

# School inspection report

24 to 26 March 2026

## **Kitebrook Preparatory School**

Kitebrook House

Moreton-in-Marsh

GL56 0RP

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'.

## Contents

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS .....	5
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>6</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	7
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	9
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING.....</b>	<b>10</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	11
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>12</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	13
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>14</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	14
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>17</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors play a pivotal role in supporting and overseeing school leaders, ensuring leadership is effective and accountable. Through regular visits and open, transparent communication, governors closely monitor leaders' actions to ensure they uphold the school's ethos and high standards. Effective working with the proprietor's group of schools allows leaders to access shared policies, expertise and resources, enhancing their ability to innovate and adapt to emerging challenges. Governors ensure that the school meets the Standards consistently and fosters a culture of continuous improvement.
2. Leaders make decisions that reflect the school's core aim of delivering an education that preserves childhood. With this approach, pupils play, explore and develop socially, emotionally and academically. Outdoor education is a distinctive feature. Leaders successfully communicate this vision, ensuring staff and pupils understand and promote it. This shared commitment helps create a positive environment where pupils feel confident, develop self-esteem and are well prepared for future success.
3. Leaders implement a broad curriculum that reflects high expectations. It is carefully planned, makes use of the extensive grounds and helps pupils gain new knowledge and develop skills across a wide range of subjects. Most lessons are planned well and delivered effectively. However, in a few lessons, teaching does not provide activities or questions that encourage pupils to extend their thinking or allow them to apply their learning in more complex ways.
4. A well-structured personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum are delivered through the school's relationships, health and citizenship (RHC) education. Carefully sequenced lessons contribute to an inclusive atmosphere where pupils demonstrate considerate and respectful interactions towards their teachers and each other. Caring staff know pupils well and respond to their individual needs effectively.
5. Leaders encourage pupils to help others. Pupils take on leadership roles, participate in charity work and build links both within the school and in the wider community. Pupils demonstrate pride in their school and understand that everyone deserves respect, irrespective of differences. As pupils progress through the school, they develop independence, empathy, resilience and effective communication skills.
6. Children in the early years build secure foundations for future learning through a thoughtfully planned curriculum that offers a stimulating introduction to school life and balances nurture with challenge. Supportive teachers develop children's communication, early literacy, collaboration and exploratory play to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive.
7. Boarding leaders promote a welcoming, supportive community. The flexible boarding provision enables pupils to benefit from a nurturing, secure setting and enjoy a diverse selection of engaging activities.
8. Safeguarding arrangements adhere to current statutory guidance. Staff have a thorough understanding of safeguarding procedures and receive ongoing training. Leaders support staff, maintain comprehensive records and act promptly when concerns arise. Governors closely monitor

these practices. A robust safeguarding culture is evident in all aspects of school life, including day, early years and boarding provision.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

## Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure teaching consistently challenges pupils to extend their thinking and develop their own ideas, so that they deepen their understanding and apply their learning in more complex ways.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. The proprietor provides effective governance that challenges and supports leaders. The proprietor's team of staff and governance committees undertake a range of activities to ensure comprehensive oversight. They facilitate operational support, encourage sharing of best practice and ensure leaders have access to ongoing training. The governing board enhances accountability through regular reporting, effective data use, school visits and active engagement with leaders. The proprietor has a precise understanding of successes and areas needing further development in the school's work.
10. Leaders promote a shared vision for a happy and nurturing environment for all pupils. Staff promote and embed this vision across the school, curriculum and boarding life. Caring leaders and staff make pupils' wellbeing the central focus and prioritise the academic, personal and social development of pupils. Leaders possess the skills and knowledge to meet their responsibilities and ensure the school meets the requirements of the Standards and those related to the early years consistently.
11. Leaders are committed to improvement. They engage in effective self-evaluation, ongoing reflection and purposeful action. This approach drives robust decisions. Leaders seek feedback from across the school community, ensuring that pupils and staff views are heard and valued. Leaders act on this feedback to respond to the evolving needs of the school community and to support sustained growth. For example, leaders have enhanced facilities for wellbeing, extended the outdoor education programme and overhauled the writing scheme. These changes have a positive effect on pupils' personal growth, social skills, and academic progress.
12. The school meets its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. This includes effective implementation of an accessibility plan. Leaders identify and enact measures to ensure all pupils can access the site, information and curriculum. For example, lighting has been upgraded and training for staff to support different classroom needs has been enhanced.
13. The school ensures that parents are provided with required information, often through the school's website. This includes details on school and boarding procedures and key policies. A weekly newsletter provides the parent body with details on many aspects of school life. Parents receive regular updates on their child's academic and pastoral progress, including through parents' evenings and annual reports.
14. Leaders stay updated on legislative changes and seek guidance from external agencies. This ensures their decisions reflect current best practice. Leaders collaborate with external professionals including safeguarding partners and mental health specialists. When pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times, leaders inform the local authority. Leaders understand their responsibilities to work with the local authority should any pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). These external partnerships underpin a unified strategy, enrich decision-making and support both academic progress and pupils' emotional wellbeing.
15. Leaders maintain strategic oversight of risk. They review detailed risk assessments to safeguard pupils' wellbeing. This incorporates assessments for educational visits including overseas trips, and the premises, such as the climbing area and boarding. Precise procedures and ongoing staff training ensure staff identify and mitigate potential risks. These steps keep risk management effective and up to date.

