

School inspection report

17 to 19 June 2025

Heath House Preparatory School

37 Wemyss Road

Blackheath

London

SE3 0TG

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	7
SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	8
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	9
SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING.....	10
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	11
SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....	12
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY	13
SAFEGUARDING	14
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING	14
SCHOOL DETAILS	15
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....	16
INSPECTION DETAILS	17

Summary of inspection findings

1. The school provides an inclusive environment in which pupils feel valued, supported and challenged, fulfilling its mission to instil a lifelong love of learning.
2. Leaders provide coherent and forward-thinking strategic direction and rigorously evaluate provision and procedures so that they actively promote pupils' wellbeing.
3. Directors maintain robust and insightful strategic oversight, offering a combination of educational and commercial expertise that supports well-informed decision-making within the school. They work closely with senior leaders to monitor school improvement, ensure compliance, and actively promote the school's values.
4. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
5. Leaders of the early years demonstrate secure knowledge and relevant expertise to carry out their roles effectively, enabling children to make good progress. The early years curriculum provides a strong foundation, though emphasis on core subjects limits breadth in some areas. Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities.
6. A well-planned curriculum prioritises English, numeracy and reasoning, promoting highly effective engagement in their learning by pupils. Curriculum review has strengthened provision in other areas, such as the creative arts, ensuring appropriate subject breadth.
7. Pupils make good progress across the curriculum, supported by inclusive, well-pitched teaching and effective use of assessment. Individual learning plans lead to tailored support that meets pupils' needs.
8. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported.
9. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is well planned and delivered through highly effective teaching. Lessons are complemented by an informative assembly programme and a wide range of visiting speakers. As a result, pupils demonstrate secure age-appropriate understanding of emotional wellbeing, positive relationships and social responsibility. While leaders share an outline of the relationships and health education curriculum with parents, the level of detail is limited. This reduces opportunities for parents to engage confidently with the topics covered and to reinforce key messages at home.
10. Staff build positive relationships with pupils and prioritise wellbeing across all stages. Behaviour is calm and respectful, underpinned by consistent expectations. Pupils understand and manage their emotions well. Physical development is supported through regular activity, and pupils demonstrate secure co-ordination and motor skills. The early years provision promotes both physical and emotional readiness for future learning.
11. Pupils develop a strong sense of community, inclusion and responsibility. They contribute meaningfully to school life and show respect for difference. British values are promoted through discussion and practical application, while financial awareness is nurtured through planned curriculum and enterprise activities.

12. The school premises are well maintained and suitable for the ages and numbers of pupils within the school. Risk assessments are thoroughly implemented and systematically reviewed with any deficiencies addressed promptly.
13. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust. All staff and governors receive regular, up-to-date training and understand their responsibilities. Procedures reflect current guidance and are implemented consistently. Pupils feel safe and are taught how to stay safe, including online. Safer recruitment procedures are rigorous.

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:

- strengthen the scope and clarity of information for parents about relationships and health education to enable greater support for pupils at home.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

14. Leadership at the school is strategic, well informed and highly effective in promoting the wellbeing of pupils. The leadership team demonstrates the necessary skills and knowledge to support ongoing school improvement, underpinned by effective operational systems, strategic planning, and safeguarding oversight, which impacts positively on the outcomes for pupils. Leaders promote the school's ethos of hard work, respect, and resilience, fostering an environment in which pupils grow in confidence, kindness, and self-assurance, and where they are well prepared for future challenges both in and beyond school.
15. A board of directors provides effective oversight of the school and works collaboratively with school leaders to guide strategic planning and school improvement. Directors engage regularly with school leaders to provide support, challenge, and professional insight. They are kept informed of academic, pastoral and safeguarding developments through comprehensive reports and regular visits. Directors and senior leaders work collaboratively to create and implement the school's development plan.
16. Senior leaders have relevant experience and expertise to fulfil their roles effectively. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and leaders operate as a cohesive and purposeful team. Appointments to leadership positions are overseen by directors, who bring educational insight to support continued improvement.
17. Leaders evaluate provision carefully through a comprehensive process of self-evaluation, resulting, for example, in the refinement of curriculum content, revised staffing structures and adjustments to timetabling. Systems for monitoring the quality of education are well established, including regular learning walks and effective use of pupil data. Where practice falls short, targeted support is implemented and closely linked to measurable outcomes for pupils' progress.
18. Leaders ensure day-to-day operations are well managed, ensuring the school runs smoothly with consistent oversight. Leaders are visible and accessible to parents, maintaining open lines of communication. Concerns, when raised, are addressed promptly and proportionately through a well-understood and effective complaints procedure.
19. Leaders in the early years understand how young children learn and make sure the provision meets their needs. They plan carefully to provide activities that support children's development, including their language, social skills and early literacy. Staff work closely with school leaders to ensure the early years curriculum reflects the wider values of the school and prepares children well for the next stage of learning. Regular discussions with directors help keep the provision under review and support ongoing improvements.
20. Leaders maintain regular and effective communication with parents, including detailed academic reports, newsletters and timely correspondence. The school website provides access to statutory policies and other key documentation.
21. Leaders implement comprehensive procedures to manage risk across all aspects of school life, including educational visits and off-site activities. Risk assessments are thorough, regularly reviewed, and tailored to the specific demands of each setting. Risk management is securely embedded in leadership practice, with policies reflecting a clear understanding of site-specific challenges.

