ISI Independent Schools Inspectorate

School inspection report

11 to 13 November 2025

Kew House

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Brentford

London

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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 effectively promote the school's values of respect, compassion, tolerance, community and responsibility.

2. However, leaders do not follow statutory guidance when responding to low-level concerns about adults. Referrals to external agencies relating to concerns about adults are not always made appropriately nor in a timely manner. As a result, leaders do not consistently promote pupils' wellbeing, meaning that not all of the Standards are consistently met.

3. The complaints policy is not implemented effectively. Leaders do not follow a clear three-stage procedure within the stated timeframes when handling complaints. Recording of complaints is not systematic. In addition, leaders do not make available the required information to parents regarding the number of formal complaints in the preceding year. The school made this information available during the inspection.

4. Teachers actively support pupils through the personal tutor system. Tutors know their tutees well and provide effective support for their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils behave well and treat each other with kindness.

5. The curriculum is broad, well planned and effectively delivered across all age groups. Teachers are knowledgeable, supportive and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Assessment practices are regular and effective. In response to regular assessments, teachers provide suitable targeted support for pupils. As a result, pupils make good progress.

6. Health and safety arrangements are secure and leaders manage any risks around the school site effectively. Pupils are well supervised and there are suitable arrangements for first aid.

7. The curriculum promotes fundamental British values (FBV) effectively and prepares pupils well for life in British society, including through lessons in citizenship and financial literacy. Pupils show initiative by contributing positively to wider society through charitable activities. Careers guidance is comprehensive and individually tailored for older pupils.

8. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and the safeguarding team maintain meticulous records documenting decisions and actions relating to concerns about pupils. A suitable single central record of appointments (SCR) is maintained, which shows that checks on new appointments are carried out in a timely fashion. However, leaders do not check online activity nor verify the content of references for some new appointments.

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The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met.

Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:

- demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school Standards are consistently met
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school Standards are consistently met and
- actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils

so that:

- low-level concerns relating to the conduct of adults are acted on in a consistent and timely manner by leaders
- the complaints policy is implemented effectively.

Recommended next steps

The proprietor should:

- ensure that the safer recruitment process consistently includes consideration of due diligence checks, including verifying references and conducting online searches as part of the shortlisting process
- make available the number of complaints dealt with at the formal stage in the preceding year.

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Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. The proprietor and board of directors do not provide systematic oversight of all the school's practices and procedures. They do not rigorously assure themselves that senior leaders have the required skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities. Senior leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities when addressing parental complaints and concerns relating to adults working in the school.

10. Leaders do not always accurately record and respond to low-level concerns about adults working in the school. Consequently, appropriate and timely referrals to external agencies are not always made.

11. Leaders do not implement the complaints policy effectively. They do not ensure there is a clear division between informal and formal stages of complaints. Leaders do not ensure that timescales set out in the complaints policy are consistently followed and they do not maintain clear records of complaints that contain all the required information. In addition, they do not make available the number of complaints dealt with at the formal stage in the preceding year. These were made available during the inspection.

12. Senior leaders generally operate robust safer recruitment processes. However, some recent appointments were not subject to a pre-employment check of online activity nor verification of the content of references provided.

13. The proprietor ensures effective oversight of risk and governors oversee the school's process for self-evaluation. For example, the proprietor took effective action to increase capacity in the safeguarding team by appointing a full-time safeguarding leader.

14. Leaders ensure appropriate information is made available to parents and others. The school's website contains necessary information and policies. Reports are sent to parents every half term and are complemented by regular meetings for parents. Reports contain grades for attitude, homework and progress, along with teacher comments and targets.

15. Leaders ensure the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school has a suitable accessibility plan. This plan improves access to the physical environment and the curriculum. It provides information for pupils with accessibility needs.

16. Leaders maintain suitable links with external agencies. They carry out appropriate annual reviews of education, health and care plans (EHC plans) and report to the local authorities involved, as required, with regard to the use of funds. Leaders maintain appropriate records of paperwork relating to these. They report to the relevant local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.