16. Leaders have established a robust and transparent complaints procedure. This enables parents to raise concerns both informally and formally. All complaints are addressed promptly. There is thorough documentation and monitoring of outcomes in accordance with the policy.
17. Leaders in the early years create stimulating, secure and well-resourced environments that challenge children and build confidence. They conduct regular supervision meetings to support and monitor staff development. Communication with parents is effective and consistent. Staff consistently prioritise children's wellbeing and achievement.
18. Knowledgeable and experienced boarding leaders ensure consistent adherence to the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools (NMS). They foster positive, respectful relationships and provide care and attention to boarders. They ensure that pupils enjoy the opportunity to board, feel well cared for and are happy to raise concerns in an environment that supports their wellbeing.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance**

19. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. Leaders have designed a broad, suitable curriculum and regularly review it to ensure that it meets pupils' abilities and learning needs. Recent changes such as adding classical civilisation for Years 3 to 5 broaden pupils' cultural knowledge and deepen their understanding of different societies. Leaders prioritise the steady growth of pupils' core competencies in oracy, reading, writing and numeracy. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in subject areas such as physical education (PE), music, art and modern foreign languages.
21. A well-planned outdoor education curriculum, including farm school, rural crafts, gardening and woodland learning, provides pupils with meaningful, hands-on experiences. High-quality teaching in outdoor education lessons inspires curiosity, nurtures individuality and builds resilience, teamwork and independence. Pupils develop practical skills and connect with nature as they manage allotments, care for ducks and chickens and practise traditional crafts such as willow craftwork.
22. Teachers structure lessons well and have good subject knowledge. They manage the learning environment effectively and use a range of high-quality resources. This results in calm, productive classrooms. Pupils typically demonstrate responsible attitudes towards their work. They have positive relationships with their teachers, who willingly give of their time to help pupils.
23. Many teachers provide stimulating activities and use carefully targeted questions to encourage pupils to think independently and apply their learning in more complex ways. For example, in Year 3 pupils examine and compare skulls to identify features of different animals and in Year 5 art, they mix paint to create an index of colour samples. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not provide activities or questions that prompt pupils to think independently or apply their learning in increasingly complex ways.
24. A robust assessment framework is in place. Leaders carefully review a range of assessment information to guide teachers on how to provide more focused support. Many teachers provide pupils with effective guidance that helps them understand where they can improve and deepen their learning. Consequently, pupils learn the intended curriculum effectively. They develop a thorough knowledge of important foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics. In particular, the school's oracy programme for all years helps develop highly articulate, confident pupils who readily express their thoughts and opinions. As a result, pupils are well prepared to transition to secondary school and many secure places at selective secondary schools with scholarships.
25. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) swiftly advance in their language development, benefiting from a proactive and supportive teaching approach. Regular assessment ensures that support is adapted to pupils' individual needs. Staff anticipate language barriers and implement targeted support, such as structured discussions, keyword lists and visual aids, to build vocabulary and comprehension. This ensures that pupils who speak EAL develop essential linguistic skills and access the curriculum effectively alongside their peers.
26. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified appropriately. Leaders ensure that teachers provide support tailored to pupils' individual needs. For example, when required, pupils receive additional adult assistance, structured activities, visual sequencing and alternative recording methods. Leaders work closely with pupils and parents to monitor pupils'

learning and development. As a result of the school's collaborative and collective work, pupils with SEND are well supported to access the curriculum and learn and develop well. They are ready for a successful transition to secondary school.

