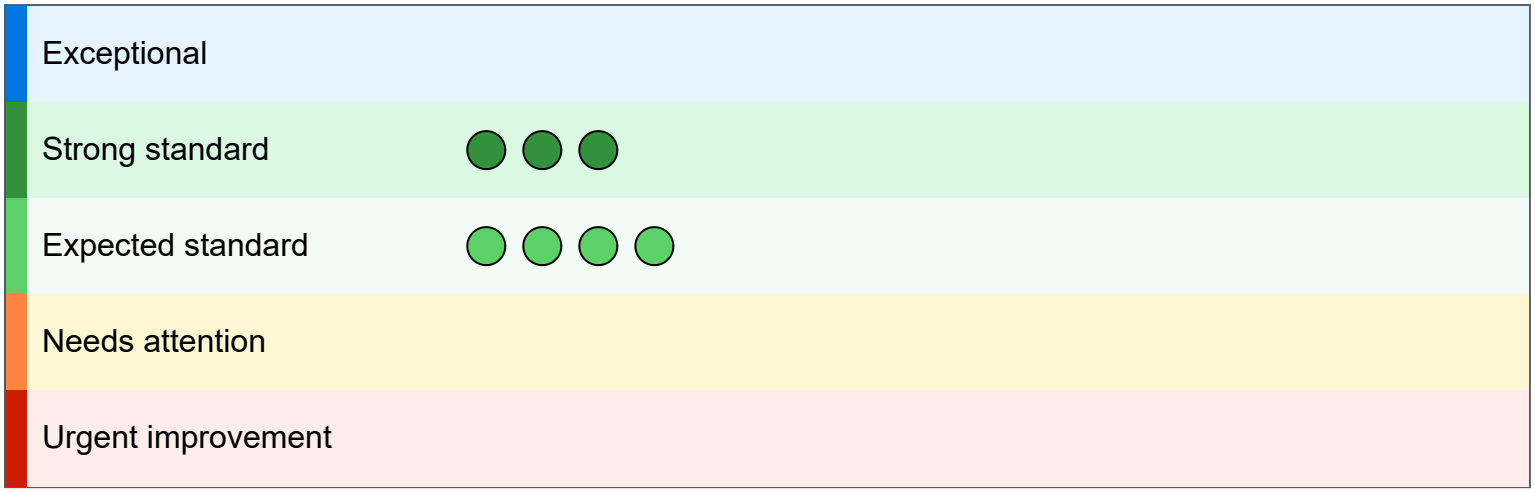
Winchmore School

Address: Laburnum Grove, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 3HS

Unique reference number (URN): 102045

Inspection report: 29 September 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

Inclusion

Strong standard

Inclusion is woven into the fabric of daily life at Winchmore School. Decisions at all levels are made in the best interests of pupils. As a result, pupils who face barriers to their learning, including those who have had difficult experiences of education previously, attend and achieve particularly well.

Appropriate support for pupils with additional needs or vulnerabilities is provided swiftly. This is because leaders and staff know pupils very well and have robust systems in place to identify and assess their needs. This includes working closely with local primary schools to ensure leaders have detailed information about pupils before they join. Leaders adapt and refine support programmes in response to pupils' needs. The flexible study options available in the sixth form enable students, including those who face barriers to their learning, to be successful.

The use of additional funding is carefully aligned with leaders' priorities. They actively remove barriers to participation in the school's rich programme of wider opportunities. This ensures that pupils with different needs thrive together.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit greatly from the bespoke curriculum in the school's 'Studio' provision. Parents and carers speak with pride about what this support has enabled their children to achieve.

The effectiveness of the school's inclusive approach means that the use of alternative provision is rare. Leaders are rightly proud of the high numbers of students who secure placements in education, employment or training.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders and those responsible for governance have successfully built an inclusive learning community where staff and pupils thrive together. Their vision for every pupil to achieve their full academic and personal potential is evident in leaders' bold decision to expand both the curriculum offer and the 'Studio' provision, enabling more pupils to benefit. Recent changes to the mobile phone policy are already having a positive impact on pupils' learning, engagement and wellbeing. Leaders make highly effective use of information and data to ensure that resources are directed where they are needed most. This includes securing access to the school's enrichment programme for all pupils.

Staff overwhelmingly say they are happy and proud to be part of the school. This includes early career teachers, who relish the supportive learning environment. Staff at all levels appreciate that leaders are approachable and operate a genuine 'open door policy'. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and speak highly of the way staff communicate with them about their child.

Leaders have established a highly engaging programme of professional learning. Staff particularly value the opportunities to work on research projects and share good practice with colleagues. This helps staff to be more effective in their roles and contributes to a

collegiate and supportive culture. Staff welcome leaders' efforts to listen to their feedback and prioritise their wellbeing.