22. Leaders meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 through the promotion of the school's values of respect and tolerance, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and without discrimination. Through the school's assembly programme and PSHE curriculum, leaders promote an understanding of diversity and individual differences. A suitable accessibility plan is in place and reviewed regularly, supporting inclusion and enabling all pupils to access the full breadth of school life.

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

23. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

24. The curriculum is well structured and reflects the school's aims to challenge, support and inspire pupils. It offers an appropriate range of subjects with an emphasis on English, mathematics and reasoning. Subject content is carefully sequenced through long- and medium-term planning, enabling pupils to build confidently on prior knowledge. Creative subjects such as music, art and drama have been given increased prominence, though literacy and numeracy remain a central priority. As a result, pupils show increased confidence in creative expression and greater engagement with reading, speaking, and performance across the curriculum. Whole-school themed events, such as Roald Dahl Day, promote cross-curricular links and develop skills in reading and performance.
25. Academic leaders have embedded a comprehensive assessment framework that informs planning and supports progress. Pupils' starting points are clearly identified, with highly effective learning plans outlining strengths, targets and support needs. These are reviewed weekly. Assessment data informs classroom strategies, resulting in well-pitched teaching and good progress across the curriculum, especially in core subjects. Leaders monitor teaching and learning rigorously. Pupils use strategies such as traffic light systems to reflect on their progress. Teachers' feedback is timely and precise, guiding pupils towards clear next steps and ensuring they understand how to improve.
26. Leaders have prioritised within the curriculum a focus on literacy and numeracy skills, which are supported through a daily emphasis on reading and access to well-resourced library areas. Structured opportunities for discussion, targeted vocabulary instruction, and carefully planned mathematics teaching further consolidate key skills. As a result, pupils make good progress and apply their learning confidently to challenging tasks. Older pupils write with impressive vocabulary on topics such as inspirational figures. In mathematics, pupils tackle complex word problems successfully applying their numeracy skills, underpinned by strong number fluency and reasoning. In modern languages, pupils develop accurate pronunciation, effective listening skills and broaden their vocabulary across Mandarin, French and Spanish. Regular homework consolidates knowledge and encourages independence.
27. Staff plan collaboratively, using their knowledge of pupils' needs, aptitudes and interests to shape purposeful learning. Planning is enhanced by subject expertise and incorporates pupil voice, resulting in engaging and relevant learning experiences.
28. Teaching is inclusive and responsive. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and present new topics clearly, adapting materials, visual supports and targeted questioning to ensure lessons are accessible. Lessons are well paced and make effective use of class time, with engaging activities that promote participation and deepen understanding. All pupils have an individual education plan to ensure that their progress is closely tracked and that they receive targeted support. Teachers encourage pupils to highlight work they find challenging, and they receive individual help in response. This fosters their self-awareness and resilience.
29. Provision for pupils who have SEND is effective. Teachers have a clear understanding of individual pupil profiles and use this knowledge to adjust teaching and classroom practice appropriately. Support strategies are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain targeted and purposeful. As a result, pupils who have SEND make continued progress.

30. Pupils who speak EAL are well supported to access the full curriculum. Visual aids and planned support enable secure language development.
31. In the early years, the curriculum provides secure foundations in literacy and numeracy. Adult-led sessions develop early skills, while child-initiated play fosters creativity, curiosity and independence. Specialist teaching, such as in Mandarin, broadens children's experiences and language development. While most pupils meet or exceed age-related expectations, the focus on core skills has led to less consistent progress in areas such as expressive arts and design. Children not meeting expectations receive robust support and are well prepared for Year 1.
32. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to enhance the focus on creative arts. Pupils develop creative and performance skills with confidence through well-planned, specialist-led music, art and drama lessons. In class music, pupils sing expressively and perform on instruments such as the guitar with fluency and control. In art, pupils work with care and precision, use subject-specific vocabulary effectively, and reflect thoughtfully on their work.
33. The extra-curricular programme supports pupils' creative, physical and social development. Pupils participate in activities such as dance, media, computing, stitch work and quizzes, alongside occasional sports fixtures. Children in the early years benefit from a programme of activities before and after school such as drawing, board games, gym and dance.

