

Material change inspection report

23 to 24 June 2026

Canbury School

Kingston Hill

Kingston upon Thames

KT2 7LN

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'.

Inspection outcome

The school has submitted a material change request to increase its capacity from 76 to 80 pupils and to be registered as an independent special school.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 1 and 2

1. The school has a suitable curriculum that includes the required range of subjects. The curriculum reflects the specialist nature of the education the school provides and is well matched to pupils' ages and abilities. It promotes, and helps pupils to understand, fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. The curriculum encourages pupils to develop respect for other people, with particular regard for characteristics such as race and religious beliefs, that are protected under the Equality Act 2010.
2. The sixth-form provision offers a highly personalised one-year transition programme that is carefully tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. The curriculum focuses on preparing pupils for their next stage of education, employment or training. Leaders and staff support pupils to develop independence, confidence and social skills so that they are ready for their next steps.
3. Leaders put suitable schemes of work in place for all subjects in the curriculum. These take account of pupils' needs and interests. Teachers plan learning effectively in the short, medium and long term. Planning includes common misconceptions that might arise and key vocabulary for pupils to learn and adopt.
4. The curriculum is delivered effectively. Staff know and understand pupils' needs well. They adapt their planning and provide appropriate support that enables pupils to enjoy school and make good progress. Staff encourage pupils to engage with and enjoy their learning. Pupils try hard and take pride in their work. Teachers focus on the importance of repetition and practice to consolidate and reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding, such as when learning key vocabulary. Staff put effective support in place that enables pupils to access the curriculum successfully, such as using 'dyslexia-friendly' versions of key texts.
5. All pupils have individual plans that detail their specific needs and the agreed strategies to address them. These are shared appropriately so that all staff know how best to work with and support each pupil. The therapy team works with and alongside the education team to meet pupils' needs and to fulfil the requirements of their education, health and care plans (EHC plans).
6. The school provides a well-planned and highly personalised careers programme that gives pupils access to accurate, up-to-date and impartial careers guidance. The curriculum is enhanced by careers fairs, work experience and visits to higher education providers. The programme broadens pupils' understanding of the wide range of education, training and employment opportunities available to them.
7. The school has an appropriate assessment framework. Leaders monitor assessment information closely and use it to ensure that the right support is put in place. Pupils respond positively to the

targets that are set for them and feel a sense of accomplishment when they achieve them. Teachers provide pupils with clear and helpful feedback that helps them to improve their work.

8. Pupils take GCSEs, BTEC Firsts and Functional Skills qualifications, as appropriate. They make good progress, despite many pupils having had disrupted educational journeys before they join the school. Pupils gain appropriate qualifications, with many pupils achieving five or more GCSEs by the time they leave the school.
9. The school provides pupils with appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE) that meets current requirements. The curriculum is well sequenced. It supports pupils to develop a mature understanding of key issues such as consent. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and the positive and negative aspects of the influence of peers. The RSE curriculum provides pupils with the knowledge they need for their future lives. Parents are consulted appropriately and informed about their statutory right to withdraw their child from sex education.
10. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a), 7(b), 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16

11. Leaders give safeguarding a high priority. They understand the school's context well, including the specialist nature of the education it provides. Safeguarding leaders are suitably trained. They have good knowledge and understanding of current statutory requirements. Leaders attend conferences provided by the local authority to help them keep up to date with changes to safeguarding policy and requirements.
12. Leaders provide staff with in-depth safeguarding training at the beginning of each academic year. They also provide half-termly updates on a range of issues, in addition to posing safeguarding questions in weekly staff briefings. Robust induction arrangements are in place to ensure that staff are well informed about safeguarding as soon as they take up their roles.
13. Staff are vigilant. They report concerns promptly, and suitable records are kept. Leaders take timely and appropriate action in response to concerns raised. Leaders continue to take action to protect pupils during holiday periods when the school is closed.
14. The school has suitable processes in place for identifying and reporting low-level concerns about adults. Staff receive appropriate training that makes clear what low-level concerns are, why they matter and what to do about them. Staff report concerns promptly, including self-referral, where necessary. Leaders take appropriate action in response to concerns raised.
15. Leaders put suitable internet filtering and monitoring systems in place. Leaders respond effectively to any concerns that are raised, including providing additional support to pupils, where appropriate.
16. The school has a suitable behaviour policy that is implemented effectively. Leaders and staff recognise the complex social, emotional and mental health needs of many pupils. They adopt an individualised approach to helping pupils to understand and manage their own behaviour. Carefully thought-out behaviour plans detail the targeted support that is put in place for pupils.
17. Bullying takes place rarely. Leaders take bullying seriously and investigate incidents thoroughly. They take effective action to address bullying when it does occur, including providing appropriate mediation and support.
18. The school's health and safety arrangements are robust and embedded in daily practice. The premises are maintained to a high standard and provide a safe, secure and accessible environment

for pupils. Fire safety practice is similarly robust. Appropriate systems are put in place to ensure, for example, that equipment is tested and serviced regularly. The school has a suitable fire risk assessment in place.

