum and broadly in line in some others. Leaders have prioritised securing consistently above-national performance.

Across subjects, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop detailed knowledge. The work pupils currently produce shows an increasingly sophisticated understanding. Pupils confidently draw on prior learning to deepen their knowledge. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary with accuracy and articulate their learning with confidence and enthusiasm. They make sustained progress through the curriculum. Pupils are particularly well prepared to take their next steps in education, training or employment.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' high attendance is a consistent strength. Attendance sits significantly above national figures and continues to rise. Pupils' positive attitudes towards school contribute strongly to this pattern. Leaders maintain rigorous systems to analyse absence trends and are proactive when they identify potential barriers to attendance. They respond swiftly to concerns and review each pupil on the vulnerable list regularly, ensuring that pupils and families receive timely and effective support.

Leaders have established a culture of high expectations for behaviour and conduct in which pupils flourish. Behaviour across the school is calm, respectful and purposeful. Pupils follow routines, settle quickly to learning and show courtesy in lessons and social times. In lessons, pupils listen attentively, contribute thoughtfully and demonstrate strong commitment to their learning. Staff apply expectations consistently and use shared language so that pupils understand what is required. Pupils report that bullying is rare and trust adults to resolve issues promptly and fairly. Leaders review behaviour systems carefully and provide targeted support where needed. A small number of pupils receive bespoke help to improve their behaviour, and this support is effective. Leaders have created a positive environment in which any bullying is addressed quickly and pupils remain focused on their work.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed an ambitious, well-balanced curriculum that is coherently sequenced and enables pupils to recall prior learning and apply it confidently in new contexts. This high-quality curriculum thinking runs across all subjects, including the sixth form. It allows pupils to build knowledge and skills in a logical and connected way. Staff deliberately revisit key content so that pupils remember more over time. They know pupils'

needs well and adapt the curriculum effectively, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the same ambitious learning as their peers.

Leaders check the quality of teaching rigorously and have a precise understanding of strengths and areas for refinement. Teachers value the professional learning they receive and use their strong subject knowledge to explain new content clearly. They check pupils' understanding routinely, identify gaps quickly and adapt teaching to address misconceptions. Pupils revisit previous learning frequently, which helps them secure important knowledge in long-term memory and develop a deep understanding across subjects.

Leaders place a high priority on pupils securing essential curriculum knowledge. When needed, pupils receive timely support with reading, handwriting and numeracy. All pupils regularly read and discuss ambitious texts, reinforcing the school's strong culture of literacy.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders create a highly inclusive culture of belonging and warmth, where staff identify pupils' needs quickly and provide the right support. Disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils known to children's social care receive well-planned help that removes barriers to learning and wellbeing. Pupils value the school's 'Aspire' provision, which offers a calm, supportive space for those who need quieter environments or additional guidance. As a result, they feel secure and participate fully in school life.

Leaders maintain high expectations for every pupil and work closely with families and external agencies to identify and address emerging needs. They analyse information carefully and implement coherent strategies that enable pupils to access the full curriculum and achieve well over time. Staff receive training in the school's adaptive teaching approach, ensuring an effective and consistent approach across the school.

Leaders evaluate the use of additional funding rigorously, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils attend well and achieve strongly. Leaders work effectively with the virtual school to support pupils who are in the care of local authorities. They also identify and support young carers effectively, removing barriers to engagement. The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils. This is managed carefully and always in the pupils' best interests. As a result of this well-structured approach, pupils with additional needs receive effective support and thrive academically and personally.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders and trustees are highly knowledgeable about their roles and hold the school firmly and effectively to account. They have detailed knowledge of the school's particular context and a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders act swiftly when they identify something is not working well enough and thoroughly investigate solutions to whatever problems the school faces. Leaders put clear plans in place along with training to ensure that staff move together on the identified development areas. Staff appreciate the professional learning opportunities provided. For example, they have strengthened leadership, increased subject expertise through quality assurance

mechanisms and added capacity during staff changes to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support.

Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities effectively. They work closely with leaders at the school and play a vital role in supporting them and holding them to account in equal measure. Leaders embrace this challenge and maintain the highest expectations so that all pupils and students in the sixth form can excel at the school. Leaders are highly ambitious for the pupils and students in their care.

Staff are proud to work at this school, and the vast majority feel that their workload and wellbeing are well considered.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders provide an ambitious and well-structured programme for personal development that equips pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive beyond school. They provide rich opportunities for pupils to explore wellbeing, identity and inclusion. Sixth-form students run the popular 'Wellbeing Café', which helps to support younger pupils. The 'Hub' provides a vibrant and safe space where pupils from all backgrounds come together for meaningful discussions about diversity. Pupils receive timely pastoral support, which helps them feel safe, valued and confident to seek help. Events such as the young carers' wellbeing day further strengthen this culture of care.

Pupils develop secure and detailed knowledge across personal, social, health and economic education programme, as well as the relationships, sex and health education and citizenship curriculums. They explore complex topics with maturity, such as consent, forced marriage and, in the sixth form, the risks associated with 'incel' ideology. Pupils have even developed an app to raise awareness of grooming and support each other in staying safe. They demonstrate a strong understanding of fundamental British values and uphold these through the school's values of 'Respect'. Pupils learn about different religions and beliefs. They celebrate each other's diverse cultures through activities such as 'cultures day', featuring cultural dress and dance. During Ramadan, pupils celebrate Iftar together. As a result of the personal development opportunities they receive, pupils and sixth-form students develop into reflective individuals who behave with integrity.

