

# School inspection report

14 to 16 January 2025

## **Brooke House College**

12 Leicester Road  
Market Harborough  
Leicestershire  
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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'.

## Contents

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS .....	4
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	6
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	8
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	10
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	12
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	13
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders work effectively together towards achieving their common aim, to educate pupils so that they make the most of their abilities. They help pupils to develop the skills and knowledge they need to make a valuable contribution to society. Leaders give pupils' welfare a high priority and meet their needs well.
2. The proprietor and the advisory board have effective oversight of the school. They visit regularly, undertake termly audits of health, safety and welfare and regularly check on pupils' academic progress. The proprietor and advisory board provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge. This helps them ensure that the Standards are met consistently.
3. The football academy is well managed. It is successful in developing well-rounded young football players who are prepared well for a life as a professional player or in a football-related career. Leaders ensure that pupils develop their football skills to a high level in line with the school's aims.
4. Boarding is at the heart of the school. The boarding houses are suitable and well maintained. Pupils are given opportunities to make decisions about the provision and are encouraged to become independent. This enhances the development of pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence.
5. Teachers know their pupils well. They have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teachers plan learning that takes account of pupils' needs, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
6. Pupils are taught the importance of respect, tolerance and inclusion. These values are routinely seen in pupils' relationships with each other and with the teaching staff. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum teaches pupils about a wide range of important aspects of life and helps them to learn how to be responsible citizens.
7. The school provides a programme of extra-curricular activities for pupils. However, the range of activities offered is narrow and mainly based around sport. As a result, opportunities for pupils to develop skills and interests in a wider range of areas are limited.
8. There are few opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in the school. This limits the development of pupils' leadership skills.
9. Safeguarding is given a high priority in the school and arrangements are robust. Those with responsibilities in this area are experienced and well trained. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns they may have will be taken seriously.
10. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education, training or employment. The careers programme is tailored to pupils' individual needs and they are given suitable advice and support.

## 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:

- further develop the range of extra-curricular activities offered, so that pupils have a wider choice available to them beyond sport, in order for pupils to broaden their skills and interests
- offer pupils more opportunities to take on responsibility in order to develop their leadership skills.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Leaders, including those responsible for boarding, work effectively together. They are suitably trained, knowledgeable and fulfil their roles effectively. Leaders actively promote pupils' wellbeing and inspire them to reach their full potential in all areas of school life. The school is involved in educational research regarding the links between sport and academic progress.
12. Management of the boarding provision is effective. Leaders are experienced and well qualified. They work together to provide a supportive environment where pupils thrive. Pupils are encouraged to contribute ideas for further development of the boarding provision and to develop their independence within a supportive environment.
13. The proprietor and the advisory board oversee the school effectively. They advise and challenge leaders, ensuring they have good skills and knowledge to undertake their roles. They visit the school regularly and carry out termly audits of all aspects of the school's provision. The advisory board seeks advice from outside agencies, when required, to ensure that the Standards are met consistently.
14. The school has a rigorous self-evaluation programme. Leaders regularly check the quality of provision in all areas of the school, including the impact on pupils' academic outcomes. They use this information to create a well-focused improvement plan. The plan is implemented fully and reviewed by the advisory board regularly.
15. Those with responsibility for risk assessment are fully trained. They have the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to carry out their responsibilities. Leaders identify risks thoroughly, including those that are not immediately obvious, and put appropriate measures in place to mitigate them. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly to check that they remain appropriate and to make changes, where necessary.
16. The required information is provided for parents and prospective parents on the school's website and is available in hard copy on request. The school provides parents with weekly, termly and annual reports about their children's progress and attainment, including target grades and advice on further improvement. The school provides a full report and all required information to the local authority for pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, including the use of funds.
17. The complaints policy is appropriate and implemented effectively. Complaints are handled sensitively and considered in a timely manner. Leaders keep detailed records of complaints including actions taken, outcomes and lessons learned. The complaints log is regularly analysed for any trends that may need addressing and for complaints relating to specific groups, such as boarding pupils.
18. The school fulfils of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The importance of tolerance and respect for all, regardless of differences, is promoted in all lessons and activities. Leaders monitor the curriculum, schemes of work and delivery of lessons to ensure that teaching does not discriminate. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place which is focused on improving access for those who have disabilities.

