

School inspection report

7 to 9 October 2025

Haileybury College

Hertford

Hertfordshire

SG13 7NU

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.....	5
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS	5
SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....	6
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. The school's effective leadership and governance enables a safe and inclusive learning environment for pupils. Governors maintain a detailed understanding of the school's work through scrutinising leaders' regular reports and conducting visits to the school. Governor committees provide effective oversight, including of safeguarding, pupils' wellbeing and school procedures.
2. Leaders foster open communication with pupils, parents and the wider community. Pupils' views are actively sought through forums and surveys and their feedback results in meaningful improvements. Governors and leaders maintain robust systems for risk management and site safety, including CCTV and secure access.
3. The curriculum is broad and balanced, offering pupils a wide range of academic and creative opportunities. Developing pupils' literacy skills, critical thinking and digital fluency are central aspects of teaching and learning. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well organised by specialist staff in the learning support centre. However, not all teachers use the strategies they are given by specialist staff to adapt their teaching sufficiently. The support that pupils who have SEND receive from some teachers is not always effective.
4. The co-curricular and academic enrichment programme is a significant strength of the school. The programme is extensive and inclusive, providing for a wide range of pupils' interests and for all performance levels. The programme offers an array of sports, outdoor education, which includes adventurous activity, drama, music and university-level research. Pupils engage in enrichment experiences such as robotics competitions, higher education genetics research and international collaborations. Many activities are pupil initiated and pupil led. Educational visits that are local, national and international enrich pupils' personal growth.
5. Pupils demonstrate ambition, confidence and resilience. They are well supported by the school's nurturing pastoral system. Boarders are equally well supported in the boarding houses. They benefit from warm relationships with staff and each other. The boarding provision and the systems within it meet the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools (NMS).
6. The school's ethos centres around the values of respect, inclusion and mutual understanding. Diversity is celebrated and discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils learn empathy and tolerance through a curriculum that integrates moral, social and spiritual development. The curriculums for physical education (PE) and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) promote pupils' healthy lifestyles, teamwork and self-awareness. The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum equips pupils to make informed decisions about their wellbeing and relationships. This prepares pupils for adult life. Pupils behave well and take ownership of their actions.
7. The school's physical environment is secure and well maintained, with accessibility for all pupils. The school's health and safety policies and procedures are rigorously monitored. First aid provision is effective. Supervision and risk assessment procedures support pupils' safety during all activities and trips.
8. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of both local and global contexts. The equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) society, themed events, and curriculum-wide discussions on identity and justice promote respect for all backgrounds. British values are embedded through democratic activities, for

example, mock elections and the national Model United Nations initiative. This deepens pupils' appreciation of liberty and law.

9. Pupils' social and cultural awareness is enriched through community service, charity work and cultural events such as Black History Month and 'modern languages week'. Pupils volunteer to help others, show compassion and develop curiosity about the wider world. Careers education is structured and engaging, providing mentoring, networking and professional insights that help pupils to consider their future careers and develop employability skills.
10. Moral education encourages reflection and ethical reasoning, guiding pupils to act with integrity. Opportunities for leadership in councils, houses and the school senate encourage accountability and democratic participation. The school's established community partnerships encourage pupils to engage meaningfully within the local area, promoting lifelong social responsibility.
11. Safeguarding is embedded throughout the school's culture. Leaders, staff and governors are well trained, meet regularly and monitor emerging issues closely. Policies are compliant with current statutory guidance and risks are managed effectively. Boarding arrangements are carefully overseen so pupils feel safe and supported. Staff recruitment procedures meet all legal requirements and thorough background checks are recorded in the single central record of appointments (SCR).
12. Pupils are taught about online safety and a robust internet monitoring and filtering system checks pupils' online activity. The school's secure door entry system using electronic wristbands and a clear mobile phone policy further safeguard pupils.

