

School inspection report

12 to 14 March 2024

Manor House School

Manor House Lane

Little Bookham

Leatherhead

KT23 4EN

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

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

Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders and governors are successful in promoting the wellbeing of pupils. Pupils are well supported and happy because leaders encourage a nurturing and caring environment which embodies the school's motto, 'to love is to live'.
2. The school's seven core values are widely understood and often expressed in the community life of the school. Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard to achieve their best. They are motivated and diligent in many activities. Pupils work together collaboratively and support each other well. They take pride in each other's achievements as well as their own. Pupils are caring, accept that everyone is an individual and enjoy spending time together.
3. There are robust systems in place throughout the school to promote a culture of safeguarding, to minimise the risk of harm and to deal effectively with any pastoral concerns. These are understood well by pupils and staff.
4. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in school life through drama, music and sport and pupils develop their creative and aesthetic skills through the arts. Their work is displayed around the school for everyone to enjoy and many take part in annual performances.
5. Pupils make good progress and achieve well at all stages in relation to their abilities. Teachers know their pupils very well and they provide considerable pastoral support. Teachers give pupils individual feedback on their academic work, which helps pupils to know what to do to improve.
6. Teachers do not always adapt their planning in lessons to implement the strategies in individual support plans. When they do, pupils engage quickly and effectively with their learning and find it easier to make progress.
7. Leaders prioritise mental health and emotional wellbeing and there are effective systems in place to ensure that pupils are listened to and can find an adult to talk to if they need support. Pupils greatly value the supportive relationships they have with staff.
8. Leaders provide a well-designed curriculum which includes a wide range of subject choices at GCSE for a school of its size. Pupils appreciate the scope they have to choose subjects they enjoy and they are motivated to work hard.
9. Careers education and preparation for transition to sixth form at other schools does not always give older pupils the information they need to make decisions about the range of opportunities available to them. Leaders are aware of this and have begun to implement a new careers programme; however, this is not yet embedded.
10. Leaders are developing the early years setting and there is now a more flexible structure in place in which planning responds to the children's interests and needs. The children enjoy their learning because of the dynamic environment and the very positive relationships they have with adults in school.

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 that teachers make use of the individual support plans for pupils who have SEND in their lesson planning so that pupils have the opportunity to make further progress within lessons
- continue to develop the breadth of careers and post-16 advice to ensure pupils' effective transition to their next steps in education and the working world beyond school.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. The school joined the Effingham Schools Trust (EST) in September 2023 and there is a newly comprised governing body including two members of the trust and a new external governor with responsibility for safeguarding who has a clear understanding of contextual risks. The trust has an executive team including an executive head who is developing a collaborative relationship with the school's senior leadership team and is overseeing the new strategic plan.
12. Governors support and challenge school leaders. They recognise the importance of ensuring school leaders have the training they need to fulfil their responsibilities and ensure the wellbeing of pupils. Governors are well informed about the school and promote its seven core values effectively. They have detailed discussions with school leaders about pupil progress and about pastoral care and safeguarding arrangements. They visit the school regularly to see procedures in action, as well as receiving reports in committee and board meetings. Governors analyse the GCSE results annually alongside the deputy head, evaluating the performance of various groups within the cohort and identifying future priorities.
13. Leaders are reflective and there is a detailed school development plan in place. Leaders seek ways to enhance the opportunities provided for pupils. They are committed to ensuring that pupils enjoy their time at school, make good progress and continue to achieve well in relation to their starting points. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to have additional help with their learning and teachers offer extra classes to support preparation for the GCSE examinations in Year 11. Consequently, pupils, including those who have SEND, achieve grades which are in line with predictions and usually surpass them.
14. Leaders have implemented an effective communication system which actively promotes the pupils' mental health and emotional wellbeing. The special educational needs and disability co-ordinator (SENCO) and pastoral leaders provide a detailed and informative weekly bulletin for staff which identifies strategies for use in the classroom for individual pupils. Pastoral and safeguarding concerns are recorded in detail and followed up meticulously. In order to ensure that all staff are implementing this guidance consistently, it would be helpful for senior leaders to adopt a more rigorous approach to the quality assurance of classroom teaching for those pupils who have SEND.
15. Leaders have a well-considered approach to the management of risk and take great care to ensure that risk is assessed effectively and mitigated to minimise the risk of harm. For example, there are new systems in place for site security and new pathways to improve accessibility.
16. There is a new leadership structure in place in the early years. Leaders are implementing an ambitious plan for the children in nursery and kindergarten, which includes a new range of activities planned to engage the children actively with their learning and to create a more inspiring environment. There are regular supervision meetings with staff to coach and develop professional practice as well as to talk about any concerns. These developments are new and have been embraced positively by staff. This is reflected in a more responsive approach to planning which is flexible and reflects the interests of the children, although as yet it is too early to see their full impact on the final outcomes for pupils at the end of Reception.
17. Parents receive the appropriate information about their children in a timely manner. Parents have a detailed annual report as well as progress reports following assessments. Parents have regular

opportunities to meet with leaders and other members of staff, which they value. Leaders encourage parents to attend information evenings and school events and parents respond positively to the school's open-door policy.