17. The school's aims and ethos are effectively promoted and work well in practice. The school's values of respect, compassion, tolerance, community and responsibility are present throughout the school and are known by pupils. Leaders encourage an atmosphere of kindness, respectful behaviour and hard work.

18. Leaders ensure trips and visits are thoroughly planned. Teachers receive regular training on writing risk assessments so that they effectively identify, manage and reduce risks related to trips and visits.

Leaders ensure the safety of the school site effectively and that pupils' health needs are met through suitable first aid provision.

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

19. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. The curriculum is broad, well planned and covers all required subject areas. In the younger years, the curriculum includes the study of three foreign languages and all pupils have access to a creative curriculum, which includes art, drama, music and design technology. At GCSE, alongside the core curriculum, pupils have a choice of four options from an extensive list, which includes humanities, creative, technological and linguistic subjects. Pupils in the sixth form study a mix of A-level and BTEC level 3 courses and the curriculum successfully gives access to a wide range of skills to prepare pupils for their next steps.

21. Leaders ensure that teachers devise appropriate curriculum plans and detailed schemes of work throughout the school. Curriculum planning caters effectively for pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs. The grouping of classes in line with prior attainment in mathematics and English effectively allows for adjusted lesson pace, so that pupils are appropriately challenged and supported. Academic and other leaders communicate regularly with teachers, so they better understand individual needs and take account of this in planning lessons. This ensures pupils with different levels of prior attainment make good progress.

22. Teachers are knowledgeable, supportive and effective. They understand pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment and use these effectively in planning lessons. This allows pupils to build on previous learning as they move through the school. Lessons are well planned and make use of effective questioning. For example, in English lessons, pupils produce high-quality work because teachers devise challenging and well-structured activities. Teachers give accurate explanations and make relevant real-world links in subjects like economics and politics. They use a wide range of good-quality classroom resources well. Pupils are given opportunities to make effective use of online platforms, smartboards and well-equipped laboratories so that they learn effectively. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons and, consequently, pupils are interested in their learning. Pupils are self-motived, consistently thinking and learning for themselves.

23. Leaders ensure that pupils who have SEND are provided with effective provision to meet their needs. They train teachers regularly to aid understanding of how to support these pupils by, for instance, structuring written tasks. Teachers make successful use of detailed lesson and individual learning plans so that individual needs are met. Leaders analyse the progress of different groups of pupils and use this to inform practice. Pupils consistently show a determination to succeed in their lessons. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.

24. Leaders ensure teaching meets the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Most pupils who speak EAL are fluent in English. Where necessary, leaders provide strategies for teaching staff, which include individual support and the use of terminology lists and bilingual dictionaries.

25. Leaders make use of regular and thorough assessment of pupils. Grades for attitude and progress of pupils are tracked. Actions to support individual pupils are promptly implemented should progress stall. Pupils learn to regularly review their own work using 'pink pen' corrections. Pupils achieve well in public examinations.

26. Leaders provide a wide range of recreational activities outside teaching time. Pupils engage in a variety of activities such as debating, research projects and social and cultural clubs. These are

designed to meet the interests of pupils and they help pupils to develop new skills and enthusiasms. For example, through Young Enterprise, pupils learn presentation skills, resilience and the importance of teamwork and adaptability.

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

27. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

28. Leaders give pupils the opportunity to develop spiritual and moral understanding. For example, pupils take a lead in the school's annual Act of Remembrance. They discuss the importance of the collective act in lessons and reflect on the beauty and power of music in enhancing these events. In art and English lessons, pupils consider the influence of religion on cultural artefacts. Pupils make links between their learning at key events, during study in lessons and by participation in educational visits. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective.

29. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum, known as 'individuals in society' (IS), is well structured to develop pupils' skills and understanding as they get older. It is effectively planned and delivered by teachers. The programme is flexible and adapts to pastoral issues that arise. The curriculum is comprehensive, covering contemporary topics such as healthy relationships, drugs, vapes and social media. It is appropriate for the pupils' ages.

