

Material change inspection report

5 June 2026

Norton College Tewkesbury

International Way

Tewkesbury

Gloucestershire

GL20 8UQ

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

Inspection outcome

The school has submitted a material change request to increase its capacity from 50 to 75 pupils.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and 16(b)

1. Leaders have established a robust culture of safeguarding. Staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff assess the safeguarding needs of each pupil and provide appropriate individual support. Leaders ensure that there are daily check-ins with each pupil and frequent and effective communication with parents and carers.
2. Safeguarding training for the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the wider safeguarding team is appropriate. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding attend training provided by relevant local authorities. Leaders have planned to expand the safeguarding team so that there is additional capacity to manage safeguarding for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
3. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding understand the contextual factors for safeguarding pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Specialist staff draw up risk assessments for each pupil. This includes the need to accommodate pupils' communication styles and transport provided by the local authority.
4. Staff receive suitable training in safeguarding including induction training before they start work at the school. The safeguarding team provides regular updates about safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance. Leaders check that staff hold a suitable level of knowledge and understanding. They ensure that staff understand how aspects of the 'Prevent' duty, including extremism and radicalisation, relate to the school. Staff are alert to signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They are confident in understanding the lines of reporting. Staff respond quickly when they have a concern. Leaders ensure that staff are supported with any concerns through debriefing meetings at the end of each school day.
5. Staff have a clear understanding of when and how to report concerns about adults working in the school. They know this is an important part of keeping everyone safe. Leaders have provided an effective digital system using a quick response (QR) code to share a concern. The safeguarding team keeps suitable records of concerns and any action taken as a response. They use this information to conduct professional conversations with staff or further training.
6. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding work well with external agencies including the youth justice service, the police and social services. They seek advice as needed. Staff are rigorous in fulfilling their duty to report extended pupil absences to the local authority.
7. Leaders encourage good attendance and monitor information closely. They ensure supportive contact with parents to encourage good attendance, through the family liaison team. Records show that a number of pupils who joined with a history of interrupted schooling now attend more consistently.

8. Pupils know to whom they can turn should they have any concerns. They readily identify trusted adults and leaders with responsibility for safeguarding. Pupils share their worries, confident that they will be listened to.
9. The school has appropriate arrangements in place for promoting online safety. Pupils learn what they need to do to protect themselves when they are using the internet. Internet filtering and monitoring arrangements are tested for effectiveness on a frequent basis.
10. Records for safeguarding are suitable and kept in accordance with statutory guidance. Leaders ensure that records are detailed, noting times of day and describing any ongoing support. They show clear timelines of concerns raised and all actions taken in response. Leaders ensure that records are maintained with appropriate levels of confidentiality.
11. Leaders have established a robust approach to health and safety. Staff training for health and safety is up to date and clearly recorded. Staff conduct frequent site checks and fortnightly meetings to ensure they have an accurate picture of current needs. Staff maintain effective and suitably detailed health and safety records. The proprietor conducts an annual health and safety audit. Staff with responsibility in this area respond to any recommendations quickly.
12. Fire prevention procedures are suitable. Staff regularly check fire prevention equipment. Fire evacuation drills are held with appropriate frequency. Pupils and staff know how to react if an alarm is sounded. Recommendations from annual external fire safety audits are acted upon efficiently.
13. Pupils are sufficiently supervised during the school day. Leaders ensure that suitable ratios are maintained for visits off site. Pupils know how to access adult support throughout the day. They feel safe in school. Leaders have planned additional staffing to meet the supervisory needs of an increased number of pupils.
14. Leaders have the skills needed to identify and manage risk. Staff receive suitable training on risk mitigation. Leaders ensure that risk assessments are regularly reviewed to remain current. Staff use an online platform to share risk assessments and risk avoidance strategies effectively. Risk assessments are in place for all classrooms, specialist activities, educational visits and welfare situations.
15. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

ISSR paragraphs 18, 19, 20 and 21

16. Leaders maintain an appropriately clear single central record (SCR) of recruitment checks. They ensure that all necessary checks are carried out before an adult begins working at the school. Staff files, which accompany the SCR, are well maintained and collate the required information efficiently. The oversight of the SCR by leaders and the proprietor is frequent and effective.
17. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29

18. The school's premises are well maintained. Any maintenance requirements are responded to quickly. Staff keep effective maintenance records.

19. The toilet and washing facilities are suitable. They are sufficient in number to cater for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
20. Water temperatures are controlled effectively. Across the site, there are sufficient facilities for drinking water, which are clearly labelled.
21. Effective internal and external lighting is in place. The acoustic conditions in classrooms are suitable.
22. Leaders have ensured that the school's medical facilities are appropriate. They provide suitable privacy for pupils. Staff manage medicines appropriately. There is lockable storage in place for sharp materials and prescription medicines.
23. The school's outdoor space is used effectively for physical education and a variety of recreational activities, such as basketball. In addition, the school uses off-site facilities, including a local gym for kickboxing and a nearby park, to support pupils' physical health and wellbeing.
24. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

25. Leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding policy is available on its website. The policy is updated regularly and reflects any changes to statutory guidance.
26. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

27. The proprietor ensures that leaders have the skills and knowledge for the school to meet the Standards. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of the school, supported by the board of governors who visit the school regularly.
28. Leaders' centre their decision-making on promoting pupils' wellbeing. They have established a culture where staff understand the needs of each pupil and develop relationships based on trust and support.
29. Leaders have consulted widely and planned appropriately for the proposed increased capacity. They have effective plans in place to repurpose facilities and for the expansion of the safeguarding team. Leaders have assessed the risks associated with increased capacity. They have planned for the proposed increase to be incremental to maintain the consistency of provision.
30. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Norton College Tewkesbury
Department for Education number	916/6021
Address	Norton College Tewkesbury International Way Tewkesbury Gloucestershire GL20 8UQ
Phone number	01684 423163
Email address	tewkesburyoffice@nortoncollege.org.uk
Website	www.nortoncollege.org.uk/tewkesbury
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Limited
Chair	Mr Richard Power
Headteacher	Mrs Lauren Tallis
Age range	11 to 19
Number of pupils	50
Date of previous inspection	8 to 10 July 2025 (Ofsted)

Information about the school

31. Norton College, Tewkesbury is an independent co-educational day special school in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. It is owned by the Acorn Care and Education group which is part of the Outcomes First group of schools. There is a local advisory board of peer governors whose members are headteachers within the Acorn group. Pupils come to the school from two local authorities. Many have experienced disrupted schooling and join the school with social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). Most pupils are educated on site although a very small number of pupils are educated at home.
32. The school's previous inspection was carried out by Ofsted. This is the first inspection of the school by ISI.
33. The school has identified all pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
34. The school has not identified any pupils who speak English as an additional language.
35. The school states that its aims are to support pupils who are not able to benefit from mainstream education, by removing barriers to learning and building re-engagement in an atmosphere of kindness, warmth and high aspirations.

Purpose of the material change inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

5 June 2026

36. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for one day.

37. Inspection activities included

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- a tour of the school site to check the suitability of facilities
- discussions with the proprietor
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant Standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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