

# School inspection report

19 to 21 March 2024

## **Collegiate School Bristol**

Bell Hill

Stapleton

Bristol

BS16 1BJ

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. Governors and school leaders have the experience, knowledge and skills to lead the school effectively. Leaders in the senior and junior schools collaborate effectively, ensuring that all parts of the school share the same aims and values, resulting in smooth progress for pupils as they move through the school.
2. School leaders carry out a focused self-evaluation which informs future improvement and the management of risk in the school. Extensive use of academic and pastoral data, and pupil surveys, enable leaders to anticipate any issues and take action to prevent them developing.
3. Teachers use their extensive subject knowledge to plan effective lessons, enabling pupils to make good progress. Staff assess pupils' work frequently and provide meaningful feedback, ensuring that pupils are aware of their progress towards their goals. Whilst teachers adapt most lessons well to meet individual pupils' needs, this is not consistent across the school.
4. Children in the early years engage in a wide range of activities which support them in their learning and in forming positive relationships. Teachers constantly assess children's progress and respond appropriately by promoting their development through the planning of stimulating activities.
5. A well-developed programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education across the school ensures that pupils understand the importance of how they treat others and the 'no bystanders' culture actively promotes positive attitudes. As a result, pupils are happy and confident, enjoy being at school and work effectively with others.
6. Pupils behave well. Instances of bullying are rare and are acted upon quickly when they do occur.
7. The school is a diverse community which celebrates difference and sees this diversity as a strength. Through a range of activities and groups pupils develop a clear sense of respect for different cultures and others whose views differ from them. Children in the early years develop strong moral foundations which prepare them well for the prep school.
8. Pupils are well-prepared for life beyond the school including through PSHE lessons and the Future Leaders programme. Pupils visit workplaces, hear from visiting speakers and engage in activities to develop the skills they will need to thrive in wider society.
9. Pupils recognise their responsibilities to the community and are engaged in a wide range of voluntary activities both inside and outside of school. The house system encourages support between year groups and an extensive volunteering programme means that pupils are actively engaged supporting others.
10. There is a secure culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders and teachers recognise their responsibilities and implement effective policies to ensure that safeguarding risks to pupils are swiftly identified and acted upon. There is an appropriate awareness of the school's local context, and the safeguarding team liaise effectively with local agencies as necessary.

## 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 step

School leaders should:

- strengthen the strategies used by teachers so that teaching is consistently adapted to the needs of all pupils, enabling them to make the best progress.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Leaders, including governors, have the knowledge and skills to provide clear direction across the school. There is a deep understanding of the aims of the school and these aims are used to set the strategic development themes which ensure the school continues to improve. Leaders in the junior and senior schools collaborate effectively on common issues and ensure that pupils experience a smooth transition into Year 7. Leadership of the early years is similarly effective, and careful weekly and daily planning ensures staff are aware of the needs of the children. Children have a positive start to their education and are prepared well for their transitions.
12. Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the importance of self-evaluation. They are able to express the current strengths and relative weaknesses of the school and take a strategic approach to promoting the wellbeing of pupils. Leaders monitor the school's progress against their aims through quantitative metrics and qualitative measures, including regular surveys of the pupil body. An awareness of the knowledge and skills of their staff means that leaders address any training needs as they arise.
13. There is effective use of pastoral and academic data to identify individuals and groups of pupils who may be at risk, including those with protected characteristics and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In the junior school this enables leaders to identify patterns in the behaviour logs and work with particular pupil groups to support them in developing strong friendships. In the senior school, academic leaders identify groups of pupils who may be underperforming and put strategies in place to improve outcomes in public examinations.
14. Governors are fully engaged with the life of the school. They receive regular reports from the school and visit frequently, enabling them to build positive relationships with leaders and staff across a range of areas of activity. They engage with pupils in discussions and shadowing so that pupils' needs are taken into account and their views considered. Using this information, leaders have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
15. Leaders keep pupil wellbeing at the centre of their vision and are effective in identifying risks. They have a strategic approach to risk management which means that steps are taken to mitigate risk prior to incidents occurring. Leaders are aware of contextual risks which arise from their cohort of pupils and their location in the city. Risk assessments cover all areas of the school and include risks to both physical health and mental wellbeing. Leaders ensure that effective mitigations are in place to minimise higher areas of risk such as the younger pupils crossing the road to the dining hall and increasing the supervision of pupils as they leave the school grounds. Governors regularly review the school's risk management and safeguarding processes to ensure these are effective. Where necessary, leaders liaise proactively with external agencies to identify risks and implement effective responses to keep pupils safe.
16. The required information is available for parents and the school communicates regularly with parents about pupils' progress and pastoral concerns. As a result, parents feel well-informed about school life. Leaders provide information to local authorities as relevant, including sharing pupil profiles in the early years.
17. Leaders ensure that there is a complaints policy which is effectively implemented. Any complaints are clearly recorded in a complaints log which is reviewed annually by governors.

