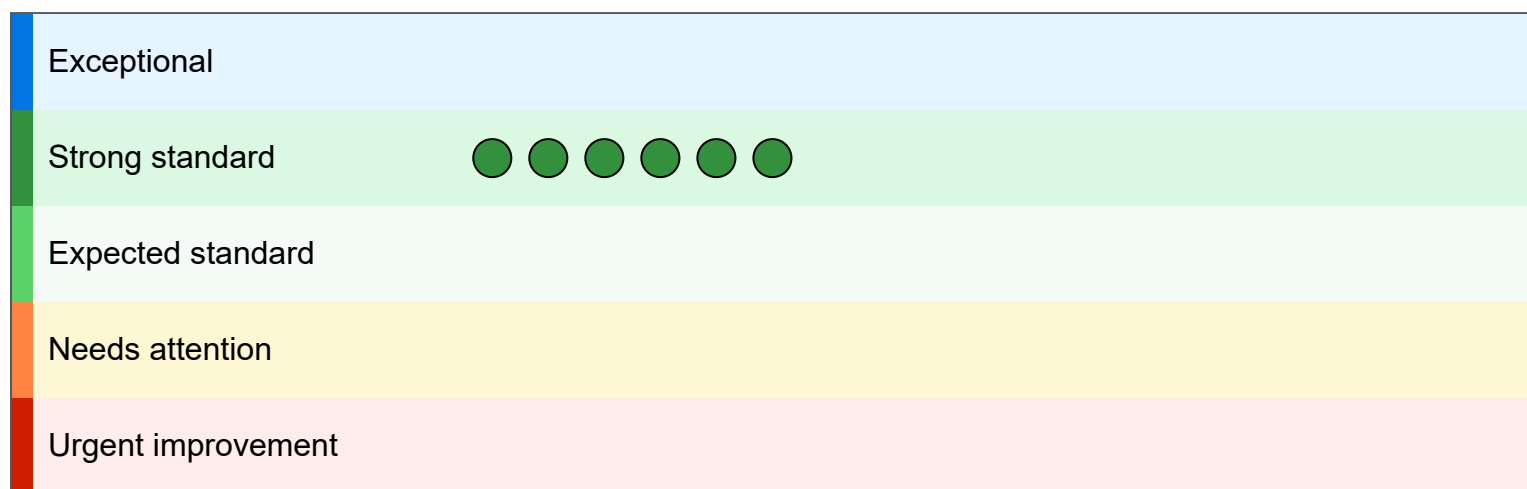


# iCollege Alternative Provision

**Address:** Independence, Richmond House, Bath Road, Speen, Newbury, RG14 1QY

**Unique reference number (URN):** 131066

## Inspection report: 6 May 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 ●

Pupils' work demonstrates progress over time from their wide and varied starting points. Progress is particularly evident for pupils who spend longer in the school. Pupils become increasingly independent and apply their skills and knowledge more confidently over time. They develop the secure knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Pupils are proud of their achievements and produce work that is of high quality.

Pupils' achievement is focused on well-chosen priorities, including reading, confidence, self-regulation and a clear approach to transition. This enables pupils' sustained engagement in learning and a return to mainstream education for many pupils.

Leaders ensure older pupils have access to a range of qualifications. Pupils achieve consistently well in these examinations. Leaders maintain a consistent focus on next steps for pupils and ensure outcomes lead to meaningful destinations. This offer supports pupils to be very well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment.

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders prioritise attendance. Many pupils arrive with very low attendance or a history of non-attendance. The school addresses this quickly. They are relentless in their approach to improving attendance. When absence persists, the school responds appropriately and quickly. This involves making reasonable and appropriate adjustments to educational programmes. The school works effectively with parents, carers and multi-agency partners to support attendance. As a result of leaders' work, pupils significantly improve their attendance when they start at the school.

Pupils behave very well. This is built on the positive, embedded relationships they establish with staff. Pupils trust staff. Staff support pupils to behave well and manage their emotions effectively. When pupils do need additional support, staff are quick to respond, and this is effective in regulating their behaviour. Staff understand the school's behaviour management system, and expectations are consistently reinforced. Serious incidents such as bullying or harassment are rare. If they do occur, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Pupils are respectful of staff, each other and visitors. They have positive attitudes to learning. They show high levels of concentration and work hard to complete tasks. Classrooms are calm and purposeful environments.

### Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a broad, balanced and highly ambitious curriculum that reflects both pupils' academic development and their individual needs. Learning is carefully sequenced and allows pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. There is clear ambition for all pupils to achieve GCSE qualifications wherever possible. Leaders' detailed understanding of each pupil's needs ensures that curriculum pathways are aspirational and aligned with future goals.

Across the school, teaching is consistently effective, adaptive and responsive. Staff demonstrate high expectations and are highly ambitious for pupils who have previously experienced disruption to their learning or exclusion from school. Teachers ensure they meet pupils' needs. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to break down complex concepts. Highly effective teaching secures pupils' understanding. Teachers support learning with regular checking of pupils' understanding and a focus on key vocabulary.

Leaders know that many pupils arrive at the school with significant gaps in their learning. Highly effective strategies are put in place to address this. Pupils across the school who are at the earlier stages of learning to read are provided with skilled teaching and support. This ensures gaps in knowledge close quickly.

## **Inclusion**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders and staff have created a well-embedded, inclusive culture. There are effective systems for sharing key information about pupils with staff. Staff and leaders know pupils very well. The school's work is characterised by strong relationships, consistent practice and a relentless focus on belonging, aspiration and meaningful progression.

