

School inspection report

7 to 9 October 2025

Slindon College

Top Road

Arundel

West Sussex

BN18 0RH

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

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors and leaders successfully provide a highly specialist education for pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use the ethos 'we are the same because we are all different' to create an environment that consistently promotes pupils' wellbeing.
2. Governors visit the school regularly and oversee the implementation of policies and procedures effectively. They assure themselves that leaders have the required skills and knowledge to ensure that all relevant Standards are met.
3. Leaders provide a curriculum that is broad, flexible and responsive to pupils' individual needs. Leaders provide access to a range of suitable qualifications so that pupils receive recognition for their learning.
4. Pupils make good progress and develop their aesthetic, technical and creative skills. In many lessons, teachers make effective plans and adapt their resources to meet pupils' needs. However, in some subjects in the senior school, teachers do not fully consider the prior attainment of pupils when planning their lessons. Pupils make less progress in these subjects as a result.
5. Leaders consistently prioritise pastoral care and the wellbeing of pupils. They provide a nurturing environment, which includes the therapeutic role of the school farm animals. Pupils gain confidence and emotional security. Staff implement robust routines and pupils behave well.
6. Staff with responsibility for boarding ensure that boarding accommodation is comfortable and well maintained. Leaders ensure appropriate supervision of pupils after school and at the weekends. Staff involve boarders in decisions regarding their environment and activities.
7. Leaders design a curriculum that prepares pupils effectively for life beyond school. Leaders and staff successfully promote respect for other cultures and pupils understand the institutions and services of modern Britain. Pupils learn to accept responsibility through initiatives such as the active school council.
8. Pupils develop economic awareness and independence through practical activities such as budgeting in cookery and taking on paid responsibilities on the school farm.
9. Safeguarding arrangements are effective and staff adopt a culture of vigilance. Leaders provide staff with rigorous training, including regular updates. Leaders accurately record and monitor any concerns. They take timely action and engage with external agencies when appropriate. Recruitment procedures are thorough and meet statutory requirements.

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 teachers fully consider the prior attainment of pupils and use this to plan their lessons effectively so that the needs of pupils are consistently met.

Material change request

10. Inspectors considered the school's request for a change to the details of its registration to include an increase in capacity from 110 to 120 pupils.
 - Leaders have considered the impact of additional pupils effectively and have drawn up suitable plans to accommodate the additional pupils.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are effective and likely to remain so once the proposed material change takes place. Leaders have added an additional pastoral role from the beginning of this academic year.
 - Leaders have considered the risks associated with an increase in the number of pupils on site and have taken appropriate action in response. This includes adapting arrangements for the supervision of pupils and regulations relating to health and safety and fire safety.
 - Leaders are not planning for an increase in the number of pupils in classes in practical subjects or in the number of pupils who board.
 - Leaders have increased the number of pupil toilets on site, and have converted a boarding house room into an additional space for one-to-one support. Leaders have purchased an additional minibus to reduce the risk of additional traffic on site.
11. It is recommended that the requested material change be approved.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Governors maintain robust oversight of the school's educational activities. They scrutinise the work of leaders in key areas of safeguarding, pastoral care and academic progress. Governors receive comprehensive reports and make regular reviews of the school's operations. They visit the school regularly, speaking to pupils and staff and visiting classes. The governing body provides effective oversight and challenge so that the school's aims and values are consistently upheld.
13. Leaders and governors promote the school's ethos effectively and ensure that the focus on pupils' wellbeing remains central to all operations. They ensure the curriculum and pastoral support provided address the needs of the pupils.
14. Governors and leaders share an ambition for continuous improvement. Leaders use data from sources including lesson observations, management walks, parent surveys and external reviews to carry out effective self-evaluation. For instance, governors provide a counsellor for senior and middle leaders in response to a review of staff welfare.
15. Leaders provide a set of clear policies and ensure that staff implement these effectively. These policies are accessible on the school's website. Teachers provide regular updates to parents on their child's progress in written reports and at parents' evenings. These reports include information about their child's social and emotional development.
16. Leaders maintain effective links with external agencies. They work closely with a range of specialist teams in the local authority, ensuring appropriate support is available for pupils. Leaders share with the local authority information about the use of funds for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
17. Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of risk and use this to make informed decisions. Risk assessments are current and relevant. For example, the school manages its extensive, open site using a comprehensive and regularly reviewed set of risk assessments. Staff implement these effectively to mitigate hazards across the site, including in practical subjects.
18. Leaders respond to any complaints in an effective and proportionate manner. Leaders provide and implement a clear complaints policy. They consider all formal complaints within the appropriate timescales. Where necessary, governors participate effectively in the formal stages of complaints.
19. Leaders successfully ensure that pupils with disabilities are not discriminated against. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. A detailed accessibility plan outlines specific support, including temporary physical adaptations and access to technology. Leaders provide a range of specialist environments, such as dyslexia-friendly classrooms and sensory spaces. The learning environment is fully inclusive.
20. Governors hold safeguarding leaders to account for maintaining high standards. They conduct regular formal meetings with safeguarding leaders in the school. A dedicated safeguarding committee of the governing body monitors the recruitment process and record-keeping through regular checks and challenges.