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 successfully foster a culture that prioritises pupils' wellbeing and personal development in line with the school's aims. The school's values are embedded in daily interactions, modelled by staff, and reinforced through assemblies and visual prompts. From the early years onwards, pupils demonstrate empathy, maturity and mutual respect in their relationships with others.
36. Leaders promote moral and spiritual development through weekly reflection sessions, where pupils discuss feelings, celebrate achievements and consider the needs of others. Music is used to create calm and contemplative moments, while cross-age collaboration, such as older pupils supporting children in the early years during art sessions, further develops emotional awareness and inter-personal sensitivity.
37. Leaders have embedded opportunities for performance and public speaking into the curriculum to develop pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils regularly perform in assemblies and participate in annual productions, and older pupils take active roles in termly services. Senior pupils organise activities for younger children, strengthening teamwork, communication and leadership.
38. Pupils' understanding of diversity and inclusion is promoted through assemblies, visiting speakers and engaging PSHE lessons. Pupils who have SEND have opportunities to share their experiences with peers through pupil-led presentations, which contribute to whole-school empathy and inclusion.
39. The programme of personal, social, health and relationships education is well-structured and delivered in an age-appropriate way. Pupils learn how to maintain healthy relationships, to understand the qualities of friendship and how to seek help when needed. Provision begins in the early years, where emotional regulation and empathy are introduced through stories and role play. While curriculum outlines are shared with parents, consultation around relationship and health education provision remains limited in scope and depth, reducing opportunities for shared understanding and partnership.
40. Behaviour across the school is exemplary. Pupils move around the site calmly and politely and show awareness of behavioural expectations, which are reinforced consistently by staff. They are happy at school, feel safe, and understand how to seek help if needed.
41. The school's anti-bullying strategy is clearly understood. Pupils confidently distinguish between unkindness and bullying and know which adults to approach if concerns arise. Bullying incidents are rare, but when they occur, they are recorded and investigated appropriately. Leaders effectively track patterns of unkindness and negative behaviour ensuring effective support is put in place where necessary.
42. Leaders actively promote pupils' physical health through a varied and inclusive physical education curriculum. From the early years onwards, pupils take part in purposeful physical activity that develops co-ordination and enjoyment. Children in the early years possess secure fine- and gross-motor skills through participating in sports events, where they are supported by older pupils. Older pupils engage in gymnastics, climbing and competitive fixtures. PSHE and science lessons reinforce pupils' understanding of healthy habits and wellbeing.

43. A range of systems supports pupils' emotional wellbeing. These include a quiet wellbeing corner, structured reflection time, and trusted adults who are available to listen. Pupils have access to a trained mental health team to support their specific needs.
44. The school accommodation is clean and well maintained. Supervision is effective across transitions, including during off-site activities. Health and safety is suitably managed, with staff appropriately trained in first aid, fire safety, and risk assessment. Logs are regularly maintained for compliance checks including, for example, fire drills, water testing and electrical safety.
45. Arrangements for medical care are suitable. Pupils know to seek adult support if they or a peer feel unwell. Minor injuries are accurately logged and information shared with parents where necessary.
46. The school's admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored. Daily attendance registers are completed consistently, supporting effective safeguarding oversight. Details of pupils who leave or join the school at non-standard points are shared with the local authority.

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

47. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

48. Leaders have embedded economic education across subjects and experiences. Pupils confidently explore the concept of money through both classroom learning and real-world projects, resulting in a secure understanding of money. In mathematics, pupils apply their understanding through tasks involving different denominations and calculating change, while visiting speakers broaden their knowledge of financial institutions.
49. The curriculum enables pupils to develop a secure understanding of law, justice and British institutions. Through the history curriculum, pupils explore themes such as crime and punishment over time, building contextual knowledge. These topics are extended through mock trials, role-play and visits from the police, which help pupils to understand the roles of legal and emergency services and how they function to uphold fairness, the law and community safety. In the early years, children learn about fairness and turn-taking in play, supported by staff who model respectful negotiation and conflict resolution. Older pupils learn about the impact of democracy through the annual elections for senior pupils. However, younger pupils beyond the early years have fewer structured opportunities to explore these concepts more formally.
50. A wide range of leadership opportunities, including roles such as prefects, eco captains and school council representatives, enables pupils to contribute visibly and meaningfully to school life. Collaborative events like the 'music for art' day allow older pupils to support younger peers, promoting confidence, communication, and social responsibility.
51. Leaders create a culture where pupils feel listened to and respected. Pupil voice is encouraged through structured opportunities such as the school council, feedback processes and charity initiatives where pupils can see the impact of their ideas. Pupils enjoy taking ownership of positive change. For example, the school council's suggestions has resulted in changes to breaktime routines and the introduction of a celebration about India as part of the curriculum to explore different cultures.
52. Leaders have implemented a well-integrated plan for community engagement. Pupils visit local care homes to share music and conversation, strengthening inter-generational empathy. They also contribute to the local community through local litter-picking initiatives and themed charity events. These experiences help pupils understand civic responsibility and develop compassionate perspectives beyond the school community, where they see the positive impact of their actions.
53. Pupils' sense of belonging and mutual respect is strengthened through the school's house system that provides integration of all pupils across the school's three sites. Pupils collaborate effectively across year groups during house events and challenges. Year 6 pupils act as 'welcome ambassadors', greeting younger children each morning and helping them settle into the school, thus enhancing the sense of community.
54. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Transitions are thoughtfully managed, and familiarisation activities embedded across year groups to develop pupils' self-confidence. Older pupils benefit from structured support for their transition to a wide range of local senior schools with interviews and support with decision-making, which strengthens their self-awareness and aspiration.