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 consistently use strategies and adapt their teaching to effectively support pupils who have SEND.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

13. Governors know the school well through evaluating detailed reports from leaders and conducting frequent visits to see the school in action. Governors access training to keep themselves up to date with the latest guidance and requirements. They maintain effective oversight of school procedures and pupils' wellbeing through their committees, which focus on different aspects of the school's work. Governors routinely check that the school is meeting its aims. Governors' regular involvement with school leaders assures them that leaders have suitable knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively.
14. Leaders and governors work together to implement the school's strategic direction through a five-year plan centred on purpose, people, provision and place. Leaders and governors understand what the school does well and what needs to improve. Governor committees ensure that policies are regularly reviewed and that necessary changes are implemented.
15. Boarding provision is well managed and provides a caring and supportive environment. Leaders ensure that boarding staff are well trained with the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles. Boarders feel safe and secure.
16. Leaders actively seek and respond to pupils' views through regular surveys, representative groups, such as the pupil senate, and informal conversations. Pupils appreciate that leaders and staff listen and act on their feedback.
17. Parents receive regular and informative reports about their child's progress and achievements. Leaders take parental concerns and complaints seriously and respond quickly, following the procedures set out in the school's complaints policy. The biannual parents' forum is held at a convenient time to accommodate different time zones and parents can attend both online and in person. This provides a useful conduit for parents to hear directly from school leaders and to ask questions.
18. Governors maintain an effective risk register that is reviewed regularly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors. Any potential risks, alongside appropriate mitigations, are well understood and documented. External agencies are routinely employed to advise leaders on risk management. The school site and buildings are kept secure through a variety of measures, including an extensive CCTV system, coded door entry and wristbands for pupils that control their access to buildings.
19. The school meets the Equality Act 2010 requirements. The suitable accessibility plan sets out the actions taken to ensure that pupils with additional needs can access all aspects of school life. Leaders' decision to establish an umbrella equality and diversity society attracts many pupils. Leaders report the use of funds for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) to the local authority as required.

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. The school's curriculum is comprehensive, relevant and thoughtfully designed to meet pupils' different needs. It equips them with the knowledge, skills and aptitudes required for future success. The curriculum includes a wide range of subjects. The school provides pupils with an array of opportunities for academic enrichment, such as collaboration with international universities on genetic mutation, sending satellites into space and developing robots for entry into a global competition. Leaders have integrated a programme of relevant educational visits for pupils, both locally and internationally, that enriches the curriculum.
22. The English curriculum supports pupils to develop their speaking and writing skills. For example, weekly reading lessons foster pupils' love of literature and develop their oracy skills during discussion time. Pupils learn to refine their ideas through teachers' feedback and personal reflection. In mathematics, pupils learn about mathematical concepts and use this knowledge to explore different strategies to solve problems. Information and communication technology (ICT) is embedded across the curriculum through a detailed digital strategy in which pupils learn to use a variety of online platforms.
23. Teachers are enthusiastic and use their good subject knowledge to plan well-structured lessons. They manage pupils' behaviour well so that teaching and learning is not interrupted. Pupils are motivated learners who engage productively with academic challenge. Teachers actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion through their teaching methods and the resources they use. Pupils make good progress over time. Results at GCSE and A level are typically above the national average and International Baccalaureate (IB) outcomes are positive.
24. Pupils are well provided for in the boarding houses. Boarding staff provide valuable academic and pastoral support. They liaise with academic staff to ensure pupils receive the level of support they need in their independent studies to make good progress. There are numerous times during the day when pupils check in with staff. These 'call points' provide staff with an ongoing overview of pupils' welfare.
25. Leaders and staff regularly assess pupils' progress. They use the information they gather to provide pupils with the support and challenge they need to learn successfully. Teachers feed back to pupils what they need to focus on next to improve. The school uses its own system both to standardise progress, by tracking across groups of pupils, and to evaluate performance effectively. Leaders analyse this data to refine the curriculum and how it is taught. Leaders rigorously scrutinise external examination results. They identify patterns and trends and adapt the curriculum accordingly. This ensures pupils learn and achieve well.
26. Leaders identify the specific needs of pupils who have SEND. Staff from the specialist learning support centre plan the strategies and individualised support that will enable pupils to make good progress. However, not all teachers use this information effectively to adapt their teaching so that pupils' needs are met. In some lessons, pupils who have SEND are not supported appropriately and they do not learn as much as they could.
27. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive support to learn subject-specific vocabulary, which helps them to develop fluency and confidence in their spoken and written English.

