

School inspection report

11 to 13 November 2025

Lancing College Preparatory School at Hove

The Droveaway

Hove

East Sussex

BN3 6LU

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 established a welcoming setting where pupils are valued as individuals. Leaders are keen to know pupils' views regarding their educational experience. They conduct termly surveys to check this. Leaders use the information they gather to refine the school's practice. They ensure that pupils receive the help they need to support their wellbeing and develop successfully.
2. Leaders have the skills and knowledge to undertake effective self-evaluation. This is wide-ranging and results in strategic improvement targets that are in line with the school's aims. Staff are invited to contribute to the process and play their part in moving the school forward.
3. Governors oversee the work of leaders through regular meetings and frequent visits to the school to talk with staff and pupils. Governors audit documentation, ensure that leaders fulfil their responsibilities and assure themselves that the Standards are consistently met.
4. Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports pupils to make good progress across a range of subjects. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 take further subject options using the facilities of Lancing College. However, the curriculums for some creative and technological subjects are less ambitious regarding what pupils are taught, what they learn and what they achieve.
5. Leaders in the early years ensure children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is well-resourced. Children are encouraged to explore their environment and make sense of the world around them. Teachers challenge children to try new experiences and understand that making mistakes is part of learning.
6. Teachers typically plan and deliver high-quality lessons with appropriate levels of challenge and support. They offer effective feedback to pupils so they know what to do to make further progress.
7. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Supportive relationships between pupils and teachers facilitate purposeful teaching and learning environments. Pupils work well with each other. They show respect and consideration as they share their ideas and resources.
8. In all year groups, including the early years, behaviour is good. Pupils understand the systems for rewards and sanctions, which staff apply consistently.
9. Pupils are taught about respect through the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum and through consistent modelling by leaders and staff.
10. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to the local community. Pupils take part in fundraising events and activities such as singing to residents in local care homes. Pupils participate in local community parades, carrying large-scale models they have constructed which showcase pupils' creativity and their pride in representing the school.
11. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that, from induction onwards, staff training is comprehensive and appropriate. Leaders update staff training to respond to changes in statutory guidance. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding complete higher-level training. External agencies provide specialised guidance and support. Leaders set tasks to test staff knowledge and confidence in various aspects of safeguarding, for example, online safety. This ensures that staff are equipped to keep pupils safe.

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:

- review and improve the curriculums for some creative and technological subjects so that teaching is always broad and ambitious, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve well.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Leaders and governors have the required knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They ensure that pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of the school's provision.
13. Leaders evaluate all aspects of the school's work thoroughly. Their evaluation process is clearly structured and enhances leaders' knowledge of the school. Leaders review the progress made towards the school's strategic goals to make sure their actions have a positive impact.
14. Leaders ensure that the school's core values are fully embedded and well known to pupils, staff and parents. These are reflected in the positive relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers and pupils readily refer to the 'Lancing ABC', which summarises the school's expectations for the values and behaviours that pupils should demonstrate. Leaders and staff align their actions with the school aim 'to know every pupil well and to support individual need'.
15. Governors have the experience and expertise to exercise effective oversight of the school's work. Governors receive frequent reports, including some anonymised case studies, to illustrate leaders' actions and the difference these make to pupils' educational experience. Governors visit the school regularly, observe lessons and meet staff and pupils. This enables governors to build an accurate view of the school. They challenge and support leaders as appropriate.
16. Leaders of the early years have established a warm and positive setting. The curriculum is broad and engaging. Activities are well planned and take children's interests and curiosities into account. This encourages children to enjoy their learning and make good progress towards the statutory early learning goals (ELGs). Leaders are rigorous in checking that the early years requirements are met, such as the safe storage of medicines and the appropriate adult-to-child ratios for supervising children.
17. Leaders work well with external agencies, including the local authority and children's services. Leaders make effective use of the support provided by the Lancing College group of schools. Leaders provide local authorities with the required information relating to the use of funds for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). They report to the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times.
18. The school's suite of policies covers all statutory areas appropriately. Leaders review policies and their implementation effectively to keep procedures up to date.
19. The school provides the required information to parents mostly by way of the school's website. Parents receive informative reports about their child's progress, including subject-specific targets. This helps parents to understand their child's next steps in learning.
20. Leaders have a good understanding of risk management. Effective assessment and mitigation of risk are in place for activities within school, for using the site and for visits outside school. Leaders ensure that appropriate action is taken when a risk is identified. Staff have suitable training in risk assessment as part of their induction programme, and this is regularly updated. Risk assessments are audited annually and revised or expanded as required.
21. The school fulfils its duty under the Equality Act 2010. Leaders draw up and follow an accessibility plan to ensure that pupils can access the curriculum. Anyone with a physical disability is supported

with appropriate adjustments, including staff support and the use of specific resources. Leaders consider how pupils transition around the school and adjustments are made, such as changing the classrooms used or providing additional adult help. Quiet spaces are available for pupils at breaktimes, creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

22. Leaders manage and respond to complaints suitably. The school's policy is followed closely, including in terms of keeping to the designated timeframes. Leaders record all complaints clearly, including those settled informally, and any trends are monitored.

