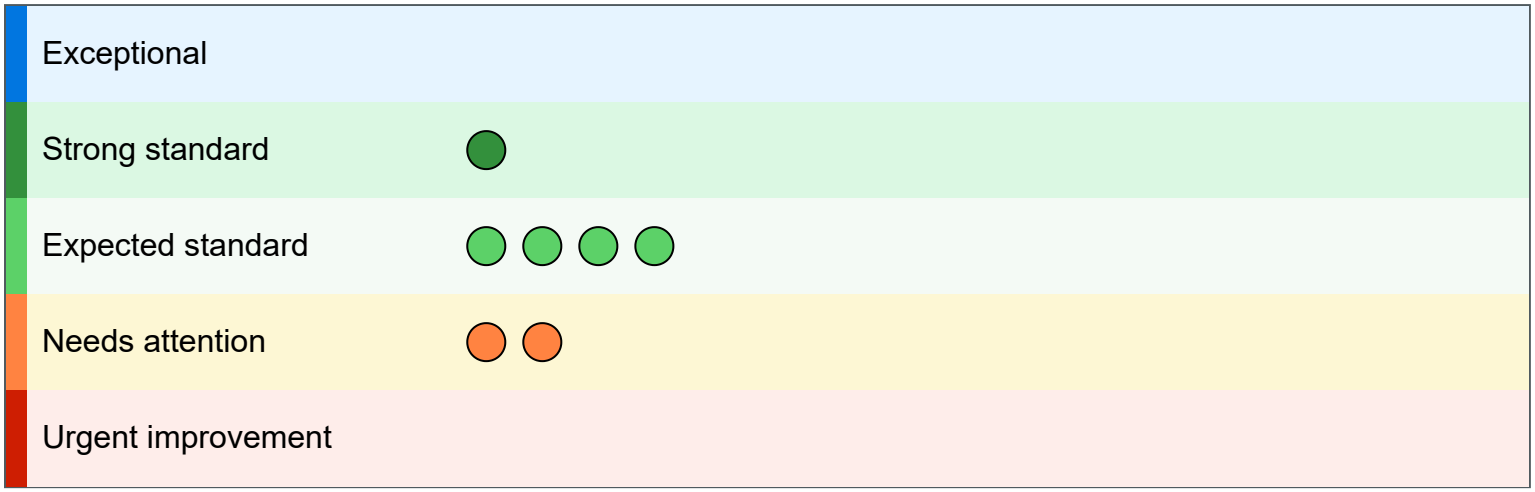
Hornsea School and Language College

Address: Eastgate, Hornsea, HU18 1DW

Unique reference number (URN): 118082

Inspection report: 3 February 2026



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

The school has worked with considerable determination to improve attendance. This is having a clear impact. The school's attendance figures continue to improve and, in some pupil groups and year groups, exceed national averages. For example, attendance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is notably high and well above average. Leaders have strengthened their systems, expanded the attendance team and acted early when concerns arise. Staff work closely with families, and well-planned transition processes from primary schools help pupils build positive habits from the start. This approach is improving attendance for various pupil groups, including those who are disadvantaged. This includes thoughtful adaptations for pupils with SEND and those facing barriers. As a result, more pupils attend regularly and benefit from the full curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is a clear strength across the school. They move calmly around the large school site and show great courtesy to staff and each other. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and look forward to their lessons. Staff know pupils well and create a caring, respectful environment, where pupils feel safe. Bullying and discriminatory language is rare and dealt with quickly. Suspensions remain well below national figures. Pupils returning from suspensions receive the structured support they need to reintegrate into school.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

The school promotes an inclusive culture and welcomes many pupils, who face difficult circumstances. This includes a large number of pupils with education, health and care plans. Leaders identify pupils' needs early, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care. The school uses this information to place pupils into the right nurture or intervention pathway, helping them to access a broad curriculum and stay engaged in learning. The school also welcomes pupils through its resourced provision for autistic spectrum disorder. These pupils are integrated well to the school and supported to succeed.

Teachers generally make appropriate adaptations for pupils' needs. On a small number of occasions, these adaptations are not precisely matched to pupils' needs. When this happens, pupils' progress through the curriculum is slowed.

Some pupils learn in smaller groups, where adults use clear structure and guidance. These approaches help pupils feel safe, understood and ready to learn. Leaders work closely with the virtual school and alternative provisions, which strengthens support for pupils who need it most.

