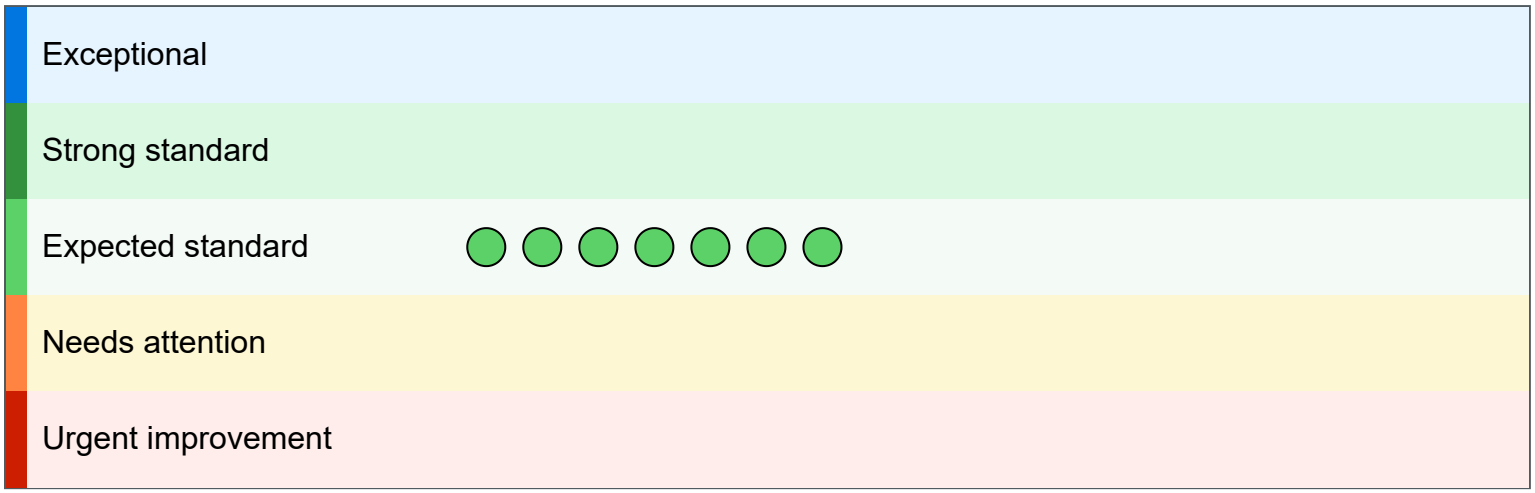
North Liverpool Academy

Address: 120 Heyworth Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L5 0SQ

Unique reference number (URN): 131065

Inspection report: 12 May 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Leaders have effective systems in place to check how well pupils achieve. Pupils generally achieve well in their national examinations at the end of key stages 4 and 5. Disadvantaged pupils typically attain above other pupils nationally, as do pupils who join the school with lower prior attainment. This is because teachers provide bespoke support for these pupils.

The work pupils produce is generally of high quality, in line with their starting points. This is the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders make sure that pupils who need help to improve their reading, writing and number skills are provided with effective help. This means that any gaps are reducing quickly for these pupils.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders have strengthened how they check and follow up on pupils' attendance. These actions have increased attendance among all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. As a result, attendance for all pupils is higher than the national average. Leaders swiftly identify any pupils who may otherwise encounter barriers to attending school. They work closely with families and provide timely, bespoke help for these pupils. This means that attendance rates are continuing to improve.

Staff have very high expectations for how pupils should behave. Almost all pupils rise to this challenge. Pupils are polite, respectful and show complete dedication to their education. They share very positive relationships with their peers and with staff. Classrooms are tranquil environments where pupils can focus fully on their learning. Bullying and discrimination are rare. Leaders have effective systems in place to deal with any incidents that may occur. Pupils know this. Leaders are continuing to strengthen the support in place for any pupils who may find it difficult to follow their high expectations.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Recently, leaders have strengthened the systems in place to improve teaching, and teachers now receive high-quality training and support to improve their practice. This is effective. As a result, teachers now routinely check what pupils know in lessons. They typically use this information to support pupils to deepen their knowledge.

There is a secure curriculum in place across all subjects and year groups. Leaders make regular changes to ensure this is suitably ambitious. Leaders have effective systems in place to identify pupils who may need help with their reading, writing or number skills. They usually provide impactful support for these pupils. This is particularly effective for pupils who have English as an additional language.

Teachers know their pupils' individual needs well. This includes how well they know disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils

who may otherwise experience barriers to their learning. Generally, they use the information they have available about these pupils to make effective changes to their teaching. This helps pupils achieve well in national examinations at the end of key stages 4 and 5.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have embedded a supportive and inclusive ethos where all pupils can succeed. They have systems in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including strong relationships with primary schools to ensure pupils arrive at North Liverpool Academy ready to embrace new opportunities.

Teachers adapt their teaching to support pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. They prioritise these pupils. This means that, generally, these pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points.

Leaders are skilful in their use of pupil premium funding to enhance pupils' experience of school. They make sure that pupils have equal access to opportunities. For example, all pupils can have 3 hot meals per day if they choose. Pupils are provided with the digital tools they need to complement their learning. Leaders provide the chance for disadvantaged pupils to experience trips and wider opportunities, for example, trips to New York, Rome and performances by the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Leaders work closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils who are known (or previously known) to social care have effective support. They have plans to further strengthen how they identify pupils who may need this support. Leaders use alternative provision sparingly. They work closely with their provider. This provision is highly effective for the pupils who use it.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, including trustees, governors and the chief executive officer, share a highly ambitious vision for what pupils can achieve at North Liverpool Academy. This vision is lived out by all staff and pupils.