18. There is an approach of constant improvement to the accessibility of the school in place, and this is effectively implemented. As and when buildings are updated or renovated careful consideration is given to those with a wide range of disabilities ensuring that the school is welcoming and accessible.
19. Leaders' emphasis on respecting and valuing all pupils is communicated clearly meaning that respect is embedded in school life. They are mindful of their duties in respect of equality for all sections of the school community and implement policies which interpret their duties effectively.

### **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. Leaders have developed a broad and varied curriculum that meets pupils' needs and allows them to make good progress towards their future goals. Teachers follow clear plans and schemes of work which effectively build pupils' knowledge and skills throughout their time at the school. There are regular reviews of these schemes of work by school leaders. This ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to make good progress, for example by sharing approaches which have worked well to other subjects across the school.
22. The curriculum builds on the previous learning, including through careful co-ordination between the senior and junior schools to enable a smooth transition, whilst also taking into account the needs of those joining the senior school from elsewhere. Senior school staff work with their junior school colleagues in a number of clubs and competitions to build their understanding of the younger pupils and introducing those pupils to new people and approaches.
23. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and pupils' progress is furthered by their high expectations. They use high-quality questioning to probe pupils' understanding and encourage them to think deeply and with subtlety. When pupils ask questions, teachers are able to use these as a springboard to take the class deeper into a topic or draw links between other areas of the course resulting in pupils developing a wide-ranging understanding of their subjects.
24. Teachers know their pupils well and typically plan well-structured lessons. Teachers evaluate pupils' progress regularly and have comprehensive records of current attainment and targeted goals. This enables staff to identify pupils who may need extra support, and this is provided effectively through a wide variety of additional sessions, or informal one-on-one help. In class, teachers circulate providing individual support which makes effective use of teachers' knowledge of the students.
25. Teachers assess work in a systematic manner and provide pupils with feedback through regular focused marking followed by supportive written or verbal feedback. Teachers encourage pupils to respond effectively to feedback, for example responding in different coloured pens and composing their own goals. When reviewing feedback, pupils engage in self-reflection effectively throughout the school, reflecting on their own learning and planning their next steps. Pupils are able to articulate how they learn and on the progress that they have made.
26. A specialist department supports pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), providing different tiers of support depending on the needs of the pupil. This may include additional tuition outside of class, combined with support in class. As a result, these pupils made progress at the same rate as their peers.
27. Leaders ensure that pupils who have SEND have comprehensive support outside of the classroom, and that detailed information in pupil passports is available to teachers. When this information is used in planning and adapting lessons, it has a positive impact on the progress made by these pupils. For example, following a diagnosis and changes to the support provided in class, pupils' subject grades were strengthened. However, the implementation of the strategies in these pupil passports in timetabled lessons is not consistent throughout the school.
28. Digital technology is increasingly used well to support learning. Where digital technology is embedded into teaching it enables pupils to access a wide range of resources adapted to their individual needs. For example, in lessons some pupils were reviewing previous work in preparation

for an upcoming assessment whilst others, who were more confident, were able to work on some additional content which broadened their knowledge beyond the core curriculum.

29. The school has a comprehensive system for recording pupils' progress from baseline data and this is used effectively to monitor the progress of different groups. Pupils' attainment at A Level and GCSE in 2023 was well above the national averages for all pupils, and public exam results show many obtain grades above their predications. In the prep school, leaders use a range of baseline data and standardised data to measure pupil progress effectively and support pupils or groups who may fall behind expected levels of progress, whatever their attainment level. Work is well matched to the abilities of pupils.
30. In the early years, lessons encompass all prime and specific areas of learning. Age-appropriate activities are available for all abilities and outcomes and progress are carefully assessed by teachers. Children make good progress in core skills, including reading, writing and numeracy. Leaders have begun a new scheme to introduce the sounds that make up words in the lower end of the prep school, which has had a clear impact on accelerating the children's learning. Younger pupils proudly display their work on the celebration boards, where they can see their own progress and work towards further goals. Physical development is encouraged through risk taking in a safe and secure environment, thus extending the children's social and emotional development.
31. There are many opportunities for the pupils to participate in additional activities through a varied programme of lunchtime and after school clubs. These enrichment activities enable pupils to develop a range of social, creative and physical skills. The extensive music and sports opportunities and the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) programme are popular and enjoyed by the pupils. These opportunities not only develop creative and leadership skills, but also develop the pupils' self-confidence and they are able to talk positively and thoughtfully about their development outside of the classroom.