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

**19. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. Pupils benefit from an appropriate, well-planned and suitably balanced curriculum that is modified for individual pupils. The curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work that take into account pupils' needs. It covers an appropriate range of subjects including English, mathematics, science, Spanish, history and computing. Leaders regularly review the curriculum and make changes to improve it. For example, this year a new course named 'global perspectives' has been introduced in Years 7 to 9, and this year at GCSE level, to deliver historical, geographical, artistic, economic and social knowledge along with a focus on sustainability.
21. The choice of GCSE subjects is similarly broad, with additional subjects such as psychology and business studies also available. A-level subjects are offered on an individual and small-group basis, depending on demand. The school offers online provision for pupils who are unable to attend school and for international pupils who wish to study GCSEs or A levels. Pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
22. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Lessons are well planned and consider pupils' needs, based on their prior attainment. Teachers support pupils well and provide them with appropriate activities. Pupils are suitably stretched and challenged in lessons.
23. Teachers use a variety of suitable resources and technology both during in-person and online lessons. Pupils are attentive, motivated and well behaved in class, taking part in activities with enthusiasm. Each pupil has a personal mentor who oversees their academic and personal development. They provide encouragement and support to ensure that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.
24. Leaders check pupils' progress using standardised tests. They set targets for pupils and put support in place, as required, to ensure pupils achieve well. Teachers use this assessment information to adapt teaching, planning and resources, as appropriate, to meet individual pupils' needs. Pupils receive individualised feedback from their teachers about their work. They find this useful and value the help it gives them to develop their understanding and improve their work.
25. The school has a well-managed and effective strategy to support those who speak English as an additional language. The EAL department provides a variety of courses that are tailored to support individual pupils' academic and social development. For example, some pupils attend an immersive English course before joining the main curriculum. Pupils make good progress and quickly catch up with the academic programmes of study.
26. Provision for pupils who have SEND is also effective. Pupils have an individual education plan that details what their needs are and how they can best be met. The plans are shared with teaching staff who use them effectively when planning and delivering lessons. Pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.
27. Pupils in boarding have daily supervised homework sessions. They are well supported during these sessions by both boarding and academic staff. Pupils are given suitable spaces to study and do their homework, where they are able to concentrate without interruption. After-school and evening activities for boarders are organised in the houses during the week. At weekends there are organised trips and activities for all boarders.

28. The school is part of a programme that focuses on encouraging pupils to develop their skills and interests through a variety of opportunities to undertake independent learning. The programme starts in Year 9 with the 'global perspectives' course, where pupils develop their research skills. Pupils in Year 12 deepen their research skills through undertaking an extended project qualification (EPQ).
29. The football academy aims to take talented football players and develop their skills through a vocational programme that runs in addition to the pupils' academic studies. The facility is run by professional coaches who provide specific football training alongside a broader programme of development including gym, yoga, nutrition and psychology. This helps pupils to develop physically and emotionally. Pupils in the academy are fully integrated into the school and all pupils benefit from a programme of physical training, which develops not only their physical fitness but also their skills of concentration and resilience. Pupils develop their understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect through their work in the football academy.
30. The school provides a programme of extra-curricular activities including clubs. This helps pupils to understand their personal strengths and weaknesses and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. However, the range of clubs available to pupils is limited and mainly based around sports. As a result, pupils are given too few opportunities to broaden their interests, recognise their talents and develop their skills in other areas.