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. Leaders have shaped a well-planned curriculum in most subjects that supports high expectations across the school. Cross-curricular links are in place which support pupils to make meaningful connections in their learning. For example, some comprehension activities in English link to other areas of the curriculum, such as science. Teachers plan activities that enable pupils to develop their critical thinking skills. Leaders routinely review the curriculum to ensure that British values are promoted, and that the curriculum remains relevant, interesting and accessible, with appropriate levels of support and challenge. Leaders check that teaching is effective and consistent through regular lesson observations, constructive discussions with staff about teaching and learning, and departmental audits.
25. From the early years to Year 8, pupils' progress is regularly assessed and provides leaders with thorough and comprehensive information. Leaders and teachers analyse the data gathered, alongside teachers' checks during lessons, to identify pupils who are excelling and those who would benefit from additional support.
26. In English, pupils study a range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts. This builds their vocabulary as well as their skills to understand and analyse the texts they read.
27. The modern foreign languages (MFL) curriculum begins in the early years. Children are introduced to basic French through songs, games and activities. These are detailed in scrapbooks that provide opportunities for children to recap and recall their learning. This practical approach to MFL continues in later years when pupils stage French fashion shows and learn about different tenses through sharing news events. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 study further languages at Lancing College on a weekly basis.
28. In mathematics, pupils apply their number skills and mathematical strategies to real-life situations. The science curriculum includes a range of topics and is taught through well-planned lessons. Pupils extend their subject-specific vocabulary during engaging lessons where they learn about animal families and the excavation process.
29. During humanities lessons, pupils explore philosophical concepts such as equality and utilitarianism. Teachers model how to emphasise and summarise key points so that pupils learn to debate effectively and show respect for each other's ideas.
30. In creative and technological subjects, the curriculums are generally well planned. Teachers typically use this guidance and their good subject knowledge to plan and teach engaging lessons. Pupils generally make good progress. However, the curriculums for some subjects, including art, and design and technology (DT), do not always include sufficient breadth and challenge to fully develop pupils' skills and knowledge and realise ambitious outcomes.
31. Leaders identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and guide teaching staff to provide appropriate additional support for pupils in lessons. Pupils receive specific, individualised teaching from specialist teachers where necessary. Additional after-school sessions provide pupils with more targeted teaching and guidance that reinforces their learning. Pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.

32. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive personalised support according to their individual needs. Teaching staff use resources such as word banks and writing frames to help pupils develop their language fluency and confidence. This enables pupils who speak EAL to make good progress.
33. Leaders ensure that children in the early years are taught a balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Teachers focus on developing children's early reading, writing and mathematics. They use many activities to teach children number recognition. Children readily count groups of objects and identify missing numbers. Teachers read stories regularly, often linking them to current topics so that children learn new vocabulary and use this confidently themselves. Children articulate their ideas and share their interests readily.
34. Pupils are keen to participate in the many extra-curricular activities provided. These include academic, technological, creative and physical aspects. Pupils in both pre-prep and prep benefit from forums to discuss issues of interest. Older pupils preserve their thoughts and ideas on podcasts. These wide-ranging extra-curricular activities enable pupils throughout the school, including children in the early years, to develop a range of skills, interests and talents that complement their academic studies.

