

School inspection report

12 to 14 November 2024

The King's High School for Girls

Banbury Road

Warwick

Warwickshire

CV34 6YE

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. Pupils' wellbeing is prioritised, including through strategic initiatives, such as innovative curriculum design. Pupils' views contribute to ongoing improvements to the quality of their school experience.
2. Robust safeguarding, transparent communication, and forward-thinking governance ensure accountability and effective policy implementation. Leaders' actions underpin the school's supportive environment, which fosters pupils' academic success, effective personal development, and future readiness.
3. Leaders provide a broad curriculum enriched by co-curricular opportunities. Lessons are planned effectively with real-world applications, for example in science and mathematics. Pupils are guided in their subject choices and this supports their academic success.
4. Teachers' enthusiasm and the rich educational experience provided by leaders effectively foster pupils' motivation to learn. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils' participation is limited.
5. Pupils' physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing education is delivered through a robust personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum, accessible counselling services, and engaging extracurricular activities.
6. Pupils thrive through targeted initiatives, such as mentoring programmes, diverse physical education (PE) opportunities and a nurturing boarding environment. This builds pupils' confidence, resilience and supports their effective wider personal development.
7. Pupils' social and economic wellbeing is supported, for example, by empowerment as 'changemakers'. Pupils are actively involved in community service, sustainability projects, global citizenship, and initiatives that foster respect, responsibility and awareness of societal and ethical issues. The importance of social responsibility and global awareness is well promoted. This is a significant strength of the school.
8. Through innovative projects such as volunteering at local schools, international links, and charitable activities, pupils develop strong empathy, leadership, and collaboration skills. Programmes such as interfaith councils, and democratic forums instil respect for diversity, ethical decision-making, and active participation in shaping societal change.
9. Leaders ensure safeguarding is effective through accessible policies, regular staff training, and clear support systems. Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns. Responsive leadership, ongoing training, and secure boarding provision underpin pupils' overall safety and welfare.

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:

- strengthen monitoring and support to help teachers understand how to increase opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts and ideas during lessons.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Pupils' wellbeing is central to leaders' and governors' decisions. The school's supportive environment and innovative GCSEs reflect a strategic focus on fostering a happy, aspirational, community.
11. The introduction of the changemaker programme and future-ready courses exemplifies leaders' encouraging independent, outward-thinking pupils. These efforts are supported by robust communication between leaders and governors, facilitated through termly governor board meetings, enabling informed decision-making aligned with the school's aims.
12. Kindness, respect for individual differences and transparency are core values. Pupils' wellbeing is promoted through leaders' direct engagement with the school community. Governors are well informed about pupils' experiences of school.
13. The visual representation of the school's ethos, through 'The King's Learning Wheel', promotes values such as persistence and imagination. Staff integrate these values into teaching, for example, in the focus on developing champions of change. Pupils are consistently encouraged to be aspirational in considering future options.
14. Governors review complaints to ensure compliance with the school's policy. Feedback from any concerns raised inform ongoing improvements. The formal complaints process is accessible. It ensures that parents and pupils feel supported when issues arise. Trends in concerns are logged and analysed, so that lessons learned are acted on.
15. Community partnerships, such as the collaboration with a local school for pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), provide opportunities for pupils to engage as playworkers. These initiatives broaden pupils' horizons, while strengthening ties with the wider community.
16. Boarding provision aligns with the school's ethos of inclusion and care, nurturing a diverse community. Boarding staff, including recently appointed team members, as well as experienced staff, are well trained to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing.
17. Risk assessments are reviewed termly by governors, enabling informed oversight. The future expansion of boarding demonstrates strategic planning to meet demand.
18. Leaders' knowledge and skills are evident in their implementation of policies and initiatives that align with the school's aims. Subject leaders link departmental schemes of learning effectively to the school's ethos.
19. Leaders have put an appropriate accessibility plan into place and fulfil their duties against the Equalities Act 2010. The school's commitment to equality is evident in the creation of clubs and safe spaces, such as the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) group, and the oasis wellbeing centre, both initiated through pupils' feedback. Pupils know that their views influence their school experiences. This enhances their engagement in and ownership of the school community.
20. Governance ensures that leaders have good oversight with regards to the school meeting the Standards and the National Minimum Standards for boarding. Governors are well informed of school

innovations, holding leaders to account effectively to continue to improve the quality of education. Policies and key information are easily accessible to parents.

