

# School inspection report

17 to 19 June 2025

## **Amesbury School**

Hazel Grove

Hindhead

Surrey

GU26 6BL

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'.

## Contents

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS .....	4
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	6
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	8
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	10
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	12
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	13
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors and leaders create a culture that values pupils as individuals and prioritises their wellbeing. They ensure that they provide high-quality pastoral care for pupils, including the youngest children, in a range of ways. They have a shared commitment to continuous improvement, focusing on where they can bring improvements for pupils. Collectively, they ensure that the requirements of the Standards are met consistently.
2. Leaders provide a curriculum that effectively equips pupils with the knowledge and skills to learn and achieve well. Pupils develop confidence and understanding across a breadth of subjects. This curriculum is enhanced by an extensive co-curricular programme which includes sports, drama and music. Teachers are knowledgeable in their subjects and most support pupils to learn effectively. Some teaching does not use assessment information precisely enough to support pupils to learn as effectively as they could.
3. Leaders ensure that the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of pupils is prioritised. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about the importance of physical health and how to maintain it. They learn about important topics such as healthy relationships and mental health. Underpinned by the school's caring community, pupils act responsibly, show respect and kindness to one another and behave well. Leaders ensure that pupils access well-resourced, safe and effectively maintained premises and resources. They prioritise the health and safety of pupils.
4. Pupils are respectful and value the differences between people, including those from different backgrounds, faiths, cultures and lifestyles. They learn the importance of contributing to the community and take lots of opportunities to do so. They learn about the importance of values such as democracy, the rule of law, and right and wrong very effectively. They apply these values in their daily interactions with one another and with staff. Pupils access a high-quality careers education as they get older, enhanced by visiting speakers and visits. They are well supported to be positive citizens in the school, and local and wider community.
5. The early years is well led and managed. Children experience a stimulating environment that promotes exploration and collaboration. Their language and communication skills are developed through a range of ways, including high-quality reading, stories and interactions. Their physical development is well planned for, including through a range of resources that they access in the indoor and outdoor environment. They learn to listen, take turns and care for one another. Children enjoy their learning and are well prepared for future experiences as they move into Year 1.
6. Pupils enjoy boarding and develop their social skills and independence through the experience it provides. A varied programme of evening activities develops interests. Pupils are well cared for by supportive boarding staff in a homely and welcoming boarding house.
7. Leaders have established a culture that safeguards pupils effectively. Safeguarding leads are knowledgeable and well trained. They ensure that staff understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies, including the local authority. These agency relationships are well established and ensure that pupils get timely support.

## 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:

- ensure that teaching uses assessment information more precisely to identify and support pupils to learn effectively.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Governors maintain robust and effective oversight of leaders' work through a range of activity including formal meetings, regular visits and scrutiny of policies, procedures and leaders' documentation. Governors ensure that the Standards are consistently met and that leaders, including those in the early years and boarding, have the appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
9. Governors and leaders prioritise the wellbeing of pupils in the decisions that they make. They ensure that they invest in supporting pupils' welfare and that staff role model positive and supportive behaviours to pupils. The school works closely with a range of external agencies, such as children's services and educational psychologists, where needed. Through these partnerships, leaders ensure that pupils receive the support they need to thrive. As a result of this well-considered programme of support, leaders and governors have created a caring community, where pupils are kind and considerate, and value the care that they receive.
10. Leaders and governors have a shared commitment to continuous improvement. They work collectively to create the school's strategic direction in line with the school's aims. They regularly review their provision thoroughly to identify ways in which they can improve. They listen to the views of pupils to carefully plan the curriculum and co-curricular programme, for instance through well-organised coaching in dance and the tennis academy. More recently, leaders have been implementing adaptations to the behaviour system to make it more suitable for older pupils.
11. Leaders are well trained and knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in boarding. They ensure that there is appropriate provision for boarders, including in relation to care, facilities and recreation. They ensure high-quality communication between day and boarding staff so that wraparound care for boarders is effective. Governors maintain effective oversight of leaders' work. Collectively, governors and leaders ensure that they meet the requirements for boarding.
12. Leaders ensure that children are given a good start to their early education and development. Leaders are skilled and experienced in leading and managing the provision and prioritise children's wellbeing. Leaders invest in an environment that is nurturing and inspiring. Children are provided with high-quality experiences, are well cared for, and are effectively supported to transition into Year 1.
13. The school has a well-considered approach to the management of risk. Thorough risk assessments are in place covering all aspects of school life, including the premises, activities and educational trips and visits. There are suitable control measures in place to mitigate any identified potential risks. Governors monitor and evaluate risk assessments and oversee a detailed risk management plan, which is regularly reviewed.
14. The school provides all required information to parents and other relevant external agencies, including policies and procedures, often through the school's website. Parents receive regular reports about their children's progress. The school has a suitable complaints policy, acts accordingly and keeps appropriate records of complaints when they occur. Leaders also ensure that they provide information to local authorities relating to any pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, including information related to finance and funding. Leaders meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. A suitable accessibility plan is in place, which is reviewed appropriately.