Staff receive training that responds to pupils' needs, including specialist guidance when required. This helps staff feel confident in meeting the needs of pupils. Leaders use pupil

premium funding effectively to provide targeted support.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are deeply committed to the school and its community, and this is reflected in the inclusive culture they have built. They have an understanding of what the school does well and where further improvement is needed. Leaders are clear that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with low prior attainment remain too weak, and they have prioritised an improved curriculum to address this.

Staff speak highly of leaders, describing them as approachable, visible and attentive to workload and wellbeing. Professional development is well structured and research-informed. Staff develop their professional expertise through a tailored development programme. This ensures that they develop the skills and knowledge that are most pertinent to their needs. Early career teachers and trainees receive a thorough and supportive induction to the profession.

Leaders' decisions place pupils' needs at the centre, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those facing barriers. Leaders maintain positive relationships with parents and carers. The school's approachable leadership style and community partnerships help families feel well supported. This contributes to pupils' wellbeing and successful transition into the school.

Governance is committed and effective. Governors understand the school's context, meet statutory duties and provide robust challenge. They direct funding to the areas that most benefit pupils' learning and wellbeing. Governors recognise where provision is variable and support leaders to secure greater consistency.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school provides a broad and well-planned personal development programme that supports pupils' wider growth effectively. The life studies curriculum provides pupils with frequent opportunities to learn about important topics, such as healthy relationships, consent, puberty and drug misuse. Students in the sixth form learn about pertinent ethical and moral issues. This helps them to build an awareness of the world beyond the school. However, although pupils show the behaviours associated with fundamental British values in their day-to-day conduct, many cannot explain concepts related to life in modern Britain in depth.

Leaders adapt the curriculum when new concerns arise in the community. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe around the coastline. They learn how to recognise risks online and make safe choices. Pupils speak positively about these sessions and recall recent learning with confidence.

Leaders have strengthened the school's careers offer. This has had a positive impact and pupils talk confidently about their next steps and aspirations. Pupils receive frequent guidance, meaningful encounters with employers and well-supported planning for their future pathways. The programme also supports disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well, helping them prepare for adulthood,

further study and employment. Many sixth-form students progress to university, including highly selective destinations.

The school offers a wide range of clubs and enrichment activities that help pupils to develop their talents and interests. These include music ensembles, gaming, dance, art support, girls' rugby and cultural opportunities, such as subsidised theatre trips. Pupil leadership roles, including the school council, give pupils a voice in school improvement. Leaders track participation in wider opportunities well, and more disadvantaged pupils now take part.

The school's pastoral care is a notable strength. Pupils describe staff as caring, approachable and quick to act when concerns arise. Pupils with SEND receive personalised support that helps them feel safe and included. Pupils are supported to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard

Sixth-form students benefit from an extensive and well-structured study programme. This reflects leaders' clear understanding of students' needs and the school's context. Teachers across the sixth form have deep knowledge of their subject, helping students to learn with confidence. Teachers deliver engaging lessons, which are valued highly by students. Students generally achieve in line with national averages in national tests and examinations. However, a notable strength is the performance of students in Applied General qualifications, which exceeds national averages. Leaders are aware that the proportion of students achieving high grades in A-level qualifications is below average. They have taken appropriate steps, including targeted academic and pastoral support to address this.

The school's careers education is a distinct strength, with students accessing employer encounters, university visits and tailored guidance. This has a considerably positive impact. Students benefit from a rich array of opportunities, such as drama productions, clubs and leadership roles. This develops their character and wider skills and knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other barriers to learning receive personalised support that helps them progress from their starting points and prepares them well for their next steps. Pupils value the strong relationships with staff, helpful feedback and open-door support that is a feature of the sixth form. This promotes both academic progress and wellbeing among students.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Pupils' achievement is mixed across the school. Pupils with lower starting points, particularly those who are disadvantaged, continue to achieve less well over time. This limits how well prepared these pupils are for their next steps in education, employment or training. Many pupils with average starting points achieve in line with national figures, and some subjects show improving results.

The school’s progress and attainment figures in national tests and examinations at the end of key stage 4 are lowered by the school’s inclusive approach to welcoming many pupils mid-year. However, although this affects the overall outcomes, too many pupils still do not make the progress they should as they move through the curriculum.

The school’s new teaching approaches and a strengthened key stage 3 curriculum are having an impact. There are some signs that this is beginning to improve pupils' progress at key stage 4. However, weaknesses in assessment and how well staff address gaps in pupils' learning continue to limit the progress that some pupils make.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Teachers do not always check pupils’ understanding well enough in several lessons and subjects. When this happens, gaps in pupils' learning and misconceptions remain unaddressed, which slows pupils’ ability to build secure knowledge. Teachers usually adapt learning effectively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in a small number of instances, the support provided for pupils with additional needs is not matched precisely enough to what they require, and this can slow their progress through the curriculum.

