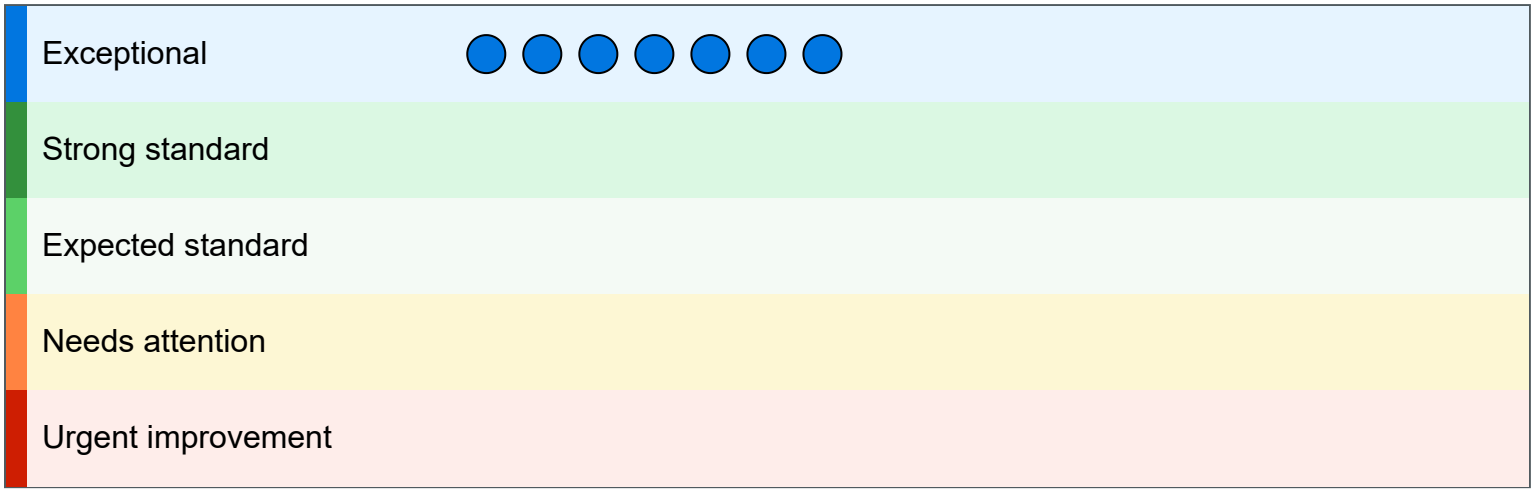
Kendrick School

Address: London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5BN

Unique reference number (URN): 136448

Inspection report: 20 October 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.

Exceptional

Achievement

Exceptional

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve exceptionally well across all subject areas and key stages in their national examinations. Pupils develop knowledge that goes well beyond the taught and examined curriculum. Across the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make extremely positive progress from their starting points. Pupils are highly articulate and analytical. They take exceptional pride in their work. Pupils write and communicate with levels of accuracy and fluency far more sophisticated than might be expected for their ages.

Pupils are highly skilled in applying their knowledge to new learning. For example, pupils' advanced mathematical knowledge supports their understanding of financial and economic challenges in modern Britain. Pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving skills prepare them extraordinarily well for the next stages of their education, training or employment.

Pupils are highly ambitious to ensure that their education enables them to make a positive difference beyond their own personal achievements. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, are consistently successful in progressing to aspirational pathways.

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have exceptionally positive attendance habits. They understand the importance of their education and rarely miss school. Pupils arrive punctually each day, ready and eager to learn. Proactive leaders are skilled in identifying and mitigating any barriers to positive attendance if pupils' needs or circumstances change. They provide highly effective support so that pupils can return to regular attendance swiftly and confidently. Combined, these factors result in attendance rates that are well above national.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Throughout the school, pupils embody the school values. They show sophisticated characteristics, such as independence, integrity, self-discipline and highly positive attitudes to learning. Pupils routinely take responsibility for their actions, choosing to behave well because they know it is the right thing to do. Kindness permeates the school. Staff build extremely positive relationships with pupils. This allows them to pre-empt and address any challenges that may affect pupils' behaviour effectively. Pupils have full confidence that bullying and discrimination are never tolerated. On the very rare occasions where such behaviour occurs, leaders address this robustly and swiftly. Pupils, including those with SEND, feel entirely confident to be themselves, knowing that they will be proactively supported and not judged by their peers. This well-embedded culture of equality and inclusivity gives pupils the freedom and confidence to immerse themselves in all aspects of school life.

