

School inspection report

18 to 20 March 2025

Bilton Grange School

Rugby Road

Dunchurch

Rugby

Warwickshire

CV22 6QU

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. The governing body provides effective oversight to both support and challenge school leaders in ensuring that the Standards are met. Governors visit the school regularly to monitor the implementation of policies, thereby contributing to the wellbeing of pupils.
2. School leaders provide a clear and ambitious vision for future development, underpinned by a robust strategic plan including for the expansion of boarding. Leaders engage proactively with parents, staff, pupils and governors, demonstrating an openness to ideas that align with the school's aims and ethos.
3. Leaders ensure that the comprehensive curriculum remains current and responsive to pupils' needs and possible future pathways. From Nursery through to Year 8, the curriculum builds on pupils' prior knowledge in a structured and methodical manner. In the prep, a pathway adapted for pupils with high attainment enables those pupils to accelerate their learning journey, equipping them with the necessary skills to typically secure scholarships in their chosen areas at their future schools.
4. Children in the early years benefit from a well-planned introduction to school life. The promotion of communication and language skills is embedded across the early years provision, developing children's ability to listen, engage, contribute and express their ideas confidently.
5. Lessons are well planned, with teachers utilising their secure subject knowledge to develop pupils' learning effectively and maintaining high expectations for pupils' achievement. The assessment of pupils' work is rigorous, providing pupils with targeted feedback that supports their progress. Enrichment opportunities, such as specific themed days, enhance pupils' learning by fostering cultural awareness and developing skills beyond the planned curriculum.
6. Leaders provide an extensive range of sporting and extra-curricular activities which enable pupils to acquire new skills and explore hobbies. In particular, the role of choristers generates a sustained interest in music, leading to the attainment of music scholarships for many pupils.
7. Leaders responsible for the identification and support of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensure that these pupils make good progress from their starting points. This is achieved through a well-structured and widely understood support programme.
8. The personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education programme and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum teach pupils about different types of healthy relationships and the importance of mutual respect. These programmes build on prior learning from the early years through to the prep. They support pupils in developing an understanding of British culture and foster respect for diversity.
9. Leaders have established effective systems and procedures to support the boarding community to feel happy, healthy and secure. They implement suitable boarding policies and procedures. The boarding provision is well resourced and furnished, with pupils appropriately supervised by staff who are safely recruited in line with regulatory requirements. Boarders work well together as a supportive community.

10. The careers and economic education programmes provide pupils with some insight into different professions and some opportunities to learn about money and economics. However, these programmes are not as well developed as other areas of the curriculum.
11. Safeguarding arrangements are effective and in line with current statutory guidance. The safeguarding team responds effectively when any safeguarding concerns are raised. Staff are appropriately trained and understand how to record and report safeguarding concerns should they arise.

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 careers and economics provision in order to ensure that pupils develop a better understanding in these areas.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Leaders demonstrate a clear vision for continuous improvement of the school, underpinned by a rigorous and well-considered development plan. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's successes and areas for development, ensuring that plans are both ambitious and realistic. This includes the recent expansion of the boarding provision. Leaders clearly communicate the school's aims and commitment to achieving aspirational outcomes for all pupils, with a clear focus on enhancing both academic achievement and the overall wellbeing of pupils.
13. Governors effectively oversee the school's operations. They hold leaders accountable while offering strategic support to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities and promote pupils' wellbeing effectively. Governors are actively involved in monitoring key performance data to ensure that the school's objectives are met. They are committed to upholding the school's aims, ensuring that its values are reflected across academic, pastoral care and boarding.
14. Leaders utilise their good knowledge and skills effectively. Their oversight and implementation of policies at the school are rigorous and well-structured. Policies are regularly reviewed and presented to governors, with adjustments made as necessary in response to emerging issues. Senior leaders ensure that policies comply with all relevant legislation and are effectively communicated to both staff and pupils. This ensures a clear understanding across the school community, supports consistent and effective implementation and ensures that all Standards are met.
15. The comprehensive website and in-school communication processes ensure that parents have access to all necessary information. Termly reports and meetings keep parents informed about their child's progress and the steps required for further development. Informal meetings are encouraged, and staff are readily available for discussions, fostering effective communication between the school and parents. Leaders provide the local authority with the required information about the use of funds relating to any pupil who has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
16. Leaders proactively contact other agencies, including local authorities, to support the wellbeing of both pupils and staff. They seek advice and support from professionals such as educational psychologists and counsellors to meet the individual needs of pupils, particularly those who have SEND.
17. Senior leaders and governors identify potential contextual risks to pupils and manage these effectively, such as through the recent installation of electric gates to enhance security. Risk assessments are implemented effectively across the school to identify possible risks thoroughly and put forward suitable measures to mitigate these. Leaders review risk assessments frequently to ensure their continued suitability.
18. Leaders implement the school's complaints policy effectively in a transparent and fair manner. They address any complaints professionally and promptly. Regular monitoring of complaints helps identify patterns and improve processes as needed.
19. The school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010. To ensure this, leaders effectively implement a comprehensive accessibility plan that undergoes regular review. Leaders ensure that no pupils are discriminated against by the school's provision.

