

Hampton Gardens Secondary School

Address: Hartland Avenue, Hampton Gardens, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 8HR

Unique reference number (URN): 143641

Inspection report: 20 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' high attendance is a consistent strength. It is above or close to national figures and continues to improve. Persistent absence has reduced markedly for all groups, including pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and staff act early and consistently well. For instance, they use first-day contact, one-to-one mentoring and tailored plans matched to individual barriers. Leaders work effectively with families and wider services on attendance. Current in-year figures show a sustained, positive trend that staff and pupils understand and celebrate.

Pupils' behaviour is consistently calm and respectful. Pupils follow routines, settle to work quickly and show courtesy in lessons and social times. Staff apply leaders' expectations reliably and use shared language so that pupils understand what to do. Pupils say bullying is rare. They know that adults resolve issues promptly and fairly. Pupils remain focused on their work very well. Leaders keep behaviour systems under review, provide the support staff and pupils need and check the impact that this has. Internal information shows a sustained reduction in pupils being removed from lessons. There is a steady growth of pupils' positive participation in activities that reinforce the school's values.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders, governors and trustees maintain a consistently accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. They take decisive action and check impact with rigour. For example, they have strengthened leadership, increased subject expertise through trust support and added capacity during staff changes to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Leaders share clear feedback with staff that focuses helpfully on continually improving classroom practice and deepening what pupils know and can do. Leaders pinpoint learning from this work and use it to target further school improvement effectively and precisely.

Staff benefit from highly effective professional learning, a supportive culture and leaders' careful attention to staff workload and wellbeing. Early career teachers are very well supported and are retained. This has strengthened staffing and helped to build subject expertise. Governors provide sustained, effective challenge and support, drawing on visits, meetings and focused questions about the impact of the school's work. Safeguarding oversight is systematic and secure.

Ongoing improvements by leaders to ensure high standards of attendance, behaviour and personal development are evident in pupils' daily experience and are sustained over time. The remaining priority is to establish greater consistency in the quality of classroom practice, especially routines for checking pupils' understanding and precise adaptations for pupils with SEND. Leaders understand that, in doing so, this will ensure that strengths are equally secure in every subject. Leaders have the capacity and effective systems to secure this.

Leaders' provision for pupils' personal development is well thought out and established from Year 7 to the sixth form. Pupils consistently learn about respectful relationships, consent and staying safe when online and offline. They can explain how this learning influences their decisions, including how they manage friendships, use social media and make safe choices in the community. Staff know pupils well. They use mentoring and pastoral support very well to help those who face barriers participate fully in school life.

Enrichment for all pupils is consistently strong. Clubs, visits and an enrichment week widen pupils' horizons and allow them to discover interests beyond the classroom. Leaders carefully track who attends and target invitations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged take part regularly. Pupils talk with confidence about representing the school, leading activities and speaking to an audience. Pupils understand how these experiences build their character and resilience. They give practical examples of where they show initiative, support others and reflect on feedback to improve.

Careers information, education, advice and guidance are well established across year groups. Encounters with employers and providers are planned across the year and tailored so that pupils see real options for themselves in the local and wider economy. Across most year groups, pupils confidently connect careers input with their own strengths and next steps, refining their choices over time. Well-thought-out work experience gives pupils a clear view of their interests and helps them decide routes to qualifications and employment. Destinations for pupils are reliably strong. Sixth-form students model responsibility through leadership roles, mentoring and running clubs, which younger pupils value.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

At key stage 4, headline attainment is close to average. The profile mostly shows strengths with some variation between subjects and cohorts, which leaders understand through regular reviews. Staff track the progress of current pupils carefully. They identify who needs extra practice and adjust teaching and support effectively. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are close to national disadvantaged averages. The gap is beginning to narrow as targeted approaches take positive effect.

From their various starting points, pupils progress steadily through the curriculum. Their work typically shows that knowledge builds securely over time, with increasing accuracy. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary with confidence. They develop greater independence in extended written work.

In the sixth form, attainment has improved and overall progress is typically close to average. Outcomes for high prior attainers dipped in 2025. Therefore, leaders have raised expectations, strengthened teachers' checks and shared effective practice across the trust to increase the stretch that teaching provides. Destinations for pupils include universities,

specialist training and apprenticeships. Bespoke careers support helps guide pupils to the most appropriate path.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Sequences of content build pupils' knowledge and confidence over time well. There is clear progression from key stage 3 into examination courses. In most lessons, teaching uses worked examples, practice and well-targeted questioning to secure pupils' understanding. Across most lessons, pupils confidently connect and build on previous learning. They use subject vocabulary with growing precision. The vast majority of pupils produce work that reflects the intended curriculum well and shows a secure grasp of core concepts. However, at key stage 4 and in the sixth form, the level of depth provided for high prior attainers is not always consistently strong enough to enable a greater proportion to secure the highest grades.

