



Leigh Academy Halley

Address: Corelli Road, SE3 8EP

Unique reference number (URN): 145315

Inspection report: 11 November 2025

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 warm ethos and the well-thought-out curriculum ensure that pupils want to attend school each day. Pupils and their families are very clear about the need for daily attendance in order to ensure success. All groups of pupils attend well, including pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attendance continues to rise each term, and persistent absence has fallen considerably. Attendance incentives motivate and encourage pupils. Leaders and staff are experts in identifying barriers to attendance and exceedingly successful in removing them. They use their deep knowledge of each pupil, alongside meticulous analysis of patterns and trends to stop potential attendance issues in their tracks, and to tackle any that do occur. Even when reasons for non-attendance are complex, leaders are exceptionally tenacious; they do not stop until they have found a solution. Many pupils who have had poor attendance at previous schools attend well once they join Leigh Academy Halley.

Leaders' approach to behaviour is exceptionally effective in developing pupils' self-discipline which stands them in good stead for later life. Expectations for pupils' behaviour are very clear and systematically taught through each lesson, the 'values' curriculum and each interaction between staff and leaders. Pupils, including those who do not join in Year 7, quickly become immersed in the school's culture. They meet these expectations consistently well and succeed every day. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are extremely positive. Around the school, conduct is considerate, purposeful and calm. Older pupils display a sophisticated understanding of positive behaviours, and are excellent role models to younger pupils. The system of rewards and sanctions is particularly impressive. It is very well designed and implemented extremely skilfully. This leads to it being both consistent, so pupils know where they stand, and responsive to pupils' needs, so it works fairly for all. Poor behaviour, including bullying, is very rare and dealt with effectively by the school's leaders and staff should it arise. The school's approach has a very clear, highly effective impact on the behaviour of all pupils, but particularly those who need additional support.

Inclusion**Exceptional** ●

This is an exceptionally inclusive school. All pupils are welcome, and all are catered for extremely well. This has a transformational impact on the extent to which all pupils succeed personally and academically during their time at the school and beyond. Many pupils face multiple barriers to their learning and/or their well-being. Pupils arrive at the school at different times of the year, sometimes speaking no English or having had difficult experiences at other schools. Some have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including autism. Some are young carers or are looked after. A large proportion are disadvantaged. Many experience a combination of these factors. Highly-skilled leaders and staff consider carefully how best to support pupils to overcome each and every barrier. They work closely, sensitively and tenaciously with parents and carers from the outset, and maintain these relationships very well as pupils move through the school.

Very well planned, multi-layered strategies ensure that in every part of school life, pupils, including those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL),

receive the right balance of challenge and support. Teachers know pupils in each of their classes very well. Frequent, high-quality training enables them to confidently draw on a range of carefully selected strategies that meet pupils' needs. Highly responsive support for attendance and behaviour has a clear impact on the outcomes for any pupil who needs it, including those who join part way through a school year, or from other schools. Pupils who attend the specialist resource provision play a full part in school life and make strong progress academically, socially and emotionally. A comprehensive programme for those who speak EAL focuses on both spoken and written English and, for those new to the country, knowledge of British values. Professionals, therapists, outside agencies and careful use of alternative provision enhance the support pupils receive. Leaders use pupil premium funding extremely thoughtfully across all areas of school life to remove barriers to success and participation for disadvantaged pupils. For example, they use technology judiciously to support pupils to learn outside of school and place a relentless focus on helping pupils to be ready for their next steps, whether university, further education, employment or training.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional 

Leaders and those responsible for governance make all their decisions in the very best interests of pupils, and their work has a phenomenal impact on pupils' lives. As a result, all pupils achieve, thrive and feel a deep sense of belonging at this school. Leaders have a tireless focus on continuous improvement, based on thorough analysis of a range of information about their work and its impact. They have developed and improved the school on all fronts, as demonstrated, for example, by the continually improving academic outcomes and the exceptionally effective inclusion, behaviour, attendance and personal development strategies.

Throughout the school, leaders are a constantly strong, warm and visible presence. They have an exceptionally deep knowledge of all their pupils, which shows in every interaction they have with them. Senior leaders continually question and examine what more can be done to help pupils to be successful. For example, the 'small school' heads, together with other key leaders, meet daily with the principal after school to analyse any challenges arising from the day around behaviour, attendance, or well-being, in order that the school can be immediately responsive. Parents and carers are immediately involved in discussions when needed. Leaders work very closely with outside agencies, including therapists, to ensure that pupils' needs are consistently well met.