55. In the early years, children engage in purposeful play and imaginative experiences that support social development. Carefully designed role-play areas, such as a garden centre, develop teamwork and a preparation for real-world scenarios. Inclusion and diversity are celebrated through culturally rich activities that mark events such as Eid, Diwali and Chinese New Year, alongside storytelling, food, dress and artefacts that celebrate a range of cultural heritages. These experiences deepen children's respect for traditions different from their own and promote a sense of belonging, helping children to feel seen, valued and part of a shared community.

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

56. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

57. Leaders effectively implement robust safeguarding procedures to promote pupils' welfare, creating a clear staff awareness of the principle that 'it could happen here'. A culture of vigilance is actively reinforced through well-understood protocols, informative displays and consistent messaging. Safeguarding leads are well known to pupils. Safeguarding remains central to school life and is routinely addressed in weekly staff meetings and regular bulletins.
58. Leadership of safeguarding across the school is assured. A team of four knowledgeable and experienced designated safeguarding leads, who carry out their roles effectively, oversee pupil welfare and wellbeing. Suitable structures are in place to ensure effective liaison with directors, who receive regular updates and scrutinise safeguarding practice as part of their governance role. There is suitable coverage across all phases of the school.
59. Staff are routinely trained in safeguarding and understand how to identify and respond to concerns if they arise. When safeguarding concerns do arise, safeguarding leads maintain comprehensive records and files for all safeguarding concerns, enabling them to monitor the effectiveness of the support provided. Leaders have adequate levels of interaction with external agencies such as the local safeguarding children partnership and the multi-agency safeguarding hub to support their decision-making and promote the welfare of pupils.
60. School leaders demonstrate effective oversight of safer recruitment, underpinned by a secure understanding of statutory requirements and appropriate training. All required checks are completed before adults are allowed to begin employment or to volunteer at the school. Recruitment records are comprehensive and well maintained, with a clearly organised single central record supported by individual staff files. Directors provide an additional layer of scrutiny, ensuring procedures are followed consistently across all appointments.
61. Leaders have implemented an effective internet filtering and monitoring system to safeguard pupils online. The system is monitored daily, with alerts and usage patterns reviewed to identify any risks or deficiencies. Pupils demonstrate a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the wider community. Through assemblies and the computing and PSHE curriculum, they learn to protect personal information and navigate the digital world responsibly. They show a secure grasp of road safety and safe travel, supported by initiatives such as a recent Transport for London workshop raising their awareness of local contextual risks.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Heath House Preparatory School
Department for Education number	209/6294
Address	37 Wemyss Road Blackheath London SE3 0TG
Phone number	020 8297 1900
Email address	info@heathhouseprepschool.com
Website	www.heathhouseprepschool.com
Proprietor	Global Schools Group
Chair	Mr Jonathan Carroll
Headteacher	Mr Mark Pearce
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	122
Number of children in the early years registered setting	27
Date of previous inspection	17 May 2022

Information about the school

63. Heath House Preparatory School is a co-educational independent school in Blackheath, south-east London. The school is accommodated in three buildings within close proximity of each other and consists of three sections: early years, pre-prep for Years 1 and 2, and prep for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Since the previous inspection, the school has changed proprietors and has joined the Global Schools Group. A new headteacher has been appointed.
64. There are 27 children in the early years, comprising one Kindergarten (Nursery) class and one Reception class.
65. The school has identified ten pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
66. The school has identified English as an additional language for three pupils.
67. The school states its aims are to provide an enriching education that fosters curiosity, compassion and a lifelong love of learning in a diverse and inclusive environment, and to instil values of hard work, respect and resilience.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

16 to 19 June 2025

68. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

69. 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.

70. 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