ISI Independent Schools Inspectorate

School inspection report

8 to 10 October 2024

Lingfield College

Racecourse Road

Lingfield

Surrey

RH7 6PN

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

1. Governors have an informed oversight of all areas of school life and ensure that leaders fulfil their responsibilities in meeting the regulatory requirements. Governors are regular visitors and support leaders in meeting the needs of all pupils in line with the school aims and ethos of working with each individual.

2. The curriculum is balanced and broad and leaders maintain a flexible approach and adapt the curriculum in order to meet the needs of pupils. Supported by an extensive co-curricular programme, this flexibility supports pupils to develop their potential whilst stimulating their intellectual curiosity, imagination and enthusiasm. The system of assessment ensures that subject leaders have an effective oversight of the progress of each individual pupil across the school which informs planning and supports future development through additional support, stretch and challenge where required. The school's digital strategy is in its infancy and measures to enhance learning across subjects are developing.

3. The curriculum in the early years and in the prep school is enriched with experiences such as outdoor education lessons, dance and music.

4. The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme, which includes provision for relationships and sex education (RSE), supports pupils' personal growth and development well. Career guidance is effective, and the school ensures that there is appropriate guidance for all pupils to inform their choices of what path they choose to take.

5. Sixth-form pupils undertake the extended project qualification (EPQ) which helps develop their analytical skills exploring their individual interests through thorough research projects.

6. The co-curricular activities offered across the school provide further opportunities for learning and progress in a wide range of areas. They allow pupils to follow interests, develop skills and enjoy a diversity of pursuits, some of which they might not study in the curriculum.

7. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing through a supportive pastoral system with staff equipped with appropriate skills and training. They implement a unified approach to pastoral care and academic support. Leaders foster a supportive environment promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, as well as anti-bullying campaigns and mental health awareness events. Pupils are well cared for and supported as they progress through the school.

8. Leaders and staff successfully encourage pupils to contribute to the lives of others both in school and the local community. Senior pupils undertake key roles in providing support and advice for younger pupils.

9. There are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching. In some areas of the school the sharing of best practice in teaching and learning is not developed as fully as possible.

10. Safeguarding provision is effective. Leaders respond to any safeguarding concerns appropriately through procedures that reflect current statutory guidance.

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:

- enhance the digital strategy so that pupils across the school have access to the appropriate technology to develop their digital skills

- strengthen the identification and sharing of best practice in teaching and learning across the school to ensure that teaching is consistently as effective as possible.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. School leaders are effective in fostering a supportive and structured learning environment for each individual in line with their aims which focus on individual academic, social and creative potential. They actively promote pupils' wellbeing through the effective implementation of policies and procedures. Senior leaders are responsible for the strategic development of the school, sharing these goals with stakeholders and encouraging staff to reflect on areas for improvement. There have also been curriculum enhancements, such as the equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) framework and initiatives in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) which are becoming more widespread in the school.

12. Leaders drive academic success effectively, particularly by early identification of underperformance and implementation of consequent strategies to ensure pupils' progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported through the use of pupil passports in the senior school and individual education plans in the prep school. These identify the provision and adaptations that teachers need to adopt in order for the pupils to access their learning in full. Leaders ensure that this profiling is an established part of school culture. Leaders foster an inclusive environment where diversity and individuality are recognised and valued. In the early years, leaders maintain a caring, and secure environment that supports children to make good progress.

13. Governors support, check and challenge leaders' work effectively through a range of committees. They visit the school routinely to ensure that the site is well maintained, and that security is effective. They regularly review the work of academic and pastoral leaders to ensure that the outcomes for pupils are high. Governors oversee the effective links with other agencies that the leaders establish and ensure that leaders have appropriate knowledge and skills for their roles.

14. Leaders implement effective risk management arrangements, including those for premises, pastoral and safeguarding aspects, to ensure that there is a secure environment for pupils. They put well-judged measures in place that reduce or eliminate the risks identified both in school and on educational visits.

15. There is a clear and comprehensive complaints policy which is regularly reviewed and available on the school's website. Concerns are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner. Leaders provide all the appropriate information to parents through the website or direct parental communications.

16. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. There is an appropriate accessibility plan in place.

