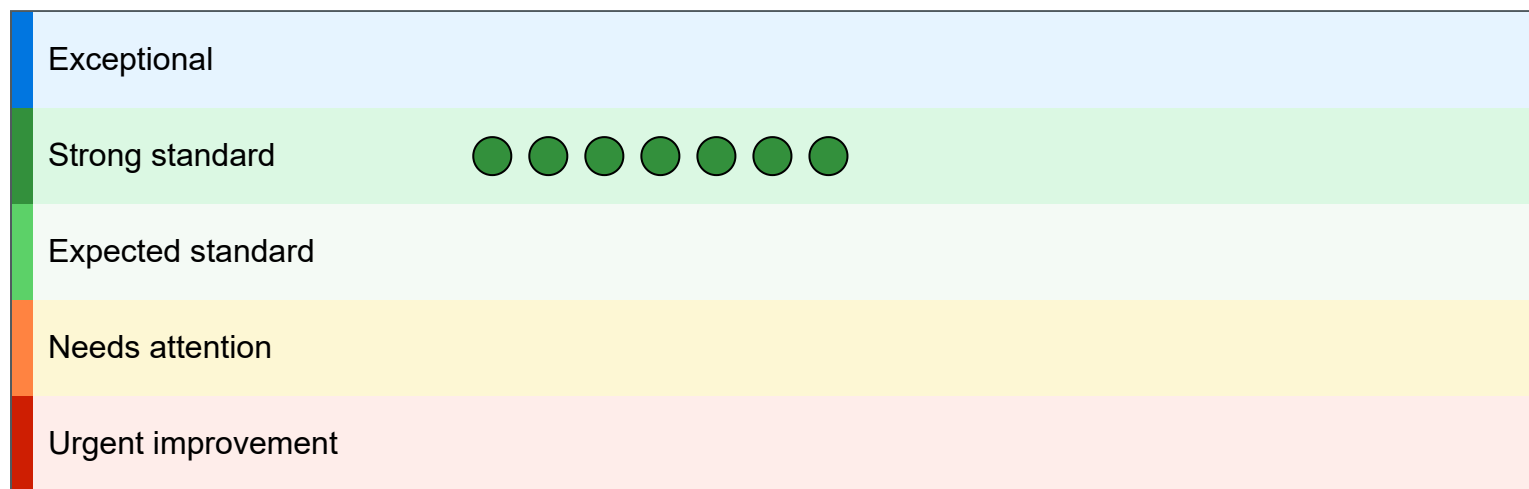


# Ilford County High School

Address: Fremantle Road, Barkingside, Ilford, Ilford, Essex, IG6 2JB

Unique reference number (URN): 102850

## Inspection report: 6 January 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 ●

### Achievement

Strong standard ●

Published academic outcomes are very high. All pupils achieve grades well above the national average across all subjects at GCSE and A level. Pupils make excellent progress from their starting points across the school.

The quality of pupils' work in all years is very high. Pupils speak with confidence about what they have learned and how knowledge connects between topics. For example, pupils in Year 11 use their knowledge of poetry analysis to identify complex ideas, such as 'maladaptive daydreaming' in a poem by Thomas Hardy. Pupils' strong knowledge and understanding prepares pupils very well for the next stage in their education, which is often university or a degree apprenticeship.

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff prioritise attendance and punctuality. This ethos is underpinned by clear systems that leaders monitor rigorously. There is a culture of support for any pupils facing barriers to attendance. The school actively encourages positive attendance. Pupils gain recognitions and rewards for the best attending houses, classes and pupils. This helps to reinforce high expectations and build a positive culture around attendance. Leaders communicate their clear expectations to parents, who the school work with when needed. Whole-school attendance is high overall. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils' behaviour is calm, orderly and purposeful. They enjoy the freedom to work hard without distraction in class. Leaders have embedded clear routines. These support pupils to engage readily in their studies. They know that bullying is not tolerated and that teachers will deal with it. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and confidence, when discussing their learning. They exhibit respect for others' contributions. Any pupils who struggle to meet the school's high expectations receive targeted support. This helps to ensure that their behaviour does not become a habit. This work includes meaningful reflection and work with external organisations when necessary.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The curriculum is broad and very ambitious. At times, pupils are taught content beyond the national curriculum. For example, all pupils have the opportunity to study further mathematics at GCSE.