Members of the governing body are highly experienced and use their expertise to provide robust challenge to leaders. Governors understand what improvements are needed and how leaders' actions are helping pupils to be successful. Governors carefully monitor how leaders take account of staff workload and wellbeing.

Post-16 provision

Strong standard

Leaders have developed a high-quality curriculum offer in the sixth form. They have strong ambitions for all students to achieve their potential, whatever their starting points. Students value the opportunity to complete blended programmes, with many studying academic courses alongside vocational ones. When it is in their best interests, some students complete part-time study programmes. This flexibility enables all students, including those who face barriers to their learning, to be successful and achieve highly from their starting points.

Lessons are delivered by skilful practitioners who are experts in their subjects. This is reflected in the quality of students' work. In lessons, students are engaged and work cooperatively with their peers and teachers. The support and guidance provided by caring staff mean that students quickly develop the skills needed for independent study. Leaders rigorously analyse data to identify where students are falling behind or need further support. This ensures that the right intervention is put in place promptly to help students stay on track.

Students speak very positively about the welcoming, inclusive and purposeful environment. They benefit from an impressive range of enrichment activities, many of which are student-led. Students benefit greatly from the volunteering opportunities available to them. The careers programme prepares students very well for further education, training or employment. As a result, high numbers of students secure and sustain an appropriate destination when they leave.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

At the end of key stage 4, pupils' achievement in examinations is in line with their peers nationally. Pupils, including those with barriers to their learning, typically secure the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the next stage of education or training. This is the case across all subjects and is particularly clear in reading, where pupils who need more personalised support successfully build up their reading fluency. In key stage 4, pupils benefit from a range of academic and vocational pathways. These pathways help pupils to achieve outcomes that reflect their individual strengths and ambitions.

Students in the sixth form have a high level of commitment to their studies. The academic and pastoral support they receive makes a significant positive difference to their outcomes.

For most students, progress in academic and vocational qualifications is above national averages. Leaders have successfully introduced new initiatives to support students with higher academic starting points to improve their outcomes in national examinations.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The rate of persistent absence is above the national average. This is a priority for leaders, and they are working closely with families to reduce this. Leaders and staff ensure families have the support they need to overcome barriers to their child's attendance. Leaders take decisive further action when needed. Pupils appreciate the rewards and recognition they receive for improvements in attendance over time.

Pupils' behaviour is consistently positive. Pupils move sensibly around the building, and there is a happy, sociable atmosphere during breaktimes. Disruption to learning is rare. The clear routines in lessons are underpinned by warm relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils thrive on the positive praise they receive. Older pupils are excellent role models for younger pupils.

Pupils know that as a 'telling school', they have a responsibility to report any incidents of bullying, discrimination or abuse. When incidents occur, staff respond promptly and take effective action.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have continued to improve and refine the curriculum since the last inspection. The programme of professional development has led to greater consistency in the quality of teaching across subjects. Classroom learning is enriched by a wide range of subject-specific trips, clubs and opportunities that deepen pupils' understanding and enjoyment of learning.

Teachers typically explain new material clearly and provide regular opportunities for pupils to recall prior learning. Teachers use suitable strategies to adapt tasks so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the curriculum successfully.

Typically, assessment is used effectively to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. When this is most successful, teaching helps pupils understand how to improve their work and what they need to do to close these gaps. However, this is not consistent across lessons and subjects in key stages 3 and 4. On occasion, teachers do not check sufficiently well that these pupils have secured important knowledge before moving on to new content.

Leaders have successfully embedded a literacy programme across subjects. For example, initiatives such as 'No Pen Fortnight' and 'Word of the Week' promote a talk-rich environment in which pupils practise using sophisticated vocabulary. The reading programme helps weaker readers secure the foundations they need to access the wider curriculum. Pupils who have not secured key mathematical knowledge benefit from bespoke support.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school's values of community, belonging and mutual respect are lived out by pupils each day. This is evident in the warm way that pupils speak about each other and their school community. Pupils benefit from the nurturing guidance and support provided by staff at the school. As a result, pupils' sense of belonging here is very strong. For example, staff in the 'Wellbeing Space' are skilled in identifying the right support for each pupil. This helps pupils to manage life's challenges and overcome barriers to their learning or wellbeing.

There is a well-designed and sequenced curriculum for relationships and sex education and health education. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum reflects pupils' needs and teaches them how to identify and respond to the risks and challenges they face, including online. There are planned opportunities to learn about important aspects of citizenship, such as how laws are made. Leaders have made recent changes to improve the curriculum offer for pupils. This important learning is typically taught well. However, systems for assessing whether pupils have detailed knowledge of this important content are not yet secure.