27. The co-curricular programme offers a diverse and inclusive range of activities, enabling pupils to develop their interests, self-confidence and leadership skills. Pupils extend their abilities and broaden their interests through clubs such as clay-pigeon shooting, cookery and chess. Creative and enrichment sessions deepen specific techniques. For example, pupils develop advanced public speaking skills through debating and build empathy and collaboration through servant-leadership activities. Extensive sporting and team-based opportunities promote co-operation and resilience.
28. The early years curriculum is carefully planned, and skilled teaching enables children to become independent, inquisitive and confident learners. Staff adapt activities to meet children's needs and preferences, increasing participation and deepening understanding. Leaders embed rich language experiences throughout the provision. Teachers guide children in developing phonics, expanding vocabulary, and applying mathematics through practical activities. As a result, children learn and develop well and are ready to transition into Year 1.
29. Boarding arrangements make a positive contribution to boarders' academic progress and personal development. Boarders benefit from a varied programme of activities and free time. Staff use the school grounds and indoor spaces fully to support social and physical development. Boarders have dedicated time for prep and access to quiet spaces for relaxation, as well as opportunities for creative and outdoor pursuits including making edible Easter displays and playing flashlight tag.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 30. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

31. Pupils' spiritual awareness is supported effectively. Through the spirituality and theology, philosophy and religion (TPR) curriculum and assemblies, pupils are given opportunities to appreciate non-material aspects of life and think deeply. The curriculum fosters appreciation for different methods of reflection. For instance, pupils in Year 2 learn about special places; they draw features of a mosque and a synagogue, present facts about Eid and explain the symbolism of the cross at Easter. Mindfulness sessions and structured reflection in assemblies or end-of-day prayers prompt pupils to pause, reflect on their thoughts and feelings and consider others' experiences.
32. Pupils develop self-awareness and confidence through a wide array of purposeful experiences, such as daily form time with intentionally planned routines. Pupils regularly present, perform and celebrate achievements, reinforcing belief in their abilities. Curriculum activities, including outdoor learning and oracy, foster self-reflection, resilience and confident communication. The school's reporting framework focuses on personal development, encouraging growth in curiosity, initiative and effort, which inspires pupils to strive for improvement.
33. Specialist PE and games teaching enables pupils to value exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum includes football, fitness, cricket and swimming and supports a 'sport for all' culture. Teachers encourage inclusivity and ensure pupils feel comfortable participating. Talented athletes benefit from a structured enrichment pathway. This programme provides extra support, including individual coaching sessions, to help pupils reach high levels of achievement. Pupils' involvement in sport and physical activities helps them to develop co-ordination, confidence, self-esteem and teamwork.
34. The well-considered PSHE curriculum is embedded throughout the school. This encompasses the required content and age-appropriate teaching of RSE. Leaders consult with parents and pupils to keep the programme relevant. Pupils learn about a range of topics, including consent, personal boundaries and the importance of respecting others' decisions. Discussion in lessons and workshops provides pupils with strategies to manage peer pressure and to understand views from different perspectives. Topics such as diversity, mental health and healthy eating help pupils understand how to support both their emotional and physical development.
35. Leaders set clear expectations for behaviour through the well-embedded code of conduct. These expectations are displayed throughout the school and understood by pupils and staff. Pupils' behaviour is consistently of a high standard, encouraged by a rewards system that recognises qualities such as resilience and self-reflection, with the tradition of receiving badges. Leaders monitor behaviour records closely and respond promptly to address any concerns that arise.
36. The school has an effective anti-bullying strategy and actively seeks to prevent and minimise bullying, for example through anti-bullying workshops and parental engagement. Instances of bullying are rare. Bullying records are maintained and leaders' ongoing analysis of emerging patterns enables timely and appropriate strategies, where required.
37. In the early years, leaders and staff nurture children's emotional and mental wellbeing through focused initiatives such as circle time, regulation zones and yoga. These efforts help children manage emotions, build resilience and support each other. Staff listen attentively, promote open discussions

and celebrate children's achievements. A comprehensive physical activity programme, including specialist PE teaching, enhances children's gross and fine motor skills.