Leaders know the quality of teaching in the school well. They monitor closely pupils' achievement. Leaders make refinements swiftly, when necessary, to improve further pupils' progress. Subject leaders are experts. They share their passion for subjects with teachers and pupils. Staff continually refine and adapt curriculum and teaching. They ensure that the curriculum systematically builds all pupils' knowledge. Teachers adapt their approaches to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well. Teachers check rigorously that pupils understand new learning. They link it to what pupils already

know. For example, in English in Year 9, pupils learn the common themes that link modern literary texts with Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Teachers explain complex concepts clearly. When ready, pupils explore and solve problems collaboratively. They are comfortable taking calculated risks. Pupils develop confidence to highlight their own errors. They use these to learn from and explain their thinking to others.

Teachers develop pupils' oracy explicitly and ensure that pupils read for pleasure. Where needed, pupils, including those with SEND, receive extra provision. This helps improve pupils' comprehension and handwriting. Leaders prioritise vocabulary development across the school. They organise spelling bees and ensure explicit cross-curricular vocabulary teaching.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders have high academic expectations for all learners. They take methodical steps to reduce learning barriers and foster independence. The school has a large and well-qualified team of staff, who support the small proportion of pupils in the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff identify any SEND needs swiftly and accurately. Support is comprehensive. It includes regular contact with parents or carers and pupils are always involved in regular learning reviews. Leaders check that pupils are making progress and use this information to review and refine their plans.

Staff receive regular, high-quality professional development. They share best practice within and between subjects. Inclusion is strengthened by a staff culture, where support for disadvantaged pupils is 'everyone's job'. Leaders use pupil premium funding to enhance opportunities for disadvantaged pupils by removing barriers. This includes ensuring pupils can attend educational visits and cultural experiences. Pupils report feeling safe and respected. Pupils with SEND achieve well at GCSE and A level. They are fully prepared for their next academic steps. All pupils with SEND attend school regularly.

Leaders work closely with external agencies, including the virtual school. This means that pupils, including those known to social care, are extremely well supported and thrive at school.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders have a realistic and nuanced view of the school's strengths and areas for further refinement. They work closely with subject and pastoral leaders to ensure that high standards are continually maintained. They continue to drive excellence and support staff to develop professionally.

Significant time and resources have been committed to enhance teachers' skills in the classroom and to build future leaders in the school. This work draws on a large selection of evidence-based research from within and beyond education. This programme is tailored closely to teachers' individual needs, including those at the earliest stage of their careers. Support staff are also provided with appropriate professional development.

Those responsible for governance know the school and its priorities well. They hold leaders

to account effectively. Governors know their statutory duties regarding safeguarding. They ensure that equalities are prioritised and fully upheld. They regularly seek and act on the views of staff, pupils and parents.

Staff and pupils were positive about the notable impact that new leadership has already made. Staff value the renewed focus on reducing workload further and prioritising wellbeing, so that they can 'focus on the core job'. They commented that communication from senior leaders is consistent and clear.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders provide an extensive and inclusive personal development programme. This equips all pupils with the knowledge, skills and character needed for success in later life. From Year 7, pupils develop detailed knowledge of fundamental British values. They learn how to be safe online and the importance of healthy relationships. 'Drop-down' days bring learning from timetabled lessons and assemblies alive. Topics such as 'respect for different families and cultures' are introduced appropriately. Pupils engage thoughtfully with important concepts, including equality and kindness. Protected characteristics, such as race, are explored through diversity week and anti-bullying workshops. Events such as 'progressive masculinity day' help pupils to challenge negative stereotypes. Pupils report feeling highly respected.

The programme supports pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils reflect on their beliefs and respect others' values. They demonstrate empathy in class and during social times. Pupils' understanding of culture is extended through a wide range of experiences. These include theatre visits, creative showcases and international trips. Enrichment opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's award and chess competitions are popular. These help pupils to develop independence and resilience. Leaders track participation carefully for groups, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures that everyone benefits from these high-quality opportunities.

Careers education provision is excellent. Pupils receive guidance throughout their time at the school. This includes tailored post-16 support for university entrance and help with apprenticeship applications. Pupils with SEND are well prepared for adulthood. They learn how to use Braille and remote learning technology. Pupils with SEND benefit from coaching for independence. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing. Pupils access counselling, mentoring and resilience workshops. Over time, pupils become confident to recognise when they need support and how to access it.