30. The school encourages mutual trust and respect for others. The PSHE curriculum and personal tutor programmes are central to this work. In these lessons, pupils discuss inclusion and the importance of respect for people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Pupils behave well and are considerate of the needs of others.

31. The school develops pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence effectively. Teachers know pupils well and develop their confidence through regular encouragement. The success of pupils is celebrated weekly in assemblies. Pupils of different ages meet in small groups with their personal tutor daily and this fosters high levels of cohesion among students. Leaders encourage pupils to attempt challenging tasks without fear of making mistakes. As a result, pupils learn to view mistakes as a learning opportunity.

32. The physical education (PE) curriculum is well planned by leaders and well delivered by teachers. The PE department offers a variety of sports and activities, providing pupils with a wide range of opportunities in weekly PE and games lessons and extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy participating in a team and they develop skills rapidly as they do so. As a result, many pupils achieve individual and team success in their chosen sports and others choose activities that keep them healthy and active. The PE curriculum and provision successfully encourage physical and mental health.

33. The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum is comprehensive. It is delivered mostly through PSHE lessons and assemblies. The programme plan is suitable for the pupils' ages. The school provides parents with information about the course content and actively consults them. Leaders brief parents on any contentious topics. Parents are given the opportunity to withdraw their child from parts of the course as required.

34. The behaviour policy is consistently applied by leaders. Pupils know and understand the policy and appreciate teachers' regular use of positive reinforcement, through the awarding of 'greens'. Leaders ensure the school operates an effective anti-bullying strategy. Pupils do not view bullying as a significant issue. Concerns are dealt with in a timely and effective manner. Records show that any misbehaviour and bullying are dealt with swiftly by teachers. Effective support is provided to both those affected and those responsible.

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35. The effectiveness of health and safety arrangements is robust. The school premises are modern, well maintained and any hazardous areas are controlled effectively. Fire and evacuation arrangements are secure and comprehensive risk assessments are effective in identifying risks. Leaders make timely and effective adjustments to reduce identified risks.

36. First aid provision is in place so that pupils are well looked after. The first aid arrangements are appropriate. The first aid centre manages medical administration. Staff receive suitable training in first aid.

37. The school ensures its admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with statutory regulations. Leaders regularly review attendance data and use a comprehensive action plan to monitor and improve pupils' attendance.

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

38. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

39. The school promotes fundamental British values both in PSHE lessons and during personal tutor sessions. Pupils regularly discuss politics, democracy and citizenship, learn about being responsible citizens and study local and national government. This enables them to acquire a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services. Visits from local politicians further inform their knowledge. Displays around the school reinforce positive messages about school and British values. Leaders organise mock elections and consequently raise pupils' awareness of democracy.

40. Leaders effectively develop pupils' social and cultural knowledge and understanding. For pupils in Years 7 and 8, the curriculum includes the study of three foreign languages, giving pupils a broad global view. Educational visits to destinations such as Berlin and Iceland broaden horizons and provide first-hand cultural experience. Through culture days and assemblies, leaders promote pupils' understanding of different traditions. Pupils learn about various cultures and faiths, for example, through the study of different religions in religious studies.

41. Leaders create a curriculum that enables pupils to learn about the world of business and develop financial literacy. Pupils learn about financial life skills in mathematics and PSHE lessons. Content includes budgeting, affordability and tax. Through enterprise activities such as a Christmas fair, quiz nights and cake sales, pupils learn to budget, manage money and learn about differing business models. For example, pupils in Year 8 work to a budget as they produce products for the fair, the proceeds of which are donated to charity. As part of a 'Young Tycoons' competition, older pupils learn to write business plans and how to apply for a loan to initiate their enterprises.

42. The school encourages pupils to show initiative and to learn to contribute positively to communities in the local area and wider society. Pupils of all ages are involved in collections and fundraising events. For example, a pupil enterprise group produces items to sell at the Christmas fair and organises cake sales to raise money for charity. Sixth-form pupils take on leadership roles and donate funds to a local foodbank. Through these activities, pupils learn to be empathetic and philanthropic.