21. Leaders foster an environment where pupils are confident and well prepared for future challenges. Through thoughtful decision-making, robust systems, and a clear focus on community and social responsibility, leaders and governors ensure pupils' academic success and wellbeing.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

23. Leaders provide a rich educational experience that equips pupils with academic, personal, and social skills. A broad curriculum and effective assessment practices reflect the focus on developing a range of knowledge and skills across subjects.
24. In English lessons, pupils hone speaking and listening skills through presentations, while in mathematics, collaborative problem-solving reinforces the value of teamwork. Pupils can confidently articulate their learning, expressing enthusiasm for their subjects.
25. Subject leaders regularly review curriculum plans to ensure alignment with pupils' age and aptitudes. In science, for example, pupils are guided to personalised learning pathways. Pupils value the tailored support, which has a positive impact on their progress.
26. Activities are thoughtfully aligned to schemes of work. This supports pupils' good progress. For example, Year 10 science lessons use practical real-world applications to illustrate theoretical content, while Year 7 engineering promotes creativity and teamwork through projects like 'Mission Mars'.
27. Staff use an appropriate mix of formal and informal checks on learning to track pupils' progress. In geography, pupils keep tracker graphs to self-assess their achievements over time. In the creative subjects, ongoing teacher assessment grids are used to track progress.
28. Pupils who have SEND benefit from the support from the special educational needs coordinator, who collaborates with departments to help adapt teaching strategies to meet pupils' needs when required.
29. Co-curricular opportunities play a vital role in broadening pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils are well prepared for the future. They develop entrepreneurial and analytical skills as they apply dynamic mathematics software to real-world scenarios. Creative subjects such as music and art build technical proficiency and confidence. This was notable in a Year 7 choir rehearsal where pupils demonstrated clear improvement in singing and cultural appreciation. Boarders benefit from a varied programme of recreational activities, which enhances their personal and social development.
30. The curriculum effectively integrates interrelated themes across subjects. Science lessons reinforce mathematical and linguistic abilities through the use of technical terminology.
31. Pupils are well motivated to learn, encouraged by their teachers' enthusiasm. Year 12 pupils critically analyse marketing strategies in real-world contexts in business studies. In doing so they demonstrate effective use of prior learning. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils' participation is limited.
32. Recreational and cross-disciplinary activities complement pupils' academic learning, while developing pupils' skills more broadly. The Year 8 form time project develops research, design, and presentation skills, while the 'global changemaker' course cultivates innovation and sustainability awareness. Collaborative opportunities, such as joint choral concerts allow pupils to showcase their talents and to foster pride in their achievements.

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

33. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

34. The school's emphasis on physical, mental, and emotional health equips pupils with the tools needed to thrive. Pupils are well supported and valued, within an environment that is conducive to securing and maintaining their overall wellbeing.
35. Leaders have implemented a robust PSHE and RSE curriculum that supports pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing. The curriculum is designed to allow topics to build on pupils' prior learning. Curriculum reviews take account of and act on pupils' views. Pupils are well prepared for societal challenges, for example, in the context of recent additions addressing knife crime, artificial intelligence, and gang culture.
36. The school builds self-esteem and confidence through diverse opportunities such as assemblies, which encourage ambition, and extra-curricular clubs tailored to a range of interests. Initiatives, including the mentoring programme and external workshops further enhance pupils' self-esteem. Targeted support is on hand for those who need it.
37. Support for pupils' mental health and wellbeing is comprehensive. Onsite counsellors, a wellbeing mentor and a psychologist are available to pupils. Events, including the mental health week and co-curricular activities such as beekeeping, happy hens and relaxation clubs, promote a culture of openness around emotional wellbeing.
38. Leaders ensure the provision of good quality school food for boarders. They enjoy the use of the house kitchen where fresh food is provided. This supports them to make healthy lifestyle choices. Day pupils in all year groups have access to good quality school lunches.
39. Boarders' health and wellbeing are closely monitored by house parents, tutors, and a matron. A medical room within the boarding house enables prompt attention to health concerns, supported by trained staff. Termly fire drills and robust health and safety measures are in place, reflecting leaders' prioritisation of safety.
40. The physical education curriculum encourages mastery of core physical skills while offering a wide range of competitive and non-competitive options, from yoga to athletics. Pupils are given individual feedback on their performance and access to a diverse range of activities. Opportunities to represent the school in regional and national competitions contribute effectively to pupils' physical fitness and mental resilience.
41. The school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. This creates a calm and respectful learning environment. Pupils understand the sanctions for unacceptable conduct, which are applied fairly. A restorative approach is used on the rare occasion when poor behaviour occurs. This build pupils' understanding of right and wrong and supports the effective repairing of relationships.
42. The school's anti-bullying strategy is robust, with detailed logs and thorough investigations when concerns arise. This ensures that issues are resolved equitably.
43. Boarding accommodation is homely and secure. Facilities such as lockable storage facilities enhance pupils' comfort and independence. Boarders are supported through induction programmes, buddy

