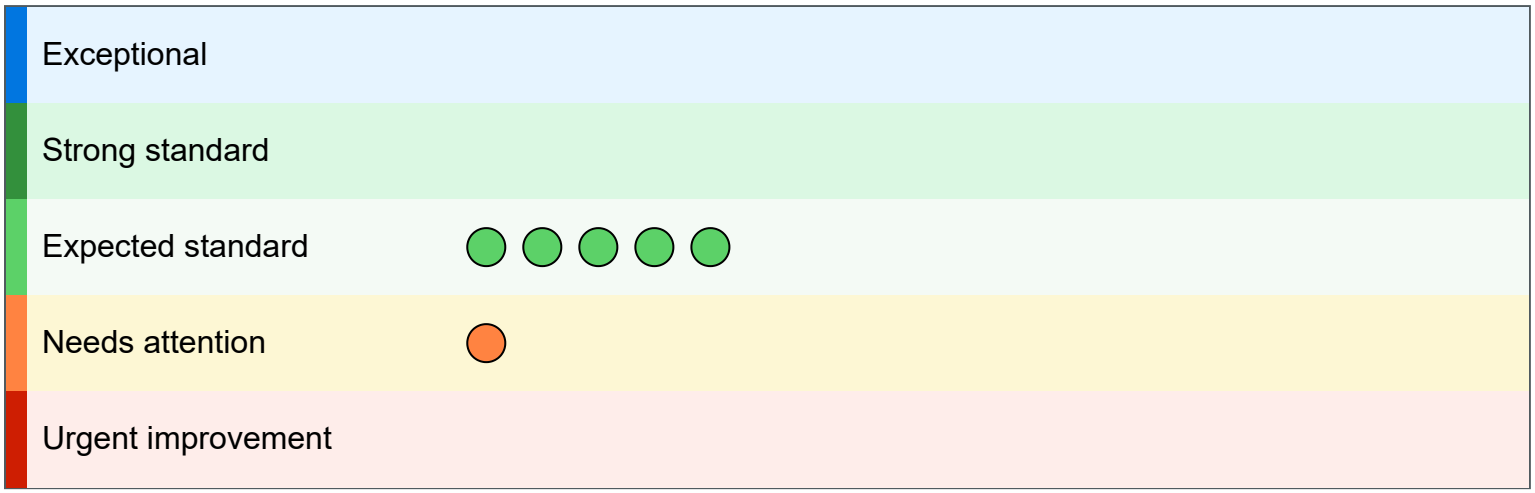
Nidderdale High School

Address: Low Wath Road, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 5HL

Unique reference number (URN): 149987

Inspection report: 28 April 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders' focus on ensuring pupils experience a sense of belonging underpins their work on attendance. Attendance is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have an informed understanding of attendance patterns and trends. Leaders' knowledge of pupils enables them to support and challenge non-attendance appropriately. As a result of leaders' actions, the number of pupils who are severely or persistently absent is reducing. There is careful consideration of individual circumstances when attendance does not meet leaders' expectations. Leaders support pupil engagement with learning and attendance through a range of strategies. For example, they make adaptations to the curriculum and provide additional support for pupils' wellbeing. Leaders seek support and advice from other professionals when needed.

Leaders have clear expectations of pupils' behaviour that staff and pupils generally understand. Pupils usually behave well and follow routines. Positive attitudes to learning are particularly evident in practical subjects. At social times, staff presence supports a safe environment. Bullying is rare but when this is reported it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Occasional instances of discriminatory language or violence are not tolerated. Suspensions are used appropriately. Leaders track behaviour data closely. They put further support or adaptations in place for pupils who need them.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders ensure there is a broad and appropriate curriculum in place. Pupils develop skills and knowledge over time because the curriculum is designed effectively. Leaders prioritise professional learning so that teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum well. For example, leaders focus on checks on pupils' learning. These are evident in some lessons but are not yet consistent across subjects and year groups.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They use their knowledge of pupils to inform teaching. Teachers generally check pupils' understanding well and provide feedback to pupils. However, in some cases, it is not clear how pupils should use this to further their learning.

Leaders identify the pupils who have not yet secured the foundational knowledge and skills, such as reading and handwriting. They receive support to catch up. There is appropriate support for reading, including in phonics, to support pupils who need it. Extra help with handwriting is put in place for some pupils. This helps them to write with increased accuracy and fluency. However several of these strategies are recent and not fully embedded.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders know pupils well. During transition from primary school, leaders seek to identify and understand pupils' barriers to learning quickly. Leaders share with teachers information about pupils' needs and the strategies to use in order to meet pupils' needs. Teachers generally put the right support in place in the classroom. Support typically reduces the

barriers pupils face, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders seek advice and support from wider professionals when needed. Pupils who are known, or previously known, to social care receive appropriate support.

A small number of pupils access alternative qualifications through the 'Nidd Venture' curriculum. These certifications recognise the development of pupils' wider skills. They are appropriate and tailored to each pupil's needs. Leaders ensure that pupils' education, health and care plans, where in place, are followed appropriately. Leaders use alternative provision effectively to enhance the opportunities and support for pupils.

Additional funding, such as the pupil premium grant, is used suitably to help disadvantaged pupils. For example, it is used to promote the development of literacy skills. Some pupils have recently had their work published in a short story anthology.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders including trustees and governors understand the school's context and its strengths. There is a shared drive to secure 'achievement for all' and to ensure that pupils receive the right support so that they feel they belong. Leaders and governors engage constructively with parents and carers. The majority of parents are positive about the support the school provides. Leaders have established clear priorities, particularly around improving attendance and strengthening pupils' basic skills. They monitor these closely and take appropriate action, where needed, including refining approaches to literacy and ensuring that pupils with additional needs are supported effectively.