Typically, teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and adjust teaching when gaps appear. This is pupils' usual experience and mostly helps staff to address misconceptions before they take hold. On a minority of occasions, particularly in key stage 3, teachers check pupils' understanding less effectively. Therefore, misconceptions linger and pupils' written responses lack depth or accuracy. Leaders have clarified their expectations for teaching to include increased subject support where this is most needed. Early reading and catch-up support for pupils are prioritised. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read follow effective structured programmes linked to assessment of what they know and understand. Staff monitor these closely to ensure that pupils build fluency and confidence to access the wider curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders generally identify pupils' needs accurately and put effective support in place. Staff use 'pupil passports' to set out helpful information about pupils' needs in a pupil-friendly way. Staff follow ways of working set out in education, health and care plans for individual pupils to guide classroom practice. The step-by-step support from leaders and staff for pupils' needs shows in the effective adaptations made to teaching and the targeted help for pupils' English and mathematics. Staff draw well on specialist advice and, where needed, act to remove barriers to individual pupils' learning. Leaders review this support with families and external partners to make sure that it is making a measurable difference to pupils' education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn alongside their peers. They take part fully in wider opportunities such as mentorship, clubs and visits.

On occasion, adaptations to teaching in lessons are not as precise or consistent as leaders intend. When this happens, a small number of pupils do not access new learning as successfully as they could, or they produce written responses that lack the depth that leaders expect. Leaders have strengthened training for staff and increased their checks on how effectively pupils are supported in lessons. Leaders' priority is to make these expectations routine in every classroom.

The sixth form is inclusive and growing. Collaboration across the trust has broadened the curriculum and secured specialist teaching in more subjects, giving students a wider set of viable combinations. Typical lessons include clear explanations, purposeful tasks and time for independent study that staff check and shape. Students speak positively about academic support, study skills and their contribution to the wider school through leadership and mentoring.

Students' attainment has improved over time, and their overall progress is mostly close to average. Outcomes for high prior attainers dipped in 2025, so leaders have introduced focused professional learning for staff and stronger assessment routines to increase the stretch of teaching in every subject. Guidance for applications and interviews is well structured and timely. Across most subjects, students confidently connect new content with prior learning and use this to plan revision and produce high-quality responses. Destinations for pupils are strong and include selective universities, apprenticeships and employment with training. Leaders recognise the need to secure greater challenge so that more students achieve the highest grades across their study programmes.

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

Pupils experience a calm, orderly and welcoming school. They follow routines without fuss and speak respectfully with staff and one another. When pupils raise worries, staff respond quickly and keep them informed. Pupils new to the school describe feeling known within days because routines are clear, support is visible and expectations are explained to them in plain language.

Pupils enjoy engaging lessons. Teachers show examples clearly and provide effective practice and well-pitched questions. For example, in English, teachers break down complex texts and check pupils' explanations before moving on. This approach helps pupils to remember important knowledge well and apply it when writing at length or discussing ideas. Across most lessons, pupils confidently connect and build on their previous learning. In a handful of lessons, teachers' checks on pupils' understanding are not as secure, so a few pupils do not produce the same depth of response. Leaders are acting to bring the same consistency to all classrooms through sharper guidance on expectations for written answers.

Pupils value the breadth of experiences on offer. Clubs, visits and an enrichment week broaden pupils' interests and help them to try new things with their peers. Leaders carefully track participation and target invitations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged take part fully. Pupils can confidently explain how careers information, education, advice and guidance have shaped their choices, including what to study next and routes into apprenticeships or university. Older students describe how leadership roles build their confidence and how they support younger pupils during transitions and social times.

The school provides precise support to enable pupils to attend school regularly. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that staff deal with any incidents promptly and fairly. They feel

safe in school and say that staff responses give them confidence that concerns will be handled well.

Next steps

- Ensure teachers consistently check pupils' understanding and use assessment effectively in their teaching to close gaps and build the depth of pupils' knowledge consistently in key stage 3.
 - Ensure that teachers have precise information about the adaptations pupils need and that they implement these adaptations effectively so pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access and learn the intended curriculum consistently well.
 - Strengthen the depth provided by the curriculum and teaching for high prior attainers at key stage 4 and in the sixth form, so a greater proportion secure the highest grades.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Hampton Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Price, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alastair Kingsley.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and staff. They met with members of Hampton Academies Trust and the board of trustees.

The school meets 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 13 alternative provisions, including 4 that are unregistered.

Kevin Ainslie: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

James Chester, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Duncan Ramsey, Ofsted Inspector

Alexandra Jane Burton, Ofsted Inspector

Victoria Colgate, Ofsted Inspector

Polly Lankester, 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,264

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

1,500

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)

22.58%

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

3.96%

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

10.05%

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)

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 (provisional)	47.6%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.0%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	49.5%	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 (provisional)	46.9	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	44.1	45.9	Close to 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)	0.29	-0.03	Above

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)	25.5%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	20.4%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	30.2%	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 (provisional)	38.5	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	33.8	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	38.5	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)	-0.34	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.01	-0.57	Above

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)	25.5%	52.8%	-27.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	20.4%	53.1%	-32.7 pp
2022/23 (final)	30.2%	52.4%	-22.2 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	38.5	50.3	-11.8

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	33.8	50.0	-16.2
2022/23 (final)	38.5	50.3	-11.8

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)	-0.34	0.16	-0.50
2022/23 (final)	0.01	0.17	-0.16

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)	97%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	95%	93%	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)	29.85	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.36	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	20.43	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)	-0.2	0.0	Below
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)	7.6%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.3%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.5%	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)	17.0%	21.9%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	21.3%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	26.8%	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.

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