ISI Independent Schools Inspectorate

School inspection report

16 to 18 September 2025

Salesian College

119 Reading Road
Farnborough
GU14 6PA

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 and governors promote the school's aims and ethos. The governors visit the school regularly, meeting with leaders, staff and pupils and assuring themselves that the Catholic ethos of the school is upheld. However, leaders do not ensure that all the Standards are met.

2. Leaders do not ensure that policies and practices around safeguarding and attendance fulfil statutory requirements. Staff do not have secure knowledge of systems within school to deal with low level concerns about adults working in school.

3. At the beginning of the inspection, leaders had not ensured that all previous inspection reports were published on the school's website. This was rectified before the end of the on-site inspection.

4. Leaders review the effectiveness of teaching and learning to support further improvements for pupils. They carry out lesson observations and reviews of assessment and marking to ensure that teachers are delivering the curriculum effectively. Leaders use this information to inform training and development needs for teachers.

5. Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills across a wide range of academic subjects. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress.

6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported to access the curriculum effectively and make good progress.

7. Pupils achieve well at all stages of their education. Pupils achieve above national averages at both GCSE and A level. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points. Individual support is given to pupils who have SEND. Teaching is effective and well planned.

8. Leaders ensure that the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme is effective. There is an appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum which covers all statutory content. Pupils develop their own spirituality in line with the school's ethos. Pupils are taught to be respectful of other faiths, and to appreciate diversity, both within and beyond the school.

9. Leaders effectively promote pupils' understanding of society and citizenship. They teach pupils how democracy works at both the local and national level. Pupils throughout the school develop their economic understanding. Pupils undertake activities that benefit the school and local communities, such as supporting pilgrims during trips to Lourdes.

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The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not all 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 not all met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are not all 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:

- systems are in place to ensure that the local authority is informed when pupils leave the school at non-standard times
- safeguarding records are kept in accordance with current statutory guidance
- leaders and staff understand their respective responsibilities to record and report low-level concerns
- policies relating to safeguarding and attendance adhere to current statutory guidance.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that the school's website is updated with previous inspection reports in a timely manner.

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Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders and managers ensure that reason, religion and loving kindness are embedded into all aspects of school life so that pupils are confident to explore their spirituality, whether it is Catholic or not.

11. Leaders do not always follow statutory guidance, and governors do not demonstrate satisfactory oversight of policies or procedures to support leaders in their role. Consequently, they have not ensured that the Standards are met. The safeguarding policy does not adhere to current statutory guidance. Leaders do not ensure that referrals to outside agencies are made appropriately and that safeguarding records are kept in line with statutory guidance. Staff do not understand when and how to report any concerns they have about adults effectively.

12. The attendance policy does not adhere to current statutory guidance. Leaders do not ensure that guidance relating to attendance and the reporting of both persistent absence and departures from the school at non-standard transition points is followed.

13. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. They make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils who have SEND can fully access the curriculum. A suitable three-year accessibility plan is in place and is updated annually. Information concerning pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) is provided to the local authority as required.

14. Leaders and managers ensure that there is a thorough approach to the curriculum and assessment of pupils. Leaders ensure that heads of department review data and identify individuals who might need adaptations and accommodations to support their progress. Likewise, pastoral leaders prioritise pupils' health and wellbeing and provide effective support when necessary, liaising with the school's medical team appropriately.

15. Leaders ensure that appropriate information is provided to parents relating to their child's learning, progress and attainment. Teachers provide parents with regular reports which give them helpful information about their child's academic progress and include guidance as to how their child can take the next steps in their learning.

16. Effective risk assessment supports pupils' safety, security and wellbeing. Leaders have drawn up a suitable risk assessment policy and take appropriate action to ensure it is implemented effectively. Staff complete suitable risk assessment training and understand risks around the school and how to mitigate them. They identify areas and activities associated with potential risk, including off-site sports, and take appropriate action to mitigate potential harm to pupils. As a result, pupils are able to participate in a range of activities, including residential trips, which support their wider education.

17. Leaders encourage pupils to respect one another regardless of race, age, gender, sexuality or disability, engendering an environment where pupils are confident to discover who they are while also respecting the individuality of others.

18. Appropriate policies, including the complaints policy, are made available to parents and relevant external agencies on the school's website. Leaders respond promptly to any complaints or concerns raised and take suitable action. They maintain detailed records of all complaints, both formal and

informal. However, previous inspection reports were not available on the website. This was rectified before the end of the inspection.

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. There is a well-planned and structured curriculum throughout the school, which provides pupils with a wide variety of learning experiences. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 study classics, two modern foreign languages (MFL), four creative subjects, and music technology from Year 8. Pupils studying for GCSE examinations are provided with a broad range of options including humanities, separate sciences, languages, drama and business studies. Choices at A Level include politics, psychology and economics. Departmental leaders have developed, and regularly evaluate, comprehensive schemes of work that include the consideration of ways in which to promote British values, such as those of tolerance and individual liberty, within each subject.