Leaders have recently strengthened their evaluation of teaching. This now directly links to the professional learning for teachers. Teachers value this support to improve. They strive to provide the best education for all pupils. Leaders have accurately identified the need to further strengthen some of the systems they use to check how well their actions are working. However, some of this work is in the early stages, and it is too soon to see the full impact of this work.

Staff are very proud to serve the local community. They enjoy coming to work and go above and beyond to improve pupils' life chances. Typically, they feel that leaders take their workload and wellbeing into account when making decisions.

Leaders work closely with external agencies and parents. This means that they have effective working relationships with the wider community. Generally, parents are very positive about the support their children receive.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They provide appropriate support and challenge and engage with the wider life of the school.

The executive principal has been in post since April 2026. One of the vice-principals has been in post since September 2024 and the other since October 2025.

Personal development and wellbeing **Expected standard**

Leaders have embedded an appropriate personal development curriculum that teaches pupils how to contribute responsibly to their communities. This includes opportunities for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe, both online and in their local community. Pupils treat each other with respect and tolerance. They know how to make sure everyone is included, and they understand the importance of healthy relationships. Leaders make sure that all pupils can access the curriculum, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who may face other barriers.

The school offers an unusually wide range of clubs. For example, some pupils attend classics club, archaeology club, fencing club and rowing club. Pupils are grateful that they can follow their interests, whatever they may be.

Some pupils with higher academic starting points benefit from the highly successful scholars programme. This offer provides these pupils with additional opportunities to broaden their horizons academically and raise their aspirations. Leaders have plans to open this offer to more pupils.

Leaders have prioritised support for pupils' wellbeing. They have implemented a skilled team to help pupils should they need it. Staff work with a wide range of professionals to enhance this support. This means that pupils who may have barriers to their wellbeing receive appropriate help.

There is an appropriate careers programme in place for all pupils. This means that pupils have access to information about a range of employers, universities and jobs. Teachers support pupils who have a particular interest in their subject to access additional resources. Increasingly, pupils are leaving school to go on to appropriate education, training or employment.

Post 16 provision **Expected standard**

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

The motto of 'Aspire, Community and Achieve' is woven through school life. Pupils enjoy coming to North Liverpool Academy. They appreciate the support that staff provide to help them achieve their best. Pupils feel safe and know they can share any concerns with staff. They know staff will help. Pupils value diversity at this school. They show a keen interest in learning about a variety of cultures and faiths. Everyone works together. Pupils do not

tolerate any unkindness to their peers. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that staff will deal with any incidents quickly.

Pupils show real commitment to their learning. They know that education unlocks opportunities for their future. This is reflected in how well pupils achieve in national examinations at the end of key stage 4 and key stage 5. Generally, pupils achieve in line with their peers nationally. Disadvantaged pupils typically achieve above national averages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the help that teachers provide to allow them to achieve their potential.

Pupils develop their resilience and confidence through their enrichment activities. Many pupils take advantage of the clubs on offer, including performing arts, sport, robotics and chess. Lots of pupils engage in local charitable activities and Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. They appreciate the range of trips they can go on, both in the city and internationally. Sixth-form students are sensible and committed role models for younger pupils.

Pupils and students benefit from tailored careers guidance and access to a range of local and national businesses. Most pupils have a clear ambition for what they would like to achieve when they leave school.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine the processes they have in place to evaluate the impact of their actions. They should use this information to drive improvements across all areas.
- Leaders should continue to sharpen the systems in place for identifying any pupils who may encounter barriers to their learning or wellbeing so that all pupils can achieve their potential.

About this inspection

This school is part of Northern Schools 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), Nigel Ward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Geoff Wainwright.

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, including the special educational needs coordinator and the designated safeguarding lead, during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority, a group of trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees, a group of governors, including the chair of governors, the CEO and other trust leaders.

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 makes use of one registered alternative provision.

The executive principal has been in post since April 2026. Two vice-principals have been appointed in the last two years.

Executive principal: Paul Johnson

Lead inspector:
Helen Fowler, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Alison Stott, Ofsted Inspector
Katy Robinson, Ofsted Inspector
Jamie Jardine, Ofsted Inspector
Katie Sharp, 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 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,286
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

1,550
Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

57.61%
Well 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

2.57%
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

14.93%
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)

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 (final)	38.0%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39.0%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.6%	45.3%	Below

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 (final)	45.6	46.1	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	44.1	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40.8	46.3	Below

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)	-0.02	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.21	-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 (final)	32.4%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.5%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	43.3	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.1	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	36.2	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.17	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.50	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	32.4%	53.1%	-20.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	30.5%	53.1%	-22.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	25.0%	52.4%	-27.4 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 (final)	43.3	50.4	-7.1
2023/24 (final)	41.1	50.0	-8.9
2022/23 (final)	36.2	50.3	-14.1

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)	-0.17	0.16	-0.33
2022/23 (final)	-0.50	0.17	-0.67

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 (revised)	80%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	88%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	87%	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
2024/25 (final)	36.97	35.00	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.19	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.70	34.16	Close to average

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	0.4	0.0	Above
2023/24 (revised)	0.2	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 (3 term)	6.7%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.8%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.5%	9.0%	Above

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)	18.9%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	20.9%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	29.3%	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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy

Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026

© Crown copyright