

Progress monitoring and material change inspection report

25 March 2025

Hereford Cathedral School

Old Deanery

The Cathedral Close

Hereford

Herefordshire

HR1 2NG

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 meets all the relevant Standards that were considered during this inspection.

The school has requested a material change to increase capacity from 583 to 949 pupils and change the age range from 11 to 19 to 3 to 18. 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, 23 and 4; NMS 2

1. There is already significant liaison between curriculum leaders at Hereford Cathedral School and Hereford Cathedral Junior School. Their principal purpose is to design and implement successfully a curriculum which develops pupils' knowledge and skills across the age range from Nursery to Year 13. An effective mathematics curriculum, for example, is taught to pupils aged three to fourteen to prepare pupils for the GCSE course. Scientific inquiry is securely embedded in the junior school to enable further development of the pupils' knowledge in the senior school.
2. Teachers in the senior and junior schools are working closely together and have planned the effective integration of the curriculums. Leaders also plan to increase the numbers of staff teaching across the two schools. Staff in both schools undergo joint training.
3. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the characteristics of positive relationships and how to maintain their physical and mental wellbeing in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons. Leaders consult parents about the relationships and sex education (RSE) provision and make the policy available to them on the website.
4. Leaders have established appropriate schemes of work which encompass the key subject areas. They ensure that knowledgeable teachers plan lessons effectively so as to take account of pupils' needs. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work and their feedback, both verbal and written, helps enables pupils at all levels to make good progress.
5. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

ISSR Paragraph 5

6. Leaders ensure that pupils learn to value and celebrate differences. Leaders inculcate in pupils the ability to discern right from wrong and the importance of trying to do what is right. There is mutual respect between adults and pupils. Through the curriculum and wider school experiences, pupils develop an understanding of different faiths and traditions.
7. In assemblies, form periods and PSHE education lessons, pupils learn about the harm caused by prejudice and discrimination and are taught about key values such as tolerance, equality and democracy. Pupils acquire knowledge about how parliament works and the role of key institutions such as the National Health Service.
8. Leaders plan effectively for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

9. 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) and 7(b), 8(a) and 8(b), 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and 16(b); NMS 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 20

10. Safeguarding leaders have completed the required training and they ensure that staff are suitably trained, including at induction. Staff understand how to support pupils and the need to report safeguarding concerns about the conduct of staff without delay. Leaders have appropriate plans for the management of safeguarding when the material change is implemented.
11. Leaders understand the contextual safeguarding risks to pupils and take appropriate action to control these risks.
12. Pupils, including boarders, can express any concerns to their form tutors or other trusted adults who respond promptly and supportively. Pupils have access to the school counsellor and leaders train sixth form pupils to be peer mentors who provide support for younger pupils in the school. Pupils can also raise any issues or worries by using online forms which provide access to support from senior pastoral staff.
13. Leaders work effectively with children's services, the police and local authorities. Where required, safeguarding concerns are referred to external agencies in a timely and appropriate manner to ensure pupils get the help and support they need.
14. Leaders monitor attendance closely to ensure the correct codes are used on daily registers and all absences are followed up promptly. Leaders provide additional support, as required, to enable all pupils to maintain appropriate levels of attendance. They inform the relevant local authority about pupils who join and leave at non-standard transition points, in accordance with statutory requirements.
15. Staff teach pupils in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons how to stay safe online and when out in public areas. Leaders fulfil their statutory responsibilities regarding the filtering and monitoring of the school's internet and regular testing of these arrangements.
16. Governors maintain rigorous oversight of safeguarding procedures at the school. Governors with safeguarding responsibilities visit the school regularly to meet pupils and staff, including the safeguarding team, check safeguarding documentation and ensure school practices reflect statutory guidance and that pupils' needs are suitably supported. The governing board conducts an annual review of the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures and gives formal approval of the safeguarding policy which is updated each summer to take account of any statutory changes.
17. Governors ensure that leaders draw up and implement effectively a suitable health and safety policy which complies with the relevant health and safety laws. Health and safety checks are conducted regularly and are systematically recorded.
18. Leaders have drawn up a suitable fire risk policy. An appropriately qualified independent professional conducts a fire risk assessment of the premises and any recommendations are implemented in a timely manner. Fire safety equipment is properly maintained and termly fire drills carried out and recorded, including the during the night in the boarding house.
19. Leaders now ensure that pupils are suitably supervised. A change in school rules means only sixth form pupils are now allowed to visit the city centre during lunch breaks and they are required to sign out and sign in. Risk assessments relating to supervision are in place and appropriately implemented. Staff supervision at key points has been strengthened and they conduct spot checks of the pupils in