17. Leaders have recently implemented a digital literacy strategy across the school which has enhanced classroom engagement in some areas. The network infrastructure has been upgraded and the roll out of school-managed laptops has begun with Year 10 pupils. Leaders are committed to embedding a more focused digital approach and making more use of digital platforms to support both pupils and staff within the teaching and learning environment. However, this initiative is in its early stages, and its impact on pupils' development of digital skills has yet to be established.

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

18. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

19. Pupils pursue a suitable range of academic, creative, artistic, linguistic and scientific interests within formal lessons and through the co-curricular programme. There is a wide offering of performing and creative arts. Leaders plan subjects effectively to develop pupils' skills and subject knowledge methodically as they progress through the school. Subjects are planned to ensure that pupils cover at least the content reflected in national curriculum age-related expectations. Academic leaders monitor outcomes and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs and reflect the prior attainment of the pupils.

20. Leaders of the early years provide ample opportunities for children to develop in all seven areas of learning, such as providing occasions for children to explore the natural environment confidently. Children's communication and language skills are developed through learning activities across the setting, where staff model appropriate language and behavioural expectations and interact at the children's level.

21. The school provides a well-rounded educational experience, with a clear emphasis on academic achievement, personal development, and the cultivation of independent learning skills. Management across departments actively enhance curriculum design and feedback methods to ensure pupils receive targeted support which enables them to make good progress. The emphasis on developing learning points and activities methodically and the provision of clear and detailed feedback across subjects guides pupils about how to improve their work further and ensures that pupils not only retain essential knowledge but also develop the ability to consider subject matter critically and analytically as they progress through the school.

22. The comprehensive system of assessment ensures that subject leaders have an effective oversight of the progress of each individual pupil across the school. They use this to inform planning and support future progress through additional support and appropriate stretch and challenge where required. Teachers enable pupils to actively engage in self-assessment and peer discussion, which foster reflection and ownership of their learning.

23. Pupils attain highly at GCSE, A level and BTEC. Pupils also achieve well in London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and musical instrument graded examinations.

24. Sixth-form pupils are able to undertake the extended project qualification (EPQ) and younger pupils take similar project based assignments. These help pupils develop their analytical skills exploring their individual interests through thorough research projects. Pupils spoke of their enjoyment in this type of study.

25. Lessons are well planned to build on pupils' prior understanding and attainment, including for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are well supported with appropriate adjustments in place to ensure that they are able to make good progress from their starting points. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are assessed and supported to ensure that they develop English language skills effectively.

26. Teachers are knowledgeable in their subject areas. They are familiar with the examination requirements and aware of their pupils' needs and adjust their teaching to reflect both. Most teachers make effective use of teaching methods which fosters pupils' interest in their work. However, the effectiveness of teaching across the school is inconsistent. Systems designed to

identify and share best practice in teaching and learning across the school are not as effective as possible.

27. Teaching enables pupils to practice a range of subject-specific skills, such as media language and anatomical referencing, which helps them grow in confidence and develop new skills. Teachers make effective use of good quality resources to assist in the implementation of the curriculum. Teaching is conducted fairly and inclusively and does not discriminate against any pupils.

28. There are a wide range of co-curricular activities. These allow pupils to follow interests, develop skills and enjoy a diversity of pursuits, including some that go beyond the curriculum. For example, pupils pursue intellectual interests such as Model United Nations (MUN), debating, chess and art. The knowledgeable teaching and leading of the co-curricular activities enable pupils to develop their skills well in the areas that they engage in.

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

29. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

30. The pastoral care at the school is effective, and pupils have many trusted adults they can approach if they have concerns. Leaders make effective use of non-teaching staff and particular dedicated spaces in the school to support pupils with their emotional wellbeing. The 'anti-bullying ambassador' programme is a key part of the school's proactive approach to emotional wellbeing, providing a peer-led support system that encourages pupils to be confident to raise concerns. The ambassadors, trained through the Diana Award, are committed to providing a secure space for quieter voices and ensure that all pupils feel heard and supported. This initiative, combined with mental health awareness campaigns such as 'Monday music' which promotes positive mental health amongst pupils, and pastoral support structures, creates a supportive and inclusive environment.

31. The school therapy dogs also play a role in supporting pupil wellbeing, and worry boxes are provided for pupils to anonymously share their concerns which are regularly checked and addressed by staff. There are systems such as welfare care plans and risk assessments, where appropriate, to help ensure that all pupils' individual pastoral needs are met.