Boarding staff work closely with the EAL coordinator to make sure that boarders who speak EAL are given the support they need.

28. Pupils have many opportunities for outdoor activity, including sport. This encourages pupils to be healthy and active. The wide range of activities ensures that there are pursuits and experiences for everyone. Pupils can access many clubs, from robotics to beekeeping. These are offered alongside societies, for example, Model United Nations, adventurous training and lectures, many of which are pupil led and pupil initiated. Pupils participate in music and drama, leading to a variety of performances in the school's dedicated theatre. Pupils develop confidence in various public speaking events. Pupils engage well in all these activities. Leaders and staff check closely that all pupils access varied activities and flourish because of them. Pupils in the sixth form benefit from the many opportunities to develop their organisational and leadership skills. For example, sixth-form pupils coach younger pupils in a range of sports. Leaders and staff support pupils to balance their academic studies with their co-curricular commitments so pupils can participate in sporting teams and clubs alongside additional academic programmes.

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 school fosters a strong culture of mutual respect and understanding amongst pupils and staff. The school community embraces and celebrates pupils from a diverse set of backgrounds and nationalities. Pupils are taught to value different perspectives and to engage respectfully in discussions, showing maturity and empathy towards others. Discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated and rare incidents are addressed promptly and effectively. The strong house spirit gives pupils who board a firm sense of belonging and engenders self-confidence.
31. Leaders provide pupils with ample opportunities to explore spiritual and moral issues through lessons, chapel services and enrichment activities. The curriculum encourages reflection, self-awareness and a respect for others' beliefs. Pupils develop a moral compass that values honesty, fairness and compassion.
32. The school's curriculum and co-curriculum are highly effective in promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils develop a keen sense of self-knowledge and self-esteem. They are confident to express themselves during lessons. They communicate their ideas clearly and make valuable contributions in councils and committees.
33. Physical education is an integral part of the curriculum, promoting not only pupils' physical health but also teamwork, perseverance and discipline. Pupils engage in a wide range of sports and physical activities that encourage participation, fair play and respect for others. Pupils learn the value of healthy living and understand the importance of exercise for their physical and mental wellbeing.
34. The curriculum for PSHE, including RSE, is well planned and delivered. The curriculum equips pupils with age-appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed choices about health, wellbeing and relationships. Lessons are taught sensitively and encourage open discussions in a safe and respectful environment. The PSHE curriculum effectively supports pupils' personal development and prepares them for life beyond school, promoting resilience, responsibility and positive mental health.
35. Pupils are respectful and polite, behaving kindly towards each other. Pupils understand leaders' clear behaviour expectations and these are consistently reinforced by staff. The school's values are embedded in daily routines and this contributes to the school's calm and purposeful environment. When behaviour incidents occur, including bullying, they are dealt with swiftly, fairly and in line with established procedures. Pupils reflect on the choices they make and take responsibility for their actions. The positive behaviour culture contributes to pupils' sense of safety and belonging.
36. The premises and accommodation are well maintained, providing an orderly and clean environment for learning. Classrooms are well resourced and suitably equipped. Pupils are appropriately supervised, including those who board. Clear procedures are in place for pupils' supervision during activities and trips. Risk assessments are conducted for all off-site events.
37. The school maintains suitable admission and attendance registers. Pupils' absences are monitored closely, with prompt follow-up where necessary. Parents are informed regularly about the school's attendance expectations. The school works collaboratively with families to promote punctuality and

consistent attendance. Leaders inform the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times.

