

Okehampton College

Address: Mill Road, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1PW

Unique reference number (URN): 145337

Inspection report: 27 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, typically build their knowledge and skills well as they progress through the school. At key stage 4, this is reflected in pupils' performance in national examinations, which are consistently in line with national averages for most pupils. The exception is for higher prior-attaining pupils, who achieved less well in some subjects in 2025.

The vast majority of pupils secure their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, they have the knowledge that they need in key stage 4 to progress to their next steps in education. At key stage 5, however, students do not achieve as well. Students' achievement at post-16 is consistently below national averages in examinations, which sometimes hinders students' next steps in education, employment or training.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have stabilised the school following a period of turbulence. They have identified and prioritised the right actions for improvement. For instance, they have raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour and started to reduce absence. Leaders are taking quick and effective action to bring about the necessary improvements, acting in the best interests of pupils. However, there is further work to do.

Leaders, trustees and the local governing board understand the school's context and areas for development. Trustees ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled. Recent changes in governance mean that trustees gain suitable insights into the school's effectiveness.

Leaders have created an effective professional learning programme. This has started to strengthen teaching, including for those newest to teaching. However, some improvements are in their infancy. For example, adaptations are not consistently made for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is also the case for a minority of pupils who have gaps in their basic knowledge and skills.

Trustees and the local governing board are determined to build constructive relationships with parents and carers. This work has started and is beginning to have a positive impact.

Leaders manage staff workload and provide support for their wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a suitable and coherent personal development programme. For example, pupils and post-16 students follow themes such as celebrating diversity and keeping safe, both offline and online. Consequently, they build knowledge and understanding over time, including about healthy relationships. Leaders adapt the content of the programme appropriately to respond to local contextual issues.

Leaders have established an effective careers information, education, advice and guidance programme. Pupils learn about jobs related to the different subjects they study, for example. They hear from relevant speakers, and older pupils and students undertake relevant work experience. This builds their understanding of their future options. Leaders prioritise careers support for pupils who face barriers to learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils gain an understanding of fundamental British values, such as mutual respect and tolerance. The vast majority of pupils show respect for those differences that are protected in law, such as race and disability. Leaders ensure that the programme develops pupils' knowledge of rights and responsibilities. For example, pupils learn about how they can have a voice in the school and in the local community.

There is a broad range of extracurricular activities offered to pupils, including sports, academic clubs, arts and music. Leaders adapt the programme to incorporate activities in response to pupils' ideas. Consequently, pupils have opportunities to experience new clubs and activities, such as a religion and belief society or model-making club. Leaders make adaptations to include pupils who are disadvantaged or who have SEND. Leaders track who takes part in opportunities. However, they do not always use this information precisely enough to make further improvements.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Pupils' attendance is generally well below the national average, and rates of persistent absence are high. This includes for pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders are taking effective action to reduce absence. For example, they are working closely with families to reduce barriers to attendance. However, while leaders' actions are appropriate, they are in an early stage. Their work has resulted in some quick reductions in absence, but it is too soon to determine the impact over time.

Leaders have taken prompt action to raise expectations of pupils' behaviour and to strengthen the school's approach. This work is at an early stage. Consequently, some disruption to learning continues. This is reflected in the school's high rates of suspension. Staff continue to develop their skills so they can better support pupils with more complex behaviour needs, including some pupils with SEND.

Staff apply behaviour policies consistently. As a result, most pupils behave well in lessons, which are generally calm and orderly. Leaders have quickly established a culture in which disrespectful or abusive language is not tolerated. On the whole, they ensure that any such behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching is not adapted effectively enough for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have started to strengthen teaching. However, there are inconsistencies in how well strategies and support for these pupils are put in place.

A small number of pupils have gaps in their basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. Leaders have made supporting these pupils to secure this knowledge a priority. However, they have not ensured that staff have the expertise they need to close these gaps. For example, teaching does not check pupils' knowledge of multiplication facts accurately enough. It is not adapted well enough to help the small number of pupils in the early stages of learning to read to gain fluency.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. On the whole, they ensure that staff have the subject knowledge they need to implement the curriculum successfully. As a result, the curriculum builds most pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. Where necessary, leaders are taking action to improve teaching, including checking that effective adaptations are made for pupils. However, it is too soon to determine the impact of this work.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

The planning and implementation of support for pupils with barriers to learning is not precise enough. For example, there are inconsistencies in how well adaptations are made to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This hinders how well some pupils achieve.

Leaders have introduced strategies and approaches that are starting to have a positive impact on some pupils. For example, they have raised disadvantaged pupils' attendance. However, this work is in its infancy.

