

St John's Upper Holloway CofE Primary School

Address: Pemberton Gardens, Upper Holloway, London, N19 5RR

Unique reference number (URN): 100439

Inspection report: 30 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' attendance that they share openly with parents and carers. Leaders are clear that in order for pupils to achieve in line with their ambitious expectations, they need to be in school. Leaders check attendance information carefully and work sensitively with parents to unpick any barriers families may have to attending well. The support provided is highly bespoke and has had significant impact on improving attendance for individuals. While overall attendance is broadly in line with national figures, attendance for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is better than the national figures. Rates of persistent absence are low. The school's work in this area is worthy of note.

Calm, purposeful behaviour is evident throughout the school whether pupils are working or playing. This is underpinned by consistent expectations and highly positive relationships. Pupils have a sense of purpose in everything in they do, showing excellent resilience and independence. Rare incidents of poor behaviour are dealt quickly and consistently. Respect is taught, expected and demonstrated through each interaction. Pupils who may struggle to manage their behaviour are provided with highly effective adaptations and clear modelling of the expected behaviours. This systematic, scaffolded support teaches children to learn, to reflect, behave well and develop their self-regulation and cooperation with others over time.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Early years is truly the welcoming start to school that leaders aspire to. Children enter school happily each day, parents and carers are fully welcomed and encouraged to be part of their child's learning journey. Children are settled, safe and nurtured here. They listen well and build resilience and independence. Children make very good progress, often from starting points lower than those found nationally. They are very well prepared for Year 1.

Children are active and engaged in their learning. From the very start, in the classroom for 2-year-olds, they are taught the things needed to build communication, socialisation and physical control. The curriculum is meticulously thought through, showing clear progression in learning. There are highly consistent approaches to phonics, writing and mathematics that embed the essential knowledge children need to be ready for Year 1. Assessment is used effectively to check children's understanding and make meaningful adaptations to the curriculum and learning experiences. For example, vocabulary is tailored to address the individual gaps in children's language. The curriculum and approaches to assessment are equally well designed to consider, for example, intimate care practices and safe eating.

Staff are highly trained and deliver learning with precision. They understand what each child needs and how to support and extend learning. They skilfully use interactions during children's play to intervene at the right time. They provide children with the vocabulary they need and the space to help them to build on their learning experiences.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

This is a truly inclusive school. Leaders are committed to providing all pupils with the right help at the right time to enable them to succeed. Leaders and staff know their pupils and families incredibly well. This helps them to identify any additional needs swiftly. The school works effectively with a range of external professionals, including the virtual school and educational psychologist. The advice and guidance received from these agencies is communicated clearly with staff so that additional support is well planned to meet pupils' different needs. Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the help they receive from the school to help reduce barriers to learning at home as well as at school.

There are relatively high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Through high ambition and clear and consistent routines for all pupils, the school ensures a fully inclusive approach that maximises engagement and participation in school life. Targeted training for staff enables them to support a range of needs skilfully as well as reduce pupils' barriers to their learning and wellbeing. Pupils with additional needs learn the same curriculum as their peers, wherever this is possible. Additional bespoke interventions in the 'comfort zone' provide a more tailored offer for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans and/or specialist support, including for speech and language.

Pupils' progress and the impact of any additional support is carefully analysed by leaders. This information is used with precision to further shape adaptations and provide additional staff training that might be required. This helps to maximise the impact of planned support for pupils.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Staff are focused on ensuring all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, build accurate and fluent communication, reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. As a result, any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in these areas are typically well addressed. The impact of the school's work in this area is reflected in pupils' outcomes, including in national assessments. Pupils who are disadvantaged achieve highly. They out perform other disadvantaged pupils nationally and also their non-disadvantaged peers in reading and mathematics.

Leaders have identified that pupils' achievements in writing are not as embedded as they are in reading and mathematics. The school has undertaken significant work this year to address this. While the impact of this work is not yet fully reflected in national outcomes, the quality of pupils' written work across the curriculum is improving.

The curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics is not as consistently embedded. While pupils generally remember what they have been taught, they do not consistently develop the same depth of understanding.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is ambitious and well designed. Learning is organised and delivered in a way that helps pupils to build on what they have learned before. This helps them to understand new learning. Many pupils start at the school with lower levels of language competency than is typical. The curriculum has been purposefully designed to address this, starting in the Nursery and moving through the school. Language acquisition and communication are prioritised to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, have the vocabulary needed to enable them to access and understand the curriculum in different subjects.

Staff prioritise pupils' accurate and fluent communication, reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. They check pupils' knowledge and understanding in these aspects of the curriculum carefully. Pupils who need additional support have careful adaptations put in place to ensure they can keep up with their peers. This consistent focus provides pupils with the knowledge and understanding they need to access future learning.

The curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics is typically taught well. Staff have secure subject knowledge and explain clearly new ideas. However, the checks made on pupils' learning in these subjects are not as precise. This means that sometimes teaching can move on before pupils have fully embedded learning. When this happens, pupils do not deepen their understanding as well as they could.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, know the school well. They have an astute understanding of pupils' and their families' needs. They use this knowledge to identify areas of strength and prioritise appropriate aspects they want to improve further. The decisions leaders make are always in the best interests of pupils. This has been the driver for curriculum improvements since the previous inspection and the constant focus of ensuring the school is fully inclusive. Professional learning for staff is carefully linked to whole-school priorities. Governors meet their statutory duties and work closely with leaders to ensure that any improvements planned are achieved.

Leaders' focus on individual needs is unwavering. Sometimes this can overshadow the precision with which they analyse the 'bigger picture' of whole-school performance. Leaders recognise this and are in the process of expanding the analysis they use. Leaders are building on the success of how they evaluate, for example, the impact of their provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to other areas of their practice, for example, evaluating their personal development programme.

Staff, including those who are new to teaching, are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They view it as a 'family' and are fully committed to its continued growth. They are

proud to be part of this tight-knit community. Staff appreciate the support they receive with their workload and wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's Christian ethos, as well as its embedded values, underpins an inclusive personal development curriculum. Leaders and staff know their pupils extremely well. They have a deep understanding of not only each pupil's needs, but also those of their family. Leaders are focused on enriching every aspect of all pupils' lives, including their wider experiences, through their broad personal development offer. Leaders take considered action to ensure all benefit from this offer.

Pastoral support is carefully planned for pupils who need it. This includes interventions in the 'comfort zone', and times to talk, self-soothe and reset. This provides pupils with the emotional support they need to help them stay focused and maximise their learning. The support that pupils receive, what they learn about their emotions, as well as how to cope and advocate for themselves, prepares them very well for life beyond school.

Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and experiences of others through daily worship. They take part in local community events and wider opportunities linked to equality and diversity. For example, linked to the school's work on social justice and building strength of character, the school was nominated for a Queer Student Award in 2024. The school has also worked with the local football club on a project about supporting neurodiversity awareness at matches.

Leaders have designed a suitable personal, social, health and economic curriculum that provides pupils with the knowledge they need to prepare them well for future life in modern Britain. Well-considered adaptations are in place to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum. The curriculum is delivered effectively, but pupils' understanding of different topics varies. For example, pupils have a secure grasp about online safety, the risks associated with drugs and what they need to do to keep themselves safe. However, they do not have the same depth of knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship.

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

St John's Upper Holloway is a caring and welcoming school. One of the school's shared principles is: 'as we are nurtured, so we will flourish'. This is fully realised through the unwavering support that pupils and their families receive from the moment they start in early years. The school's values of love, truthfulness, friendship, courage, thankfulness, creativity and perseverance are seamlessly woven through all aspects of daily life and seen through pupils' behaviour and interactions with staff around the school. Routines and expectations are clear and consistently applied. There is a warm and friendly start to each morning, with both staff and families greeting each other with respect and kindness.

Pupils are kept safe and feel safe in school. They know there are always staff available to talk with and who will help them should they need it. Playtimes and lunchtimes are happy

and cooperative times where pupils and staff enjoy positive relationships. For example, older pupils actively include their younger peers in their play and help them to resolve any minor disagreements they may have.

Pupils do well here; high expectations and consistent routines help ensure that lessons are focused on learning. Pupils are keen and try hard across the curriculum. They are typically well prepared for their future learning. Pupils value the wider opportunities that are available to them. They speak enthusiastically about their residential visit, in-year trips, and activities such as netball, art and choir. Pupils really are the focus of all aspects of the school's work, with a clear commitment by leaders to close any gaps in pupils' learning and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to strengthen their analysis of aspects of the school's provision, including, for example, the impact of staff training and the personal development offer.
 - Leaders should ensure that the checks made on pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics are precise. This will help to ensure that teaching does not move on before pupils have fully embedded their previous learning.
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About this inspection

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.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jane Airey.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector met with 2 representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.

The school currently makes use of one registered alternative provision.

The school is registered as having a Christian religious character. The school's last section 48 inspection was in June 2025.

The school offers places for 2-year-olds in its nursery.

Headteacher: Mr Nick Turpin

Lead inspector:

Samantha Ingram, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Abdul-Hayee Murshad, Ofsted Inspector

Shahnaz Ali, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

212

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

230

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

53.41%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.72%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

27.36%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	83%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	81%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	84%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	62%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	88%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	55%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	92%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	73%	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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	53%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	56%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	73%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	27%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	80%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	61%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	36%	58%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	83%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	83%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	91%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	59%	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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	53%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	56%	69%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	67%	5 pp
2022/23 (final)	27%	66%	-39 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	80%	80%	0 pp
2024/25 (final)	78%	81%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	80%	2 pp
2022/23 (final)	82%	78%	4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	58%	78%	-20 pp
2024/25 (final)	61%	78%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	78%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	36%	77%	-41 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	83%	80%	3 pp
2024/25 (final)	83%	81%	3 pp
2023/24 (final)	91%	79%	11 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	73%	79%	-6 pp

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)	6.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.1%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	14.5%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	16.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	15.3%	16.2%	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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