32. Effective behaviour strategies are implemented to support pupils of all ages. Leaders maintain a thorough oversight of behaviour management, ensuring that comprehensive policies for behaviour and bullying are in place and understood by both pupils and staff. The school uses successful strategies to monitor and support pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour. Leaders ensure that specific cases of low-level disruptive behaviour are managed through external assessments and additional support like one-to-one classroom support depending on the age of the pupil. A range of strategies to prevent poor behaviour are used effectively throughout the school, supported by the effective supervision of pupils at all times.

33. The PSHE and RSE programme meets pupils' needs effectively. It covers essential topics such as consent and healthy relationships. Staff, parents and pupils are consulted about topic areas and the weekly dedicated lessons cover key areas including those of relationships and sexual relationships (RSE) topics. The programme develops pupils' understanding of people's protected characteristics., such as race, religion and sexual orientation. PSHE lessons and discussions encourage pupils to reflect on physical and mental health, helping them understand the importance of self-care and resilience. Pupils use reflective journals and surveys are used regularly to ensure pupils are receiving education that meets their needs.

34. The school develops pupils' spiritual understanding at all ages through the curriculum. Pupils learn about a wide range of religious and faith perspectives in religious studies lessons, and explore themes such as the role of women in Islam.

35. The physical education (PE) and sports programmes develop pupils' skills in a wide range of areas. Specialist staff utilise their subject knowledge to enable pupils to hone specific physical and sports-related skills.

36. The school environment is well maintained, with comprehensive systems for managing health, safety and fire safety. Leaders monitor records of checks and maintenance records. Minibuses are regularly serviced to ensure their roadworthiness.

37. First aid provision is thorough, with trained staff in both the prep and senior schools, and appropriate measures are in place for managing injuries and administering medication. First aid procedures, including those for head injuries, are carefully recorded and adhered to.

38. The school promotes a sense of responsibility among pupils by encouraging them to take on leadership roles, including through inter-house competitions and school assemblies. The house system fosters teamwork across different year groups, contributing to a sense of community within the school.

39. Admission and attendance registers are completed and maintained in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders emphasise the importance of regular attendance in supporting pupils' academic success and overall wellbeing. They closely monitor attendance records, identifying trends and providing timely support to pupils and families to improve attendance where necessary. Leaders inform the local authority whenever any pupils join or leave at non-standard times of transition.

40. The school promotes pupils' development of self-confidence effectively. Staff maintain positive relationships with pupils and provide them with encouraging feedback. These motivate the pupils and support their confidence that they are valued and can achieve well. Pupils also develop self-confidence through performances in class and assemblies.

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. The school develops pupils' social skills effectively. In the early years, staff provide a wide range of activities that foster social interaction and encourage them to share and communicate using positive manners. Extra-curricular activities such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE), MUN debates and a wide variety of sports help develop pupils' leadership, teamwork, and social responsibility. MUN debates allow pupils to discuss global issues confidently, while mentoring opportunities enable sixth-form pupils to support younger peers, fostering social cohesion. In the sixth form, studying towards the EPQ helps pupils develop other key life skills such as time management, critical thinking, and independence.

43. The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of issues relating to diversity and equality well. For example, sixth-form pupils explore questions of human rights in religion and philosophy lessons, and the modern foreign languages (MFL) programme encourages discussions on global and social issues, such as poverty and homophobia. Such lessons develop pupils' sense of right and wrong and their appreciation of the importance of mutual respect.

44. The school enables pupils to develop their sense of responsibility towards others. House captains undertake leadership roles and organise termly events to promote inclusivity, such as the inter-house 'It's a knockout' with inflatables, quizzes and Christmas events. These enable pupils across the school to positively interact with each other and lead to a close-knit atmosphere. The school encourages pupils' support of local and international charities. It raises funds for local, national and overseas organisations and runs an annual outreach expedition to Tanzania, where pupils engage in fundraising and hands-on community projects. Pupils organise regular events, such as supporting mobile pizza vans in Ukraine.