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

21. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

22. Leaders provide a broad and flexible curriculum. Pupils choose from a range of qualifications including GCSEs and vocational qualifications such as the BTEC level 2 qualification in animal care. Pupils also study the AQA Unit Award Scheme for the accreditation of smaller steps. Specialised performance and arts qualifications, such as the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and Trinity College Music Awards, offer pupils UCAS points at higher levels. This means that pupils can access qualifications that suit their individual needs.
23. Teachers in the creative, technological and aesthetic subjects successfully adapt their lessons to meet pupils' needs and provide effective one-to-one support. Teachers respond to pupils' development so that, as their confidence and skills grow, pupils work with greater independence. Teachers use varied resources in class to enable pupils to develop their language skills. Pupils use technical language confidently, for instance to explain the science behind photograms and to explain the process carried out in the dark room to produce images on photographic paper.
24. When lessons are well planned, teachers successfully deploy effective resources and pupils consistently acquire new knowledge and intellectual and creative skills. However, teachers in core senior school subjects such as English, mathematics and science do not consistently consider pupils' prior attainment when planning lessons and pupils make more limited progress as a result.
25. Leaders use a range of national testing tools to measure pupils' literacy and numeracy levels. Staff combine this testing with a system of vocational and performing arts assessments to track pupils' progress. Leaders review this data regularly and support pupils appropriately.
26. Leaders identify and provide for pupils who have SEND effectively. They use individual education plans to give pupils the support they need to help them make progress. Specialist staff provide one-to-one teaching for literacy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and for Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). Leaders provide a learning environment that is well adapted to the pupils' needs. This enables pupils who have SEND to make good progress and gain in confidence. Leaders work with external partners to carry out annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans.
27. Leaders identify pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and devise effective programmes to support their learning. Teachers adapt their lessons so that these pupils can access the curriculum. Leaders monitor the progress of pupils who speak EAL and set them appropriate targets. This supports their linguistic development effectively.
28. Leaders provide a diverse and comprehensive programme of recreational activities that promote pupils' personal and social development and decision-making skills. Activities such as electric car racing help pupils develop teamwork, strategy and technological skills. A wide range of enrichment activities, such as drama, role-play clubs and woodland activities encourage collaboration and communication.
29. Boarding pupils benefit from a wide choice of activities, which include use of the facilities such as the swimming pool, multi-use games area and playing fields. Staff support pupils to successfully access their chosen activities and develop a wide range of physical skills.