19. Leaders put effective arrangements in place for first aid and the administration of medicines. Procedures are well considered and robust. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid.
20. Pupils are supervised appropriately. The school is highly staffed to ensure that pupils receive sufficient time and attention for their needs to be met. The school has adequate staffing to accommodate the requested increase in the number of pupils admitted.
21. The school has suitable admission and attendance arrangements in place that are in line with current guidance. The school's admission and attendance registers meet requirements. Leaders put effective arrangements in place to support pupils whose special educational needs make attending school challenging. Leaders inform the local authority, as required, if pupils' absence reaches specified thresholds and when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard transition points.
22. The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy that is implemented effectively. Leaders identify a wide range of risks, including those related to pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and put effective measures in place to mitigate them. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and adjusted as necessary.
23. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

ISSR paragraphs 18, 19, 20, and 21

24. The school has robust processes in place for the safer recruitment of staff. Leaders are appropriately trained in safer recruitment and have good knowledge and understanding in this area. The single central record of pre-appointment checks meets requirements. It includes all required information, is up to date and is well maintained. Staff personnel files are thorough and include all necessary information.
25. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraphs 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29

26. The school's existing premises provide all required accommodation, including a medical room, shower facilities and sufficient toilets. The school is bright and well lit, with suitable acoustics. Appropriate external and emergency lighting is in place. The school has an outside area that is suitable for physical education and as a space for pupils to play. The school is clean and well maintained.
27. The school provides a suitable environment for the specialist education that it provides. The school has sufficient space to accommodate the planned increase in pupil numbers.
28. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

- 29. The school's safeguarding policy is detailed, thorough and in line with current guidance. The policy is made available to parents and others via the school's website.
- 30. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- 31. Leaders have good knowledge and understanding appropriate to their roles. They make promoting pupils' wellbeing their highest priority. Leaders consider what is best for pupils when making decisions. They have a clear rationale for both parts of the material change application.
- 32. Governors know the school well and visit regularly. They provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge. Governors ensure that the Standards are met consistently.
- 33. All current pupils have SEND and the vast majority have an EHC plan. Leaders are knowledgeable about the individual needs of pupils. They manage arrangements for EHC plans effectively, ensuring that annual reviews are carried out in a timely fashion. The school essentially operates as a special school already. The material change request is to recognise the specialist nature of the education the school provides.
- 34. The request to increase the number of pupils that can be admitted to the school is to meet local needs. The school has capacity for four additional pupils without needing to increase staffing or extend the premises.
- 35. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Canbury School
Department for Education number	314/6068
Registered charity number	803766
Address	Canbury School Kingston Hill Kingston upon Thames Surrey KT2 7LN
Phone number	020 8549 8622
Email address	reception@canburyschool.co.uk
Website	www.canburyschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Canbury School Ltd
Chairs	Mr Rupert Marks and Ms Louise Clancy
Headteacher	Mrs Philippa Rich
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	76
Date of previous inspection	6 to 8 February 2024

Information about the school

36. Canbury School is a co-educational day school in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey. The school operates on a single site. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. The school caters for pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly social, emotional and mental health needs. Since the previous inspection, new co-chairs of the governing body were appointed in September 2025.
37. The school has identified 76 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 61 pupils in the school who have an education, health and care plan.
38. The school has identified nine pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
39. The school states that its aims are to deliver outstanding pastoral care so that every pupil feels fully supported and confident in themselves and their relationships. It aims to continue to develop the curriculum to encourage and challenge each pupil to realise their academic potential. The school strives to create an ethos and atmosphere that promote high standards of mutual respect and tolerance, both within the school community and in the wider world. It aims to develop strong and constructive relationship between pupils, staff and parents. The school states that it endeavours to offer opportunities and experiences that help each pupil to develop their personal qualities and talents.

Purpose of the material change

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 to 24 June 2026

40. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for two days.

41. Inspection activities included:

- observations of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- a tour of the school to check health and safety arrangements and the suitability of the site
- discussions with the co-chairs of the governing body
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils and parents
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work.

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.
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