45. The school's PSHE programme includes comprehensive career guidance for pupils designed to help prepare them for their chosen path. The school provides dedicated career co-ordinators in the senior school and pupils use various online platforms to explore career, university, and apprenticeship options. Leaders make effective use of alumni in the careers fair to share their experiences and offer insights into various pathways, including university study and apprenticeships. Workshops covering essential skills such as interview techniques, curriculum vitae (CV) writing, and university applications help prepare pupils for life after school.

46. Pupils engage with themes of inclusion by studying figures like Martin Luther King Jr., which deepens their understanding of issues and principles relating to equality and justice. The school's scholarship programme enables pupils to visit places like the Supreme Court, where pupils observe live legal cases, and participate in mock trials. The school integrates politics and civic education into assemblies, where British and US politics are discussed. Pupils study how general elections work, including through taking part in a mock election.

47. Personal finance education is embedded into PSHE sessions, where pupils learn about managing money, including practical experiences like using debit cards in the dining hall. Older pupils learn about ethical and social considerations relating to how global markets work. Younger pupils in the prep school are supported by sixth-form pupil volunteers who spend time in their classes supporting the teachers.

48. Leaders ensure that the school creates a supportive environment that fosters pupils' personal growth and leadership skills, and prepares them well for life beyond school.

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

49. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

50. The school implements robust safeguarding procedures in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities maintain effective partnerships with relevant external agencies, ensuring prompt referrals when necessary. Staff diligently record concerns about pupils and these records are carefully reviewed by safeguarding leaders to identify patterns and maintain a comprehensive overview. This allows the school to provide appropriate support to pupils as needed.

51. The school regularly reviews its safeguarding practices. Leaders and governors monitor the school's safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that they are effectively and rigorously enforced. The governors have regular contact with the pastoral and safeguarding teams and are involved in some of the executive committees. They also meet with pupils when they come to school and discuss their wellbeing with them.

52. The safeguarding team are appropriately trained for their role and equipped to manage concerns about pupils when they arise. New staff go through comprehensive induction training on safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and are well-versed in protocols for reporting safeguarding issues, including any low-level concerns or allegations against staff that may arise.

53. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online, through PSHE and RSE lessons where they learn about navigating the internet safely and protecting their personal security. The school's filtering and monitoring systems further safeguard pupils' online activities. Leaders ensure pupils are aware of safety protocols, such as recognising visitors and their identification lanyards. Staff are readily available for pupils to seek out, and pupils feel confident in approaching or contacting adults if they have concerns.

54. A complete single record of appointments is kept, with necessary safe recruitment checks carried out before staff, volunteers or governors join the school. Relevant staff are thoroughly trained in safer recruitment practices, and the proprietor oversees the entire recruitment process.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

55. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Lingfield College
Department for Education number	936/6255
Registered early years number	392491
Registered charity number	295598
Address	Lingfield College Racecourse Road Lingfield Surrey RH7 6PN
Phone number	01342 832407
Email address	office@lingfieldcollege.co.uk
Website	www.lingfieldcollege.co.uk
Proprietor	Lingfield College
Chair	Mr Peter Samuels
Headteacher	Mr Richard Bool
Age range	0 to 19
Number of pupils	951
Number of children in the early years registered setting	14
Date of previous inspection	5 to 6 February 2020

Information about the school

56. Lingfield College is an independent day school, divided into three sections: Nursery and Reception, prep and senior. They are located in separate areas within the 37-acre school site in Lingfield, Surrey. The school was founded as a school for female pupils in 1940 and has been fully co-educational since 1996. The school is a registered charity administered by a board of governors. The current chair of governors was appointed in October 2023.

57. There are 79 children in the early years, including 14 in the registered setting, which was inspected separately by Ofsted on 8 October 2024.

58. The school has identified 249 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

59. English is an additional language for three pupils.

60. The school states its aims are to be a safe and trusted foundation for the pupils to achieve their individual academic, social and creative potential through cultivating the skills, knowledge, self-awareness and academic credentials that they will need to confidently meet the challenges of the rapidly changing world. The school aims to guide each child in the discovery, delight and development of their unique gifts, talents and character. It prioritises the physical and emotional wellbeing across every facet of the community, whilst sustaining an inclusive and contemporary school culture, where diversity, difference and individuality are recognised and celebrated.

Inspection details

Inspection dates   8 to 10 October 2024

61. A team of nine inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

62. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders

- observation of registration periods

- 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.

63. 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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