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 successfully promote an ethos of mutual respect and inclusion throughout the school. Staff consistently model respectful behaviour. This creates an environment in which pupils feel emotionally secure. This is a foundational element for the school's success with pupils who have previously struggled.
32. Leaders understand pupils' individual and often complex needs well and successfully promote pupils' wellbeing. Appropriately structured routines support pupils' emotional security, enabling them to remain calm and focused. For instance, reading time after lunch helps pupils to regulate their emotions. In practical sessions, such as animal care or motor mechanics, pupils gain self-worth. Contact with the school animals provides regular opportunities for pupils to build their self-esteem and develop empathy.
33. In assemblies and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) sessions, pupils learn about the risks of discriminatory language. Teachers reinforce this in lessons and create a respectful environment. They model the behaviour they expect and make sensitive corrections to pupils if they get it wrong.
34. Teachers support pupils' spiritual and moral development through discussions in lessons. For instance, in religious studies lessons, pupils learn about different beliefs and gain an understanding of different perspectives. Pupils develop a critical and moral understanding of the world around them.
35. The physical education (PE) programme is broad and inclusive. Leaders provide activities such as pickleball and yoga. These broaden the engagement of pupils with PE, particularly among those less confident in competitive sports. These programmes successfully develop pupils' physical confidence and fitness.
36. Personal, social, health and economic education lessons are effective, age-appropriate and accessible to all pupils. Pupils understand healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. These lessons adhere to the statutory curriculum for relationships and sex education.
37. Leaders make effective use of the prefect system to develop pupils' maturity and leadership skills. Prefects perform appropriate duties, such as supporting younger pupils and presenting at assemblies and events. Pupils learn accountability and self-discipline and develop positive relationships across different age groups within the school community.
38. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils behave well. Staff consistently and fairly apply the behaviour policy, for instance requiring pupils to hand in their mobile phones and to meet the uniform standards. Staff record any incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders monitor these records regularly to identify and respond to any trends.
39. Leaders maintain a clear anti-bullying policy, which is understood by staff and pupils. Pupils learn about bullying in whole-school assemblies and in PSHE lessons during house time. Pupils understand how to recognise bullying and how to respond. Where pupils do raise concerns, staff respond promptly to support pupils.

40. Leaders provide premises and accommodation that directly promote pupils' wellbeing. Leaders respond to the pupils' needs by developing therapeutic facilities, such as a sensory snug and occupational therapy rooms. Boarding accommodation is comfortable, well maintained and includes individual rooms, social spaces and a kitchen area. The boarding accommodation includes appropriate security measures, such as alarmed exits.
41. Leaders with responsibility for boarding successfully promote the pupils' wellbeing. Suitable duty rotas ensure that pupils have easy access to staff, including overnight. Boarding staff seek pupils' views and take these into account, for instance when planning food choices and leisure activities. Staff reward kind behaviour and celebrate it with a 'boarder of the week' award.
42. Staff implement robust health and safety practices and maintain careful records. Leaders undertake regular fire risk assessments to ensure accommodation meets regulations. Staff hold regular fire drills so that pupils know what to do in case of an emergency. Leaders have effective oversight of risk, including the secure storage of hazardous materials and adherence to safety routines in practical subjects, such as science and cookery.
43. Supervision of pupils is appropriate throughout the school, including in the boarding houses. Staff ensure effective oversight throughout the school day, including at drop-off and pick-up times. Boarding staff maintain appropriate duty rotas and pupils understand who to call should they need help during the night.
44. Admission and attendance procedures meet statutory requirements. Staff use internal communication systems, such as walkie-talkies, to confirm pupils' attendance in lessons. The senior attendance champion meets weekly with the administration team to monitor unauthorised absences. Where a pupil's attendance falls below expectations, staff respond appropriately. Leaders provide the local authority with appropriate information when a pupil joins or leaves the school at non-standard times.
45. Leaders provide appropriate medical support for pupils, including first aid. The medical centre is well equipped and staff are appropriately trained. There are clear, secure protocols in place for the recording and dispensing of medication.