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 curriculum is broad and balanced. It is designed to develop pupils' knowledge and skills methodically across a wide range of subjects, including literacy, foreign languages, numeracy, scientific understanding, performing arts, creative arts and physical education (PE). The curriculum effectively prepares pupils for the next stage of their education. Older pupils are prepared for examinations specific to their choice of senior school. In the early years, children follow a suitable curriculum that develops independence in their approach to learning.
22. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and convey high expectations. They tailor their teaching to the individual needs and aspirations of pupils, which results in sustained progress and the acquisition of new knowledge. Teachers provide pupils with effective support to clarify learning points when required. Effective questioning encourages pupils to think carefully and deepen their learning. A broad range of well-chosen teaching strategies and resources enhances pupils' learning, particularly in developing vocabulary, speaking and numeracy skills, and adds to pupils' motivation to learn. The school makes effective use of its rural site to enhance both curricular and co-curricular activities, providing pupils with opportunities to enrich their learning experience beyond the classroom.
23. As pupils progress into the prep, preparation for examinations is tailored to their chosen schools, with pupils aiming for scholarships receiving additional support in a variety of areas, including academic, sport, music, art and drama. As a result of this targeted provision, pupils secure a high number of scholarships across a diverse range of schools.
24. Leaders implement a comprehensive assessment and achievement framework to track and monitor pupils' progress effectively. Pupils' individual progress is supported through extensive written feedback in all subjects, which enables them to understand how to improve their work further.
25. Leaders of provision for pupils who have SEND identify pupils' needs and support and monitor them effectively, ensuring that their needs are met. Pupils receive targeted support both in class and through additionally planned individual provision. Staff have a clear understanding of pupils' needs and adapt their teaching accordingly. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.
26. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive targeted support either individually or in the classroom when required. This support ensures that pupils who speak EAL make good progress in their English.
27. Boarders are well supported in their academic work. Key members of the boarding staff supervise homework and provide assistance when required. Boarders who speak EAL receive effective support, enabling them to develop their language skills swiftly and participate fully in discussions and learning activities.
28. Staff and leaders in the early years provide a well-planned and engaging curriculum that supports children's development. Children make good progress, particularly in communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development. Teachers model rich vocabulary and encourage active participation in activities that relate letters to the sounds that they make, supporting children to develop early reading and writing skills. Well-structured learning

opportunities in mathematics support children's understanding of number, shape, space and measure.

29. Leaders have developed a comprehensive co-curricular programme that enables pupils to develop their skills in sport, drama, music and the creative arts. In addition, pupils engage in a range of activities throughout the year which provides them with opportunities to develop skills and interests in areas such as photography, board games, textiles and community service.