21. Teachers are knowledgeable and utilise effective resources in the classroom to promote learning. They are adept at building on previous work to improve pupils' understanding, for instance, when inviting pupils to censor their own work to aid understanding of the role of censorship in history. They make links between subjects and encourage pupils to gain practical experience alongside theory. A trip to a local tropical house for Year 8, for example, helped pupils to see the growth cycle of rainforest plants which they were studying. Teachers encourage collaboration and discussion among pupils in their lessons so that pupils can develop their thinking and refine any opinions they have. Consequently, pupils are interested and engaged in their learning.

22. Leaders ensure that feedback is effective so that pupils understand how to improve their work. Teachers provide constructive and regular feedback to support pupils' progress.

23. Well-planned assessment strategies are in place. Using information about pupils' starting points and regular assessments, departmental leaders carefully track pupils' progress in each subject. They put strategies in place to support pupils as necessary and a well-established programme provides extension activities for pupils with higher prior attainment. As a result, pupils perform broadly in line with expectations in their examinations at GCSE and A Level.

24. Leaders with responsibility for pupils who have SEND scrutinise pupils' profiles carefully on entry and ensure that appropriate targeted support is in place. Leaders supply specific advice to teachers, who adapt their teaching effectively and use learning support assistants in classrooms as necessary. Pupils can attend the learning support centre in their breaks and at lunchtimes to access further support in a friendly and calm environment. As a result, most pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.

25. A small number of pupils who speak EAL require additional support in the development of their linguistic skills. Early assessment enables staff to identify their needs in reading, writing and general communication. Effective use of suitable resources and assistance with some specific vocabulary ensures that these pupils acquire the required linguistic skills to access the curriculum successfully and make good progress from their starting points.

26. Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to enjoy so that they learn new skills and develop new interests. These include creative opportunities such as orchestra, choir and drama club, sporting activities and academic societies, as well as public speaking and debating. In addition, pupils in the sixth form can participate in the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), sports leaders awards and the CAFOD leadership programme, which provide them with skills for life.

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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. School leaders consistently emphasise the school's key values. They encourage pupils to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem as pupils learn to appreciate each other's differences and similarities. The curriculum supports this understanding. For instance, in PSHE pupils learn about tolerance and the importance of treating each other fairly. The RSE programme is well planned and delivers appropriate guidance to pupils while also reflecting the school's Catholic principles. It is regularly reviewed and adapted in consultation with parents and pupils.

29. Leaders have not ensured that the admission and attendance registers are maintained as required by statutory guidance. Leaders have not provided the local authority with information regarding any pupils who leave the school at non-standard transition points, and arrangements for reporting persistent absence from school do not meet statutory requirements

30. Leaders prioritise pupils' spiritual development in line with the school's Catholic ethos and ensure that pupils gain an understanding of the ways in which different faith traditions approach spirituality. They consistently demonstrate an open and welcoming approach to pupils of different faiths or none, for instance by providing a multi-faith room for pupils to use.

31. Leaders have devised a mental health policy for pupils which is effectively implemented across the whole school. Strategies to promote mental health are taught in PSHE across each year group, and this is supported by a number of whole-school initiatives. For instance, pupils in Year 12 who choose to become peer mentors receive specialist 'young leaders' training. The well-equipped and staffed learning support centre provides a safe and calm space for any pupil who needs support for their mental health.

32. Pupils typically behave well in the school's wider environment, where staff supervision is friendly and vigilant. Leaders deploy staff effectively during breaktimes and extra-curricular activities to support pupils' recreation. Staff manage behaviour calmly and consistently, using non-verbal cues as well as verbal instructions when necessary. They consistently praise pupils for good manners, independence and maturity as they challenge one another's ideas through respectful dialogue. Bullying is rare, and when it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and appropriately.

33. The school emphasises the importance of physical education (PE) as a means to help pupils become physically and mentally healthy. There is a suitable curriculum for PE which is taught effectively by skilled staff. Teaching balances the value of participation and the acquisition of advanced skills to the benefit of the pupils. Pupils are awarded 'colours' if they represent the school in a team and 'activity marks' for taking part as an encouragement to get involved. Pupils have access to a wide variety of sports, including table tennis, football and netball, in which they receive effective coaching.

34. Leaders, supported by governors and specialist expertise, ensure that the school is well maintained and provides a secure and suitable environment to promote learning. All health and safety checks, including those relating to fire safety, are effectively implemented. Regular fire evacuation and lockdown drills ensure that pupils know how to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency.

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35. Leaders support pupils' medical needs through the provision of well-trained staff, suitable accommodation and the safe storage of any medicines. Pupils who are injured or unwell benefit from appropriate first aid and medication provided by staff suitably qualified in first aid.