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

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



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

32. The curriculum for PSHE is comprehensive and implemented well. The programme of study is detailed and includes current issues in society, such as health issues related to vaping, along with topics such as healthy eating, resilience and the importance of sleep. This programme, along with the strong pastoral focus the school offers, supports pupils to act responsibly and respectfully.
33. The relationship and sex education programme (RSE) is suitable and well planned. It is taught in an age-appropriate way by staff who have received specific training in this area. Pupils and parents are informed of topics in advance and online supporting material is provided. Feedback is sought from parents when planning the delivery of the course.
34. Pupils learn about the importance of diversity, tolerance and inclusion through PSHE, tutorials and assemblies. They are taught about the importance of being respectful to everyone in society regardless of differences such as race, religion and sexual orientation. Pupils develop positive relationships with their peers as well as with staff. This helps to create a calm and inclusive learning environment.
35. Pupils learn about the world's faiths through religious education, PSHE and in assemblies. Religious festivals such as Diwali, Easter and Ramadan are discussed and celebrated. Pupils are provided with opportunities to follow their own beliefs and religious traditions, including when boarding.
36. The physical education (PE) curriculum is designed to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of fitness and a healthy lifestyle. It is delivered by knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well-qualified staff. The programme helps pupils to feel healthy, confident and happy within themselves. Those who are part of the football academy have extra team training, encouraging them to maximise their sporting potential.
37. The school's behaviour policy is clear about standards and expectations. It is applied consistently and fairly throughout the school. Pupils understand the need for rules and sanctions to address unacceptable behaviour. Incidents are dealt with appropriately and detailed records are kept. These are reviewed regularly by leaders in order to identify and address any patterns in behaviour.
38. Bullying is rare. The school's policy is robust, and all incidents are investigated swiftly and thoroughly. Detailed logs are kept so that patterns of incidents can be followed up on. Pupils are well supervised and there is always someone they can speak with, during the day and when boarding.
39. The school has suitable premises and facilities. Classrooms are well resourced and there are specialist rooms for subjects such as art and science. In addition, the school has daily access to extensive high-quality sports facilities, where the football academy is based.
40. A comprehensive induction programme is in place for new boarders. Boarders have good-quality accommodation, medical support and laundry facilities. There is provision for the safe storage of their personal possessions. Good-quality nutritious meals are provided and there is ready access to drinks and snacks.

41. Procedures for admission and attendance are robust and follow statutory guidance. Attendance and admission registers are properly maintained. Absence is followed up and support, both pastoral and academic, is provided to those who are unable to attend through online teaching. The school reports to the local authority any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition times.
42. Health and safety assessments are suitable and thorough. Leaders make regular and appropriate checks, including about fire safety. They take prompt and effective action when any areas of concern are identified. The advisory board carries out regular audits to assure themselves of the effectiveness of arrangements. The premises and accommodation are appropriate and well maintained, providing a conducive environment for both teaching and learning and for boarding.
43. Suitable first aid arrangements are in place. The school medical centre is led and managed by the school nurse. All staff receive regular training in first aid and boarding staff also undertake training in relation to the administration of medicines. The school has appropriate links with local doctors and all boarding pupils are registered with a surgery.

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

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

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

45. Pupils are taught about the importance of including everyone and respecting other people's views and beliefs. They respond positively to leaders' high expectations about how people should be treated. Pupils display sensitivity and understanding towards the needs of others. The school's commitment to inclusion is seen in assemblies, wall displays, academic lessons and PSHE. The 'global perspectives' course encourages pupils to look positively at other people's experiences and characteristics in order to appreciate the positive benefits that an inclusive society can bring.
46. Pupils are prepared well for the next phase of their lives. The careers programme follows the Gatsby benchmarks and is provided through an online package and mentoring sessions. It enables pupils to be prepared not only for the next stage of their educational journey but to emerge as rounded individuals who can make a positive contribution to the world beyond the school. Many pupils have ambitions for a career in football. Extensive links have been developed within the football world to support this, although careers staff also ensure that pupils are prepared for life in other areas. Visits from outside speakers, including from universities and alumni, give pupils an insight into the possibilities available to them.
47. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They understand the need to have rules, be it within a game, in school or in society. They learn that this is to protect everyone's interests and help underpin a peaceful and law-abiding community. Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils learn about rights and responsibilities, British institutions and values such as democracy, law and individual liberty. Real-life issues are addressed, which pupils discuss and debate maturely.
48. Older pupils are expected to set a good example and be supportive of others in the school community. However, there are no specific formal positions of responsibility in the school. This means that pupils have limited opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Pupils are invited to join the school council, and this group meets weekly to discuss life at the school. The school council also leads assemblies about topics such as racism and internet safety. School councillors are provided with guidance and are supported effectively in their roles.
49. Boarders attend a weekly boarders' forum where all matters pertaining to the house are discussed. There is also a daily meeting of all boarders where issues such as timings for breakfast and lunch and the use of the washing machines are discussed. This helps pupils to develop a sense of responsibility in working together for the benefit of all.
50. Staff present a balanced perspective to pupils at all times. Visiting speakers are thoroughly checked to ensure that pupils are not subject to inappropriate material. Schemes of work are updated regularly and reviewed by leaders to ensure that fundamental British values are promoted, where appropriate, in the curriculum.
51. Economic education is taught as part of the 'global perspectives' course and PSHE. Pupils learn about issues such as personal budgeting and managing a bank account. Pupils gain practical experience of budgeting through their involvement in charitable fundraising and in the organisation of events such as the whole-school fashion show.