Leaders ensure pupils' progress is rigorously monitored. When new pupils join the school or the needs of individual pupils change, regular checks ensure strategies remain effective. Staff are skilfully trained to adapt their approaches and provide effective support for pupils. As a result, pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing are reduced significantly over time. This enhances pupils' experiences of learning and supports them to be well prepared for life beyond the school.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of the varied challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. They use additional funding to effectively remove barriers and support pupils' academic and personal development. Leaders monitor the impact of the funding closely to ensure it remains effective.

Staff work closely with external agencies and ensure specialist advice informs the support provided. Parents and carers are engaged through accessible communication strategies and positive relationships are quickly developed. Alternative provision is carefully selected and regularly checked to ensure it is aligned to pupils' best interests.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders are inspirational in their drive to reset pupils' life chances. Staff overwhelmingly share this commitment. Leaders communicate an ambitious vision for inclusion and achievement. This ensures pupils access meaningful education and move successfully to their next steps. This vision is reflected in a calm learning environment where pupils feel a deep sense of belonging and are supported to re-engage with learning.

Leaders carefully consider the school's strategic priorities. They are grounded in an expert understanding of pupils' needs and the local context. Leaders balance flexibility with appropriate boundaries, ensuring that the curriculum remains purposeful and responsive to individual pupils' needs. The curriculum, personal development offer and approach to transition are carefully aligned to support positive outcomes for pupils. Leaders have

established an ambitious culture of professionalism, underpinned by a commitment to continuous improvement and evidence-informed practice.

Leaders work collaboratively with parents, carers, governors, the local authority, local schools and external agencies. They contribute to wider partnerships while always putting the needs of pupils first. Leaders prioritise staff wellbeing and establish a highly supportive and inclusive culture. Staff appreciate that leaders are approachable and responsive, offering both professional and personal support when needed.

Governors bring a range of experience and expertise that supports their work. They are very knowledgeable and passionate about their roles and the work they do to support the school to further improve and develop. They have detailed knowledge of the strengths and areas for development, which focuses their support in the right areas.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Strong standard** ●

Leaders demonstrate excellent strategic leadership of the school's personal development and wellbeing offer. They have established a broad and coherent programme that is relevant to the needs of the pupils and the context of the school. This integrates a well-planned relationships and sex education and health education curriculum with a rich range of wider opportunities and experiences. Leaders ensure the provision is carefully mapped, sequenced and reviewed to ensure it is appropriate for pupils.

The personal development programme is highly responsive to pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that age-appropriate but developmentally accessible content supports pupils to stay safe and healthy. Experiences such as visits to places of worship, cultural visits and engagement with external speakers enhance pupils' curiosity, enjoyment and a deeper understanding of the wider world. The presenter programme is a key strength where pupils interact with a range of expert speakers to develop their understanding of the wider world. This supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to thrive in modern Britain.

Pupils develop character, resilience and independence. They learn to manage their emotions and behaviours, understand right and wrong, and recognise the consequences of their actions. Pastoral support is highly effective. Leaders and staff know pupils extremely well and provide tailored interventions. Where necessary, these are supported by external agencies. The ongoing impact of this work is monitored through robust tracking systems.

Careers education is a significant strength of the school's work. It is expertly taught. This ensures pupils understand possible future pathways and the steps needed to achieve future goals. It supports pupils to believe in themselves and identifies future opportunities that they previously thought were beyond them. This contributes positively to pupils being very well prepared for their next steps.

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

Pupils are valued at iCollege. They enjoy coming to school to learn and be with their friends. Leaders have created an environment where the school's values of acceptance, kindness, responsibility, perseverance and aspiration are at the forefront of the school's work. Pupils quickly develop warm and caring professional relationships with staff. Pupils develop a deep sense of belonging. Staff help and support them to overcome any challenges they face. For many pupils, this is a positive experience of school and education. They speak about being hopeful about their future.

Staff support pupils skilfully across the school's different sites. Pupils develop strategies to manage their own behaviour. Staff respond quickly to provide additional support for pupils who need it. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with bullying if it occurs. This results in a calm and respectful school environment where pupils are happy and safe.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils' barriers to learning are swiftly reduced. They are well supported to progress well from their starting points through the carefully considered curriculum. Pupils who stay at the school for longer periods achieve highly in a range of examinations. A very carefully designed and appropriate programme of personal development extends across and beyond the curriculum. This makes a positive difference to pupils and enables them to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Careers education supports pupils very well to make ambitious and well-judged choices. Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps at every stage.

The best interests of pupils are always at the heart of the school's work. This consistently drives the work of the dedicated staff, leaders and governors in their mission to improve the life chances of all their pupils.

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## Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to support staff and leadership at all levels to understand their role in sustaining consistently high standards in all areas of the school's work, using the best available evidence to drive a transformational impact for all pupils.
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## About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr Tim Pritchard.

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 the co-headteachers and other senior leaders during the inspection. They also met with those responsible for governance. Inspectors spoke with several pupils and staff. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

At the point of inspection there were 82 pupils on roll.

The school is located over 5 different sites.

All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs, and many have other identified special educational needs. The school provides a range of short- and long-term placements for pupils. All pupils have experienced difficulties in mainstream schools. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan.

The school makes use of 15 alternative provisions that are unregistered.

Co-headteachers: Jacqueline Davies and Jo Farley

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### **Lead inspector:**

Simon Graydon, His Majesty's Inspector

### **Team inspectors:**

James Broadbridge, His Majesty's Inspector

Vicky Essex, 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 May 2026

## **School and pupil context**

### **School capacity**

**48**

**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.

## 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
2022 leavers (revised)	43%	93%	Not available
2021 leavers (revised)	67%	94%	Not available

## 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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