18. Information is provided annually to the local authority for those pupils with an education, health and care plan to inform the annual review. There is an appropriate and carefully considered accessibility plan in place with timescales and action points, which fulfils the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
19. The complaints procedure is clear and easy to follow. Communication with parents is effective and as a result, there are very few formal complaints. If any arise, these are handled in line with the policy, and are recorded appropriately.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. Pupils develop their academic, linguistic, creative and aesthetic skills well because the curriculum throughout the school includes a broad range of subjects, providing many opportunities for pupils to discover areas of interest and develop their understanding. Pupils choose from a wide range of options for GCSE given the size of the school and, in addition, the school offers some vocational qualifications. In this way, the curriculum is well constructed to meet the aptitudes and needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to gain knowledge and learn new skills, and they make good progress from their starting points, including in the early years.
22. The curriculum in the early years has been reviewed and enhanced to include a wide range of stimulating and enjoyable activities for pupils to choose. Children immerse themselves in hands-on experiences, including Forest school and messy play. Adults listen carefully to the children and respond to their interests, so planning is both closely matched to their learning goals and their preferences. They make swift progress as a result.
23. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in the plentiful extra-curricular activities available. These increase in number as pupils progress through the school. Leaders review the offer regularly and respond to pupils' suggestions about what they would like to try. Most pupils participate, whether in music, art, drama, physical activities and performances or in academic extra-curricular opportunities to support GCSE work. There are a number of residential trips for the prep and senior school through which pupils develop their independence and self-confidence.
24. Pupils make good progress across the school and in all subjects because there is a robust system in place to track achievement. Leaders have a good understanding of progress data and use the results from termly class assessments to identify pupils who may need additional support. There is comprehensive intervention to provide individual help. Pupils and parents value this support because it builds confidence and helps pupils to make additional progress.
25. Pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities and the analysis of GCSE results indicates that pupils usually achieve above the grade expected from their assessed starting points. Consequently, they are able to pursue their choice of courses in sixth form. Pupils in the early years achieve well in relation to the early learning goals and their outcomes show that they make good progress across all areas of learning and are well prepared for their next steps.
26. Pupils preparing for exams have the access arrangements they need to approach GCSE exams with confidence. The curriculum is adjusted when appropriate to make the workload manageable for pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have regular weekly meetings with the SEND co-ordinator or teaching assistants to monitor their academic progress and to support their wellbeing. Pupils appreciate these opportunities. The outcomes for pupils who have SEND in the most recent GCSE examinations are in line with their assessed starting points.
27. Pupils who have SEND know what they need to do to support their own learning. Pupils use a range of strategies in class including reader pens, noise-cancelling headphones and technology to enable them to access learning more easily.
28. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported and make good progress in their speaking and writing skills.

29. Electronic resources and technology are used effectively across the school. In a senior music lesson, technology is used to provide opportunities for feedback when recording tasks which enables pupils to view their progress and teachers to offer targeted feedback. In a prep French lesson, an electronic resource is used to facilitate a vocabulary challenge where pupils compete against each other. Technology is used regularly in lessons and pupils have the technological skills they need to use devices successfully to enhance their learning and improve the quality of their work by annotating texts, answering questions and editing their written work.
30. Teachers across the school have a thorough understanding of their subject matter and typically use this to ensure that new material is presented in an accessible way. In the best lessons, there is a carefully selected range of activities which keeps pupils highly engaged and develops their skills and knowledge rapidly through resources which are well matched to their abilities. Pupils enjoy tackling open-ended questions. Those with high prior attainment are encouraged to extend their thinking and to synthesise ideas.
31. Sometimes teachers clearly adapt their teaching and resources to consider the individual support plans for pupils who have SEND, for example, by maintaining a running list of new words using diagrams and visual examples to support understanding of scientific concepts or adding additional scaffolding to worksheets. These adaptations facilitate pupils making good progress. However, at times, teaching does not employ the strategies identified to meet pupils' needs, and in these cases, pupils make more limited progress in class.
32. Teachers are adept at encouraging pupils to develop their confidence through discussion in lessons. Pupils are articulate and their language is well developed from a young age. For example, they use correct mathematical language, as seen in prep school lessons when pupils use accurate vocabulary to describe mathematical concepts. In the early years, children are happy and chatty in the setting; they talk readily to each other and to adults using precise, descriptive vocabulary. In the best examples, pupils with high prior attainment are challenged in lessons to take their learning further through the skilful use of challenging questions by teachers.
33. Teaching is inclusive and typically pupils are able to participate well in lessons because of the warm relationships they have with teachers. This creates a nurturing atmosphere in which pupils are comfortable to share with others what they have learned and to ask for additional help if they need it.