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

**15. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

16. Leaders have created a broad curriculum across a range of subjects that also broadens pupils' wider experiences in sport, creative subjects and performing arts. Leaders invest in specialist teachers across a range of subjects, including music, languages and computing. Leaders also invest in high-quality resources, such as the well-resourced library or well-equipped science laboratories. The oldest pupils in the prep school benefit from the school's baccalaureate programme, which helps Years 7 and 8 pupils to develop critical thinking, study and research skills. As a result, pupils are well prepared to transition successfully to secondary school. Pupils are successful in gaining places at a range of academically selective senior schools, a number of whom achieve scholarships.
17. Most teachers help pupils to apply their learning in increasingly complex ways. For example, many pupils learn to read and write to a very high standard and apply their mathematical skills to complex questions. In technology, pupils use a range of resources and skills such as soldering tools and graphic design to produce wooden boxes in the style of an artist. In languages, pupils are grounded in the meaning and etymology of words, so that they are able to apply this to new vocabulary. In performing arts, pupils develop confidence in using music, dance and drama in their performances. Pupils develop a rich understanding of the subjects they are studying.
18. Teachers are skilled and knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. They use a range of ways to check on what pupils know and can do. Most teachers use assessment information to identify where pupils need extra help, or where they are ready to apply learning in more complex ways. They use this information to adapt their lessons and provide useful guidance and feedback to pupils. Typically, teachers use this information to help pupils to learn more effectively. However, some teaching does not use assessment information precisely enough to identify where pupils are capable of learning more effectively. Where this happens, pupils do not learn as effectively as they could.
19. Teachers are adept at supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are clearly identified. Teachers are provided with appropriate strategies about how best to meet pupils needs, including through the use of additional technology to support pupils' reading and writing. Leaders regularly review pupils' progress and adapt provision, where needed. Pupils access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers, learn and achieve well.
20. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils are provided with in-class support so that they can access the curriculum alongside their peers. Where needed, pupils are also provided with additional support through intervention from adults. Pupils quickly develop linguistic skills in English. They learn to speak, write and communicate in English with confidence.
21. In the early years, children are supported to learn effectively by knowledgeable staff and through the stimulating environment. Children are supported to develop their language and communication skills. The indoor and outdoor environments are well-resourced and used successfully to provide engaging learning experiences. Staff are adept at identifying and supporting children to learn and develop effectively.
22. Pupils benefit from an extensive and diverse co-curricular programme, outdoor learning activities, trips, visits and expeditions. For many pupils these opportunities lead to accreditation, for example in London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) examinations, or to success in competitive

sports. In boarding, pupils develop independent study skills and confidence, working together on prep tasks in a collaborative and supportive environment. Pupils appreciate having a varied programme of evening activities and games provided by boarding staff.

