

School inspection report

18 to 20 March 2025

Dulwich College

Dulwich Common

London

SE21 7LD

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. School leaders and governors consistently ensure that pupils' wellbeing is actively promoted. Governors are well informed and staff have the skills needed to carry out their responsibilities so that school policies are appropriate and implemented, and Standards are met.
2. The curriculum for children in the early years covers all the required areas. The curriculum for older pupils is broad, offering a wide choice that includes classics and a number of modern foreign languages. It is extended by an extensive range of co-curricular opportunities.
3. Leaders' oversight of the curriculum and assessment processes provides for a seamless transition between the junior and senior school. Liaison has been less thorough between leaders in the school's infant provision, and in the junior school, and oversight of the pupils' experience of transition between the two is less smooth as a result.
4. Teachers are knowledgeable and manage class time well. On occasion, lesson planning for children in the early years and younger pupils does not provide sufficient challenge, leading to restless, inattentive behaviour. The classroom atmosphere in the senior school is focused and purposeful. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in public examinations.
5. Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is thorough and well managed. The learning needs department provides teachers with information and guidance on helpful strategies, and these are effective in supporting pupils to make progress over time.
6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported in the classroom, with guidance from the learning needs department. Boarders who join the sixth form are given additional support to develop their fluency in English to the standard required for university entrance.
7. Pupils learn the importance of respect for all, regardless of differences, in a restructured and effective personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum provides pupils with the knowledge and understanding they need to keep safe and to form healthy relationships as they mature.
8. The clear behavioural expectations are respected by pupils, who treat each other with kindness and respect. The anti-bullying strategy is effective. Attendance levels are monitored systematically.
9. Policies and procedures for matters of health and safety are rigorous, so that the school provides a secure environment where preventable risk is mitigated effectively.
10. The curriculum ensures that pupils develop their understanding of financial matters. A well-planned careers programme provides impartial and helpful advice for pupils on potential career paths.
11. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They are responsible and know that their actions can make a difference to school life and in the wider world. They are well prepared for adult life in modern Britain.
12. An extended safeguarding team led by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is rigorous in training staff to understand their responsibilities in this area so that action is taken as required. Accurate

records are kept and stored confidentially. Measures to check that those working in the school are suitable to work with children are thorough.

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:

- develop closer liaison between leaders in the infant school and in the junior school on curriculum and assessment matters, to support pupils' smooth transition between the two sections of the school
- ensure that all teaching for pupils below the examination years creates a purposeful learning atmosphere in which pupils face appropriate levels of challenge and so make consistently good progress.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