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

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

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

47. Pupils develop their economic understanding in practical scenarios. In cookery lessons, pupils plan, shop for and prepare meals using a specified budget. They learn about cost comparison and nutritional value. Waste from these lessons is used as feed for the school farm, teaching pupils the principles of sustainability. The farm provides an opportunity for pupils to earn money. Pupils apply for roles, submit timesheets to the accounts department and receive payment. Pupils learn to manage money and their time.
48. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop business skills. Pupils collect elderflower and make cordial, which they advertise and sell at a local fete. Pupils calculate the profit and donate it to local charities. Pupils learn the link between enterprise and social benefit.
49. Pupils are actively involved in the school's local community and gain a sense of responsibility to others. For instance, pupils volunteer at a local library and model railway. They represent the local area in disability sports teams and gain knowledge of local institutions and events.
50. The curriculum promotes respect for other cultures. In religious studies lessons, pupils research and make presentations about different beliefs, such as the afterlife in Judaism. Pupils discuss their own ideas and their understanding of religious texts. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their values and explore their own beliefs. Pupils learn to respect diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
51. Leaders integrate careers guidance into the curriculum. In PSHE lessons, pupils learn about the careers open to them. Pupils undertake work experience in local businesses such as shops, theatres and garages. Vocational courses, including a range of BTEC qualifications, link learning directly to future pathways. The 'greenpower challenge' encourages pupils to build a wide range of future skills through vehicle construction, strategy planning and marketing.
52. The school prepares pupils effectively for life in British society. The curriculum gives pupils an understanding of the laws, institutions and services of society. Pupils learn about democratic processes through the school council, where they nominate house charities, vote for representatives and contribute suggestions. The school council makes recommendations to the headteacher, which are reported to the governors. For boarders, weekly meetings and suggestion boxes allow them to have influence over decisions affecting their environment.
53. Pupils engage critically with current affairs and political issues. Leaders ensure pupils experience a balanced presentation of different views. In PSHE lessons, pupils discuss differing views on a range of sensitive topics. Teachers skilfully manage dialogue, challenging extreme views and promoting constructive conversation. Pupils learn to consider media bias and understand multiple perspectives.

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

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

Safeguarding

55. Leaders and staff maintain robust arrangements for safeguarding and promote a culture of vigilance and care. Leaders understand their statutory responsibilities and meet them effectively. Leaders use their knowledge of individual pupils to anticipate where help is needed and provide it quickly. Robust procedures are in place for handover of safeguarding files when pupils arrive at, or leave the school.
56. Leaders make effective use of the local authority as a source of external support and training. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding receive regular training at an appropriate level. All senior staff receive one-to-one supervision with an external counsellor, who supports them in their safeguarding roles with pupils.
57. Leaders provide staff with detailed and regular safeguarding training, including formal sessions on the statutory guidance and regular staff briefings. This training is regularly updated in response to local and national trends. Staff are alert to the possible signs of abuse and are confident in responding to any concerns they may have. They understand the procedures for recording and reporting these.
58. Leaders accurately record any safeguarding incidents. They monitor these records closely and take prompt action when necessary. They track patterns and follow up incidents promptly and appropriately. Leaders work effectively with external partners and make timely referrals to the local authority where necessary.
59. Pupils learn how to raise any concerns they may have. Positive relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils are confident to do this.
60. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders ensure that an appropriate internet monitoring and filtering system is in place. Staff respond quickly and effectively to any notifications of inappropriate activity.
61. Leaders maintain robust recruitment procedures and carry out appropriate pre-employment checks on staff. These are accurately recorded in a single central record of appointments.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Slindon College
Department for Education number	938/6094
Registered charity number	1028125
Address	Slindon College Top Road Arundel West Sussex BN18 0RH
Phone number	01243 814320
Email address	registrar@slindoncollege.co.uk
Website	www.slindoncollege.co.uk
Proprietor	Slindon College Charitable Trust
Chair	Mr Stuart Lawrance
Headteacher	Mrs Sotiria Vlahodimou
Age range	8 to 18
Number of pupils	101
Number of boarding pupils	10
Date of previous inspection	8 to 10 November 2022

Information about the school

63. Slindon College is a day and boarding school for boys aged 8 to 18 years who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school consists of a prep school, a secondary school and a sixth form on one site and is located in Slindon village, near Arundel, West Sussex. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors was appointed in January 2024.
64. Boarders are accommodated in a single boarding house, which is located centrally within the school grounds. The school accepts boarders from Year 7 upwards.
65. The school has identified all pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Eighty-seven pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
66. The school has identified four pupils who speak English as an additional language.
67. The school states its aims are to remove barriers to learning by providing individualised pathways and to give all pupils an education that capitalises on their strengths, is tailored to their needs and supported by a dedicated team of professionals.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

7 to 9 October 2025

68. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

69. 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 areas and facilities for physical education
- visits to the boarding house accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

70. 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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