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

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

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

36. The PSHE curriculum teaches pupils about relevant topics such as good mental health and staying safe. The curriculum includes the required content for relationships and sex education (RSE) including establishing boundaries, healthy relationships and physical changes during puberty. Leaders consult parents about the RSE content and make parents aware of the right to withdraw their child from lessons.
37. Staff in the early years support children's personal and emotional wellbeing alongside their academic development. They create an encouraging and comfortable learning environment where children happily explore their interests while they learn and play together. Staff give clear positive instructions. They teach children to share and take turns so that children learn to consider others and interact successfully.
38. The physical education (PE) curriculum supports pupils' physical wellbeing through a range of sporting activities which are taught in an inclusive environment. Lessons are taught by dedicated games staff, with a clear focus on pupils' safety as they learn. Teaching and resources are adapted to meet pupils' different needs.
39. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a balanced menu each day, with staff on hand to help them make healthy choices. Younger pupils are encouraged to try a wide variety of food and have the confidence to select their own food. Break and lunchtimes are happy, social occasions. Pupils are respectful to each other and to staff.
40. Pupils' spiritual understanding is developed through religious education, ethics and philosophy lessons, alongside visits from faith leaders, including a local imam and a rabbi. Services of Eucharist are held weekly by the Lancing College chaplain. Pupils understand and show respect for the range of faiths and beliefs represented by their community.
41. Pupils behave well. Leaders and teachers support pupils to manage their behaviour and reflect on the impact of their actions on those around them. Leaders keep comprehensive behaviour records. They analyse incidents to identify any patterns and trends and act quickly to address these. Bullying seldom happens and any instances are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
42. Pupils of all ages are well supervised both in school and when participating in off-site visits. Pupils understand the supervision structures and know where to find an adult at any time. Leaders and staff rigorously monitor entrances and exits in the morning and evening and ensure that all pupils on site are accounted for.
43. Leaders maintain attendance registers that reflect the latest changes to guidance. Staff meet frequently to monitor attendance and to note any concerns or patterns. Leaders contact pupils' families to offer support, as appropriate. They inform the local authority appropriately of any extended absences.
44. Leaders review and record health and safety matters systematically. Leaders follow a well-organised programme of works through the school year to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of the premises. This supports pupils' safety and security in the school environment. Any immediate needs

are responded to quickly. Pupils are respectful and appreciative of the facilities and resources available to them.

45. Pupils understand the fire safety procedures and detailed records are kept of termly evacuations. Staff are appropriately trained, and fire instructions are clearly marked in classrooms and across the school site.
46. The wellbeing centre is an effective hub for supporting pupils' emotional and medical needs. The presence of the school dog adds a separate, welcome level of support, and older pupils benefit from its steadying influence. The wellbeing lead creates a calm, caring environment for pupils, who are supported in a variety of different ways such as through talking and drawing therapy.
47. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to support pupils who are injured, unwell or who have specific medical needs. Medical documents are well maintained, and medicines are stored securely. The school makes sure that relevant staff know the needs of pupils who have allergies and other specific medical conditions, for example when pupils participate in off-site visits.

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

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

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

49. The curriculum develops pupils' social understanding well and is aligned closely with the school's aims of promoting integrity, kindness and community contribution. These aims are embedded across subjects, from planned discussions about friendships in the early years to learning about life in a global society during geography lessons.
50. Children in the early years have many opportunities to explore and learn about their community. Children are encouraged to develop friendships. Learning activities give children a clear understanding of the world around them. Children are equipped with the skills and understanding to be socially ready for the transition from Reception to Year 1.
51. Across the school, pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong. Younger pupils discuss fairness and the importance of keeping rules and routines. During religious education and philosophy lessons, older pupils explore ethical dilemmas and come to understand a range of moral perspectives. The PSHE curriculum enables pupils to discuss stereotypes, relationships and moral issues in an age-appropriate and constructive way.
52. Pupils develop their economic awareness through PSHE lessons and a range of experiences that relate to real-life scenarios. Younger pupils learn about money and banking and older pupils engage in a '£5 challenge'. Through this initiative they learn to develop business plans, analyse profit and loss, and think creatively as they work through entrepreneurial tasks. Cross-curricular work in geography, mathematics and critical thinking broadens pupils' understanding of global issues, natural resources and economic decision-making. Pupils' awareness of current affairs is developed through class discussions and the use of world maps to track global events.
53. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain and learn about British values. Leaders include these in curriculum plans and in departmental audits so that teaching staff are prompted to refer to these as they plan and teach their lessons. Pupils' appreciation of British values is reinforced as they complete their 'cultural passports' and reflect on British values in practice. Visits to the Royal Courts of Justice, legal workshops delivered by local solicitors, such as a social media trial, and citizenship-based learning support pupils' understanding of the rule of law and public institutions.
54. Leaders have established a culture where pupils' opinions are sought and valued. All year groups are represented in termly surveys and in regular discussion groups with the food council and the school council. Pupils are listened to and contribute to the school's development. Leaders include pupils' suggestions in their actions to improve school life, such as the purchase of playground equipment and adaptation of lunch menus. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to undertake roles and responsibilities. Pupils readily volunteer to be peer mentors and learning enhancement prefects.
55. Leaders encourage pupils to consider how they can support and help others. Pupils confidently discuss and vote for the charities they support and understand why this is important. Charitable activities, including donating gifts to vulnerable children and painting pictures to raise funds, are acknowledged in weekly celebration assemblies. Pupils appreciate the mutual benefits of supporting others. Leaders raise pupils' awareness of environmental issues so they value the natural world and consider how to use resources responsibly. The school's support for an environmental foundation

has resulted in the planting of over 2000 trees. Pupils in Year 7 take part in bird counts and learn about different species as part of these activities. Pupils in Year 8 participate in beach cleans.