13. Governors and school leaders at all levels are self-reflective and rigorous in checking that decisions taken reflect the school's published aims and values. They are not afraid to take difficult decisions and have been proactive in creating an inclusive and supportive environment where the school community is united in understanding that equal respect for all is a non-negotiable expectation.
14. School leaders provide thorough reports to governors for consideration in full board meetings and the meetings of sub-committees. Chairs of sub-committees meet with the chairman of the board annually to ensure a clear overview of how the school is meeting its aims. Governors keep themselves well informed so that they can be confident that school leaders have the knowledge and skills needed for their roles so that they can fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
15. Leaders are rigorous in reviewing the school's success against its aims and the effectiveness of actions taken. For example, there is careful monitoring of the restructured curriculum for PSHE and the content of its teaching on RSE. Leaders monitor its effectiveness in promoting the values of respect and kindness as well as academic curiosity. All required policies are in place and leaders ensure that staff are implementing them correctly so that the Standards are met consistently.
16. School leaders take a wide view of actual or potential risk presented by different activities or the school's context. They take mitigating actions such as teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe when travelling to school. Leaders require staff to complete comprehensive risk assessments for trips and outings. They work closely with school leaders in a nearby school for female pupils with whom there are curricular and extra-curricular links to ensure that expectations of pupils' behaviour are consistent across the schools and joint action is taken if necessary. They liaise with external agencies such as social services and the police as appropriate.
17. Leaders ensure that the curriculum meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 so that the needs of all groups of pupils are met. The accessibility plan covers the required timeframe and reflects leaders' commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive environment. It sets out actions to be taken to improve facilities and provision for any pupils who have specific needs or disabilities. The plan is reviewed regularly. Actions taken have included the provision of lifts and ramps to improve access to buildings. There is ongoing assessment of needs for additional learning support so that all pupils can access the curriculum and information.
18. Leaders liaise with the local authorities to provide the required information, including reporting on the use of funds for pupils in receipt of an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school's website has links to the school's policies and procedures so that parents have easy access to the required information, including for boarding. Any concern expressed is managed in line with the complaints policies for parents, pupils and boarders.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. Leaders have established a curriculum that covers all required subjects and extends beyond this to offer classics, separate sciences and a wide range of modern foreign languages so that it meets the needs and aspirations of pupils.
21. Well-designed schemes of work provide pupils with intellectual challenge and stimulation. Close liaison between leaders in the junior and senior school helps to ensure that there is a coherent curriculum, so that that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills develop systematically. Liaison between the infant provision and the junior school is not so effective, with the result that procedures for curricular decisions and assessment are less coherent and pupils' transition between the two is less smooth.
22. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in developing their subject knowledge and understanding. Children in the early years and the infant school develop effective communication skills. They understand the relationship between letter shapes and their sounds. In the junior and senior schools, pupils' oracy skills develop well through discussions in class and activities such as debating. Mathematical understanding is secure, and pupils apply their understanding well to other subjects, such as geography. Pupils have a confident grasp of scientific and technological concepts. They use information technology skilfully and creatively to support their learning, for example in manipulating photographic images for art projects.
23. Pupils who have SEND are well supported by the learning needs department. On initial identification, suitable strategies are devised and shared with staff for use in lessons. In the early years and infant provision, this may include extra support from teaching assistants and if necessary short periods of individual or small-group support. The needs of pupils in the junior and senior school are primarily met within the classrooms. Regular discussions of pupils' progress with teachers assess the effectiveness of these. When further support is required, for example in literacy skills, it is provided in sessions with specialist staff, the aim being to empower pupils to understand how best to manage their own learning. The support provided helps pupils who have SEND to make good progress from their starting points.
24. The majority of pupils who speak EAL are fluent in English and require minimal support. The fluency of international boarders joining the sixth form is assessed on admission and necessary support, including individual lessons, is put in place. As a result, pupils' confidence in English develops swiftly.
25. Pupils make good progress overall. Well-planned activities encourage children in the early years to make good progress in the required areas of learning. Pupils in the infant provision make good progress. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils in the junior school are reading fluently, writing in a controlled manner and attaining highly in mathematics. There is a consistent pattern of high levels of attainment in public examinations. In GCSE examinations in 2024, pupils achieved very highly. Almost all candidates at A level reached the highest grades in all their subjects.
26. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Typically, teachers manage class time well and plan lessons that take into account pupils' aptitudes and prior attainment. On occasion, however, planning for children and younger pupils does not provide sufficient challenge or a range of activities to keep the pupils engaged. When this happens, pupils become inattentive and restless, and this impedes their progress.

27. Older pupils are self-motivated and keen to engage in learning. Teachers encourage pupils to think and learn for themselves. They respond positively to their teachers' subject expertise and show a willingness to explore topics broadly and deeply. In lessons for older pupils, the classroom atmosphere is typically one of absorbed mutual exploration, with the teacher guiding pupils and stimulating their curiosity through careful questioning and creating links with other areas of the subject.
28. The well-planned assessment framework is used effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning. Targeted questioning in lessons helps teachers to assess pupils' understanding and address misconceptions promptly. Useful feedback is provided to help pupils to improve their work. Departments also carry out surveys of pupils to assess their confidence in what they have learnt. These actions effectively support pupils' progress. Parents are provided with regular reports on their child's performance.
29. The extensive range of co-curricular activities extends learning beyond lessons. There is an appropriate range of activities available for boarders in the evenings and on weekends. Numerous clubs and societies, many initiated and run by pupils themselves, encourage pupils to pursue their interests and to explore new activities. The vast majority of pupils are enthusiastic participants in clubs, and their leadership skills, self confidence and self-esteem develop through their involvement. The co-curricular programme enriches pupils' education, reflecting the school's aim to bring purpose and joy to school life.

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 have created a curriculum and culture that emphasises inclusivity and helps pupils to feel valued. Staff forge positive and respectful relationships with pupils. Pupils know that they can turn to staff for support.
32. Children in the early years and infant provision understand the values of kindness and unselfishness. In the junior and senior schools, the restructured PSHE curriculum places a particular emphasis on the importance of respect for self and for others. Joint lessons and activities with a nearby school for female pupils, and the marking of events such as International Women's Day, Black History Month and neurodiversity week, support a culture in which pupils form a deep understanding of the unacceptability of discriminatory attitudes. RSE lessons include discussions on appropriate attitudes and language. Pupils are prompt in reporting their concerns should they hear unacceptable terms being used. Boarders learn to live in harmony with others, regardless of differences of background and culture. House activities organised by staff provide boarders with relaxed opportunities to talk about their different backgrounds and traditions.
33. The RSE curriculum covers matters such as puberty, consent and what constitutes a healthy relationship. Pupils consider how to keep themselves safe in social situations and to be alert to the risk of online exploitation. Regular and thorough monitoring of pupils' understanding of such issues helps leaders to be sure that pupils have the knowledge they need to keep themselves safe.
34. Pupils learn about different belief systems and the moral and philosophical issues these raise. Watching ducklings emerge from the eggs in the school's hatchery and observing how they grow introduces children in the early years to the idea of a cycle of life. Older pupils consider arguments on the existence of God or whether time exists. Pupils' evident pleasure in the aesthetic beauty of music-making and art demonstrates their appreciation of non-material values.
35. Pupils throughout the school develop self-esteem and self-confidence because they know that their opinions and happiness matter to their teachers as well as their academic progress. Their teachers' praise of their efforts and initiatives helps bolster their self-confidence, so that they are not afraid to take risks in their learning. The wide choice of extra-curricular activities provides pupils with many opportunities to challenge themselves intellectually and physically, further developing their self-belief and resilience.
36. Children and pupils develop their physical skills well in physical education (PE) lessons and sessions in the outdoor environment. Well-designed PE lessons for pupils in the junior and senior schools introduce them to a wide range of team and individual sports including football, rugby, water polo and fencing. Teaching helps pupils' skills to develop well, so that teams are successful in fixtures, some reaching national levels of success. Pupils understand the importance of sporting activity for their physical health and for their mental wellbeing, understanding how sport can be a means of relieving stress.
37. Leaders set clear behavioural expectations appropriate to the ages of the pupils. Pupils understand the school's values of kindness and respect, and their behaviour exemplifies this. Leaders' use of restorative conversations in the event of misdemeanours encourages pupils' self-reflection so that they learn from their mistakes.

38. The anti-bullying strategy is implemented appropriately. Records show that there are few incidents of bullying and that when these do occur, they are managed effectively.
39. There are appropriate numbers of staff on duty throughout the day and in the boarding houses. Processes for the management of admissions and registration are maintained as required and overseen by the DSL. Attendance levels are overseen by the school's attendance champion and actions are taken as necessary in the event of any issues of lateness or absenteeism. Information is shared with local authorities when pupils join or leave at non-standard transition points.
40. The grounds and building are secure and well maintained, with regular checks of health and safety procedures. Procedures to minimise the risk of fire are rigorous and there are regular fire drills, including in the boarding houses outside the school day. The medical centre provides appropriate support for pupils, with medical support available for boarders at all times. Arrangements for the storage and administration of medicines are suitable and there are accurate records of any medical treatment given.
41. Boarders are well cared for by boarding staff. Main meals are provided in the school dining room and there are snacks and facilities for making hot drinks available in the house kitchens. Staff listen to and support boarders. The boarding experience helps boarders to develop their self-assurance and independence.

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

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

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

43. The planned curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the human and social forces that shape modern Britain. Pupils of all ages learn the importance of respect and tolerance in a civilised society. Talks from parents help children in the early years to begin to develop an understanding of the wider world and that everyone has the right to their own beliefs. The experience of boarding equips boarders with the skills to form positive and respectful relationships with those from different social and cultural backgrounds. In lessons, pupils of all ages consider issues such as the migration experiences of previous generations and the experiences of different social groups, including those of women, over time. Pupils learn that the rights of those who have specific needs or are in minority groups are protected in law.
44. Careers education is comprehensive, providing impartial information and encouraging pupils to consider a range of options. Careers education for younger pupils is taught primarily through PSHE lessons, during which pupils reflect on their own aptitudes and interests. Weekly careers newsletters, visiting speakers, discussion evenings and careers conventions provide ongoing information to stimulate pupils' understanding of potential routes for their futures. Those in the sixth form have interviews with a careers advisor and are given individual support in planning and applying for universities, apprenticeships or business routes of their choice.
45. The curriculum supports pupils to develop their economic awareness from an early age, as part of their preparation for adult life. Children in the early years and infant classes make flowers to sell to raise funds for charity. Teaching in the junior school includes units in financial literacy, including savings and taxation. Pupils in Year 8 undertake an entrepreneurial challenge and sixth-form pupils learn about budgeting and how to apply for student grants.
46. School leaders at all levels have created an environment in which pupils develop their understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and of responsibility to the school community and to society. A well-planned programme of activities for children in the early years includes opportunities to teach them to share and take turns. In the junior school, roles of responsibility for pupils include being 'buddies' to new pupils and being members of the school council. In the senior school there are prefect roles with specific responsibilities, such as chairing the pupil council, promoting equality and inclusion, and representing the views of pupils in LGBTQ communities. These roles support the development of leadership and team-building skills. Pupils learn that their actions have a positive impact on the school and its culture.
47. The broad extra-curricular programme encourages pupils to understand the importance of service and older pupils engage with other schools and community groups. Their understanding of the needs of others develops alongside their leadership skills as they realise that they have the power to make a difference to the lives of others.
48. Pupils are well prepared for adult life in British society. They learn about the role of democracy in lessons through trips to the Houses of Parliament and visiting speakers. Pupils see how democracy works by voting for posts of responsibility and seeing the impact of the school councils. Boarders learn to understand British institutions and cultural expectations through various trips and activities.

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

49. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

50. Leaders have established rigorous safeguarding procedures. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are regularly trained to an appropriate level. There are leaders with responsibility for safeguarding working in each section of the school to ensure that safeguarding provision across the school is equally robust. An extended pastoral team, including heads of sections, heads of year, nurses and a counsellor, meets regularly to discuss any concerns arising. Those responsible for safeguarding maintain a record of welfare concerns about pupils, updated weekly to ensure that there are regular checks on their wellbeing.
51. Governors attend safeguarding training. They receive regular updates on safeguarding issues arising in the school and conduct an annual formal review of the school's safeguarding policy and practice. The governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding meets regularly with the DSL to provide challenge and support.
52. The DSL and deputy DSL send regular informal safeguarding reminders to staff and provide comprehensive annual training for staff, including on the 'Prevent' duty. Safeguarding leads check the effectiveness of training sessions by means of a quiz. Any whose answers show insecure understanding are required to attend additional training. This approach ensures that staff are confident in their understanding of safeguarding and what they should do if they are concerned about a pupil.
53. Pupils know how to report concerns, either in person or using an online system. They trust their teachers and are confident that appropriate action is taken as necessary to keep them safe.
54. Safeguarding leads have formed good relationships with the local authority safeguarding officer. They readily seek advice when concerns arise and act accordingly. Leaders keep confidential records of concerns and actions taken. The safeguarding team work with local agencies as necessary, including social services and the police.
55. Staff recruitment processes are stringent. Leaders undertake periodic checks of the single central record (SCR) of staff appointments. This is correctly maintained and shows that the required checks are undertaken before an individual is allowed to start work at the school.
56. There are robust systems for filtering and monitoring the school's internet systems, with reports to school leaders and governors on the effectiveness of these. Pupils know the potential risks presented by the internet, how to protect themselves and what to do should they encounter material that poses a threat to their wellbeing. Boarders and pupils say they feel safe in school and know to whom they can turn for help.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

57. All the relevant Standards are met.

The quality of the early years foundation stage in the registered early years provision

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

58. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
59. Children display high levels of personal and emotional security, and the relationships formed between children and their key person are positive. Staff warmly welcome the children and their families, which ensures children settle quickly when they arrive at the start of each day. There is a clear feeling of mutual respect between adults and children, and politeness is regularly reinforced and praised. Children listen to staff and can follow instructions successfully.
60. Staff create a stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment, which promotes children's fine and gross motor skill development. For example, children delight in playing on the slide, digging in the sandpit and balancing on climbing equipment. Overall, staff use what they know about children to inform the learning opportunities on offer.
61. Staff structure the curriculum to develop children's skills in the prime areas of learning. They explain the importance of building children's hand muscles in preparation for writing and the different ways they can do this. For instance, they encourage children to manipulate dough and use their pincer fingers to choose tactile materials to decorate an egg. Children are supported to be inquisitive learners, developing positive attitudes to learning. However, they are not fully encouraged to be independent throughout the school day.
62. Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement through thoughtful self-evaluation and a clear vision for future development. They place utmost importance on supporting the work-life balance and wellbeing of staff. For example, leaders encourage staff to complete all of their duties within the working day and on a recent training day staff were offered activities to promote their wellbeing, such as yoga.

Quality of education

63. The quality of education is good.
64. Staff plan activities around children's interests, incorporating all seven areas of learning. They set up activities that they think will be fun for the children, such as making potions in a water tray. On occasion, staff do not fully and precisely consider the sequence of skills that they want the children to learn during activities to help prepare them for their next stage of learning.
65. Children benefit from the language-rich environment that staff provide to build on their communication skills. Toddlers begin to link words together as they enthusiastically share books with staff. Older children learn ambitious new words as they explore planting, such as 'sprout' and 'seedling'. Staff in the baby room promote good manners through repeating 'please' and 'thank you' in their interactions with babies.
66. Children have regular opportunities to be outdoors, such as during forest school activities. They learn about the world around them, exploring, making dens and climbing trees. This supports

children to learn about risk and challenge and to use tools and equipment. They similarly learn about plants in the environment and follow clear rules. These opportunities enable children to begin to understand rules and boundaries.

Behaviour and attitudes

67. Behaviour and attitudes are good.
68. Staff promote positive behaviour well. They provide plenty of praise and positive feedback to children. For example, in the toddler room, staff congratulate children when they successfully create towers with colourful pegs. This helps to boost levels of self-esteem.
69. Children are encouraged to express their emotions. They have opportunities to socialise with others and learn how to interact respectfully with kind hands and words. Staff use clear and consistent instructions to support children to make good choices. For instance, children willingly join in with activities and respond well to staff who guide them in their learning.
70. Children develop positive attitudes to learning. For example, younger children squeal with delight as they post balls through cardboard tubes and watch them roll along the floor. Older children fully immerse themselves in activities linked to eggs, talking about the newly hatched ducklings and creating their own textured eggs.
71. Children benefit from a tailored settling-in programme and visits to the next room prior to transition. Partnerships with parents are well established, which helps support children's emotional wellbeing. Staff communicate effectively with parents, with daily updates on children's progress and regular parents' meetings.

Personal development

72. The personal development of children is good.
73. Staff talk to children about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including being physically active and having a healthy diet. Mealtimes are organised well, with food prepared on site. Staff follow procedures to ensure that they meet children's dietary needs. However, during mealtimes, staff spend time completing simple tasks for the children. For instance, they prepare, plate and cut food for the children, rather than encouraging children to complete these tasks for themselves. This does not fully promote children's independence in daily routines.
74. Children are beginning to gain an appreciation for the diverse world in which they live through opportunities to explore other cultures and beliefs. For example, parents come in to share traditional family celebrations, such as Ramadan, and children explore whole-school themes, such as Black History Month.
75. Staff are extremely sensitive to the needs of younger children. For instance, after naps, they give children time to transition from sleep to wake time. They do not rush children to leave the sleep area and give them time to sit up and have a cuddle before moving to play or change a nappy. This is supportive for children's wellbeing.

Leadership and management

76. Leadership and management are good.
77. Leaders work closely with staff in the pre-prep team to create a consistent approach to children's learning as they move from Kindergarten to pre-Reception. Children have regular contact with familiar staff who come to read books, join in activities and provide specialist teaching. Children also join in with whole-school events, such as International Women's Day. This developing familiarity with staff and the school helps to ensure smooth transitions as children move through the school, which supports their wellbeing, learning and progress.
78. Leaders ensure that systems are in place to support children who have SEND. Staff use their own specialist knowledge to support children. Early intervention is sought by leaders and staff, who liaise with parents and outside providers to ensure each child is supported appropriately. For example, staff use the guidance they receive to make resources, such as visual timetables and support materials, for children to access learning in the environment.
79. Leaders provide support for staff through regular supervision. Training needs are identified and addressed to enhance the quality of provision. This training is effectively shared with other staff across the setting to further support the needs of children. For instance, recent training on neurodiversity has been shared with staff, ensuring that consistent practice is in place to assist children. The supportive approach to staff wellbeing helps maintain a motivated and effective workforce, which positively impacts the care and education provided.

Safeguarding

80. Safeguarding is effective.
81. There are effective arrangements in place to help safeguard children. The safeguarding team arranges staff training and checks knowledge through regular meetings and quizzes. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of safeguarding arrangements, the signs to look out for that may indicate a potential concern and the action to take in this instance.
82. Children's medical needs are met with robust first aid procedures. Staff complete fire drills and daily risk assessments which ensure areas are clear for evacuation. Leaders maintain thorough oversight of safeguarding, promptly addressing concerns to sustain a vigilant and responsive culture.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- support staff with planning to ensure that they precisely consider what it is they want children to learn in the activities they provide
- ensure that staff teach children the skills that they need to develop their independence throughout the school day.

The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage

83. The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

School details

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| School | Dulwich College |
| Department for Education number | 210/6000 |
| Registered early years number | EY381689 |
| Registered charity number | 1150064 |
| Address | Dulwich Common London SE21 7LD |
| Phone number | 020 8693 3601 |
| Email address | enquiries@dulwich.org.uk |
| Website | www.dulwich.org.uk |
| Proprietor | Dulwich College Trust |
| Chair | Dr Adrian Carr |
| Acting Headteacher | Mrs Fiona Angel |
| Age range | 6 months to 18 years |
| Number of pupils | 1919 |
| Number of boarding pupils | 135 |
| Number of children in the early years registered setting | 55 |
| Date of previous inspection | 16 to 19 November 2021 |

Information about the school

84. Dulwich College, founded in 1619 by Edward Alleyn, is a day and boarding school situated in south London. The school is made up of three sections: the Kindergarten and infant school cater for male and female pupils between the ages of 6 months and 7 years; the junior school is for male pupils aged 7 to 11 and senior school is for male pupils aged 11 to 18. Boarding is offered for pupils from Year 9. The school is a registered charity, overseen by a board of trustees who provide governance oversight of the school.
85. There are three boarding houses, two of which are solely for sixth-form pupils. All boarding accommodation is on the main school site.
86. Provision for all children in the early years setting is in the Kindergarten, with dedicated rooms. The early years registered setting consists of a baby room and a toddler room. There are five rooms for children aged between 3 and 5 years, forming the pre-Reception and Reception classes.
87. The school has identified 301 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Four pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
88. The school has identified English as an additional language (EAL) for 132 pupils.
89. The school states its aims are to create an inclusive and supportive environment in which all pupils feel equally secure and valued. It sets out to provide opportunities that will enable pupils to discover and develop their academic, sporting and cultural potential. It intends that pupils learn to work co-operatively while developing leadership skills and a sense of social responsibility.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

18 to 20 March 2025

90. A team of ten inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

91. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

92. 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

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For more information, please visit isi.net