Teachers receive regular training and have secure subject knowledge, which helps pupils learn well. In most lessons, teachers explain ideas clearly and build pupils’ confidence with subject-specific vocabulary. This helps pupils understand new concepts and enjoy their learning. Leaders prioritise pupils' reading and essential core knowledge. Pupils who find reading difficult get the help they need to catch up.

Leaders have constructed and sequenced a broad and balanced curriculum across all year groups. Sixth-form students benefit from a wide range of courses, and the curriculum prepares pupils well for their next steps in education, training or employment. Leaders understand the strengths and areas to develop in the curriculum and teaching, and they have taken steps to improve key areas. This includes strengthening the key stage 3 curriculum, developing an inclusive nurture curriculum and improving approaches to adaptive teaching.

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

This school sits at the heart of its coastal community. Pupils attending this school benefit from warm relationships with staff, who know them well. The school welcomes pupils with a wide range of needs, including a high number with education, health and care plans and many who face barriers to learning or wellbeing. Pupils particularly value the school’s pastoral care, which helps them to navigate challenges inside and outside the classroom.

Pupils’ behaviour is a real strength. They are polite, cheerful, dedicated to learning and show great respect to each other and to adults. Bullying is uncommon, and pupils are confident that adults will act when issues arise. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They have trusted adults that they can approach with any problems. Pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils enjoy their learning, and sixth-form students particularly value the focused support they receive. Pupils benefit from their teachers' deep subject knowledge and clear modelling to help them understand new ideas. However, pupils experience variability in how well teachers check understanding or address their misconceptions. This means learning does not always build as effectively as leaders intend. Pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 4 is not consistent. Some pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged or pupils with lower starting points, do not secure knowledge as quickly as they should. This limits the outcomes they achieve at the end of key stage 4 and how well prepared they are for their next steps in education, training or employment.

Pupils enjoy a rich selection of wider opportunities, such as drama productions, sports clubs, music groups and student leadership roles. Many take pride in improving the school environment and provision through the student council. Pupils thrive socially and personally, but they are less confident in explaining some aspects of life in modern Britain, including democracy and fundamental British values. Leaders are continuing to strengthen the curriculum so that all pupils are better prepared for their futures.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen the consistency and precision of assessment by supporting teachers in using information effectively to adapt learning and ensure all pupils build securely on what they already know.
- Leaders should improve outcomes at the end of key stage 4 for disadvantaged pupils and those with low prior attainment, ensuring that curriculum improvement work translates into sustained, measurable impact for these groups.
- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum and teaching helps pupils to develop a secure, detailed knowledge of fundamental British values and aspects of life in modern Britain.
- Leaders should continue to refine their quality assurance processes so that variability in provision is identified and addressed swiftly, securing consistently high standards across all areas of provision at the school.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Graham McDonald.

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 headteacher, other leaders, a local authority representative, staff and pupils. They met with governors.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes specially resourced provision for 16 pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The school makes use of 2 registered alternative provisions,

Headteacher: Stephen Ostler

Lead inspector:
Chris Carr, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Richard Wood, Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Allen, Ofsted Inspector
John O'Hara, Ofsted Inspector
Lyndsey Reed, 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 3 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,257
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

1,449
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)

24.13%
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

7.00%
Well 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

4.61%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

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)

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 (provisional)	41.5%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.1%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	36.2%	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 (provisional)	44.4	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.7	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.6	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 (final)	-0.34	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.38	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

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

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	14.0%	25.6%	Below
2023/24 (final)	27.3%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	12.9%	25.2%	Below

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)	29.5	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	35.3	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	28.8	35.0	Below

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)	-0.91	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.96	-0.57	Below

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)	14.0%	52.8%	-38.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	27.3%	53.1%	-25.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	12.9%	52.4%	-39.6 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 (provisional)	29.5	50.3	-20.8
2023/24 (final)	35.3	50.0	-14.7
2022/23 (final)	28.8	50.3	-21.5

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)	-0.91	0.16	-1.08
2022/23 (final)	-0.96	0.17	-1.13

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)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	93%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	93%	94%	Average

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)	31.63	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.82	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.13	34.16	Below

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)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
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)	8.1%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.4%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.6%	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)	23.5%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	27.7%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	29.4%	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 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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