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

**23. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

24. Leaders consistently promote the school's aim to create a kind and caring community where pupils are celebrated as individuals. Pupils value the range of initiatives provided to support their wellbeing, including the wellbeing hub with guinea pigs, the Friday lunch club and the reading dog. Pupils are kind, support each other well and are empathic because this is modelled by staff. Pupils are confident to mix between year groups for activities because of the community ethos within the school.
25. The well-designed personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes are taught effectively through the school's life skills lessons. The curriculum equips pupils with important knowledge and understanding about topics such as healthy relationships, healthy lifestyles, drugs and consent. Parents are consulted and kept well informed about the curriculum.
26. Typically, pupils behave well, showing respect to adults and each other. Behaviour expectations are well understood by most pupils. Pastoral staff encourage pupils to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others and to take responsibility for their actions, in an environment where restorative acts are encouraged. Bullying is rare, and staff quickly respond to any worries. Pupils know how to recognise any potentially bullying behaviour and understand who to talk to. Leaders analyse behaviour information and are alert to potential trends or patterns. They act when needed to resolve issues, talking with those involved and communicating effectively with pupils and parents.
27. Children in the early years are well supported to develop their physical and emotional health. Adults help children to develop their motor skills, for example through regular opportunities to climb and explore the outdoor environment. They learn about healthy foods and the importance of making good choices. Children learn to use communication and language skills to express how they feel. Adults support children to play imaginatively, such as by creating a sailing boat that provides enough seating for all their classmates. Children are ready to transition into Year 1 at the end of the early years.
28. Pupils benefit greatly from the wide-ranging and well-organised PE curriculum, which includes many opportunities to learn a variety of sports and participate in an extensive range of competitive fixtures, including cricket, rugby, football, hockey and tennis. In particular, the school's tennis programme supports pupils to develop a high level of skill. Pupils also enjoy using the outside space available to them at break and lunchtimes to play together and be physically active.
29. Pupils value and gain from the opportunities to be prefects. Through these roles they develop leadership skills and self-confidence while, for example, running the school council, organising events and engaging in public speaking. They use their talents in areas such as sports, music and drama to lead and encourage their peers.
30. Leaders ensure that the health, safety and supervision of pupils and the premises are appropriate. The premises are well maintained and secure, including boarding accommodation, which provides suitable sleeping and washing facilities as well as communal space for pupils to socialise and snack. There are comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures in place, including in relation to

fire risk. Appropriate logs and training records are kept. Any resulting actions are acted upon appropriately. Provision for first aid is appropriate and there are suitable medical facilities, including in boarding.

31. Admission and attendance registers are maintained in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance and work effectively with external agencies when there are concerns. Leaders inform the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition times.

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

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

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

33. Pupils demonstrate care and compassion towards one another, in line with the school aims, and understand social responsibilities well. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to give time and talent to support charitable initiatives and to make a positive difference to the lives of others. Prefects help organise an annual charity day, and pupils value the links they have with a school in Tanzania. Pupils, including children in the early years, tend the remembrance garden, which is a place of quiet reflection for the whole community. Pupils readily take on opportunities to become peer mentors and support other pupils who need help.
34. Pupils co-operate, collaborate and develop effective social skills. Pupils value being part of a school community where everyone contributes. For example, opportunities such as year-group performances where many pupils perform and choral evensong in front of parental audiences help pupils to develop self-confidence. The occasional boarding experience allows pupils to develop personal qualities such as resilience, tolerance and self-respect. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have in boarding to deepen friendships and develop social skills through the programme on offer.
35. The curriculum, through life skills lessons and the school's Amesbury award, ensures that pupils understand important values such as democracy, the rule of law and liberty. Pupils articulate the importance of treating everyone equally and appreciate that not everyone has the same opinions or makes the same choices about their lives. Older pupils understand the importance of respecting everyone, including those who have protected characteristics. Pupils understand the democratic process and value opportunities they are given to vote for pupil leaders or to stand for election to the school council.
36. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting those with different faiths and beliefs. For example, the chapel provides a space where pupils of all ages can reflect and develop spiritual and moral understanding. Pupils sing hymns enthusiastically and reflect thoughtfully on different faith perspectives and why they are important. The religious education curriculum effectively supports an understanding of faiths, as does the programme of trips and visits to places of worship.
37. In the early years, children's social development is well supported. Adults help children to develop social skills, modelling conversation and interactions through play and encouraging every child to build secure friendships. From a young age, children identify right and wrong and understand how their actions may affect someone else. Children are well prepared to transition to the pre-prep, showing confidence and playing co-operatively with each other.
38. Pupils, including the youngest children, learn about important public services, such as police and nurses and jobs in society. As they get older, pupils access an effective programme of careers education through the school's life skills programme and the school's pre-senior project qualification (PSPQ) in Years 7 and Year 8. This curriculum is enhanced by a programme of well-considered visiting speakers, selected from a range of backgrounds and career paths.
39. The school's economic education starts with the youngest children in the early years, where they learn about money and paying for goods when role playing. As they get older, through the PSHE curriculum, pupils develop a more complex understanding about money, digital payment methods,