the city centre. Governors carry out unannounced visits to the school to check the effectiveness of these supervision arrangements. As a result of these actions, suitable risk assessments and supervision arrangements are now in place.

20. The school meets the Standards and 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, 20 and 21; NMS 19

21. Leaders ensure a rigorous, effective approach to the recruitment of staff. All mandatory pre-employment checks, including for boarding staff, are completed before any adult begins work or volunteers at the school. An appropriate single record of appointments is accurately maintained and the necessary documentary support is held in suitably organised personnel files.
22. 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, 29 and 30; NMS 4

23. Leaders ensure that suitable toilet, changing and shower facilities are provided and that appropriate accommodation is available for pupils' medical and therapy needs. Acoustics, lighting and water provision are appropriate. There is suitable external space for pupils' physical education and recreational play.
24. Good quality, comfortable and homely accommodation is provided in the boarding house. Pupils can personalise their rooms and have use of a well-equipped kitchen in which to prepare snacks and drinks. In the evenings and at weekends, they can meet in the common room to watch television, relax and socialise. Leaders ensure that recreational trips are provided during weekends.
25. 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)

26. The particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils are published on the school's website and are available to parents.
27. 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 paragraphs 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c); NMS 2

28. Governors and school leaders promptly implemented their action plan follow the previous inspection. Leaders, including those with specific responsibility for safeguarding, now demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the Standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted.
29. The governing body of Hereford Cathedral School is already responsible for Hereford Cathedral Junior School. It ensures that leaders in the two schools are working collaboratively and effectively

to promote the wellbeing of pupils across the 3 to 18 age range. Governors and leaders have carefully considered the implications and consequences of merging the two schools and have planned accordingly to ensure that the Standards are consistently met.

30. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Hereford Cathedral School
Department for Education number	884/6004
Registered charity number	518889
Address	Hereford Cathedral School Old Deanery The Cathedral Close Hereford Herefordshire HR1 2NG
Phone number	01432 363522
Email address	hmpa@herefordcs.com
Website	www.herefordcs.com
Proprietor	Hereford Cathedral School Governors
Chair	Mr Christian Jones
Headteacher	Dr Michael Gray
Age range	11 to 19
Number of pupils	566
Number of boarding pupils	33
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 April 2024

Information about the school

32. Hereford Cathedral School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 11 to 19. It is located in the cathedral city of Hereford in Herefordshire. The school is overseen by a board of governors who are also responsible for Hereford Cathedral Junior School. The schools share some facilities, including the dining hall and music school.
33. There are 33 boarding pupils aged 13 to 19 who are accommodated in one co-educational boarding house which is a little more than nine miles from the school.
34. The school has identified 125 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. None of the pupils in the school has an education, health and care plan.
35. The school has identified 34 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
36. The school states that its aims are to develop the moral character and leadership qualities of their pupils and provide them with the best academic outcomes so that they are equipped for the world beyond school.

Purpose of the material change and progress monitoring inspection

This was a progress monitoring inspection carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, combined with a material change inspection. Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the DfE to make a material change to the school's provision.

The purpose of this inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the Independent School Standards and National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other Standards that were unmet at the school's previous inspection, and to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the independent school Standards if the material change the school has requested is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

25 March 2025

37. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for one day.

38. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the school site to inspect the premises and accommodation
- discussions with the chair of governors and members of the governing body
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils and staff
- a visit to the boarding house accompanied by staff.

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

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

For more information, please visit isi.net