38. Well-informed staff and leaders embed a secure health and safety culture. They manage health and safety practices effectively and respond promptly to any concerns, including those related to fire risk and boarding. First aid accommodation and arrangements are appropriate, managed by well-trained staff, including those with paediatric first aid training. Pupils are well supervised, including through suitable staff-to-child ratios in the early years. Leaders maintain appropriate records and ensure that the premises remain suitable for pupils and promote their wellbeing.
39. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained, with active monitoring resulting in high attendance rates. Staff communicate regularly with parents and link with the local authority to support leaders in improving attendance. Staff use clear procedures to monitor patterns and follow up on concerns quickly.
40. Leaders have established a flexi-boarding setting that is welcoming, safe and adaptable. The physical needs of boarders are met by providing opportunities for exercise, socialising and relaxation. Boarders have convenient access to a variety of nutritious meals and snacks to support their wellbeing and academic performance. They are able to store their belongings securely. Boarders are encouraged to share their views and suggest improvements through discussions, meetings and an annual questionnaire. Supervision for boarders is equally well managed, with staff in the boarding house available to provide appropriate support, including overnight.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- 41. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

42. Pupils learn to value and understand respect and diversity in meaningful, age-appropriate ways. Pupils learn about topics such as gender stereotypes, racism, systemic injustice and discrimination. Teachers choose texts carefully to help pupils to understand these themes, such as *Journey to Jo'burg* and *Noughts and Crosses* or, for older pupils, when studying the experience of Alan Turing. Pupils celebrate festivals like Diwali and Holi, explore artistic traditions from Jamaica and Ukraine and participate in theme days such as 'Caribbean carnival day'. They study historical figures from varied cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds. They debate ethical questions, such as euthanasia, from multiple religious and cultural perspectives. From these varied and well-planned experiences, pupils cultivate respectful appreciation for those of different faiths, beliefs, lifestyles and cultures.
43. The school develops pupils' economic awareness. The well-sequenced and planned curriculum teaches pupils about concepts such as economic migration, profit, loss, bank accounts and income and expenditure. Teachers also support pupils to understand how financial circumstances can affect emotions and help them identify wants versus needs. Leaders reinforce financial education with entrepreneurial activities. For example, pupils in Year 8 run the tuck shop and pupils in Years 3 to 5 take part in a young enterprise project to create a business, such as designing and selling T-shirts. These experiences let pupils apply their knowledge and skills in real-world contexts.
44. Leaders adopt a culture in which pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and understand right from wrong. Staff provide clear expectations and use a restorative approach that guides pupils to consider the impact of their actions, reflect thoughtfully and rebuild relationships. This is further supported by assemblies and classroom activities that deepen pupils' awareness of the principles and laws that underpin democratic life.
45. Teachers design curriculum topics, such as crime and punishment in history, learning about the National Health Service in PSHE and studying the British government in citizenship, to develop pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. They use practical experiences, including mock trials, trips to Bletchley Park and visits from legal professionals, to foster appreciation and respect for laws, public institutions and democracy. Staff present any political views brought to pupils' attention in a balanced way.
46. The promotion of social skills in the early years underpins the school's inclusive and caring ethos. Specialist teaching in music and drama nurtures creativity and appreciation of different cultures. Classroom routines are designed to encourage independence and provide opportunities for children to develop autonomy, play co-operatively and solve problems. For example, after outdoor learning, children sensibly hang up their coats and wellies. During child-initiated learning, children work together to build a car, sharing materials, communicating their ideas and collaborating to achieve the common goal of getting to a dinosaur world. Through these experiences, children strengthen their abilities in turn-taking, negotiation and collaboration.
47. Pupils receive effective careers guidance. This comprehensive programme, called 'next steps', broadens pupils' awareness of career pathways and societal roles. Leaders support pupils as they prepare for their next phase of education. They assist older pupils in getting ready for examinations and provide activities that develop interview and presentation skills. Careers advice features regular speakers. Leaders seek speakers of varied ethnicities and genders to challenge stereotypes and

encourage pupils to value diversity. Recent speakers have discussed careers in the BBC, artificial intelligence and neuropharmacology.