enterprise and business. The school's Amesbury award helps pupils to learn about institutions, such as the judiciary, while they plan and organise fund-raising activities.

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

**40. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

41. Leaders ensure that policies and processes to safeguard pupils, including those children in the early years and boarders, are effective and in line with statutory guidance.
42. Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable in their roles. They work collaboratively to ensure a culture of vigilance, including through weekly meetings with staff to ensure that they share appropriate up-to-date information. Leaders respond to concerns effectively and maintain detailed records. They liaise in a timely way with external agencies, including the local authority attendance teams and the local authority designated officers (LADO) when required.
43. Governors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding. The safeguarding governor checks on the effectiveness of leaders' work to safeguard pupils through a range of activity, including regular visits, talking to staff and pupils, annual audits, and reviewing leaders' records and information. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.
44. All staff receive comprehensive regular safeguarding training, including training related to the youngest children and boarding. Staff report and record concerns effectively using the school system. Staff are alert to signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm and ensure that they report all concerns, so that leaders have a full range of information about pupils.
45. Pupils are aware of what to do if they have any concerns or need help, including how to communicate directly with safeguarding leads, and the options to use worry boxes or share a concern anonymously. Boarding pupils know how to raise a concern with boarding staff and nursing teams, as well as how to access an independent person.
46. Leaders take a thorough approach to teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe, including online. For example, pupils are taught about the potential risks of online activity and how to mitigate those risks. When pupils receive personal devices, they are helped to understand how to use the technology sensibly. The school has a suitable filtering and monitoring system in place, which is tested and reviewed. Leaders act promptly and effectively on any concerns raised, including in boarding.
47. Leaders have a thorough knowledge of safer recruitment procedures and ensure all adults working with pupils are appropriately vetted before they start work at the school, including those working with boarders and children in the early years. Staff maintain an accurate single central record of appointments (SCR), which is overseen regularly by leaders and governors.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Amesbury School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	936/6052
<b>Registered early years number</b>	2749442
<b>Registered charity number</b>	312058
<b>Address</b>	Amesbury School Hazel Grove Hindhead Surrey GU26 6BL
<b>Phone number</b>	01428 604322
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@amesburyschool.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.amesburyschool.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Amesbury School Trust Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Karen Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Gavin Franklin
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13
<b>Number of pupils</b>	365
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	35
<b>Number of children in the early years registered setting</b>	75
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 to 8 July 2022

## Information about the school

49. Amesbury School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school located in Hindhead, Surrey. The school consists of Little Amesbury for children in the early years, a pre-prep school for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and a preparatory school for pupils in Years 3 to 8. The school also runs a separate early years setting called Baby Amesbury on the same site, for children aged nine months to two years old. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors, including a chair who is a director of the trust. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2023.
50. The school offers occasional boarding for pupils in Years 5 to 8, for four nights a week. There is one boarding house located on the school site in Bickley House.
51. There are 75 children in the early years comprising a Pre-Nursery class, a Pre-School class and two Reception classes. In the separate early years setting, there is one class for children aged nine months to 18 months old and a second class for children aged 18 months to two years old. Ofsted carried out a separate inspection of the registered early years setting at the same time as the routine inspection.
52. The school has identified 98 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
53. The school has identified English as an additional language (EAL) for six pupils.
54. The school states its aims are to develop in every pupil the necessary skills, aptitudes and abilities to enable them to become resilient independent learners. The school seeks to develop a caring community by encouraging commitment, courtesy, co-operation, tolerance and compassion towards one another, while understanding that each individual is a member of a wider community.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

17 to 19 June 2025

55. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

56. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods, chapel 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.

57. 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)**.

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

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