

School inspection report

6 to 8 January 2026

Collingham College

23 Collingham Gardens

London

SW5 0HL

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'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders have developed a learning environment in which pupils are able to identify and build on their strengths and develop their confidence. Leaders and proprietors work together to review the school's provision and ensure that policies and practices are in place to support pupils' progress and wellbeing.
2. Risk assessment procedures are implemented successfully and reviewed regularly. Leaders manage complaints in accordance with the school's three stage policy. The school provides parents and local authorities with information as required, including annual reviews for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Leaders ensure that adjustments are made to support individual pupils' needs, so that no pupils are discriminated against. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
3. The curriculum is broad, covers a wide range of subjects at GCSE and A level and responds to the strengths and aspirations of pupils. Teachers plan lessons to take account individual pupils' needs, and most use an effective range of strategies and resources to ensure that pupils make good progress. However, in a small number of lessons at GCSE level, pupils' progress is limited by a lack of variety and range of teaching approaches. Pupils have opportunities to participate in activities outside the taught curriculum to further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
4. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive highly personalised support. Assessment is frequent and varied, but the framework for tracking attainment and progress over time is not fully developed and does not provide leaders with appropriate oversight.
5. Leaders place an emphasis on pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing. A 'selfhood' programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is in place, which supports pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils are informed about what constitutes healthy living, but a small number of pupils do not always apply this knowledge to their lifestyle choices. The school monitors attendance and behaviour effectively. Arrangements for health and safety, first aid and supervision are effective.
6. Pupils are encouraged to understand their place in society and to participate in the community. Pupils take part in community projects and develop skills in leadership and teamwork. The curriculum provides effective careers education and develops pupils' financial literacy. Pupils are suitably prepared for further education, training and employment.
7. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies and procedures are aligned with statutory guidance. Staff receive regular training, and recruitment checks are completed before employment starts. Leaders work effectively with external agencies and maintain records of concerns and actions. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online.

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 in all subjects at GCSE level an appropriate range of teaching methods fully supports pupils' needs and ensures they make good progress across all subjects
- develop the assessment framework to evaluate more systematically the progress of pupils so that they fulfil their potential
- encourage pupils to give more consideration to the implications of some of the choices they make about everyday health.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders have established a supportive and nurturing learning environment in which pupils are enabled to discover their strengths, set their own goals and develop their potential and confidence. As a result of teachers' incisive knowledge of individual pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment, pupils benefit from a carefully and sensitively tailored academic programme, which builds upon their personal aspirations. Pupils' success is seen through the perspective of their personal circumstances and the fulfilment of their self-identified targets. This approach is central to leaders' decision-making, which gives careful and sensitive consideration to the impact that the adaptability of the curriculum has on the wellbeing of individual pupils.
9. Self-evaluation procedures are in place to assess the quality of the school's provision and its impact on pupils. Leaders review policy and practice to identify what the school does well and areas for development and use this information to inform future actions.
10. The proprietors, supported by a board of advisors, provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders through regular meetings and reviews. The proprietors and advisors understand the work of the school as a result of regular visits, learning reviews, reports and meetings with senior and middle leaders, teachers and pupils. Leaders demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to lead the school effectively and to meet the Standards consistently. They ensure policies comply with relevant legislation and are implemented effectively and develop effective links with other agencies to promote and benefit pupils' wellbeing. Leaders ensure that staff possess the qualities needed to meet the needs of all pupils and carefully consider actions required to enable pupils to thrive in a safe and secure environment that promotes their progress and wellbeing.
11. Leaders ensure that risk assessment procedures are comprehensive and that they are understood by staff. Risks are identified appropriately and mitigated effectively. Leaders provide clear guidance to staff, informed by a detailed understanding of pupils' individual circumstances. Risk assessments for the site, educational visits and individual pupils are appropriate and are reviewed regularly, taking account of pupils' physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.
12. Parents' concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. Formal complaints are managed by the principal and proprietor in accordance with the school's complaints policy. Leaders reflect on issues raised and, where appropriate, review the school's policies and practice.
13. Parents have access to an appropriate range of information via the school's website and receive regular updates regarding their child's progress and attainment. Leaders provide local authorities with all required information for pupils who have an EHC plan, including how any funding has been applied to support pupils' progress.
14. Leaders make reasonable adjustments to support individual needs, where required. A three-year accessibility plan is in place, which focuses appropriately on ensuring equal access to the curriculum, information and buildings. Leaders regularly review provision to ensure that the curriculum and teaching do not discriminate against any individuals or groups of pupils. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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

15. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

16. Leaders design and continually adapt the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs, interests and aspirations of pupils. This leads to a wide range of GCSE and A-level subjects, which include multiple modern languages, including French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Chinese and Arabic. The curriculum is delivered in a way that responds sensitively to the needs of individual pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well at GCSE and A Level, enabling them to access the next stages of their education.
17. The curriculum at GCSE level effectively spans all the required areas and develops pupils' speaking, listening and numeracy skills appropriate to their age, aptitudes and prior attainment. At A level, pupils' subject choices define the taught curriculum, which is enhanced through an enrichment programme in Year 12 that encourages pupils to broaden their horizons, for example through debating and a book club.
18. Leaders are highly responsive to the individual needs of pupils and adapt the timetable to accommodate a wide range of challenges, for example out-of-school elite sports programmes, family circumstances and school attendance anxiety.
19. Teachers have consistently good subject knowledge in most areas of the curriculum. Their wide-ranging and deep knowledge enables them typically to provide pupils with stimulating and enriching lessons. Teachers establish calm, focused and supportive learning environments in which pupils engage confidently, participate actively and feel safe to explore challenging content.
20. Lessons are typically well planned, taking into account individual pupils' needs, especially in light of the extended length of lessons. In the majority of lessons, teachers use an appropriate range of activities, methods and resources, for example structured questioning, retrieval strategies, timed essay writing and interactive materials so that pupils acquire new skills, knowledge and secure retention of facts and concepts and maintain their engagement. Teachers check pupils' understanding continually and misconceptions or errors are addressed quickly. This highly personalised approach means that teachers support pupils' learning and provide effective feedback. As a result, pupils are self-motivated and interested in their work, so that they achieve well and make good progress. However, in a small number of lessons at GCSE level, a lack of range of teaching methods, strategies and resources restricts opportunities for pupils to learn.
21. The needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified on entry to the school. Leaders develop an incisive knowledge of each pupil's background, challenges and learning needs. These are addressed in a sensitive and skilled manner, such as by using techniques to avoid perceived or real pressure for pupils who experience heightened anxiety. Provision is highly personalised with tailored additional support, access to counselling and flexible timetabling. This approach is effective in improving attendance, engagement, emotional regulation and academic progress.
22. Where pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), appropriate support enables them to understand and acquire subject specific language and terminology, which supports their learning in a range of subjects.
23. Assessment is frequent, varied and embedded across subjects. Weekly timed essays, oral testing, quizzes and structured exercises help pupils to secure retention, improve examination readiness and

build independent skills. Diagnostic assessment identifies gaps in knowledge, informs planning and supports actions to address underperformance. Teachers track assessment data, scrutinise pupils' work and observe lessons to ensure they apply the most suitable strategies to support pupils' progress. However, the framework for assessing all pupils' attainment and progress over time is underdeveloped and does not give leaders appropriate oversight of pupils' academic development to enable them to make informed decisions.

24. The school enables pupils to follow their own interests by arranging opportunities outside the taught curriculum. A broad range of trips take advantage of the cultural richness of London to enhance pupils' experience of the curriculum and broaden their horizons.