## **Post 16 provision**

**Strong standard** ●

The post-16 curriculum is detailed and ambitious. For example, in science, staff ensure that students are prepared fully to study beyond A level. This includes discussion of concepts that are outside of the examination syllabus. This is because it interests students and staff know that it will help to support their expertise as scientists in future. Teacher subject knowledge is a strength. Staff explain knowledge precisely and balance this with probing questions that make students think hard. Checks on learning are used to accurately identify

and address gaps in students' knowledge. Students work independently, respond well to expert teacher feedback and are well supported to deepen their understanding. Teachers facilitate discussion and debate between students. This helps students to understand that sometimes there is not a clear 'right' answer. Staff also guide students more closely where needed. All this fosters a culture of learning, where students value teachers highly.

The personal development programme for post 16 is comprehensive. All students take part in voluntary service and meaningful work experience. There are many student-led societies, such as economics and aerospace, and clubs include public speaking.

New leaders took effective action to reverse the temporary decline in examination results in 2024. As a result, in 2025 the proportion of top grades increased significantly above the national average.

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

This school supports pupils to become independent learners. They work together to solve problems and develop a love of learning. Pupils' achievement is very high. They make excellent progress across subjects. Teachers strike the right balance between academic challenge and wellbeing. One pupil, typical of many, described their time at school as 'enriching'.

Pupils feel safe. They flourish within the effective pastoral care and safeguarding systems. Pupils value the offer of mental health support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive due to the high-quality provision. Disadvantaged pupils are supported to help them overcome their individual barriers to learning.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent throughout the school day. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. Students enjoy being part of a tight-knit post 16, which provides individualised support. Approachable, knowledgeable teachers help create an environment, where everyone can work hard. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly. Pupils feel confident that staff will listen and act.

Post-16 students highlight the benefits of learning beyond their core academic curriculum. They value their involvement in academic societies. These provide support for their aspirations to study sciences, mathematics, humanities and more. Students act as responsible role models for younger pupils. Many take on this role informally, as well as through opportunities organised by the school. Careers guidance is particularly well organised and context specific. It begins from Year 7. It includes alumni talks and work experience opportunities. These help to prepare pupils for life beyond school.

Outside the classroom, pupils thrive through a wide range of extracurricular activities. These include sports, drama and student-led societies. These experiences help them to develop confidence, leadership and resilience. Pupils' knowledge beyond the classroom is expanded through theatre visits, creative showcases and discussions on issues, such as racism. Pupils understand how to support one another. They learn to engage positively with their community.

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## Next steps

- The school should sustain its effective use of assessment and build on its work to further enhance teaching and learning.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Melvin Pedro.

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 leaders with responsibility for post 16, behaviour, attendance, special educational needs and/or disabilities, personal development, professional learning, careers and safeguarding during the inspection.

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 headteacher is new since the last inspection. The headteacher started in September 2025.

Headteacher: Mr Gavin Barnett

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### Lead inspector:

Guy Forbat, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Joanna Jones, Ofsted Inspector

Debbie Lebrecht, Ofsted Inspector

Una Buckley, His Majesty's Inspector

Ray Lau, 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 6 January 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**1,126**

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

**850**

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: 1,152

### Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

**12.17%**

Well 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

**0.80%**

Well below 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**

**4.80%**

Well 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**

**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 (provisional)	97.2%	45.2%	Above
2023/24 (final)	99.4%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	97.1%	45.3%	Above

## 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)	75.5	45.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	77.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	77.4	46.3	Above

## 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)	0.87	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.77	-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)	92.0%	25.6%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100.0%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	92.0%	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 (provisional)	74.2	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	74.8	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	71.2	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)	0.67	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.18	-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)	92.0%	52.8%	39.2 pp
2023/24 (final)	100.0%	53.1%	46.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	92.0%	52.4%	39.6 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)	74.2	50.3	23.9
2023/24 (final)	74.8	50.0	24.8
2022/23 (final)	71.2	50.3	20.9

### 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)	0.67	0.16	0.51
2022/23 (final)	0.18	0.17	0.01

## 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)	100%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	99%	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 (provisional)	R	R	R
2023/24 (final)	35.89	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	38.85	34.16	Above

### A-level value added

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

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (provisional)</b>	R	R	R
<b>2023/24 (revised)</b>	-0.1	0.0	Close to average

The Key Stage 5 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. 'R' in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

## **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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (2 term)</b>	5.0%	8.1%	Below
<b>2023/24 (3 term)</b>	5.1%	8.9%	Below
<b>2022/23 (3 term)</b>	5.6%	9.0%	Below

### **Persistent absence**

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

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (2 term)</b>	11.4%	21.9%	Below
<b>2023/24 (3 term)</b>	11.4%	25.6%	Below
<b>2022/23 (3 term)</b>	14.0%	26.5%	Below

# 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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