Leaders have strengthened the identification and assessment of pupils' needs. For example, where relevant, they use information from education, health and care plans to inform support for pupils with SEND. Leaders have started to provide suitable training to staff. They are working more closely in partnership with families.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of some strategies, such as how additional funding, including the pupil premium, is used. However, in other areas, they do not build a precise enough picture. For example, they lack clear insight into how to further overcome the barriers that prevent some disadvantaged pupils from participating in wider activities.

Pupils known to social care typically receive the support that they need. Where needed, alternative provision is used appropriately.

Students do not achieve well enough in the post-16 provision. Leaders have designed a suitable programme, including academic and vocational options. This programme broadly meets the needs of students and the context of the school. However, students do not consistently deepen their knowledge and skills. This is reflected in their achievement in examinations, which is consistently below national averages.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching in the post-16 provision. They have started strengthening teaching, but there are inconsistencies. For example, students do not have sufficient opportunities to recall and apply their knowledge. Teaching does not consistently make adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, some students do not learn the curriculum in as much depth as they could.

Students are generally prepared well for their next steps. They follow a suitable relationships education programme and receive helpful advice about careers and future education options. Leaders ensure that there are wider opportunities for students, such as taking leadership roles in the school. These experiences build students' confidence.

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

Most pupils enjoy their learning. They achieve well, including in their GCSE examinations at the end of key stage 4. However, some pupils do not receive the support that they need. For example, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who face other barriers to learning do not experience teaching that is well matched to their needs. As a result, they do not achieve as well as they could. Post-16 students experience inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. This affects how well they achieve, including in their A-level courses. In the main, students in key stage 5 do not achieve well enough.

Pupils generally have positive relationships with their peers and staff. Most feel that staff support them with their learning and provide valuable experiences beyond the classroom. For instance, pupils benefit from educational trips and visits, including opportunities to travel abroad to places such as Switzerland and New York. Pupils build their resilience and character by taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award or '10 Tors' events. Some pupils hold leadership positions, such as house captains or anti-bullying ambassadors. These opportunities build their understanding of how to be a positive member of the school and wider community. Pupils learn to mark and remember significant historical events, such as Holocaust Memorial Day.

Most pupils behave well and meet the school's expectations of behaviour and conduct. However, a minority of pupils cause disruption or do not show enough respect to others. Pupils appreciate that leaders deal with poor behaviour and bullying effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This hinders their achievement and participation in broader experiences beyond the curriculum. Absence and persistent absence, although declining, are typically higher than national averages.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that levels of absence and persistent absence, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), reduce further, so that pupils maximise their opportunities for learning and benefit from the school's wider opportunities.
 - Leaders should ensure that they provide effective support to improve the behaviour of pupils, including those who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.
 - Leaders should ensure that effective curriculum and teaching adaptations are made for all pupils with SEND so that they achieve well and thrive.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers have the expertise they need to quickly close any gaps that pupils have in their basic reading, handwriting and mathematics skills.
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About this inspection

The school is part of the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rachel Shaw, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jessica Harding.

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.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, teachers, trust leaders, trustees and local governors during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses 5 alternative providers, including 4 that are unregistered.

There have been significant changes in governance and leadership since the last inspection.

Gareth Smith: Principal

Lead inspector:

James Oldham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Alun Williams, Ofsted Inspector

Raymond Hennessy, Ofsted Inspector

Matthew Collins, Ofsted Inspector

Jan Woodhouse, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,137

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

1,437

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)

20.29%

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

2.73%

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

16.09%

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

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 (provisional)	38.8%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46.3%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46.0%	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)	43.1	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.6	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	46.0	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)	-0.24	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.18	-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 (provisional)	22.9%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	22.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	16.2%	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)	33.1	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.0	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)	-0.56	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.86	-0.57	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

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

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

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

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	22.9%	52.8%	-30.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	22.2%	53.1%	-30.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	16.2%	52.4%	-36.2 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)	33.1	50.3	-17.2

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	32.5	50.0	-17.5
2022/23 (final)	32.0	50.3	-18.3

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)	-0.56	0.16	-0.72
2022/23 (final)	-0.86	0.17	-1.03

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)	94%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	95%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	98%	94%	Above

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)	30.43	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.59	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	29.50	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)	0.0	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	10.7%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	11.9%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.7%	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 (2 term)	28.8%	21.9%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	34.8%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	30.2%	26.5%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

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

Strong standard

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

Expected standard

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

Needs attention

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

Urgent improvement

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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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