Curriculum and teaching

Exceptional

The quality of teaching in the school is exceptionally high. Across all curriculum areas and year groups, staff are experts in their subjects. They explain content with clarity and precision. As a result, pupils constantly deepen their knowledge over time. Leaders' ambitious and precise knowledge and understanding of the curriculum underpins this work. Teaching is characterised by passion, precision and academic rigour. Teachers make consistently effective choices about what to teach and select activities that accurately meet all pupils' needs. This supports pupils' learning within and beyond their lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access learning as ambitiously as their peers. Teachers use their accurate knowledge of pupils' needs to ensure that there are no barriers to high-quality learning for any pupil. Lessons are consistently purposeful, aspirational and inclusive.

Staff rigorously monitor pupils' learning. They are swift to identify and address any misconceptions that arise. Pupils demonstrate deeply embedded independent learning habits. They make highly effective use of staff's feedback to check and improve their own work. As a result, pupils rarely fall behind in any aspect of their learning. Staff ensure that if any knowledge gaps do emerge, they are rapidly addressed. Leaders closely and accurately monitor that their high expectations of teaching are consistently maintained. As a result, all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, thrive in their learning.

Inclusion

Exceptional

Leaders make highly effective use of pupil premium funding. The time, expertise and resources directed towards disadvantaged pupils goes considerably beyond what might reasonably be expected within this funding. The manner in which disadvantaged pupils are supported to access a high-quality education is exemplary. For example, leaders have established and embedded a 'widening horizons' initiative. Through this, they enable pupils in primary schools to gradually build their aspirations and academic stamina, so they can succeed and flourish within and beyond their school years.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in any way, thrive in all aspects of school life. Leaders begin the process of identifying any barriers to learning and/or wellbeing well before pupils join the school. The needs of pupils are precisely understood. Across the school, staff are highly adept at removing any barriers that pupils experience.

Leaders ensure that pupils' provision is constantly refined and adjusted in line with their emerging needs. Pupils are highly appreciative of the accuracy and subtlety of the support they receive. Pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those who are known or previously known to social care learn with remarkable confidence and ambition. They participate fully in an extensive range of experiences that add significant value to their wellbeing and achievement.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional

Leaders have a precise understanding of the many strengths within the school. These strengths, embedded over many years, are as a result of insightful leadership that is sharply focused on inclusivity and equality. Decisions are always taken in the very best interests of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Leaders are meticulous in identifying ways to further improve provision, ensuring that the impact of each pupils' education is lasting and far reaching. In recent years, leaders have actively sought to widen access to the school, so that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils benefit from the high-quality education offered here. Leaders continue to be successful in this ambition. As a result of sharpening their focus on high-quality inclusive education, the experiences of all pupils have been further enhanced. The opportunities and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have been transformed.

Leaders have established a deeply embedded culture of community cohesion. Staff are highly dedicated and committed in their roles. They feel well supported by leaders, recognising how their wellbeing and workload is thoroughly considered in all decision-making. Parents and carers are incredibly supportive of the school. They value the quality of learning and the breadth of opportunities that their children benefit from. Pupils are effusive in their pride and happiness to attend the school. They exemplify leaders' ambitions. Leaders establish highly collaborative working relationships with wider professionals. In particular, they build very strong partnerships with local primary schools so that disadvantaged pupils are supported in their aspirations from the earliest opportunity. Governors are fully aligned with leaders' ambitions. They are highly knowledgeable in their roles, fulfilling their statutory responsibilities robustly.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional

Leaders have established a seamless and coherent personal development programme that has a transformational impact on pupils' experiences, attitudes and behaviours. Pupils understand and consistently model the school values, promoting 'equality, tolerance and justice' in all that they do. Pupils have a deep and sophisticated understanding about rights and laws. They apply this knowledge daily, recognising how respectful debate can develop healthy moral and social perspectives. Staff create a wealth of opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and explore their views.

In addition to highly effective teaching within the formal curriculum, pupils extend their thinking through academically rigorous clubs and societies. Often these activities are led by older students, who have the training and expertise to deepen pupils' knowledge considerably. For example, the student led debate club helps pupils to understand the craft of balanced debate, while in the current affairs society, pupils apply these skills to explore important world events.

The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum prepares pupils extremely well for the next stages of their development. Pupils have a refined understanding of how to maintain positive mental and physical health. They know the risks to be alert to in relationships and social settings as they prepare for adulthood. Pupils have detailed knowledge about online safety, including the emerging risks that new technologies create. Pupils receive exceptionally rigorous careers advice and guidance, enabling them to

confidently access ambitious and well-matched future pathways. All aspects of learning are precisely adapted, where appropriate, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are as robustly prepared for their next steps as their peers.

Pupils enthusiastically embrace the extensive opportunities they have to explore their talents and interests on a daily basis. For example, pupils' high-quality pastoral care is enhanced through a range of therapeutic wellbeing activities. Pupils deepen their passion for literature in 'readathon', where they jointly analyse books with staff. The wider breadth of music, sports, academic, creative, diversity and sustainability clubs are highly attended, consistently contributing to pupils' confidence, independence and deeply embedded sense of belonging.