38. The school's health and safety policies are comprehensive and well implemented. Regular inspections and risk assessments ensure that all facilities and equipment meet safety standards. Staff receive appropriate health and safety training, including fire safety and emergency procedures, so they understand and enact their responsibilities. The culture of safety awareness extends to pupils who are taught the part they must play in maintaining a safe and secure environment.
39. First aid provision is effective and well managed. Trained medical staff ensure that pupils are well cared for when they are injured or unwell. The medical facilities are well equipped and provide twenty-four hour care for boarders.
40. Boarding accommodation is clean, organised and well maintained. Boarders appreciate that their houses are welcoming and comfortable. Boarders are able to contact their families and this takes into account different time zones.
41. The prefect system provides pupils with valuable opportunities for leadership and responsibility. Prefects' duties are clearly defined and contribute meaningfully to school life, including mentoring younger pupils, assisting with events and contributing to councils. Through these roles, pupils develop confidence, organisational skills and a sense of service to the community.

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

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

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

43. Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils show a mature understanding of the social and economic factors that shape modern life. They build their financial literacy through discussing topics such as budgeting, taking into account needs and wants, student finance and the implications of loans. Pupils develop empathy, social awareness and an understanding of societal structures. Key concepts are revisited each year to help pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on personal responsibility and community engagement, ensuring pupils are well prepared for life in both British and international contexts.
44. Mutual respect is a defining feature of the school's culture. Pupils are respectful and tolerant in their relationships with others, including those from different cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds. They take part in discussions knowledgeably and with sensitivity, citing specific examples of how the school supports equality and inclusion. Through initiatives such as the EDI society, themed assemblies and pupil-led discussions, the school actively promotes pupils' understanding and acceptance. The curriculum, from literature to philosophy, incorporates opportunities for pupils to explore identity, diversity and social justice. The school is sensitive to pupils' different needs, including those of boarders. Leaders ensure an inclusive ethos throughout the school, including in the boarding houses.
45. The British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect are woven through the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to 'disagree well' and recognise that responsible citizenship involves both freedom and accountability.
46. Pupils' social and cultural understanding is developed through an extensive programme of academic, co-curricular and service-based learning. Pupils participate enthusiastically in community initiatives such as volunteering for local charities, working at community allotments and supporting local elderly residents. Activities such as 'knitting for charity' and partnerships with organisations for young people with disabilities exemplify compassion in action. Cultural awareness is enhanced through events such as a week dedicated to modern foreign languages, Black History Month and the study of world literature and history. Pupils are proud of their diverse community and demonstrate curiosity about the wider world. Opportunities for leadership, teamwork and service build character and develop pupils' understanding of social responsibility.
47. The school's aims and ethos are promoted and reinforced well in the boarding houses. Boarding staff consult with pupils to develop a set of agreed values for each house. Staff and pupils are encouraged to demonstrate these at all times.
48. Careers education is progressive, relevant and well structured across year groups. Pupils begin to explore career aspirations in the lower school. They engage in assemblies with visiting speakers and discussions about personal ambition and skill development. In the upper school, older pupils explore employability skills, potential barriers and higher education pathways. Alumni connections through 'Haileybury Connect' provide pupils with mentoring and networking experiences. Presentations from professionals and themed events enhance pupils' understanding of diverse career routes. Pupils value this provision and how this prepares them for future study and employment.

49. The moral education provided by the school ensures that pupils develop a sound understanding of right and wrong. They clearly articulate ethical reasoning and apply it to contemporary issues such as plagiarism and media ethics. The emphasis on reflection rather than punishment reinforces pupils' moral awareness and encourages personal accountability.
50. Prefects, house leaders and mentors act as role models for younger pupils, supporting them in both academic and social settings. Pupils' involvement in decision-making through councils, feedback systems and initiatives like the house senate, illustrates their sense of ownership and accountability. Leaders' expectation that every pupil will contribute positively to school life cultivates responsibility and leadership at every level.
51. The school makes good use of its locality to establish community ties and promote responsibility. Pupils engage with local charities, support neighbourhood initiatives and visit nearby care homes. These experiences enhance pupils' social understanding and encourage them to see themselves as part of a wider network. The school's partnerships with local organisations enrich pupils' learning and develop their meaningful engagement with the local community.
52. Pupils are given numerous opportunities to participate in democratic processes. Regular hustings, when pupils in the sixth form represent major political parties, provide hands-on experiences of democratic debate. Pupils engage thoughtfully with differing opinions and vote for the values that align with their beliefs. The school's senate and house systems empower pupils to influence policy and practice, modelling democracy in action. Through these experiences, pupils gain an informed understanding of democratic participation and the responsibilities it entails.

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. Arrangements are securely in place to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare. Leaders and governors with responsibility for safeguarding have suitable knowledge and skills to implement school policies and procedures. Staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities meet regularly with the safeguarding governor to consider issues and monitor patterns.
55. Across the school, the safeguarding culture is embedded. All staff undertake the required safeguarding training and receive regular updates. Training for governors equips them for their oversight role. Governors meet regularly with the safeguarding team to evaluate policies and procedures that ensure pupils feel safe.
56. The school's safeguarding policy is fully compliant with the latest guidance and accurately reflects practice. Risks linked to safeguarding are actively identified and managed in accordance with statutory requirements.
57. Staff are confident to report any concerns and use guidance from the local authority to assist their decision-making. Referrals are made promptly to children's services or the local authority.
58. Pastoral leaders, including boarding staff, have a thorough understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and the importance of promoting pupils' welfare. Safeguarding arrangements for boarding pupils are carefully monitored and reviewed. This enables a safe and supportive boarding environment.
59. Recruitment procedures meet statutory requirements, with all pre-employment checks carried out efficiently. Leaders take responsibility for confirming the suitability of staff, governors and those working within the boarding community. Checks are meticulously recorded on the school's SCR, which is reviewed on a regular basis.
60. The school teaches online safety effectively so that pupils understand how to protect themselves when using digital platforms. Monitoring and filtering systems are well established and security arrangements ensure both the boarding accommodation and school site are secure. Pupils use personal electronic wristbands to enter buildings on the campus. Pupils understand and accept the school's new mobile phone policy, recognising the reasons behind it.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Haileybury College
Department for Education number	919/6015
Registered charity number	310013
Address	Haileybury College Hertford Hertfordshire SG13 7NU
Phone number	01992 706200
Email address	reception@haileybury.com
Website	www.haileybury.com
Proprietor	The Governors of Haileybury College
Chair	Mr Martin Rayfield
Headteacher	Mr Eugene du Toit
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	925
Number of boarding pupils	534
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 October 2022

Information about the school

62. Haileybury is an independent co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged 11 to 18. The school is located in Hertford, Hertfordshire. It was established as a school for male pupils in 1862 in buildings that had housed the training college of the East India Company. It has been educating female pupils since 1973. Incorporated by Royal Charter, oversight is provided by a council, the members of which are the charity trustees of the school.
63. There are 13 boarding houses spread across the school campus for pupils aged 11 to 18. Over half of all pupils are boarders.
64. The school has identified 160 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
65. The school has identified 218 pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
66. The school states its aims are to nurture and develop the mind, body and spirit of pupils so that they can thrive and have a positive impact on the world around them. The school aims to provide a holistic education which sees serious academic endeavour sitting comfortably alongside a rich co-curricular programme. The school is committed to supporting pupils in achieving outstanding outcomes, developing character and building resilience. Activities on offer aim to enhance team spirit, engender confidence and promote a sense of social responsibility. The school seeks to ensure that pupils leave Haileybury equipped with the values, skills and credentials they need to thrive.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

7 to 9 October 2025

67. A team of 10 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

68. 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
- 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.

69. 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

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net