52. Opportunities such as fundraising allow pupils to enjoy working together towards a common aim. They support local and international charities chosen by pupils and staff. Through activities such as making cakes for a local hospital fundraiser and supporting the local foodbank, pupils make valuable links with the local community. Pupils learn the importance of supporting their community through volunteering as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DoE). Older pupils help at the school's summer football camp, which gives them a sense of responsibility.
53. Through the 'global perspectives' course, pupils learn about the world around them. They develop an understanding of global and local issues such as sustainability. They develop independent learning skills by investigating long- and short-term initiatives to help solve such problems.

### **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. The school has a thorough, whole-school approach to safeguarding. Those with specific responsibilities are given the training, time and recognition required to carry out their duties effectively. Staff training is conducted annually, with regular weekly 'top-ups' to check understanding and ensure knowledge is up to date. Any issues or concerns, no matter how small, are noted quickly and dealt with discreetly.
56. The safeguarding policy reflects local arrangements and statutory guidance. It is reviewed annually and updated as necessary. The designated safeguarding member of the advisory board is in regular contact with the school and is a source of advice and support. The advisory board also undertakes a termly welfare audit and reports its findings to the school. Appropriate advice is sought from external agencies, as necessary. Incidents are reviewed and lessons learned from them. Meticulous records are kept, which are reviewed regularly by staff and the advisory board to identify trends and patterns.
57. Pupils feel safe in school, both physically and emotionally. They are confident that they have a trusted adult to talk to about any problems and that staff respond quickly. Boarders have access to an independent person should they wish to talk about any worries or concerns. Pupils are given information about other sources of advice and have access to an anonymous reporting system.
58. Recruitment procedures are thorough and robust. All necessary pre-employment checks are carried out before new staff are allowed to work in the school. A single central record (SCR) of these checks is well maintained and checked regularly. New staff receive a thorough induction programme when they join the school.
59. The curriculum, particularly through PSHE, computing and PE, is effective in teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about travel safety, particularly when travelling alone. Pupils are also given the skills and knowledge needed to stay safe online. Mobile phone use is restricted during the school day. Boarders have appropriate access to their phones, which is monitored carefully by resident tutors. The school has a suitable filtering and monitoring system in place to ensure pupils do not have access to unsuitable websites. Leaders monitor this carefully including through weekly tests to ensure the system is working properly.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	<b>Brooke House College</b>
<b>Department for Education number</b>	855/6005
<b>Address</b>	Brooke House College 12 Leicester Road Market Harborough Leicestershire LE16 7AU
<b>Phone number</b>	01858 462452
<b>Email address</b>	Principal@brookehouse.com
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.brookehousecollege.co.uk">www.brookehousecollege.co.uk</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Giles Williams
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Giles Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Smith
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 19
<b>Number of pupils</b>	89
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	68
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 April 2023

## Information about the school

61. Brooke House College is a co-educational day and boarding school established in 1967 in Market Harborough, Leicestershire. The college is overseen by an advisory board and is an incorporated limited company with two directors. The college has a football academy, in partnership with a local football club, and a motor sport academy. Pupils from more than fifty countries attend the college. The current principal took up his post in September 2021.
62. The school accommodates 68 boarders aged 11 to 19 years in four single-sex boarding houses on site or in the proximity of the campus.
63. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
64. The school has identified 24 pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
65. The school states its aims are to promote inclusion, diversity and divergent thinking, informed by three values: inspiring with love, encouraging with time and empowering with language. Its purpose and ethos are underpinned by six behaviours enabling every student to be courageous, compassionate, open-minded, resilient, empathetic and honest, whether in the classroom, on the pitch or at the racetrack, maximising performance and progress.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

14 to 16 January 2024

66. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

67. 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 proprietor and members of the advisory board
- 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
- 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.

68. 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](http://www.isi.net)**.

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For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)