48. Pupils have opportunities to develop responsibility and assume leadership positions across many areas of school life, including boarding. They value chances to contribute to their school community, such as serving as a wellbeing prefect, a sports captain or a pupil parliament member. Pupils see their feedback result in tangible improvements. For example, after discussions, the school introduced a cookery club and improved outdoor clothing.
49. Pupils contribute positively to the wider community through well-planned charitable and partnership activities. Community links grow through events such as a dog show and an annual classic car show. Leaders collaborate with a nearby Rotary club, enabling pupils to plan fundraising events, including cake sales, to support Ukraine and a local nursing home. Through these experiences, pupils demonstrate compassion, develop a sense of social responsibility and become positive citizens in the community.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society**

- 50. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

51. Leaders have established an effective safeguarding culture. This is outlined appropriately in the safeguarding policy, which is available on the school's website.
52. Leaders are well trained and knowledgeable. They encourage ongoing dialogue and build trust among pupils, staff and parents. They respond swiftly and thoroughly to any concerns that arise. They are consistent and thorough in their approach to recording and monitoring safeguarding concerns, including low-level concerns about staff. They work effectively in purposeful partnerships with external agencies, such as children's services and the police. They refer, seek advice and work collaboratively when there are concerns.
53. New staff receive comprehensive induction training that equips them with clarity and confidence in their safeguarding roles. Leaders also provide regular safeguarding updates and training to all staff, including child-on-child abuse, radicalisation or extremism. These enable staff to stay informed, vigilant and up to date with statutory guidance, including contextual safeguarding risks for boarders and the youngest children in the early years. Staff identify and respond to concerns appropriately. They use the school's reporting system effectively.
54. Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. Through a range of activity, they oversee and check on the effectiveness of leaders' safeguarding work. For example, the designated safeguarding governor visits the site routinely, speaks with pupils and staff and reviews documentation. Governors regularly review reports on the school's wider information, looking at themes and trends in pupils' experiences and leaders' actions. They rigorously review and ensure the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding work.
55. Leaders have created a culture where adults are vigilant to pupils' welfare. Positive relationships between pupils and staff ensure that pupils' concerns are heard and addressed. Various methods are available for pupils to report their concerns, such as, for example, through an online form. Trained staff, such as emotional literacy support assistants (ELSAs), offer individualised, specialist support when needed. Boarders know who to approach, including the contact information and role of independent advocates.
56. Pupils are taught how to stay safe. They learn about safety in an age-appropriate way, including physical safety when climbing or when handling animals. When learning about online safety, pupils learn about topics such as media influence, helping pupils distinguish between fact and fiction and how to identify and report online bullying. Leaders implement suitable internet filtering and monitoring systems. They review and address any concerns effectively and promptly.
57. Leaders are knowledgeable and well trained in safer recruitment practices. They undertake all appropriate pre-employment checks on adults before they work with pupils and boarders. They accurately record these checks in the single central record (SCR) and maintain well-organised files.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

**58. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Kitebrook Preparatory School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	931/6118
<b>Registered charity number</b>	309243
<b>Address</b>	Kitebrook Preparatory School Kitebrook House Moreton-in-Marsh Gloucestershire GL56 0RP
<b>Phone number</b>	01698 674350
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@kitebrook.org.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.kitebrook.org.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Peter's College, Radley
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Smellie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Christine Cook (interim headteacher)
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 13
<b>Number of pupils</b>	344
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	20
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 to 2 February 2023

## Information about the school

59. Kitebrook Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. It is located in Moreton-in-Marsh in Gloucestershire. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was a charitable trust run by Prep Schools Trust. Since September 2025, the school has remained a charitable trust but is now overseen by St Peter's College, Radley, with a new chair. This proprietor is responsible for the management of several schools, collectively known as the Radley Schools Group. The proprietor provides governance through the oversight of its chief executive and several committees which collectively form the Council of Radley College. There is also a local advisory group which provides advice to the headteacher.
60. The school comprises three sections: a pre-prep, for children in the early years to Year 2; a middle school, for pupils in Years 3 to 5; and a senior school, for pupils in Years 6 to 8. The current interim headteacher started her role at the school in September 2025.
61. There is one co-educational boarding house located within the main school building, providing for boarders from Years 4 to 8. The school offers boarding on a flexible basis.
62. The early years setting comprises 67 children, who are taught in two Nursery and three Reception classes.
63. The school has identified 52 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Currently no pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
64. The school has identified English as an additional language for 10 pupils.
65. The school states that its aims are to develop each pupil holistically in a happy, safe and unique environment that preserves childhood. It endeavours to tailor the learning experience to individual needs and nurture confident and respectful children who are resilient and reflective learners. It seeks to establish strong relationships within the school community and maintain an environment conducive to pupils using their initiative to problem solve.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

24 to 26 March 2026

66. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

67. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of co-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair of the executive team and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

68. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**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](http://www.isi.net)**.

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For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)