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

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



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

33. Leaders place a high priority on pupils' mental wellbeing, and a range of activities teach pupils strategies to support them in managing this. Older pupils gain opportunities to develop their own strategies through talks by visiting speakers on stress management and use of online applications to help them manage workload and stress levels. Older pupils share their experiences with younger pupils through the house systems and peer mentoring process. This fosters a clear sense of a school community which values a proactive approach to mental health.
34. In the prep school, the PHSE programme is effectively embedded in all lessons from Nursery to Year 6. A well-planned curriculum through Year 7–11 develops into the Future Leaders programme in the sixth form which not only delivers age-appropriate sessions on RSE topics, but also focuses on preparing pupils for life beyond the school through establishing effective links with external organisations. This co-ordinated programme across the school results in pupils developing self-understanding and self-confidence as they involve themselves in lessons and activities with enthusiasm.
35. Pupils develop spiritual understanding through their religious studies lessons, chapel and assemblies. In the early years the children's spiritual and moral understanding is enhanced through activities such as the Easter Gardens where they have the freedom to express themselves and experiment with their ideas. Respect for others, no matter what their faith, is encouraged through assemblies throughout the school which are often designed and led by pupils and focus on the theme of treating each other as unique members of the community.
36. Pupils of all ages engage enthusiastically with physical activity and understand that it is part of being healthy. Pupils have many opportunities for a wide range of sports and physical education including both competitive sports and non-competitive activities such as the walk and talk option for older pupils. Younger pupils enjoy time spent in the woodland learning environment, learning how to appreciate the natural world whilst staying safe. Children in the early years are given the freedom to choose their own tasks in structured free flow play and pursue their own learning, developing personal and emotional skills alongside physical activities. They treat each other with respect and consideration.
37. Leaders have implemented highly effective systems for the reporting and analysis of behaviour and bullying which enables the identification of patterns and effective support to be put in place. Incidents of bullying are rare and there is preventative action taken to prevent acts of unkindness developing into potentially more serious behaviours. Standards for behaviour in lessons are high and early intervention in response to any excitable behaviour ensures pupils remain on task.
38. The school site is well maintained and careful consideration is given to keeping it safe. Appropriate health and safety checks are carried out, and action taken effectively to reduce potential hazards. Daily safety checks are undertaken, including walk-arounds in the early years, to ensure children are safe. There is a well-resourced maintenance and remedial programme to manage the large grounds and woodland areas. The school draws on external expertise where necessary, for example carrying out tree audits after storms and to ensure the safety of the well-used outdoor learning areas. The security of the site and supervision of pupils are carefully considered and appropriate measures are

in place. Pupils across the school site are well supervised by staff who provide a welcoming and reassuring presence.

39. The school provides a well-resourced medical centre with staff that keep thorough records of any treatments and medicines administered, including for children in the early years. Logs are analysed by senior leaders and followed up through health and safety team meetings to identify any patterns or trends, responding appropriately when required.
40. Admission and attendance registers are maintained appropriately. Attendance levels are monitored weekly and action taken to support any pupil falling below expected thresholds. Where necessary, external agencies are informed promptly of arrivals and departures, particularly at non-standard transition points.

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

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

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

42. The school is a diverse community which celebrates difference. Pupils in the Strength in Differences (SiD) group work with leaders to promote an inclusive approach in the senior school and in the prep school, teachers embed the same ethos across the curriculum. Pupils have led a wide range of initiatives such as culture days and pride events, which raised awareness and encouraged celebration of difference among the pupil body. The language ambassadors scheme allows pupils to champion their home language and they take great pride in sharing their heritage. This range of activities results in pupils gaining a deep understanding and respect for each other, including those from different cultures and with protected characteristics.
43. In the early years and the pre-prep, mutual respect is taught and encouraged, with active promotion of understanding right from wrong. For example, when a child carries out a minor misdemeanour there is mediation and a discussion about feelings from which all children learn. Consequently, children develop a strong moral foundation for their future in the school and wider society.
44. As pupils progress through the school careers education and enrichment opportunities are embedded within the curriculum and pupils are effectively developing leadership, teamwork and resilience. The Future Leaders program is particularly effective and provides guidance on a range of career and post-school opportunities. This programme also prepares pupils for life after school, and they gain a range of essential skills for their next steps from financial management to self-care. Pupils across the school experience a wide range of visiting speakers from different professions and visits to workplaces including a hospital. As a result, they are well-prepared to make decisions about their future, choosing a wide range of options from university courses to alternative pathways. Pupils have the confidence to choose and pursue their own path and teachers the knowledge and skills to support them in this.
45. Opportunities for economic education are integrated into PHSE and other subject areas in a systematic manner. For example, in mathematics lessons, younger pupils carry out calculations around budgeting for a day trip and older pupils create a mock business plan to pitch for start-up funding to local business leaders.
46. Pupils have an ingrained awareness of the importance of mutual respect in their multicultural environment. They recognise the importance of speaking up if they witness intolerance and follow the 'No bystanders' motto in their lives at the school. They discuss scenarios where tensions between different groups may be present, and this means that pupils are insightful about how to respond compassionately to others in difficult scenarios.
47. In the junior school, pupils with EAL are celebrated through a variety of cultural activities including sharing their experiences with their peers. Pupils take great pride in this and it develops an accepting and welcoming environment for all through greater knowledge of different cultures.
48. There are many ways for pupils to communicate their views to the school and take on leadership roles. The school council meets regularly and has implemented changes to the school including changes to uniform policies and improvements to areas of the grounds. Consequently, pupils feel heard and able to contribute to the running of the school.