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

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

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

35. Leaders are deeply committed to the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils. This is seen through the school's seven core values, which are the foundations of school life. Leaders have prioritised creating an environment in which individuals can thrive because they are nurtured by caring members of staff who listen to them and respond to their concerns.
36. Pupils are kind to each other and their behaviour is excellent. Pupils' self-awareness is well-developed as is their awareness of the needs and feelings of others. This is seen in the way pupils support each other in class and in house events, as well as in their daily life in school.
37. Pupils appreciate the many ways they are able to share their concerns. They talk to a range of supportive adults in schools, whether within the SEND department, with pastoral staff or with the emotional literacy support assistant. Across the school they know who to go to if they need to talk because this is consistently reinforced by adults. As a result, pupils' confidence grows.
38. Pupils understand how to look after their physical health and are keen for opportunities to play sport and to compete. Pupils in the prep school understand about healthy lifestyles and they feel well prepared for the changes that occur during puberty through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, called PSHRSE in school, and the open manner in which they discuss this in class. This continues through the senior school where leaders ensure the PSHRSE curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence in a programme that includes visits from outside speakers to address a range of topics including mental health, eating disorders and relationships and sex education.
39. There are warm relationships between pupils and each other, and pupils and staff. Pupils are happy in school. Pupils become self-confident and self-assured. This develops as they progress through the school because they have opportunities to self-reflect and to lead. Pupils work collaboratively with others both older and younger than themselves, whether as prefects, in school productions and events or competitions, or as mentors to new pupils and supportive friends to their peers.
40. Pupils in the early years are happy in the setting, quickly settling with their key adults in school. They are happy to talk about their emotions. They are kind to each other and can explain why it is important to share. They express their preferences and reassure each other. This was seen, for example, when one child generously gave the pencil they were using to another when asked, who in turn promised to give it back as soon as they were finished.
41. Bullying concerns are taken seriously and there is a robust procedure in place to deal quickly with any concerns raised. Incidents are rare and both pupils and staff are aware of what actions to take. These are comprehensively recorded and monitored. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.
42. There is an assiduous approach to ensuring that the site is safe and meets all relevant standards. Leaders have the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that risk is effectively identified and mitigated. Leaders are proactive in anticipating changes which may create future risk and taking preventative measures early, for example by reviewing the routing of traffic in anticipation of the growth of the nursery. Leaders are alive to contextual risks and are developing new procedures in light of security incidents which have affected other schools in the county. Record-keeping is

comprehensive and the school actively seeks external expertise where it is required. The school site is maintained to a high standard and the maintenance team are vigilant in identifying issues and repairing them in a timely manner. Teachers are trained in risk assessment and take responsibility for ensuring that activities are carried out safely.

43. There is comfortable medical accommodation and the school has robust procedures in place for ensuring that injuries and illness are dealt with quickly and effectively. Staff are appropriately trained in first aid, including paediatric, and the administration of medicines. Accident logs are analysed and a culture of learning lessons is well embedded at all levels, supported by governor oversight of the Health & Safety Committee.
44. The school maintains admissions and attendance registers in accordance with regulations and leaders take a proactive approach to monitoring attendance within the school. Leaders meet termly to review pupil attendance and identify those that fall below internal thresholds. Where this occurs, an action plan is put in place which escalates as necessary.