systems, and daily informal interactions with staff. Regular wellbeing surveys ensure that boarders' voices are heard. As a result, the effectiveness of the nurturing environment continues to improve.

44. Leaders' commitment to mutual respect is evident in initiatives like the neurodiversity club, which celebrates achievements through termly publications. Individuality and equality are promoted through curriculum content and inclusive school events. Pupils demonstrate respectful attitudes, aligning with the school's ethos of diversity and inclusion.
45. Attendance and admission registers are appropriately maintained. Attendance is monitored closely, with swift and effective follow up on absence. Leaders ensure that any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition times are reported to the local authority in line with statutory guidance.
46. The school prepares pupils effectively for their next steps in education and adulthood. Pupils and parents value the rich curriculum and the relevance to real-world scenarios. This is complemented by extracurricular activities that encourage pupils to reflect on societal issues and develop self-confidence through public speaking, leadership roles, and collaborative projects.

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

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

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

48. In all areas, pupils demonstrate independence, responsibility, and respect. This aligns with the school's ethos. An inclusive, active, and socially aware culture is fostered throughout the school.
49. Leaders have embedded the 'King's High School Learning Wheel'. This underpins pupils' motivation to demonstrate collaboration, independence, and creativity. This ethos is evident, for example, in Year 8 projects, where pupils tackle modern-day issues like fast fashion and ethics, fostering awareness of social justice and sustainability.
50. The school's focus on global citizenship includes trips abroad, such as sixth form visits to India and South Africa. These allow pupils to experience diverse cultures and global challenges. More widely, pupils demonstrate respect for different cultures, including through celebrations of different festivals.
51. Tolerance and inclusion of different faiths and beliefs are promoted through the school's interfaith council and equality committee. These groups have facilitated pupil-led changes, such as the introduction of a new religious jewellery policy. These actions reflect the school's culture of embracing diversity and responsiveness to pupils' needs.
52. Pupils actively engage with their community through volunteering and service. Pupils in Year 9 to Year 13 regularly visit local primary schools to support reading activities. Other pupils make a contribution to the wider community by visiting hospitals and nursing homes. In doing so, pupils develop empathy and a sense of responsibility towards others.
53. Fundamental British values are integrated effectively into the curriculum. In PSHE and RSE lessons, pupils learn about mutual respect, democracy, and the rule of law. Mock trials and visits to Parliament help pupils to understand democratic institutions and legal principles.
54. The school's careers programme offers robust guidance. Year 10 psychometric testing and Year 11 mock interviews help to shape pupils' aspirations. They are supported to explore pathways such as degree apprenticeships and overseas university options.
55. Respect for individual difference is promoted through the neurodiversity club and pupil-led assemblies on diversity. Mutual respect is embedded within the school culture. Year 10 pupils confidently discuss topics such as racism, indicating the success of PSHE lessons in promoting inclusion for all.
56. The importance of right and wrong is well promoted through modules such as the Year 11 philosophy and theology course. In this, for example, pupils critically examine the ethical implications of certain laws and practices, cultivating moral reasoning and thoughtful decision-making.
57. The culture of environmental awareness is evident through initiatives such as the green flag award and support for local clothing bank charities. Pupils contribute to sustainability projects, including designing recycled sportswear and supporting local environmental groups.