49. Pupils volunteer for a range of organisations from supporting the Bristol Education Partnership with activities for local children to visiting a local care home for those with dementia. Pupils engage deeply with these opportunities, forming relationships with organisations which persist beyond their time in the school. As a result, pupils have a broad awareness of the range of experiences which exist beyond the school gates.
50. Student leadership and community engagement in house charity days enables groups of pupils to work together to make a positive impact through fundraising for local homeless charities or active participation in local beach cleans. Pupils place value on supporting others and understand their responsibilities both within the school and to the wider community.
51. Sport, music and drama often happen across year groups, promoting a strong sense of community. This is particularly well developed through the house system and activities such as the CCF. Older pupils regularly work with younger pupils in peer mentoring schemes, or training The Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants on navigation and expedition skills, for example. Communal singing is an important part of school life and contributes to pupils feeling part of a community through activities such as performing the house song and assemblies.

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

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

## Safeguarding

53. There is a secure culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Every member of the community understands their own role in promoting safeguarding including early reporting of any concerns, and both staff and pupils are clear on the ways to do this. Where concerns are raised, they are acted upon quickly and effectively building confidence in pupils that their concerns are listened to and taken seriously.
54. Governors conduct an annual review of safeguarding, challenging the school's procedures and sampling records to ensure that the school's processes are effective and robust. Governors respond to the findings of these reviews and have implemented a number of initiatives in response to changes in the school's context, including implementing a comprehensive lock down alarm system and procedure to help keep everyone in the school safe.
55. The safeguarding team are suitably qualified and have the knowledge, skills and understanding to carry out their roles effectively. All staff are suitably trained, including those who have a specific safeguarding responsibility. This means that all staff have a well-informed understanding of the importance of safeguarding and their roles and responsibilities in keeping the pupils safe from harm.
56. There are clear protocols in place for reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff are aware of these protocols and feel confident in using them. There are a range of members of staff that pupils can contact if they have concerns, in addition to an online reporting tool.
57. The safeguarding team keep comprehensive records of safeguarding concerns enabling them to spot patterns and respond quickly to emerging issues which may affect an individual or group of pupils.
58. The safeguarding team in the senior and junior schools understand the contextual safeguarding risks of their pupils and location. Members of the safeguarding team liaise effectively with local partnerships and agencies to support individual pupils and on initiatives to keep all pupils in the school safe. Safeguarding leaders are proactive in identifying emerging areas of concern in the local area and respond effectively. Staff are alert to risks such as child-on-child abuse, extremism and share any low-level concerns.
59. Pupils learn how to keep safe online in a range of lessons throughout the school, including PHSE and computing classes. Teachers target the messages to different ages effectively and consequently pupils are confident and knowledgeable about online safety. Suitable filtering and monitoring processes are in place.
60. Those responsible carry out the necessary recruitment checks for staff, volunteers and governors. These checks are carried out robustly and recorded accurately on the record of appointments.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Collegiate School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	801/6002
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1079552
<b>Address</b>	Collegiate School Stapleton Bristol BS16 1BJ
<b>Phone number</b>	Senior School: 0117 9655207 Prep School: 0117 9655297
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@collegiate.org.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.collegiate.org.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Collegiate School Bristol
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Nicholas Baker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jeremy McCullough
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 18
<b>Number of pupils</b>	787
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 to 17 October 2019

## Information about the school

62. Collegiate School Bristol is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 2 and 18 years. It is a charitable company limited by guarantee with a board of governors. The school is divided into pre-prep for pupils in pre-school to Year 2; a prep school for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6; and a senior school for pupils in Years 7 to 13, with the head of the latter having overall responsibility for the school.
63. There are 60 children in the early years which comprises a pre-school class and two reception classes.
64. The school has identified 203 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
65. English is an additional language for 126 pupils.
66. The school states its aims are to provide opportunities for pupils to fulfil their potential in all areas, academic, creative, sporting and social; encourage a spirit of service in its pupils, so that they may become confident, respectful and responsible citizens; and to prepare students for effective participation in higher education and employment, providing opportunities for leadership and encouraging initiative and independence.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

19 to 21 March 2024

67. A team of 7 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 head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

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](http://www.isi.net)**.

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For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)