The comprehensive careers programme prepares pupils very well for the next phase of education, training or employment. There is an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to learn about different careers and the world of work. The carefully planned programme of talks from employers and universities helps pupils to learn about options outside of their direct experience. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive bespoke guidance, which helps them make informed choices about their next steps.

The enrichment offer is a strength of the school. The clubs, trips and opportunities available to all pupils help them to explore new interests, develop their talents and broaden their horizons. Leaders meticulously track participation rates and take action to ensure that a high number of pupils benefit from these opportunities. Leaders work closely with families to remove financial or practical barriers to participation, including for international trips.

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

At the heart of Winchmore School is a caring, inclusive and welcoming community. Pupils speak very positively about their experience here. They enjoy contributing to their school community and are happy to take on volunteering and leadership roles. The atmosphere around the school is warm and friendly. Pupils are respectful and courteous towards their peers and staff. Bullying is rare, and pupils are confident to report issues or concerns. They rightly trust that staff will listen to them and keep them safe.

Pupils achieve well here. Overall, outcomes in end-of-key-stage assessments are close to national averages. Students in the sixth form are making excellent progress from their starting points. Pupils take their learning seriously. Lessons have a calm and focused environment for learning. Pupils are confident to speak about their learning in lessons and encourage each other to do so. Staff know pupils very well and are quick to respond when pupils need additional support with their learning or wellbeing. This helps to reduce barriers to pupils' learning quickly. Thoughtful adaptations to the curriculum help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils who attend the school's ‘Studio’ provision make excellent progress from their different starting points.

There is a rich and extensive programme of extra-curricular activities, including clubs, societies, trips and visits. These help to build strong bonds between pupils and staff. This is particularly true for the popular whole-school productions, which the whole community look forward to. Residential and international trips provide pupils, including those with SEND, with opportunities to develop important life skills and learn about new places and things. Through the careers programme, pupils learn about the breadth of career opportunities available to them and the steps they need to take to achieve their ambitions. This prepares them well for their next steps.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that assessment is used consistently across key stages 3 and 4 so that teachers accurately identify and address gaps in pupils’ learning, and pupils know what they need to do to improve and securely build their knowledge over time.
- Leaders should strengthen the assessment of relationships and sex education and health education and citizenship so that pupils have sufficient opportunity to consolidate important knowledge, deepen their understanding and demonstrate what they have learned before moving on to new content.
- Leaders should build on their current work to improve attendance, with a particular focus on reducing persistent absence, so that attendance strengthens more quickly, reaches levels that are closer to national averages, and is maintained consistently for all groups of pupils.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jim Orros.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This inspection took place on 29 and 30 September 2026.

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 with the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with members of the governing board, including the chair of governors, a consultant with responsibility for school improvement, and a group of parents and carers.

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 3 registered alternative provisions.

There is a specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with autism, which is part of Durrants School, located on the school site. Pupils who attend this provision are dual-rolled with the school and attend some mainstream lessons.

Headteacher: Jim Owen

Lead inspector:
Polly Haste, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Katerina Christodoulou, Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Lebrett, Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Cross, Ofsted Inspector
Brian Oppenheim, Ofsted Inspector
Greg Forster, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

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

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 29 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,859
Well 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: 1,063

School capacity

1,433
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)

31.63%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 30.4%

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

5.38%
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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

7.96%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 14.0%

Location deprivation

Close to 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)	41.6%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56.0%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	54.5%	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 (final)	46.2	46.1	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50.0	45.9	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	48.7	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)	0.13	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.25	-0.03	Above
2021/22 (final)	0.19	-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)	22.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45.1%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	46.9%	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 (final)	38.5	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44.4	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	43.0	35.0	Above

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)	-0.29	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.10	-0.57	Above
2021/22 (final)	-0.63	-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 (final)	22.2%	53.1%	-30.9 pp
2023/24 (final)	45.1%	53.1%	-8.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	46.9%	52.4%	-5.5 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)	38.5	50.4	-11.9
2023/24 (final)	44.4	50.0	-5.6
2022/23 (final)	43.0	50.3	-7.3

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)	-0.29	0.16	-0.45
2022/23 (final)	0.10	0.17	-0.06
2021/22 (final)	-0.63	0.15	-0.78

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)	96%	92%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022 leavers (revised)	95%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	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 (final)	32.34	35.00	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.97	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	33.45	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)	0.2	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.3	0.0	Above

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
2025/26 (1 term)	7.4%	7.8%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	7.8%	8.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.3%	8.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (1 term)	20.4%	21.5%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	22.9%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	24.9%	25.6%	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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