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

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

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

37. Leaders embed the teaching of fundamental British values across all subjects and year groups in the school. Tutors reinforce these in their PSHE sessions with their tutor groups. As a result, pupils of all ages acquire different perspectives on democracy, constitutional law and government decisions. Democratic values are reinforced, and pupils learn to understand how the law, crime and punishment are related. Older pupils explore the role of Westminster and devolved government, understanding how legislation varies across the United Kingdom. Through understanding the rule of law as it applies to school life, pupils develop an appreciation of life in wider British society and an awareness that laws are made to protect the population.

38. Pupils develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong, grounded in the school's Catholic ethos and its vision to create a caring Christian community. Pupils demonstrate high levels of acceptance of each other's differences including those related to gender, race, age, sexuality and disability. Leaders help pupils to appreciate the diversity of the school community and value inclusivity.

39. Pupils in the senior school are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities. Some pupils in the sixth form exercise leadership within the CAFOD charity, implementing initiatives such as that for the school's jubilee and regularly raising money for the international community. Leaders actively promote opportunities that enable pupils to show initiative and contribute to the lives of those locally and in wider society through an extensive charitable activities programme.

40. Leaders have developed a broad, well-planned and impartial careers programme which equips pupils with the tools and knowledge required to make informed decisions about their next steps in life. Younger pupils learn about employability skills and ethical business practices while also receiving age-appropriate careers advice through events such as assemblies, workshops and talks by parents and alumni. Leaders support all pupils with their choices throughout their school life. Close liaison between the relevant academic and pastoral leaders enables pupils to access information and experiences relating to a wide range of possible careers and other opportunities after they leave the school.

41. Younger pupils learn about finance within the PSHE programme, which includes topics such as budgeting, borrowing, saving and making financial choices. In economics, pupils in the sixth form discuss the costs and benefits of taking out a financial arrangement as opposed to paying in cash. Extension lessons for the sixth form include the option to study financial literacy further, equipping pupils appropriately for the future.

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

42. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

43. Leaders do not ensure that arrangements in place to support the safeguarding of pupils fulfil statutory guidance. The school's safeguarding policy was out of date at the beginning of the inspection. The policy does not fully reflect current statutory guidance; it does not include arrangements for low-level concerns or checks on visiting speakers.

44. Leaders and managers do not take a consistent approach to recording and cataloguing safeguarding concerns in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders and staff do not display clear understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern about an adult in the school community and leaders do not keep a clear record of low-level concerns raised.

45. Leaders have worked with local authority agencies to review safeguarding processes and procedures. However, leaders have failed to report matters of concern to the local authority in a timely manner.

46. Staff receive safeguarding training on induction and thereafter annually from the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). They prioritise the wellbeing of pupils in their care and understand how to report any concerns they have about pupils. Suitable risk assessments are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable pupils.

47. Pupils understand how to report any concerns they have and are confident that appropriate action will be taken should they do so.

48. A thorough recruitment process is in place. All new staff and other adults are appropriately checked before they commence employment or engage with pupils, and records are carefully maintained in the single central record (SCR) of appointments.

49. Leaders ensure that online safety is taught across all age groups both within the PSHE programme and in computing lessons. The programme includes advice for pupils about online behaviour within and beyond school, alongside wider issues affecting pupils' wellbeing. Leaders have implemented effective internet monitoring and filtering systems which safeguard online activities in the school. These systems are regularly tested.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

50. 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[1] 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 well-being of pupils.

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

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

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

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.

[1] The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('ISSR')

School details

School	Salesian College
Department for Education number	850/6022
Registered charity number	1130166
Address	Salesian College 119 Reading Rd Farnborough GU14 6PA
Phone number	01252 893000
Email address	office@salesiancollege.com
Website	www.salesiancollege.com
Proprietor	Salesian College, Farnborough Ltd
Chair	Mr Mirek Gliniecki
Headteacher	Mr Gerard Owens
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	528
Date of previous inspection	15 to 17 November 2022

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Information about the school

51. Salesian College is an independent day school for male pupils aged 11 to 16 and for male and female pupils aged 16 to 18. The school is a charitable trust. The governing body is appointed by the Provincial Council of the Province of Salesians of Don Bosco. Members of the governing body are trustees and directors of Salesian College.

52. The school has identified 74 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).

53. The school has identified English as an additional language (EAL) for 38 pupils.

54. The school states its aims are to be a Catholic, Salesian school, inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the educational charism of St John Bosco. The school aspires to educate all through reason, religion and loving kindness, providing a home, a school, a church and a playground where lifelong friendships are formed and all can flourish as they realise their God-given potential. The school aims to send out into the world happy and confident young people as witnesses to the Gospel who have an active concern for social justice.

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Inspection details

Inspection dates	16 to 18 September 2025

55. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The on-site inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

56. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods
- 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
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

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

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