Leaders know where improvements are needed and take swift action. For example, their work has led to improved attendance. Leaders prioritise staff workload and wellbeing. Trustees and governors ensure the strategic direction of the school is clearly understood and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They are knowledgeable and there are clear processes to provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders.

Staff, including those at the start of their careers, receive evidence-informed professional learning designed to develop their skills. Leaders recognise the continued importance of this as the number of pupils with barriers to learning increases. Staff feel valued, are positive about the support they receive and are proud to work at the school. Trustees and governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and use this to provide appropriate challenge, particularly in relation to pupils' outcomes and the consistency of teaching.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have established a well-designed programme for pupils' personal development. This is delivered through dedicated lessons, tutor time activities and assemblies. Pupils understand healthy relationships appropriate to their age. They know how to keep themselves safe both on and offline. Pupils develop awareness of different faiths and cultures. They are respectful of people's differences.

Leaders identify that it can be challenging for pupils to stay after school to take part in the range of activities that are on offer. Pupils do not miss out on opportunities and experiences

as these are built into the school day. Key stage 3 pupils broaden their experiences or develop their talents during 'flourish' lessons. Pupils choose a physical and creative experience each year. Activities include Bushcraft, biking, photography and 3D printing.

Pupils develop their skills in leadership. Pupil leaders represent student voice, help at school open events and support younger pupils with reading. Leaders and pupils are committed to the local community. Pupils make regular visits to residents and organise a wide range of charity events. Pupils also plant trees and maintain local shared areas.

Leaders know pupils well and this enables them to provide effective pastoral support. They proactively reduce barriers for pupils. This includes those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils receive support for their wellbeing and they appreciate the ‘pastoral garden’ space.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from helpful careers advice and guidance. They learn about the options available through presentations from local schools and colleges. Pupils value the chance to try out potential future careers during a week of work experience. Some pupils develop their employability skills through visits and opportunities to help local employers.

Needs attention

Achievement **Needs attention**

Pupils generally make clear progress from their starting points. Achievement in national tests is broadly in line with national averages. This supports pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to move on to their next steps in education or training. Some pupils achieve extra qualifications that recognise their wider skills, for example, in speech, language and communication.

A significant minority of pupils have gaps in their knowledge or skills. Difficulties in areas such as reading and writing, hinder their achievement. This is reflected in the quality of pupils’ responses and the work they produce. Some pupils’ work is variable in its quality across subjects. This does not reflect leaders’ high expectations.

Leaders are developing a more refined approach to support pupils with reading and writing. For example, they are beginning to make effective use of technology and a range of literacy interventions. This support is in its infancy and gaps remain for some pupils in older year groups.

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

Everyone is made to feel welcome at Nidderdale High School. Respectful and caring relationships exist between staff and pupils. These positive relationships extend to the wider local community. The school’s ‘Nidd Venture’ curriculum supports pupils to overcome their

barriers and thrive. Through outdoor and community volunteering activities, pupils develop a sense of achievement. Activities such as tree planting, supporting park runs, Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions and baking for local residents help pupils develop skills for their future.

On the whole, pupils secure next steps that support their interests and aspirations. Pupils typically achieve broadly in line with averages in national examinations at the end of key stage 4. Pupils with barriers to learning generally receive the support they need to make progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, a significant minority of pupils have gaps in key skills, such as reading and writing. This hinders their achievement. As a result, the quality of some pupils' work is variable and does not consistently reflect leaders' high expectations.

Pupils generally behave well in school. Pupils feel safe. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that if they need to report concerns, they would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Classrooms are generally purposeful environments. Social times are more lively. At these times, pupils benefit from adult presence to help remind them about positive behaviour.

A focus on developing pupils' sense of belonging drives attendance. Pupils' attendance is improving. Pupils particularly enjoy practical lessons and their 'flourish' lessons in key stage 3. Here they experience wider opportunities, such as outdoor adventures, sports and crafting.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that pupils develop secure foundational knowledge and skills, particularly in reading and writing, so that the quality of their work improves and they achieve consistently well.
- Leaders should ensure that teaching consistently meets pupils' needs, including through effective checks on learning and clear guidance on how pupils should improve their work.
- Leaders should ensure that staff apply the school's behaviour expectations consistently, so that learning is not disrupted and a calm environment continues to be maintained throughout the school day.

About this inspection

This school is part of Moorlands Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Halsall.

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 chief executive officer of the trust, the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team and the special educational needs coordinator during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with trustees and members of the local governing body.

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 currently makes use of one alternative provision, which is unregistered.

Headteacher: Kath Jordan

Lead inspector:
Lyndsey Reed, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Richard Crane, Ofsted Inspector
Barry Found, Ofsted Inspector
John Linkins, 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 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

395
Well below 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

425
Well below 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)

21.01%
Below 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

8.10%
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

20.76%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	30.6%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	35.4%	45.9%	Below
2022/23		45.3%	

Attainment 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	41.8	46.1	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	41.5	45.9	Close to average
2022/23		46.3	

Progress 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.15	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23		-0.03	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

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

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	16.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	14.3%	25.8%	Below
2022/23		25.2%	

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	28.8	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	33.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23		35.0	

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.95	-0.57	Below
2022/23		-0.57	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

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

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	16.7%	53.1%	-36.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	14.3%	53.1%	-38.8 pp
2022/23		52.4%	

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	28.8	50.4	-21.6
2023/24 (final)	33.0	50.0	-17.0
2022/23		50.3	

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.95	0.16	-1.11
2022/23		0.17	

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 (revised)	94%	93%	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)	9.7%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	11.5%	8.9%	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)	26.3%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	35.5%	25.6%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

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

Strong standard

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

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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