

Holland Park School

Address: Airlie Gardens, London, W8 7AF

Unique reference number (URN): 149632

Inspection report: 20 January 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.

Attendance and behaviour**Exceptional** ●

The school's work to improve attendance has been extremely successful. All groups of pupils now attend very well, including pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have created a culture where pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils willingly meet these high expectations. For example, pupils arrive on time and settle quickly, so lessons start promptly. Leaders work diligently to provide highly tailored support for individual pupils, including those who are vulnerable, so that they attend school regularly and benefit from all that the school has to offer. As a result, attendance continues to improve and persistent absence has decreased dramatically.

The school has a terrifically positive culture, where pupils live up to leaders' high expectations of how to behave. There is a culture of calmness and respect that permeates social times and lessons. Leaders have created an ethos of professionalism and pride. The school's large communal spaces buzz with pupils and students talking about their learning or helping others. Older students are excellent role models for younger pupils as they exemplify the positive character they have developed during their time at the school.

Serious incidents of poor behaviour are incredibly rare. When any issues arise, staff provide tailored input to help pupils reflect and improve. This reduces repeat problems over time and ensures that pupils do not miss out on learning. Bullying is rare, and when it does occur, it is dealt with right away. Pupils are clear that derogatory behaviour or discrimination, including online, are not tolerated. Pupils work and socialise together extremely well. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, approach their learning with a positive attitude and are keen to engage in opportunities and activities.

Leadership and governance**Exceptional** ●

The new trust and school leaders have quickly identified what needed improvement, resulting in transformational progress at the school. As one student said, 'The school has been completely transformed; there's a stronger sense of community and a completely different school culture.' Leaders have a forensic understanding of the school, pupils and the local community, which means they are laser focused on school improvement.

Decision-making and effective systems and processes show a precise understanding of what different pupils need to thrive. This is as a result of the highly sophisticated monitoring which leaders have developed. This ensures that nothing is done in isolation. Leaders share expertise and make decisions in the best interests of every individual pupil. Leaders are high profile around the school. They are welcoming to pupils and model the positive, consistent approach that they expect of staff. Leaders at all levels are ambitious for every pupil, including those who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Their work continues to have a transformational impact on pupils' achievement, behaviour and wellbeing.

Trustees and local governors provide both expertise and robust oversight of the school's improvement. Trustees fulfil their statutory responsibilities diligently and delegate a range of responsibilities to local governors, who live and work within the community. Staff, including early careers teachers, are very positive about being part of the school. Staff feel listened to

and valued. They particularly appreciate the variety of professional learning provided that gives them the skills they need to help pupils learn and flourish. Staff feel valued and enjoy working in a caring community.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils' knowledge builds securely as they progress through the curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. They demonstrate real confidence in recalling and applying their learning, this includes high-quality written work. Pupils gain the qualifications they need to move into the school's sixth form, or on to further education, training or employment. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have other additional vulnerabilities are well supported to achieve their full potential. Regardless of starting points, pupils progress well through the curriculum and go on to attain well in national tests and assessments. This is indicative of the impact of leaders' high expectations for all pupils across the school. Although disadvantaged pupils' attainment dipped in 2024, leaders' effective actions mean that they are now achieving well and gaps are closing rapidly. When needed, leaders thoughtfully explore how pupils' achievement could be strengthened further. This has included a focus on oracy in the classroom, which is having a positive impact on pupils' communication skills.

Pupils, and students in the post-16 provision, leave the school with a wide range of qualifications that support them well with their next steps in education, training or employment. Overall, pupils are very well prepared to go on to sustained and extremely ambitious destinations when they leave school.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed an ambitious and well-balanced curriculum. It is coherently sequenced and enables pupils to recall prior learning and apply this with confidence in different contexts. The high-level curriculum thinking and sequencing runs across subjects, including in the sixth form. It enables pupils to build up their knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical order.

Teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach. They are passionate and bring learning to life in the classroom. The curriculum delivery is highly effective for all pupils. An embedded programme of training and support equips teachers with deep subject-specific knowledge. Leaders provide them with helpful information about pupils' individual needs and barriers, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers' feedback supports pupils to develop detailed understanding about how secure they are in different aspects of their learning and what they need to improve.

Leaders place a high priority on securing the required foundational knowledge for all pupils, such as reading skills. Additionally, leaders are highly focused on developing language and communication skills with an increased focus on oracy and helping to support pupils to

articulate their learning with clarity. This is seen increasingly as the pupils progress through the school.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusive practices at Holland Park School have been rapidly improved. There are now high expectations for every pupil regardless of their background or any barriers to learning they may have. Leaders know that more pupils are now joining the school with additional needs and/or barriers to learning. Leaders are forensic in their approach to working closely with pupils and their families to identify any potential barriers to pupils' success. They seek specialist support and work closely with the local authority in doing so.

Leaders make sure that staff receive detailed knowledge of pupils' needs, which extends beyond those who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to social care. Staff receive regular, highly effective training about how to support these pupils, especially those with SEND. As a result, staff expertly target support when teaching so that those pupils with additional needs can access the same challenging curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that aspirations for all pupils remain high.