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

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

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

31. Leaders actively promote a culture of kindness and respect. Pupils' understanding of the importance of respectful relationships is well developed through assemblies, the PSHE programme, the 'Thought for the Week' programme and form time. Leaders and staff communicate appreciation of pupils' individual identities and foster an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.
32. Pupils learn about different faiths and religions through the curriculum and collective activities such as assemblies. Leaders make effective use of the chapel to encourage pupils to explore their spirituality and develop their own spiritual and moral perspectives. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on diverse spiritual perspectives.
33. Suitably experienced and trained boarding leaders and staff provide boarders with responsive and caring support and comfortable and appropriate accommodation. Staff conduct thorough 'welfare check-ins' to support pupils' wellbeing. Boarders have access to a wide range of activities and spaces that encourage social interaction. Boarders are also given the opportunity to make suggestions or log complaints about the boarding provision through an online reporting system.
34. Supervision across the whole school, including boarding and the early years, is highly effective in ensuring that pupils always have staff available to support them. Leaders provide staff with guidance about how best to supervise and support pupils. Appropriate staff-to-child ratios are maintained in the early years at all times.
35. The PE programme effectively develops pupils' physical and teamwork skills. The programme enables pupils to enhance their co-ordination, balance and sport-specific skills across a range of activities. They develop resilience, leadership and collaboration through team sports, while individual activities promote self-discipline and personal fitness. The programme also educates pupils on the positive impact of exercise on both physical health and emotional wellbeing, fostering lifelong healthy habits. Well-qualified swimming coaches teach pupils water safety and swimming skills.
36. The PSHE curriculum, including RSE, contains appropriate content for pupils' ages. Starting in pre-prep, the PSHE programme supports pupils' emotional understanding, self-regulation and personal growth, developing themes in complexity as pupils progress through the school. Lessons promote mutual respect and cover social and cultural aspects of life in Britain and globally. Through discussions in PSHE and global studies, pupils engage with topics such as human rights, equality and international relations, equipping them with pertinent knowledge and an understanding of the importance of mutual respect in a diverse world.
37. The RSE programme reflects the requirements of current statutory guidance. It teaches pupils in an age-appropriate manner about relevant topics such as different types of healthy relationships and the importance of respecting privacy and consent.
38. Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school, with activities well matched to their needs, which helps them to stay engaged. The school's behaviour management and anti-bullying strategy is highly effective. Leaders and staff communicate clear expectations for behaviour, reinforcing them

through consistent and fair use of rewards and sanctions. The PSHE programme educates pupils about different types of bullying, their impact, and the importance of kindness and inclusion. A well-publicised reporting system ensures concerns are addressed promptly, fostering a culture where pupils feel safe, supported and confident in seeking help when needed.

39. Admission and attendance registers are meticulously maintained, and leaders track and monitor attendance carefully and follow up any absenteeism appropriately. The school informs the local authority whenever pupils leave or join the school at non-standard times of transition.
40. The premises and accommodation are well maintained, including in boarding. All required health and safety checks and maintenance are carried out. The school conducts regular fire evacuation drills, including during boarding time, and implement any action points identified in fire risk assessments.
41. Effective first aid and medical support are available to all pupils, including boarders. Appropriately trained staff store medication securely and administer it appropriately when required. They maintain comprehensive records of any administration of first aid or medication. A member of staff trained in paediatric first aid is always available to children in the early years.
42. Children in the early years engage in a range of appropriate activities that promote their personal, emotional and physical development effectively. Staff encourage children to take responsibility and act independently, such as when pouring milk or organising wellington boots. Such activities foster self-sufficiency and teamwork. Staff make effective use of strategies and resources, such as sand timers, to encourage turn-taking and to promote co-operative play and fairness.

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

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

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

44. Leaders and staff actively model the school's positive values and foster relationships with pupils based on respect and kindness. Pupils are taught to be courteous and polite, with positive behaviour recognised through the school's token system.
45. Pupils develop their sense of right and wrong through the exploration of moral principles such as fairness, integrity and responsibility. Through PSHE and subjects such as history and literature, pupils consider ethical dilemmas, the necessity of laws, and the relationship between crime and punishment. Assemblies, tutor discussions and debates provide further opportunities to engage with contemporary moral issues and different perspectives. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their moral and emotional sensibilities further, such as by remembering those who have gone before them and fallen in the World Wars. The school's culture of respect and accountability ensures that pupils apply the school's values and principles in their daily interactions, fostering a respectful and cohesive community.
46. In the early years, children are encouraged to develop independence in their learning, for example by making choices about the equipment they use in the outdoor area. Children are taught to care for and respect each other, taking turns and helping one another, such as by assisting a friend in fastening their coat or sharing resources during creative play. This fosters a happy and supportive learning community.
47. Through assemblies, chapel services, 'Thought for the Week' and the PSHE programme, pupils develop an understanding of key values such as tolerance, and the importance of respecting cultural diversity and people's identities and backgrounds. For example, pupils explore themes such as colonisation and decolonisation, and neurodiversity. Pupils learn why it is important to acknowledge and respect people's protected characteristics, such as race, sex and religion, and explore such themes through discussions and well-chosen texts.
48. Pupils develop their understanding of democracy through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. They learn about the role of Parliament, the electoral system and civic participation, in PSHE and subjects such as history. Pupils experience democracy in action through student elections, school councils and leadership roles. Visits to government institutions further enhance their knowledge of democratic processes.
49. The boarders' weekend programme provides opportunities for pupils to visit cities and sites of cultural importance, enhancing their knowledge and understanding of Britain. This programme helps foster an appreciation of life in British society and its traditions and values.
50. Leaders provide pupils with guidance on their next steps and support pupils effectively in their transition to future schools. In the early years and pre-prep, pupils begin to explore different careers through talks and a guest speaker programme. This allows them to explore roles such as being a nurse or a firefighter. In the prep, teachers introduce pupils to career pathways related to their subjects. For example, teachers talk to pupils about jobs linked to mathematics or languages. However, this programme is less well developed than other areas of the curriculum and does not provide older pupils with as much information about future career and educational possibilities as it could.