The school's rigorous and well-led approach to professional learning for staff, including for early career teachers, has successfully ensured continuous improvement across all areas of the school's work. It systematically builds teaching expertise. Staff at all levels lead coaching for their peers in areas in which they have particular skills. Senior leaders, together with the trust, continually and methodically develop leadership capacity, both by developing current staff and by appointing able new staff. The school is a hub for Early Careers Teachers, both across the trust and for other local schools. Those responsible for governance bring a great deal of expertise to their roles, fulfil their statutory duties entirely and set high expectations for the school. Staff feel valued and very well supported in terms of their workload and well-being.

Personal development and well-being

Exceptional 

The personal development offer is of extremely high quality. The school's success in developing all pupils' character is remarkable. As pupils progress through each year, they build their personal and social skills exceptionally well. Strong positive traits, such as confidence, resilience and independence, are consistently demonstrated by all pupils. They are cooperative and consistently demonstrate respectful attitudes towards others.

Pastoral support in the school is also exceptional. Pupils feel very safe and very valued. The school's 'small school' system is at the core of the school's sense of community. Each of the four 'small schools' is very carefully structured to include staff who lead on attendance, behaviour and progress, ensuring that each pupil is known extremely well in every respect and that their emotional and physical well-being are supported. Heads of 'small schools' have a high-profile presence around the school, including at 'small school' breaktimes. Tutors stay with their groups through the years, and teach the 'values' curriculum. This builds trust over time and ensures that all pupils have a range of trusted adults they can turn to.

Through the school's 'values' curriculum, pupils build their understanding of fundamental British values and explore moral and ethical concepts each year in an age-appropriate way. Leaders ensure that relationships and sex education and health education equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their well-being, health and relationships, including in post-16 provision. They make very clear to pupils how to keep themselves safe from harm in a wide range of contexts, including online. Pupils treat others with respect and tolerance. They are taught to understand and respect religious practices and customs, and the diverse cultural values and beliefs of others. A rich programme of outings and journeys enhance all pupils' cultural awareness further and deepens their understanding of their place in the world. All staff contribute to a strong culture of personal development. Pupils benefit greatly from what they are taught. In the safe space that the 'values' sessions provide, older pupils in particular demonstrate great maturity and depth in their discussions and reflections about sensitive topics. Overall, the school's personal development provision ensures that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their futures.

Post 16 provision

Exceptional 

Leaders have made sure that study programmes in the post-16 provision offer a very wide variety of academic, vocational, and technical pathways. These are extremely well tailored to students' needs and interests and are taught consistently well. The broad curriculum enables any students who wish to, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are at the early stages of learning English, to continue their education in the school's post-16 provision. Some students each year start post-16 while experiencing extremely challenging personal circumstances and are supported and nurtured to complete their studies. For all students, their time in the post-16 provision enables them to build on their ambitions and expand on their knowledge of the wide possibilities that are open to them in the future.

The curriculum is highly tailored to students' needs, for example pupils who still need support with their English or have missed out on earlier learning are given the teaching and support they need. The published data shows that students make strong gains from some low starting points to catch up with national averages by the end of Year 13. However, published results do not tell the full story of students' strong achievement in the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme or success in recently introduced T levels. For the past four years, all students have gone on to education, including at a range of universities nationally, or training or were successful in securing employment at the end of Year 13. Leaders ensure that students make informed decisions about their next steps through a rich careers programme including work experience and independent advice and guidance. Post-16 provision has a transformational impact on preparing students for their next stage and their adult lives, including through the school's personal development programme.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils' knowledge builds securely as they progress through the curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. Published outcomes data does not fully reflect the strength of pupils' positive achievement, due to the school's commitment to inclusion. This commitment means that the school has higher than average proportions of pupils who join the school later than Year 7, who are new to English and who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. If pupils join with gaps in their learning, they quickly catch up, including those who need support with reading and with literacy skills. The vast majority of pupils progress well from their starting points and achieve more highly at every stage of their school journey. All pupils are very well prepared for their next steps as a result of the knowledge and skills they develop across the curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have established a broad, ambitious and imaginative curriculum that is carefully designed to meet the needs of all pupils and prepare them well for their adult lives. The curriculum and teaching are highly effective in enabling pupils to make consistent progress, including those who join the school later or are new to English. These approaches are having a particularly strong impact for low prior attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged.