Leaders have developed a sophisticated approach to monitoring the impact of the support provided. This enables them to check it is working to address gaps in pupils' knowledge or to provide pupils with extra pastoral support when needed. This includes thoughtful use of external agencies where appropriate. They also carefully evaluate the impact of the pupil premium spending. As a result of this work, disadvantaged pupils overcome their barriers to learning and achieve well.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders provide a well-structured programme for personal development that weaves together to support pupils to grow into respectful, confident and resilient young people. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are supported to build highly developed social skills and levels of independence effectively. The personal, social, health and economic education programme gives pupils an in-depth understanding of healthy relationships, healthy lifestyles and how to avoid risky behaviour. Relationships and sex education and health education and the teaching of wider wellbeing are planned with care and updated regularly. Staff receive regular training and clear guidance so that sensitive topics, including consent, mental health and online risks, are taught with confidence.

Trips, educational visits and workshops are carefully planned to contribute to and expand pupils' experiences. Leaders break down barriers to ensure all pupils access these opportunities, which enhance the personal development programme. They carefully track the uptake of experiences to ensure all pupils benefit.

Pupil leadership, peer mentoring and the highly active student council all help pupils to see themselves as citizens of the school, local area and wider world. The school's work to support pupils' progression into further training, education or employment is highly effective, resulting in most pupils moving on to very ambitious destinations when they leave the school. This includes one-to-one guidance, careers fairs, work experience and employer

engagement. Post-16 students benefit from targeted support for university and apprenticeship applications. Pupils and students in the sixth form describe, with confidence, the futures they are working towards.

Leaders ensure there is highly effective pastoral care and support available to all pupils. Staff have positive and constructive relationships with pupils and know them well. Specialist staff are proactive in identifying pupils, and groups, who may need additional help at different times. This is particularly beneficial in creating a harmonious school community.

Post 16 provision

Strong standard 

Leaders have designed a high-quality, tailored and relevant curriculum for post-16 study. Teachers use their high levels of expertise to extend and deepen students' learning very effectively. Teaching is thoughtfully adapted to help all students learn and achieve. Teachers create a rich, discursive environment in lessons, which helps students deepen their understanding, become highly reflective and develop confidence.

Students demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning. They show mature study habits and produce sophisticated work in lessons. They make extremely good use of the helpful feedback given by their teachers. They appreciate the time teachers take to get to know them and help them succeed. Students are ambitious for their futures and receive comprehensive support and guidance about further opportunities open to them. A well-embedded careers programme is in place which is tailored well to pupils varied interests. Thanks to useful, personalised advice and guidance, students know what they need to do to realise their ambitions. Students are excellent ambassadors for the school, they provide useful guidance and modelling to the lower school through mentoring, leadership roles and running enrichment.

Sustained high expectations, expert teaching and strong pastoral care mean that students are extremely well prepared for their next steps and for life beyond school.

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

This school is a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment where all pupils thrive. Leaders have an unwavering belief in ambition for everyone. Pupils understand that staff want the best for them. Across all year groups, pupils keenly describe the sense of belonging that permeates the school. There have been significant improvements at the school since it joined the United Learning Trust in January 2023. Pupils and staff speak about the culture shift that has happened and why they feel happy to come to school.

Pupils build very respectful, working relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils learn to be responsible and reflect on their own actions. Staff and pupils value the restorative approach to behaviour, which results in a culture of kindness and care. Pupils feel safe and trust adults with any concerns or worries that they might have, knowing that staff will address these effectively and swiftly. This results in very positive behaviour and exemplary attitudes to learning. The school has extremely high expectations for pupils' attendance at

school. Leaders follow up any absence robustly. This results in very high levels of attendance. Across the school and sixth form, pupils are eager to succeed.

Pupils are highly motivated by their lessons and by the extensive range of enrichment activities on offer. There is a very strong focus on pupils' personal development. Staff teach pupils about the importance of topics such as mental wellbeing and consent. Pupils know that their voice matters and that staff will support them when they face challenges.

Pupils, and students in the post-16 provision, benefit from a high-quality curriculum. This is delivered with consistent precision and skill by well-trained staff. Teachers are very well informed about pupils' individual needs. This helps to ensure they make appropriate adaptations to teaching and resources. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have additional barriers to their learning achieve highly. Pupils are rightly proud of their work, especially in Art, where the outcomes are particularly impressive.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain the effectiveness of their work in all areas. They should seek continued improvement, overcoming barriers and challenges, in order to drive a transformational impact for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.
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About this inspection

This school is part of United Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sir Jon Coles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christian Brodie.

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 executive principal and other senior leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing board and 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.

The school does not make use of any alternative provisions.

Lead inspector:

Sam Johnson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Heidi Swidenbank, Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Roddick, Ofsted Inspector

Rebecca Iles-Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

Russell Bennett, 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,336

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

1,430

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)

32.71%

Close to 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

3.97%

Close to 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

13.62%

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 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 (provisional)	73.5%	45.2%	Above
2023/24 (final)	68.7%	45.9%	Above
2022/23		45.3%	

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 (provisional)	59.2	45.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	58.7	45.9	Above
2022/23		46.3	

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)	0.04	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23		-0.03	

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 (provisional)	52.5%	25.6%	Above
2023/24 (final)	39.3%	25.8%	Above
2022/23		25.2%	

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 (provisional)	45.4	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	45.1	34.6	Above
2022/23		35.0	

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)	-1.01	-0.57	Below
2022/23		-0.57	

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 (provisional)	52.5%	52.8%	-0.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	39.3%	53.1%	-13.8 pp
2022/23		52.4%	

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 (provisional)	45.4	50.3	-4.9

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	45.1	50.0	-4.9
2022/23		50.3	

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)	-1.01	0.16	-1.18
2022/23		0.17	

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)	37.87	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	41.31	34.38	Above

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)	0.2	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.4	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 (2 term)	7.5%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.6%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.2%	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)	21.8%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	35.3%	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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