51. In the early years and pre-prep, pupils develop an understanding of money through role-play activities such as buying gifts and shopkeeping. In the prep, pupils gain practical experience by running a stall at the summer fair. However, leaders' provision for pupils' economic education is not as well developed as possible. There are limited opportunities for pupils to explore aspects of economics or finance beyond what they learn through mathematics lessons.
52. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to hold positions of responsibility, such as School Council in the pre-prep and chicken monitors, and Prefects or Ambassadors in the prep. In Year 3, pupils apply for 'section leader' positions, which come with appropriate duties and responsibilities, forming part of the school's charities committee. Prep pupils are encouraged to participate in activities such as reading to younger pupils, litter picking and charitable endeavours. These opportunities help pupils develop a sense of responsibility towards others.
53. Pupils contribute positively to the local community. They take part in running stalls, selling goods for charitable endeavours, which benefits both local initiatives and causes further afield. Pupils support the local care home, including by singing for the residents, demonstrating their sense of responsibility and respect for others.

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

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

Safeguarding

55. Leaders prioritise safeguarding and implement robust safeguarding arrangements. The safeguarding policy and procedures reflect the requirements of current statutory guidance.
56. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive, well understood and consistently implemented. New staff, including part-time teachers and external staff involved in the activities programme, receive detailed and effective induction training. All staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to follow the school's procedures, including how to raise concerns about other members of staff. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities are appropriately trained for their roles. They respond to any safeguarding concerns in a timely and appropriate manner, including by working closely with relevant external agencies and referring concerns on to them when necessary. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) maintains suitable records of safeguarding concerns and how the school has responded to these.
57. The school carries out all required pre-employment checks and records these accurately in a single central record (SCR) of appointments. Leaders maintain robust oversight of the SCR to ensure that appropriate safer recruitment procedures are followed.
58. The school ensures that pupils are aware of the channels through which they can report concerns or ask for help. Boarders know they have two independent persons whom they can approach for additional support if needed.
59. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online, through the PSHE programme and other lessons. The school has appropriate monitoring and filtering systems in place for internet use. Leaders take prompt and effective action to address any alerts that they receive.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Bilton Grange School
Department for Education number	937/6002
Registered charity number	528771
Address	Bilton Grange School Rugby Road Dunchurch Rugby Warwickshire CV22 6QU
Phone number	01788 810217
Email address	bgsec@biltongrange.co.uk
Website	www.biltongrange.co.uk
Proprietor	The Governing Body of Rugby School
Chair	Mr Nicholas Bacon
Headteacher	Mr Gareth Jones
Age range	3 to 13
Number of pupils	382
Number of boarding pupils	56
Date of previous inspection	23 to 25 March 2022

Information about the school

61. Bilton Grange School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school which is part of the Rugby School Group and is overseen by the group's governing body. Boarding provision is available from the age of 8 years. Founded in 1873, the school has occupied its current site since 1887. The school merged with Rugby School in 2020, and the current headteacher took up his position in September 2021. The school comprises the early years, for children aged 3 to 4 years, pre-prep, for pupils aged 4 to 8 years and prep, for pupils aged 8 to 13 years.
62. There is one co-educational boarding house situated on the school site. Pupils can board on a full-time, weekly or flexi-boarding basis.
63. There are 51 children in the early years comprising one Nursery class and two Reception classes.
64. The school has identified 65 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Four pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
65. The school has identified English as an additional language (EAL) for 60 pupils.
66. The school seeks to be a learning community in which pupils feel safe, stimulated and nurtured to discover their talents, develop their potential, contribute to the community and lead happy, fulfilled lives.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

18 to 20 March 2025

67. A team of five 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 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

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