43. Leaders help pupils to learn to accept responsibility for their actions and contribute to the school community. Senior pupils, including those who are prefects, act as effective role models. They lead sporting activities and clubs, building teamwork skills and assisting younger pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and new interests.

44. Leaders complete an audit of careers guidance in the school so that pupils receive comprehensive education and impartial advice. Careers are intertwined with the PSHE curriculum from Year 7 and in Year 8 with individual interviews and parent consultations. This helps to ensure that pupils know how their decisions about subject choices and courses match future career possibilities. Leaders organise a programme of talks from parents and alumni and host international university fairs. Guidance is individually tailored for older pupils, who receive help with university applications and apprenticeships as well as preparation for the world of work.

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

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

46. Leaders have a strategic overview of arrangements for safeguarding pupils. They have appointed a full-time, non-teaching designated safeguarding lead (DSL). This has increased the capacity of the safeguarding team. This leader with responsibility for safeguarding is well qualified and participates in local meetings with safeguarding leaders in other schools.

47. However, leaders do not operate effective systems for managing any concerns about adults. Record-keeping and responding to low-level concerns and complaints about adults who work in the school is not consistent. Timely referrals are not always made to external agencies and regulatory bodies by the school. As a result, school leaders do not manage staff conduct matters effectively.

48. The safeguarding team maintains meticulous records of safeguarding incidents involving pupils, and decisions made, including effective use of detailed safety plans. The school liaises effectively with the local authority and other external agencies to promote pupils' welfare. Leaders use an audit of safeguarding by the local authority to ensure that practices are robust.

49. Leaders ensure staff are trained in safeguarding procedures. Training includes bespoke safeguarding sessions for discrete groups of non-teaching staff and weekly briefings for all staff by safeguarding leaders. Leaders oversee thorough induction processes for new staff, including for those joining after the start of the school year. Staff are confident in their use of the school's systems and understand their responsibilities. They know how and to whom to report issues.

50. The school operates effective recruitment procedures. The SCR, which records checks, is accurate and regularly audited by the proprietor. However, the school does not routinely verify the content of references provided for those applying to work at the school nor does it consistently carry out online searches for all new appointments.

51. Leaders ensure that the arrangements for internet filtering and monitoring are robust. Pastoral and network leaders meet regularly to carry out termly checks of the school's systems. They use their oversight of events flagged by the systems to make changes.

52. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. The curriculum is effective in delivering online safety in information technology lessons, assemblies and PSHE lessons. Pupils understand the potential dangers when they are online and know who they would speak to if they had a concern.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

53. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 7 paragraph 33	The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which—
33(c)	sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint
33(d)	allows for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis
33(e)	where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (d), establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to be made in writing
33(f)	where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint
33(j)	provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and—
33(j)(i) and (ii)	whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing; and action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

Safeguarding

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –
7(a)	arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and

7(b)	such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

School details

School	Kew House
Department for Education number	313/6005
Address	Kew House School 6 Capital Interchange Way Brentford London TW8 0EX
Phone number	020 8742 2038
Email address	info@kewhouseschool.com
Website	www.kewhouseschool.com
Proprietor	Maria Gardener Schools Group
Chair	Mr Theo Brehony
Headteacher	Mr Will Williams
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	468
Date of previous inspection	27 to 29 April 2022

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Information about the school

54. Kew House School is a co-educational day school located in Brentford, London. The school occupies one main site, with two additional smaller sites used for sixth-form lessons, a studio, gym and administrative offices. The school is part of the Gardener Schools Group and consists of a senior school which includes a sixth form. The proprietor and a board of directors oversee the running of the school and form the school's governing body.

55. The school has identified 275 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Six pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.

56. The school has identified English as an additional language for 28 pupils.

57. The school states its aims are to recognise and enhance the individual abilities of each child. It focuses all reporting and feedback on enriching the individual's reflection so that pupils are engaged in their learning and hence achieve and exceed their potential.

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Inspection details

Inspection dates	11 to 13 November 2025

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

59. 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.

60. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

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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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