56. Careers education is well delivered through the PSHE curriculum, critical thinking lessons, the 'challenge' programme and an annual careers morning where professionals from a range of industries share information about their careers. Speakers represent a range of professions in technology, aviation, business, medicine and design. They offer pupils insight and practical advice about preparing for possible careers. This supports pupils' aspirations and their understanding of future pathways.

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

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

Safeguarding

58. Leaders have established a robust culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are vigilant. They know pupils well and are alert to any small changes. Staff are trained in how to respond to concerns and who they should contact. Leaders act quickly in response. Staff understand how to recognise forms of abuse, including neglect. Staff are trained in the 'Prevent' duty and understand how to address risks of radicalisation and how to counter extremism.
59. Leaders share safeguarding updates with staff, parents and governors as appropriate. They make sure that staff and governors follow the safeguarding policy closely. The policy is revised promptly in response to statutory guidance.
60. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding work effectively with external agencies. Leaders understand the expectations and systems they must follow to keep pupils safe. They work constructively with the local authority, seeking and acting on advice as appropriate.
61. The school's management of low-level concerns is effective, with suitable records kept, including a separate log of self-referrals. Leaders ensure that follow-up actions are taken, as necessary. Staff understand that sharing a concern about staff behaviour is an important part of keeping everyone safe.
62. Pupils know who to speak to if they have a worry or concern. They appreciate the range of adults available to support them. The 'bubble box' system allows pupils to raise concerns privately or anonymously. Leaders strive to maintain a culture of open discussion where pupils are confident to share their anxieties and concerns.
63. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online. The school has suitable arrangements in place for filtering and monitoring pupils' internet use. The system is subject to monthly testing, including by an external provider. Weekly reports highlight any patterns for trends. Teaching staff are trained to watch over pupils' screen usage as an expected part of their role. Staff receive alerts should anyone attempt to access inappropriate material, and any concern is assessed promptly. Pupils who bring laptops to school to access the curriculum must have monitoring software installed. Assemblies routinely promote online safety. Parents are encouraged to review their child's digital behaviour through the parents' digital charter.
64. Leaders' safeguarding records are detailed and with clear timeframes. This enables pupils to receive the support they need quickly. Records are managed in line with statutory guidance and with suitable attention given to confidentiality.
65. The single central record of appointments (SCR) is complete and kept up to date. The accompanying staff files are well managed and comprehensive. Leaders ensure that all necessary checks are completed and recorded before any adult begins work or volunteers at the school. References are verified. The SCR is rigorous in its inclusion of the checks on staff who visit regularly from other schools in the Lancing group.
66. Governors' oversight of safeguarding is effective. The designated governor for safeguarding visits the school regularly to meet staff, check documents and observe procedures such as those for safer recruitment. Detailed reports are presented to the governing body so that governors remain well informed about safeguarding at the school.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

67. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Lancing College Preparatory School at Hove
Department for Education number	846/6000
Registered charity number	1076483
Address	Lancing College Preparatory School at Hove The Droveaway Hove East Sussex BN3 6LU
Phone number	01273 503452
Email address	hove@lancing.org.uk
Website	www.lancingcollege.co.uk
Proprietor	Lancing College Governing Body
Chair	Mr Martin Slumbers
Headteacher	Mrs Kirsty Keep
Age range	3 to 13
Number of pupils	262
Date of previous inspection	22 to 24 November 2022

Information about the school

68. Lancing College Preparatory School at Hove is a co-educational day school situated in central Hove, East Sussex. It is one of four schools in the Lancing College group.
69. There are 37 children in the early years. There are 16 children in one Pre-School class and 21 children in two Reception classes.
70. The school has identified 39 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
71. The school has identified English as an additional language for 42 pupils.
72. The school states that its aims are to inspire a desire for excellence, to develop independent, searching minds and to foster creativity; for the children to achieve their potential, academically and creatively, with pupils' personal development considered as important as their academic success.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

11 to 13 November 2025

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

74. 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.

75. 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

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