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

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

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

26. Leaders have created an ethos and atmosphere that ensure pupils can feel relaxed, welcomed and known. Leaders place pupils' wellbeing at the heart of their planning and decision-making. In particular, the school is highly successful in promoting self-knowledge and belief in pupils who suffer heightened levels of anxiety or have experienced doubt in their own abilities. As a result, pupils' self-confidence is effectively developed, which has a major impact on their self-esteem.
27. Leaders have developed a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), which develops pupils' sense of self. This bespoke programme meets the needs of pupils by encouraging personal reflection and self-awareness, enabling them to develop a strong sense of identity and social consciousness aligned with the school maxim of 'to thine own self be true.' Discussion-led lessons encourage pupils to adopt a neutral stance and promote debate and exploration of a range of beliefs and values. As a result, pupils articulate ideas, concepts and views confidently and engage respectfully with peers' differing perspectives.
28. Leaders provide a suitable programme of education that ensures that pupils are well informed about maintaining their personal health and develop a range of sports skills. Pupils participate in sporting activities as part of the curriculum or through external clubs. However, leaders recognise that a small number of pupils make lifestyle choices about diet and smoking which contradict the curriculum's messages around healthy living.
29. The school has high expectations of pupil behaviour and has developed a culture in which pupils respect the positive, supportive and restorative approach staff take to deal with individual cases. Leaders and teachers sensitively and effectively adapt the behaviour policy to take into account the needs of pupils who have SEND or who are neurodivergent.
30. Pupils have a secure understanding of what constitutes bullying and leaders monitor and deal effectively with any cases. They keep detailed records and look for trends across different groups.
31. The curriculum supports pupils' moral understanding through the discussion of relevant themes, for example discussing fly-tipping and shoplifting in PSHE. The relationships and sex education (RSE) part of the 'selfhood' programme enables pupils to consider issues such as misogyny, consent, harmful sexual behaviours and respect for others, and encourages them to challenge social stereotypes, respect the rule of law and foster tolerance as reflective members of the school and wider community.
32. Leaders develop pupils' spiritual knowledge and understanding through opportunities to reflect upon their place in the world, to consider the part that culture, the arts and religion play in their lives, and through visits to cultural and religious venues.
33. Pupils are appropriately supervised and suitable arrangements are in place to ensure the school knows the whereabouts of the pupils.
34. Health and safety procedures are implemented in accordance with current regulatory guidance. Suitable precautions are taken to reduce the risk of fire and staff are appropriately trained in fire

safety procedures. Staff are trained to deliver first aid when required and suitable medical accommodation is available for pupils who are ill or injured.

35. The school maintains an up-to-date register of pupils' attendance and works closely with pupils and parents to actively promote good attendance. The school maintains an admission register which conforms to current statutory guidance. Leaders inform the local authority of pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard times.

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

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

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

37. The school encourages pupils to understand their place in society as well as the immediate locale of the school. Through a number of subjects, including religious studies, philosophy, sociology, psychology and 'selfhood' and by organising external speakers such as barristers and members of parliament to explain how civil and criminal law impacts on people's lives, leaders ensure pupils understand how respect, the rule of law and their participation in the democratic process prepare them for life in modern Britain. Through this work, pupils develop empathy, social awareness and a sense of civic duty.
38. The curriculum enables pupils to consider others' differences and how diversity is managed in school and the wider community. As a result, leaders ensure that pupils develop respect for those with different faiths, beliefs and opinions in an inclusive and welcoming environment.
39. The 'selfhood' programme incorporates comprehensive careers education through which pupils develop skills such as creating their own curriculum vitae. Pupils access an online platform to help them form a view of a wide range of career choices. They undertake work experience in Year 10 and again in Year 12. Parents and former pupils present information on specific careers to enable pupils to prepare for university or the world of work. Personal tutors provide interview practice specific to pupils' needs, oversee the writing of subject-specific dissertations and provide highly valued one-to-one advice to guide and support pupils through career choices and university applications. As a result, pupils feel confident in the choices they make and leave school to study a wide range of courses at universities and colleges, take up degree apprenticeships or follow vocational routes.
40. Leaders encourage pupils to contribute to the school council which, through assigned roles based on individuals' skills, such as, for example, student counsellors, enables collaboration on fundraising and community projects. Pupils in GCSE classes consider social issues in their local community, such as shoplifting and fly-tipping, and discuss the problems these present to members of the community. Pupils develop self-knowledge and self-esteem through practical experiences of planning and delivering events, such as church fairs, 'bake-offs', musical evenings and online auctions, which develop their leadership, teamwork, organisational and project management skills.
41. The curriculum ensures that pupils develop appropriate economic understanding. For example, pupils learn about budgeting, debt, mortgages and online financial risk. They develop practical financial literacy skills and an understanding of practical issues, such as university accommodation and finances, in preparation for student and adult life.
42. Through effective discussions about expected behaviours, pupils develop an understanding of how their own behaviour can impact the lives of others and proactively support their peers. They encourage pupils to embrace the principles of ethical conduct and foster a culture of responsibility and care across the school.