Pupils are taught by subject experts across all year groups, including in the specialist resource base and post-16 provision. This means that all pupils, including those with complex needs, access the same curriculum as each other and develop secure knowledge and skills across all subjects. Pupils also receive tailored support that removes barriers to their achievement. Technology is used thoughtfully, for example to enable pupils to complete homework regardless of resources available to them at home.

The school's approach to assessment is used consistently by all teachers, helping them to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils who struggle with reading or other

basic skills are helped to develop their confidence and fluency. There is a strong focus in every lesson on developing pupils' vocabulary and their spoken and written communication. Pupils at the very early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language build their proficiency in spoken and written English rapidly.

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

As soon as they join Leigh Academy Halley, pupils of all ages and from all backgrounds are welcomed, nurtured, challenged and supported. They feel safe, attend very well, and thrive throughout their time at the school. They are highly motivated by their lessons and by the extensive range of enrichment activities on offer. As a result of high-quality teaching and learning, pupils make strong gains from their starting points. They are extremely well prepared for their next steps. Leaders and staff get to know the pupils exceedingly well as individuals. They take their roles very seriously in safeguarding pupils' well-being as well as their physical safety in school and beyond.

From Year 7 to Year 13, leaders make sure that pupils' individual needs are identified early and accurately assessed by highly skilled and vigilant staff. Support, adjustments and adaptations are tailored precisely to pupils' specific needs. This means that barriers to pupils' learning and well-being are skilfully reduced, to great effect. The 'small school' system ensures that every pupil is exceptionally well known by staff. This system has a powerful impact on making sure that all pupils feel a strong sense of belonging and flourish academically, socially and emotionally. Pupils have exceedingly positive relationships with staff and their peers. The school's 'values' lessons make a huge difference to pupils' character, sense of belonging and readiness for later life. Pupils consistently demonstrate respect and tolerance for others alongside kind and caring attitudes. Student leaders, heroes and ambassadors act as superb role models. Leaders and staff organise popular cultural outings, inspiring residential journeys and extra-curricular clubs that deeply enrich pupils' learning.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They settle exceptionally quickly to learning at the start of lessons. They conduct themselves maturely around the school during breaktimes, lunchtimes and class change-over times. As such, bullying is very rare and dealt with swiftly when it does occur.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain their transformational work in inclusion, attendance and behaviour, personal development and post-16 provision, and extend this work further so that it has a similar exceptional impact on curriculum, teaching and achievement for all pupils.
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About this inspection

- This school is part of Leigh Academies 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) Simon Beamish, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Frank Green.
- 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 pupils, leaders and staff, members of the community board, the CEO and the chair of the trust 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 includes specially resourced provision for 24 pupils with autism. There are currently 25 pupil on roll.
- The school makes use of two alternative providers, one of which is unregistered.
- The inspection started on Tuesday 11 November 2025. Inspectors returned on Tuesday 9 December 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Susan Morris-King, His Majesty's Inspector, led the gathering additional evidence visit.

Principal: Ben Russell

Lead inspector:

Madeleine Gerard, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Susan Morris-King, His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

Una Buckley, His Majesty's Inspector

Russell Bennett, His Majesty's Inspector


Robert Grice, His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens, His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Jenner, His Majesty's 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 11 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

952

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: 1,067

School capacity

1,100

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: 1,152

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

42.86%

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

4.10%

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

13.34%

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 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (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	44.2%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24	40.7%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23	39.6%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	48.2	45.9	Close to average
2023/24	44.6	45.9	Close to average
2022/23	43.9	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	0.09	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23	0.05	-0.03	Close to average
2021/22	-0.28	-0.03	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	41.0%	25.6%	Above
2023/24	30.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23	35.2%	25.2%	Above

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	42.9	34.9	Above
2023/24	38.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23	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	-0.26	-0.57	Above
2022/23	-0.42	-0.57	Close to average
2021/22	-0.45	-0.55	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	41.0%	52.8%	-11.8 pp
2023/24	30.0%	53.1%	-23.1 pp
2022/23	35.2%	52.4%	-17.2 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	42.9	50.3	-7.4
2023/24	38.5	50.0	-11.5
2022/23	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	-0.26	0.16	-0.42

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	-0.42	0.17	-0.58
2021/22	-0.45	0.15	-0.60

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
2022 leavers	92%	93%	Average
2021 leavers	94%	94%	Average
2020 leavers	90%	94%	Below

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
2021/22	15.00	37.86	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (1 term)	6.1%	7.7%	Below
2023/24	7.8%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23	8.2%	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 (1 term)	19.0%	21.1%	Close to average
2023/24	24.0%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23	25.5%	26.5%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards 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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