Post-16 provision **Exceptional**

Sixth form students are exemplary role models to their peers, to younger pupils and in the wider community. Students embrace leadership opportunities, giving their time willingly to enhance community cohesion. For example, students conduct their own research, in order to lead aspirational enrichment activities, such as ‘medicine society’. They work collaboratively with staff to support local refugee families, helping to create a safe space and access to high-quality learning. Students are thoroughly poised to live independent adult lives and are highly motivated to shape the future world.

Students in the sixth form achieve extremely well in national examinations. The range of academic pathways available closely reflects the context of the school and students' aspirations. Leaders refine and adapt the offer in line with emerging needs or interests. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are thoroughly supported with bespoke teaching approaches. Across all subjects, teaching is of an exceptionally high quality. Staff are highly skilled in sixth-form teaching. They build and deepen students' knowledge, routinely developing higher level thinking and increasing academic rigour. Staff adapt the curriculum precisely in line with students' starting points and barriers. As a result, students, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, make consistently positive progress. The richness of students' learning, alongside their advanced study habits, ensure that they are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps.

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

Pupils truly flourish in this welcoming and aspirational school where every member of the community is united by the 'Kendrick pledge'. This is because pupils model the values of 'friendship, kindness and respect' in everything they do. Across the school, warm and caring relationships are the norm. Pupils show integrity in their choices, consistently behaving in an exemplary manner. Pupils fearlessly promote equality within and beyond the school. They are very clear about the difference between right and wrong, routinely and respectfully challenging any injustice. Bullying is extremely uncommon and never tolerated. Pupils feel safe and are safe.

Pupils immerse themselves in learning each day with enthusiasm, passion and motivation. This demonstrates their incredibly positive attitudes to their education. Pupils appreciate

how ambitious and engaging their lessons are, across all curriculum areas and year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are exceptionally well supported. Any barriers that pupils may face to their learning and/or wellbeing are swiftly and seamlessly reduced. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, thrive, participating fully in all aspects of school life.

Pupils are rarely absent because they do not wish to miss out on the wealth of wonderful experiences available to them each day. They embrace every opportunity to explore their talents and interests. At break times, the joyous sounds of high-quality orchestral rehearsals and musical performances add to the calm and purposeful atmosphere. Elsewhere, pupils of all ages are spoilt for choice with the extraordinary range of clubs and societies on offer. Sixth-form students often lead activities as well as expertly supporting younger pupils through mentoring.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve exceptionally well in their GCSE and A-level examinations. Pupils with SEND make highly positive progress from their starting points. Pupils are consistently well prepared for their next steps as they move through the school, into the sixth form and beyond. Pupils regularly develop the knowledge, skills and personal attributes that enable them to make a positive impact on the wider community.

About this inspection

This school is a single academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Charles Ramsden.

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

This inspection took place from 20 October 2026 to 21 October 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the school leadership team, members of staff, groups of pupils and representatives from the board of trustees.

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.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last graded inspection. The current headteacher and the chair of the board of trustees were not in post at the point of the last graded inspection. The current headteacher took up his post in September 2026.

Headteacher: Nicholas Simmonds

Lead inspector:
Tash Hurtado, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Peter Fry, Ofsted Inspector
Charlotte Wilson, Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore, Ofsted Inspector
Martin Dyer, His Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Bevan, His Majesty's 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 20 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

939
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: 1,063

School capacity

920
Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

10.76%
Well below 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

0.43%
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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

4.58%
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)	100.0%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100.0%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	100.0%	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 (final)	84.0	46.1	Above
2023/24 (final)	84.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	84.3	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)	1.07	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	1.06	-0.03	Above
2021/22 (final)	0.92	-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 (final)	100.0%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	25.8%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	25.2%	S

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)	72.0	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	S	34.6	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	35.0	S

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)	S	-0.57	S
2022/23 (final)	S	-0.57	S
2021/22 (final)	S	-0.55	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	100.0%	53.1%	46.9 pp
2023/24 (final)	S	53.1%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	52.4%	S

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)	72.0	50.4	21.6
2023/24 (final)	S	50.0	S
2022/23 (final)	S	50.3	S

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)	S	0.16	S
2022/23 (final)	S	0.17	S
2021/22 (final)	S	0.15	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	99%	92%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	100%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	98%	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)	44.47	35.00	Above
2023/24 (final)	44.68	34.38	Above
2022/23 (final)	46.77	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.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.1	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
2025/26 (1 term)	4.5%	7.8%	Below
2024/25 (3 term)	4.9%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.4%	8.9%	Below

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)	7.8%	21.5%	Below
2024/25 (3 term)	11.1%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	20.0%	25.6%	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.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright