

School inspection report

13 to 15 January 2026

Emanuel School

Battersea Rise

London

SW11 1HS

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders ensure that the school's ethos, together with the school's values of aspiration, connection and empathy, known as 'ACE', is fostered throughout the school. Staff and pupils are kind and respectful to one another. Pupils are self-aware, self-confident and highly motivated.
2. Governors oversee the school effectively, by reviewing policies and procedures, so that the Standards are met. They offer leaders suitable challenge and support to ensure that leaders have the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their duties responsibly. Leaders are aspirational and provide a stimulating and inclusive environment for pupils to succeed in a range of disciplines, in and beyond school. They are mindful to balance the demands of a challenging academic curriculum with carefully planned systems to promote pupils' wellbeing.
3. Leaders plan a highly ambitious curriculum that provides opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills and broaden their interests, including through the carefully planned co-curricular provision. Teachers plan lessons well, using good subject knowledge, use assessment effectively and encourage pupils to develop intellectual curiosity, explore topics and relate learning to real life. Lessons frequently encourage analytical reasoning and problem-solving, which generates enthusiasm and interest from pupils. Leaders have begun to develop the curriculum to improve pupils' knowledge and skills in the effective use of emerging digital technologies. However, this is not fully developed.
4. The school delivers personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), religious education (RE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) through weekly 'life education' lessons. Pupils are involved in shaping this curriculum through regular surveys so that it meets their needs and interests. They ask questions, suggest topics to be covered and engage in discussions so that they are better informed. Talks from relevant experts in the field are arranged frequently to supplement lessons and assemblies and go beyond the required curriculum. Pupils understand the current challenges faced by teens, as well as the adults that care for them. As a result, pupils develop self-knowledge, self-confidence and empathy, beyond what is expected for their age. They have extensive knowledge and a mature understanding of how to look after their personal, social, physical and mental health and wellbeing. This is a significant strength of the school.
5. The school fosters good behaviour through the appropriate use of the behaviour policy. Leaders are proactive, promoting good behaviour through well-chosen and purposeful topics in assemblies and life education lessons.
6. Pupils develop an understanding of fundamental British values through life education as well as assemblies and clubs. Leaders ensure that pupils develop social, human and economic skills to enable them to be successful in society, as knowledgeable and responsible citizens.
7. Safeguarding arrangements are effective, with appropriate training for staff so that they are vigilant and diligent in reporting concerns. Pupils are clear about how and when to report a concern, including anonymously. They develop confidence in talking about concerns through talks by student leaders, who explain the process and usefulness of the available systems in the school.

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 the curriculum so that pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of digital technologies more effectively.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Governors offer leaders support and challenge to ensure that leaders have the appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They scrutinise policies so that they reflect the latest statutory guidance and engage with senior leaders regularly, including through school visits, to ensure the Standards are met consistently. Leaders are supported through a mentoring programme, as well as opportunities to engage with colleagues in other schools, to develop their leadership skills.
9. The school's ACE values are embedded in the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Pupils have developed and often refer to the 'Our Emanuel' statement which, in their own words, states the importance of compassion, empathy and respect. Pupils are aspirational in their academic, personal and social endeavours, develop meaningful connections within the school and treat others with kindness and respect.
10. Leaders have developed a clear system to self-evaluate and plan improvement, considering risks and unintended consequences of their development plan. For instance, leaders make adjustments to provision to balance academic rigour with wellbeing. They involve pupils in developing school life and areas of the curriculum so that learning is meaningful.
11. Governors and leaders have a strategic approach to risk management. Leaders are aware of situational and contextual risks and take appropriate steps to mitigate them. Staff are trained and supported to develop risk assessments. Risk assessments are wide-ranging, reviewed regularly, in line with the policy, and consider pupils' individual needs.
12. Leaders establish links with appropriate external agencies, including the local authority and the police, as well as professionals such as educational psychologists. Leaders ensure that they fulfil their obligations to work with the local authority for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan), including providing information related to annual reviews, finance and funding. Leaders report to the local authority any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition points in the school year.
13. Leaders prioritise and promote pupils' wellbeing. They provide frequent opportunities for external speakers to deepen pupils' understanding in a range of issues related to physical, social and mental health. Leaders work in partnership with parents, providing them with regular seminars to help promote pupils' wellbeing. Older pupils are trained to mentor other pupils academically as well as to listen to their concerns.
14. All the required information is shared on the school's website or made available to parents. The school has a regular cycle of reports and parents' evenings so that they are aware of their child's progress. Pupils' academic and personal achievements are celebrated through commendations, which are communicated to parents.
15. The school has a suitable complaints policy that is shared with parents so that they are aware of the process. The policy is implemented accordingly when complaints occur. Leaders and governors review and analyse complaints and respond to needs identified. For instance, in response to parental concerns about sports, there is now a committee of parents to specifically hear and respond to parents' views about sports provision.

16. Leaders make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities and have due regard to the Equality Act 2010, with a suitable accessibility plan, reviewed regularly to support and respond to pupils' needs.

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

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders plan an ambitious and engaging curriculum. The curriculum is reviewed and adapted regularly so that it extends pupils' knowledge and skills across a broad range of learning. Leaders endeavour to provide pupils with a broad curriculum, such as providing early experiences of taster courses in a range of languages to promote linguistic diversity. The curriculum leads pupils to be able to choose from a wide range of option courses, which well prepares them for the rigours of GCSE and A-level public examinations.
19. Leaders ensure that literature and resources are carefully chosen so that pupils learn about issues that are relevant to today's society to equip them for the future. For example, leaders have introduced the '100 book challenge' across all year groups, which promotes reading across a rich variety of themes and genres. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 have weekly ethos lessons to enable them to participate in informed discussions about current events. 'Expo' sessions offer pupils opportunities to explore cross-disciplinary learning in academic subjects, applying current knowledge to new, real-life situations.
20. Teachers use a thorough knowledge of the subjects that they teach to plan lessons that engage pupils, so that pupils are interested in their work and apply effort in their learning. Teachers use effective resources to extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, matched to their needs, aptitudes and prior attainment. Teachers use a range of strategies, such as questioning, collaborative discussions and analytical tasks, so that pupils think critically, critique evidence and ask questions to deepen their learning.
21. Across subjects, pupils develop appropriate skills and knowledge. For example, in English, pupils learn language skills, which they apply effectively across the curriculum. Pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their confidence in public speaking. In language lessons, pupils develop linguistic proficiency. In mathematics, pupils use their previous learning to tackle complex problems successfully. In science, pupils confidently apply scientific theory to practical experiments. However, the curriculum does not provide pupils with opportunities to develop their skills fully across a full range of digital technologies.
22. Teachers have a sound understanding of pupils' needs and prior knowledge, which they gain through a clear and purposeful assessment framework. They use assessment information to plan suitable challenge and support for pupils. Pupils routinely self-reflect, evaluate their own work and respond to feedback from their teachers so that they know how to improve. Pupils increasingly take a mature and responsible role in setting aspirational targets for themselves. GCSE and A level results indicate that pupils consistently attain well and make good progress in relation to their starting points. Pupils successfully gain places at universities or entry to destinations to help them pursue careers in the creative and performing arts, and sports.
23. Leaders have developed their approaches to identifying the precise needs of pupils. The leader of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) shares detailed information with staff about pupils' needs, which teachers use effectively in lessons to support pupils' learning and development. Practical resources, such as sentence starters, word banks, the use of devices, as well as targeted questioning, enable pupils to learn effectively. Leaders routinely review provision for pupils to ensure that it is effective.

24. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported with the development of vocabulary and spelling through a structured reading scheme to improve their linguistic skills. In lessons, staff provide resources or one-to-one support matched to pupils' level of proficiency so that they access and learn the intended curriculum. Over time, pupils develop effective linguistic skills.
25. The school's co-curricular provision is planned so that it is inclusive and supports pupils to broaden their interests, skills and self-confidence. Pupils develop their creative and aesthetic skills through musical ensembles, choir, dance, theatre, film club, disc jockey workshops and comedy sketches. There are opportunities to try new sports such as rowing, Pilates and climbing to develop team skills, physical fitness or to gain sports coaching qualifications. Sixth-form pupils lead and organise a wide range of clubs and societies that develop their leadership and organisational skills.

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

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

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

27. Leaders have developed a highly ambitious and effective life education curriculum, covering fully the requirements for PSHE and RSE. They have thought carefully about the content and order in which the curriculum is taught. They ensure that staff are very well trained to deliver the curriculum as leaders intend, using high-quality resources to enhance pupils' experiences. The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of external speakers with specialist expertise. Leaders constantly seek the views of pupils, parents and staff to review the content of the curriculum and the way in which it is delivered. Leaders respond diligently to pupils' views when providing increasing opportunities to teach the topics that pupils feel are relevant to their lived experiences. Pupils engage maturely and confidently in sensitive and complex topics, developing a nuanced understanding.
28. Owing to the high-quality curriculum and pastoral support, pupils develop extensive knowledge about how to care for their physical and mental health and develop positive social relationships and interactions, including online. They develop a mature understanding of how to navigate changes in friendship groups, changes in family life and how to recognise and respond to inappropriate sexual behaviour. Pupils also learn about topics such as genital health and reproductive health and how to carry out self-examinations for types of cancer. They develop an understanding of the roles of parents and adults who have responsibility to keep them safe.
29. Through the high-quality PSHE and RSE curriculums, pupils are very confident about how to report concerns when they have them, including through the 'want to talk' reporting system. Pupils are aware of how the school takes action to keep them safe, such as through the school's internet monitoring and filtering system. Pupil leaders are trained to support new pupils to understand the array of ways in which they can get help if they have concerns about their safety or wellbeing. They are taught how to recognise the difference between stress and anxiety and can share strategies taught that they find helpful, including suitable online applications. As a result, pupils are articulate and confident in the steps that leaders take to protect them and in the ways in which they can safeguard themselves.
30. Leaders ensure that the school's physical education (PE) curriculum is wide-ranging, inclusive and well taught. Pupils develop and use a variety of skills and challenge themselves to learn new sports and techniques. Pupils with varying interests and abilities are well supported to engage fully in the curriculum, including taking on coaching roles and opportunities for pupils to engage in competitive sports and elite athletics. Pupils are knowledgeable about strength training and conditioning and demonstrate motivation to improve their physical fitness and health. Through the curriculum, pupils become knowledgeable about how to lead healthy lifestyles, including the importance of sleep and nutrition to aid concentration.
31. Pupils' spiritual awareness is well supported in a range of ways. For example, chapel services are presented within an inclusive ethos. Services foster respect for people of other religions and beliefs, with opportunities for quiet contemplation to understand shared values. In religion, philosophy and ethics (RPE) lessons, pupils discuss different ethical theories, which they compare to world religions and relate to their own lives.

32. The school has a behaviour policy that is implemented effectively. Praise and commendations motivate pupils to behave well and promote their self-esteem. Pupils are aware of how school sanctions are applied when necessary. Leaders develop learning opportunities through the life education programme for pupils to promote good behaviour. The school also has an appropriate anti-bullying policy. Pupils are encouraged to prevent bullying so that bullying is rare. For instance, older pupils led a presentation to inform pupils about the importance of reporting a concern about another pupil.
33. Leaders and managers ensure that they look after the wellbeing of pupils through an active approach to managing the school site. They ensure that the premises, including outdoor areas, are suitably maintained to provide an appropriate learning environment for pupils. The school takes a thorough approach to health and safety, including fire safety, with detailed risk assessments, regular checks on fire management systems, concise recording systems and frequent staff training. Staff are well trained and implement the school's first aid policy effectively, in a well-resourced medical facility. Staff supervise pupils during on-site and off-site activities effectively.
34. The school maintains accurate admission and attendance registers.

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

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

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

36. Leaders actively promote important values so that pupils understand British society. Pupils learn the role of public institutions such as Parliament and the place of voting, democracy and political parties in Britain. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply about the concepts of right and wrong, and about the rule of law, through weekly ethos lessons. They learn about criminal and civil law, important public roles, such as the police, and debate important themes such as the place of trial by jury. They discuss human rights and political activism, promoting an awareness of global society as well as understanding their own social responsibility. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting different perspectives and about the importance of being positive contributors in society.
37. Leaders ensure that pupils, through the curriculum, are taught about the importance of respect and tolerance for those of different faiths, beliefs, backgrounds and cultures. Pupils' learning in the curriculum is enriched by assemblies, chapel services and daily routines. Pupils are encouraged to form and join various societies and clubs where they discuss a range of issues, which helps them to develop an understanding and respect for protected characteristics such as sex, race and disability. Leaders ensure that books in the library and texts used in English lessons are carefully chosen so that pupils develop a deeper understanding of diversity. Well-considered trips and visits enable pupils to experience and develop an appreciation for different cultures and traditions.
38. Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their economic understanding. Pupils learn about a range of topics, such as managing monthly budgets, paying rent and bills and the impact of politics on economic indicators. Pupils receive opportunities to put their learning into real-life practice. For instance, in Year 8, pupils undertake an entrepreneurship programme, managing income and expenditure and using their profits to support charities. Over time, pupils develop a variety of new skills and knowledge, including about the social impact of careers and business as well as copyright laws.
39. Pupils are well supported to understand the importance of contributing positively to the school and wider community. For example, through the school's primary ambitions programme, pupils in Year 12 volunteer to teach and mentor pupils in local primary schools. Pupils in Years 9, 10 and 12 volunteer in their own time to provide support and guidance to younger pupils. Older pupils receive appropriate training, are well supervised and act as effective role models for younger peers. Pupils also raise money to support national charities such as Teenage Cancer Trust, Battersea Cats and Dogs and a local charity, the Ace of Clubs, which supports the homeless and vulnerable people in Clapham.
40. There is a well-planned and appropriate careers programme in place delivered through life education lessons and enhanced by visiting speakers, careers conferences and networking events. Pupils learn about the different career opportunities available to them, in an age-appropriate way. As they get older, pupils receive careers information, advice and guidance that is impartial and bespoke to their needs. Pupils are guided well in the full range of options available to them at post-16 and post-18, including support and guidance related to competitive university entry, employment, vocational training and apprenticeships. Pupils undertake work experience that is aligned with their abilities, interests and aspirations. Additional support is given to pupils who need it, in order to make all aspects of careers fully accessible to all pupils.

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

41. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

42. There is a vigilant and robust culture of safeguarding in the school. Governors and leaders maintain diligent oversight of safeguarding arrangements, including through regular reviews. They ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are in line with statutory guidance and implemented effectively.
43. Leaders are appropriately trained and have sufficient knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, including expertise related to the 'Prevent' duty. They access further training and attend conferences, including through the local authority, to ensure their knowledge is up to date. Leaders have current knowledge of contextual and situational risks and take steps to mitigate them, including the additional vulnerabilities for some pupils who have SEND.
44. Leaders ensure that records of concerns are detailed and retained securely. They act quickly to address any concerns that are raised. They liaise closely with a range of relevant external agencies, including the local authority and the police, to seek advice and make referrals, as necessary. They engage with relevant experts to provide appropriate support for the specific needs of pupils in the school.
45. There is an effective ongoing and wide-ranging programme of training for staff, including the reporting and recording of concerns about adults who work with pupils. Safeguarding training sessions inform staff about different issues that pupils may face, including online. They are aware of how to look for signs of concern that pupils may struggle to communicate. As a result, staff are vigilant to concerns about pupils and use the school's agreed systems to raise concerns in a timely way.
46. Pupils are aware of how to report a concern, including anonymously, and know who they can approach for help. Through assemblies and talks from relevant staff and pupil leaders, they understand the process of communicating concerns and the actions that follow. Information about these arrangements is also easily accessible on posters and on online devices. Pupils are taught about how these systems work and how to keep themselves safe, including when online, through computing and life education lessons, and in assemblies.
47. The school has robust and effective arrangements for internet filtering and monitoring. Leaders act to address any concerns in a timely way. Systems are tested regularly to check that they are effective in identifying any misuse of the internet or school devices. Leaders review the information that they have over time to identify any patterns and trends that require more support for groups of pupils, additional assemblies or changes to the curriculum.
48. The school undertakes appropriate recruitment processes. All the required pre-employment checks are made on adults before they begin working with pupils. This information is recorded accurately and appropriately on the school's single central record of appointments. This is checked regularly by leaders and governors.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

49. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Emanuel School
Department for Education number	212/6292
Registered charity number	1181012
Address	Emanuel School Battersea Rise London SW11 1HS
Phone number	020 8870 4171
Email address	enquiries@emanuel.org.uk
Website	www.emanuel.org.uk
Proprietor	The United Westminster and Grey Coat Foundation
Chair	Mr Markus Jaigirder
Headteacher	Mr Ravi Kothakota
Age range	10 to 19
Number of pupils	1113
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 March 2023

Information about the school

50. Emanuel school is an independent co-educational day school situated in Battersea, London. The school is run by The United Westminster and Grey Coat Foundation. Trustees have appointed a local governing body to act in an advisory capacity. Some trustees are also governors. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher in September 2025. The school comprises: a lower school, for pupils in Years 6 to 8; a middle school section, for pupils in Years 9 to 11; and a sixth form.
51. The school has identified 238 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small number of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
52. The school has identified 58 pupils who speak English as an additional language.
53. The school states its aims are to inspire young people to aspire bravely, connect deeply, and act with empathy, preparing them not just for success at school but for a lifetime of meaningful contribution.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

13 to 15 January 2026

54. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

55. Inspection activities included:

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

56. 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**.

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