58. Pupils develop their societal and global awareness through a range of projects across different year groups. Year 11 pupils explore Brazilian politics and climate change. Year 8 pupils' collaboration on a peace garden project reflects the school's emphasis on teamwork and respect for others. This initiative demonstrates pupils' contributions to creating inclusive spaces.
59. Through public performances, such as concerts at Warwick Arts Centre, and collaborative events with other schools, pupils develop confidence and experience of life beyond school.
60. Pupils' understanding of balanced political perspectives is strengthened through activities such as form time debates on voting rights. Lessons provide balanced political perspectives, enabling pupils to form their own informed opinions.
61. The school's commitment to social responsibility is evident in sixth form pupils' mentoring of younger pupils and support for house charity events. These activities foster leadership skills development and wider community engagement. For example, pupils collectively raised a large sum of money to support a South African township, showcasing their global impact.

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

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

Safeguarding

63. Safeguarding is thorough, with robust recruitment practices, including regular audits of the single central record (SCR), and comprehensive checks for staff and volunteers. Governors ensure that safer recruitment practices are upheld with regular monitoring by the safeguarding governor and human resources staff.
64. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. The school's safeguarding policy is accessible on the website. Regular updates to the policy and practice align with guidance from the local authority designated officer (LADO).
65. Pupils are confident to approach staff with safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a confident understanding of consent and online safety. This understanding is informed by well-structured PSHE lessons and assemblies.
66. Safeguarding information is provided across the school through visible noticeboards detailing key contacts and the range of support available. Anonymous reporting via online initiatives encourages disclosures, building trust and pupils' engagement in ensuring their own wellbeing. The pupils' wellbeing centre is staffed by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and trained personnel. This provides accessible support, reinforcing the school's commitment to securing pupils' welfare.
67. Staff training is rigorous and ongoing. Induction includes safeguarding modules completed before employment. These are complemented by bi-weekly updates addressing local risks. Governors are involved in ensuring effective safeguarding. They receive annual safeguarding training and contribute to regular safeguarding meetings. As a result, safeguarding practice is informed, consistent, and responsive to emerging issues.
68. Boarding provision prioritises pupils' safety, with strict visitor protocols, effective safeguarding privacy, and security. The use of independent listeners further supports boarders' welfare. Guardianship arrangements are managed by parents through accredited agencies, ensuring safe, vetted placements.
69. Comprehensive filtering and monitoring systems, and initiatives like phone-locking pouches reflect innovation in addressing online safety in school.
70. Leaders' strategic decisions, bolstered by robust governance and training, create a safeguarding culture that evolves with community needs.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	The King's High School for Girls
Department for Education number	937/6089
Registered charity number	1088057
Address	The King's High School for Girls Banbury Road Warwick Warwickshire CV34 6YE
Phone number	01926494485
Email address	khs-enquiries@warwickschools.co.uk
Website	www.kingshighwarwick.co.uk
Proprietor	Warwick Schools Foundation
Chair	Sally Austin
Headteacher	Dr Stephen Burley
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	827
Number of boarding pupils	11
Date of previous inspection	01 to 03 December 2021

Information about the school

72. King's High School for Girls is an independent day school for female students, located near the city of Warwick alongside other schools in the Warwick Schools Foundation, overseen by a shared governing body.
73. The school includes a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 16, as well as a sixth form.
74. The school was routinely last inspected in December 2021.
75. Currently, 140 students receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health, and care plan.
76. Boarding accommodation is provided for 11 sixth form pupils.
77. English is an additional language for 141 pupils.
78. The school states its aims are Aspire, Achieve, Enjoy. Creativity and Curiosity. Community and Social Responsibility. Character and Confidence. Wellbeing and Happiness. Opportunities and Futures.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

12 to 14 November 2024

79. A team of 8 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

80. 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 head, 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.

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

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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