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

43. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

44. Leaders have created a robust safeguarding culture which provides effective avenues for pupils to share concerns. This supports students, particularly those who are new to the school and so less familiar with staff and routines. Arrangements are developed and implemented effectively, including an appropriate safeguarding policy aligned with current statutory guidance.
45. Leaders with safeguarding responsibilities possess the necessary skills and knowledge to promote actively the wellbeing of pupils.
46. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they are confident and knowledgeable in managing concerns about pupils or staff. Safeguarding training forms an important part of the induction process for new staff.
47. Leaders ensure that all required recruitment checks are conducted efficiently and before the commencement of employment, to ensure that only suitable adults are employed to work with children. Accurate records of these checks are maintained in a single central record of appointments (SCR).
48. Leaders have developed strong relationships with external agencies, which ensures that appropriate guidance is sought and that statutory guidance is followed. Referrals are made to relevant authorities, including children's services, the local authority designated officer (LADO) and the police, when necessary.
49. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities meet regularly to identify safeguarding concerns and to decide next steps, for example referral to the local authority. They maintain confidential records of concerns, including actions and the rationale for decisions.
50. The proprietor ensures that a designated safeguarding governor regularly reviews the work and actions of the safeguarding team. An annual review of safeguarding procedures is conducted to ensure that the school prioritises pupils' safety and wellbeing.
51. Leaders have created a curriculum which effectively teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both in school and beyond. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online at a level appropriate for their age. Effective internet filtering and monitoring systems are in place, which are reviewed regularly. Pupils feel safe and secure within their school environment.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Collingham College
Department for Education number	207/6362
Address	Collingham College 23 Collingham Gardens London SW5 0HL
Phone number	020 7244 7414
Email address	london@collingham.co.uk
Website	www.collingham.co.uk
Proprietor	Collingham Ltd
Chair	Mr Edward Browne
Headteacher	Mr James Alder
Age range	13 to 19
Number of pupils	160
Date of previous inspection	17 to 19 January 2023

Information about the school

53. Collingham College is an independent, co-educational school, founded in 1975, that prepares pupils for GCSE and A-level qualifications. The GCSE and A-level departments are on separate sites. A considerable proportion of pupils are new to the school each September, many embarking on a one-year programme to re-take public examinations. The school is owned by a limited company comprising two directors. Since the previous inspection, a board of advisors has been set up to assist the directors in monitoring the school's activities.
54. The school has identified 114 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 14 pupils in the school who have an education, health and care plan.
55. The school has identified English as an additional language for two pupils.
56. The school states its aims are to empower pupils to uncover their strengths, set ambitious goals, and thrive in a supportive and inspiring environment. The school aims to provide a safe haven to enable pupils' academic and personal development through teaching which is committed to supporting their individuality and growth.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

6 to 8 January 2026

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

58. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair 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
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

59. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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For more information, please visit isi.net