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

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

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

46. Pupils experience an effective programme of human, social and economic education. In PSHRSE lessons throughout the school, pupils learn about the importance of respecting others and promoting positive relationships. Pupils learn about the rule of law from a young age, as seen in the reception class learning about the role of the police and their horses and dogs. Pupils understand legal structures relating to different kinds of crime and the reasons why young people may be tempted into illegal behaviour. Pupils explain the meaning and importance of justice eloquently, relating it accurately to society in the past in a religious education lesson where the complexities of justice and freedom were discussed.
47. Pupils are treated as individuals and they are tolerant and understanding of differences because mutual respect is encouraged by leaders. Pupils explore ideas about identity in their PSHRSE lessons and learn about other cultures and celebrate difference across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy history lessons because they provide opportunities for them to engage with meaningful debate, including the story of the British Empire integrating contemporary arguments about the impact of colonialism.
48. Pupils learn the value of democracy through a variety of activities in school such as writing letters of application for positions of responsibility, voting for form captains and representing their peers on the numerous committees that enable pupil voice.
49. Leaders encourage pupils to contribute positively to the lives of others. Pupils give to local charities through annual fundraising events which pupils lead and in which the whole school community participates. Pupils enjoy these opportunities and take responsibility for planning and running stalls as well as accounting for the money raised.
50. Pupils have the personal attributes they need to progress with confidence to their next steps in education and their future lives. Pupils in the prep school are well prepared for the transition into Year 7 through the induction programme which allows them to spend time with senior pupils. Pupils develop an appreciation and understanding of how to keep safe from an early age and know how to keep themselves safe online. The 'junior citizens' programme in Year 6 teaches essential life skills such as calling the emergency services and recognising dangers in the home.
51. Pupils develop a secure understanding of finance through the opportunities in the PSHRSE curriculum to learn about personal banking, debt and money management in a series of online lessons. Pupils put these skills into practice, for example in leading and managing school events like the annual fundraising charity day, which they organise.
52. Leaders have recently begun to update the careers provision following feedback in surveys from pupils. Currently, not all senior pupils are clear about the range of pathways and opportunities available to them for their next steps in education. There is a new strategy in place, led by a member of the leadership team, which includes careers mapping in Year 9 and a focus on post-16 choices beginning earlier in Year 10. Pupils are beginning to benefit from these changes and feel they receive more helpful advice. However, the strategy is not yet embedded.

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

53. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

54. Leaders put safeguarding at the centre of decision-making and this promotes a culture of effective safeguarding and minimises the risk of harm. There is a comprehensive annual safeguarding audit which school leaders share with the governing body. Governors effectively support the leadership team to ensure that all due processes are followed and that the appropriate training is in place for staff. Governors receive training on the oversight of safeguarding and there is a newly appointed governor with responsibility for safeguarding who visits the school to listen to pupils' views.
55. Pupils of all ages are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including online. There is a robust firewall and filtering system in place which is monitored regularly and tested. Staff follow up any breaches immediately and they are recorded and evaluated.
56. There is a clear and thorough system for reporting and recording any concerns, which all staff know and use well. Pupils can share concerns in a variety of ways, including worry boxes and an application on the tablets which all pupils from Year 6 upwards use in school. They can explain what to do if they have a concern and are reminded regularly about the safeguarding team and organisations which can offer support.
57. Staff raise any concerns quickly and those with responsibility for safeguarding act swiftly to address them effectively. Safeguarding leads seek advice as required, including from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO), and work closely with partnerships when appropriate to support the wellbeing of pupils and to keep them safe. The safeguarding team is fully aware of local authority procedures.
58. The designated safeguarding leads provide regular high-quality training for staff and important safeguarding messages are frequently and consistently reinforced. This means that the staff as a whole are fully aware of their responsibilities and willing to act when needed, including reporting low-level concerns. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and pastoral care communicate regularly with staff through a weekly bulletin and briefings and this means that safeguarding and pupil wellbeing remain a priority.
59. There are thorough recruitment procedures in place which ensure that all required checks are completed before staff commence employment. These are recorded appropriately in a suitable single central record of appointments. All new members of staff receive thorough induction, including on how to use the school's system for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Manor House School
Department for Education number	936/6068
Registered charity number	312063
Address	Manor House School Manor House Lane Little Bookham Surrey KT23 4EN
Phone number	03172 458538
Email address	admin@manorhouseschool.org
Website	www.manorhouseschool.org
Proprietor	Little Bookham Manor House School
Chair	Mrs Geraldine Sims-Brassett
Headteacher	Ms Tracey Fantham
Age range	2 to 16
Number of pupils	272
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2019

Information about the school

61. Manor House School is an independent day school which became part of the Effingham Schools Trust in September 2023. The school has a co-educational early years and pre-prep up to Year 2. Girls transition into the prep and senior school up to Year 11, with boys moving across to Cranmore School in the trust from Year 3. Pupils have a guaranteed place at the combined Effingham Schools Trust sixth form at the St Teresa's campus. The school is overseen by the trust directors and a board of governors.
62. There are 41 children in the early years which comprises two nursery classes and one reception class.
63. The school has identified 94 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
64. English is an additional language for seven pupils.
65. The school states that its aims are to develop happy young individuals who believe in their abilities and achieve their personal best in a caring and nurturing educational environment. The school promotes seven core values that underpin school life: a love of learning, academic excellence, individual challenge, happy and healthy, creative and collaborative, and future leaders. The school motto is 'to love is to live'.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

12 to 14 March 2024

66. A team of three 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 form time
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- 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**.

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