Leaders tailor the personal development programme carefully to remove barriers for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring they access a wide range of enriching opportunities, including the school production, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and debating. These experiences build pupils' confidence and resilience.

The school provides exceptionally high-quality careers education, tailored and supported by independent advice. Regular lunchtime lectures from professionals, such as lawyers and nurses, work experience and subject-based university events broaden pupils' aspirations, supporting them to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Expected standard

Post 16 provision

Expected standard

The school welcomes boys and girls into the sixth form. Transition into the sixth form is highly effective. Any students who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing are supported effectively. Outcomes in the sixth form have been more variable over time, particularly within the A-level pathway. Students pursuing vocational qualifications achieve securely in national examinations, and outcomes across the sixth form continue to improve. Leaders have a clear understanding of the factors underpinning this variation and have implemented appropriate actions to improve achievement. The impact of this work is increasingly evident in the improving progress that students make from their starting points.

Students receive highly effective support for their personal development. Staff foster a culture of aspiration, encouraging students to take intellectual risks, believe in their abilities and recognise their potential. This culture of aspiration is exemplified through projects such as the student-designed 'Medi-blanket' for neonatal babies. Inspired by trial days at Oxford University, this work led to students becoming finalists in a prestigious national engineering competition. Sixth-form students contribute strongly to school life through running the 'Wellbeing Café' and organising themed activities. Leadership roles, including diversity, charity and wellbeing ambassadors, ensure that student voice actively shapes the school's highly inclusive culture. Students develop into confident, articulate and responsible young adults who embody the school's 'Respect' values.

Students understand the range of future pathways available to them and benefit from clear, impartial guidance that supports well-informed next steps. Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training.

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

Pupils thrive at this warm, caring and inclusive school. The school's values, 'respect for self', 'respect for others' and 'respect for learning', are lived out by staff and pupils on a daily basis. Pupils develop a clear sense of identity and belonging, feeling connected to something purposeful and bigger than themselves. This contributes to a climate where pupils feel safe, supported and proud to be part of the school. The school champions girls to be fearless and brave and to strive for their ambitions. As a result, pupils develop the confidence, character and aspiration to achieve very well across the school.

Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. Approachable, knowledgeable teachers help create an environment where everyone can work hard and want to succeed. Pupils' behaviour is excellent throughout the school day. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident that staff listen to them and take appropriate action.

Boys and girls flourish in the sixth form, enjoying being part of a tight-knit community where they receive individualised support. Students act as responsible and compassionate role models for younger pupils. For example, students run the 'Wellbeing Café' for pupils and

provide tailored activities to guide and support good mental and emotional health. Students typically achieve well in the sixth form.

The school provides an extensive and carefully planned range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents, interests and sense of active citizenship. These opportunities are carefully mapped from Year 7 to Year 13. Outside the classroom, pupils thrive through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports, drama, music and learning Latin, alongside a wide range of other opportunities, including those led by students. These experiences help them to develop confidence, leadership and resilience. Pupils' knowledge beyond the classroom is expanded through trips abroad, such as to Barcelona, Liège and Ypres, museum visits and creative showcases, such as the recent musical performance of 'Annie'. Pupils and students in the sixth form learn to engage positively with their community and beyond.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to embed improvements in the sixth form so that students consistently achieve well.
 - Leaders should continue to ensure that the school's curriculum approach is deeply embedded across all areas so that exceptionally high standards are achieved and sustained over time, with practice remaining coherent, ambitious and securely implemented.
 - Leaders should continue to embed a whole-school approach that cultivates a deep understanding of faiths and cultures, ensuring this is consistently modelled, taught and sustained to uphold exceptionally high standards of inclusion.
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About this inspection

This school is part of a single academy trust, Northampton School for Girls, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Cristina Taboada-Naya, who is also the headteacher, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roland Gray.

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 the chair of trustees, the headteacher and a range of senior leaders 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 school makes use of 6 alternative provisions, including 3 that are unregistered.

Headteacher: Cristina Taboada-Naya

Lead inspector:

Anne Maingay, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Vasey, Ofsted Inspector

Derek Hobbs, Ofsted Inspector

Dawn Ashbolt, Ofsted Inspector

Halina Angus, Ofsted Inspector

Joanne Ward, 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 10 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,737

Well 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

1,801

Well 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

16.57%

Below 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

13.07%

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 (revised)	53.0%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54.3%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60.5%	45.3%	Above

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)	54.9	46.0	Above
2023/24 (final)	53.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	56.6	46.3	Above

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)	0.49	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.68	-0.03	Above

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)	18.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	23.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	22.9%	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)	42.6	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.8	34.6	Above
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)	0.08	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.32	-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 (revised)	18.8%	53.1%	-34.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	23.8%	53.1%	-29.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	22.9%	52.4%	-29.6 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)	42.6	50.4	-7.8
2023/24 (final)	41.8	50.0	-8.2
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)	0.08	0.16	-0.09
2022/23 (final)	-0.32	0.17	-0.48

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)	94%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	98%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	94%	Above

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)	32.65	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.30	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.58	34.16	Close to average

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)	-0.1	0.0	Close to 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 (2 term)	5.9%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.1%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.3%	9.0%	Below

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)	13.2%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	13.7%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	17.4%	26.5%	Below

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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