

School inspection report

14 to 16 October 2025

Marymount International School

George Road

Kingston Upon Thames

Surrey

KT2 7PE

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. Governors and leaders understand and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Leaders have the skills and knowledge they need to draw up appropriate policies and procedures so that the Standards are met. They monitor the implementation of policies rigorously and ensure that the school's ethos and values are actively promoted in all aspects of school life.
2. The curriculum provides pupils with a broad experience of all the required areas within the framework of the International Baccalaureate (IB). Leaders provide a range of academic pathways that ensures the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are met. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are given appropriate support to develop their fluency and confidence in English.
3. Teachers are confident practitioners who prepare lessons well. Most use effective questioning techniques and provide useful feedback to support pupils, although this is not always the case. Pupils are ambitious, focused and eager learners who develop positive study skills that support their learning. Pupils make good progress.
4. The clarity with which leaders promote the school's values and ethos means that pupils develop a deep-rooted understanding of the importance of respect and consideration for all, irrespective of difference. Being part of this supportive, respectful community helps pupils to grow in self-knowledge and self-confidence. Pupils' physical and mental health and wellbeing are further supported by the well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes.
5. Pupils are respectful of the school's expectations of their behaviour. In their dealings with each other, they are consistently kind and supportive, creating a friendly and happy school environment. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable. Should tensions in friendships arise, teachers deal with them swiftly and appropriately.
6. All requirements for health and safety are met. The grounds, teaching accommodation and boarding houses are well maintained and welcoming. They provide a secure and pleasant environment in which to live and learn.
7. The school's ethos and curriculum give prominence to matters of equality and diversity. Leaders actively encourage celebration of the diversity of the school community and discussion of matters relating to social justice. Pupils know that their actions can make a difference both within school and in the wider world.
8. The careers programme is effective in developing pupils' understanding of employability skills but currently provides them with limited insight into the range of further education or work opportunities available to them.
9. Governors and staff are well trained in safeguarding, so that measures to promote pupils' safety and wellbeing are effective. Leaders ensure that recruitment processes are carefully followed, and that all required checks are completed, with the results entered on a single central record of appointments (SCR), before individuals are allowed to start work at the school.

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:

- ensure that teachers' questioning and written feedback is of consistently high quality, so that pupils are challenged and encouraged to think rigorously, so that they make consistently good progress
- further develop the careers programme to provide pupils with comprehensive information on the range of options and careers they may consider for their futures.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors understand their responsibilities and are active in discharging them. They visit the school frequently, using the opportunity to gather first-hand information through discussions with pupils and staff. Leaders provide them with regular and informative reports, providing clear evidence to support proposals. This helps governors to be confident that school leaders have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities and to ensure that the Standards are consistently met.
11. Leaders' strategic planning is well embedded, drawing on the range of information gathered in their self-review documentation. Their decision-making is underpinned by the school's ethos, faith foundation and values, which align with the stated aims of the Global Network of Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) schools. Leaders publish these aims widely for parents and ensure that pupils understand how they are reflected in their everyday activities within and beyond the classroom.
12. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the potential risks to pupils in the school. They maintain effective procedures to minimise risk, such as those presented by fire, and undertake regular checks of the safety of the school site. Staff are trained well and draw up thorough risk assessments to ensure that pupils' physical safety and overall wellbeing are protected, including on educational visits. Governors give careful consideration to the potential risks associated with the school development plan, such as when reviewing the school's educational provision.
13. Leaders draw up suitable policies and procedures which pay due regard to statutory guidance. Staff understand these and make sure they are effectively implemented to promote pupils' wellbeing in all areas of school life. There are well-understood systems for recording and monitoring pastoral issues so that swift and appropriate action is taken when concerns arise. Leaders liaise with outside agencies such as social services, as needed, to ensure that appropriate support for pupils is in place.
14. Leaders ensure that the boarding provision meets all the requirements of the boarding standards. Boarding staff are well trained and create a positive, welcoming environment in the boarding house.
15. Leaders consistently emphasise kindness, respect and support for everyone, as core values of the school. This results in a harmonious and welcoming school community in which diversity is valued and discrimination of any sort is seen as unacceptable. A suitable accessibility plan is in place, with careful consideration given to improving access to all elements of school life. Prompt action has been taken to improve access to the curriculum for pupils with physical disabilities. The school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.
16. All required information is available to parents on the school's website and from the school office. There is a suitable policy for parents to make complaints and clear procedures for boarding pupils to raise any concerns. Leaders follow the policies and procedures meticulously when complaints arise.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. The curriculum of the IB is broad, so that all pupils study a wide range of subjects. All pupils in Years 7 to 11 follow the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), which includes and extends beyond the subjects required by the Standards. Pupils in the sixth form may choose to work for the full IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) or to select the IB courses that fit their own abilities and interests. The provision of school-specific high-school diploma courses alongside the IB courses provides flexibility and enables pupils to follow the educational pathway that is best suited to their own needs and ambitions. Each of the school's academic pathways enables pupils to achieve the qualifications needed to meet their aspirations.
19. Leaders encourage pupils to develop their literacy skills in their first language as well as in English. Pupils' confidence in their oral skills grows through making presentations or leading activities, and they become self-assured, articulate speakers as a result. Pupils develop advanced mathematical skills because they are exposed to complex mathematical concepts which they use across their learning, for example in analysing statistics in science subjects. Pupils study geographical and social developments across the world and over time, developing a thoughtful understanding of the forces that have shaped modern society. Pupils' creative skills are well developed. They reach high standards in dance, music and theatrical performance. Pupils' imagination and skill in using a range of media can be seen in their artwork.
20. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are skilful in ensuring that there is no discrimination in lessons and that all pupils are encouraged to participate, drawing on their own cultural backgrounds and experiences as appropriate. Lessons are planned well with a range of activities and effective use of quality resources that keep pupils engaged and interested in their learning. Teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour, so that the atmosphere is conducive to learning. In most lessons, teachers ask probing questions that encourage pupils to develop their thinking and confidence in their own opinions. Teachers generally provide written and verbal feedback that is analytical and supportive. Pupils make effective use of this feedback to improve their work. However, on occasion, questions are closed or are less probing and feedback is imprecise, and pupils' learning is less well supported as a result.
21. Leaders make effective use of a range of data to assess pupils' progress throughout their time at the school. This information is shared with parents through regular reports and parents' evenings. Senior leaders monitor data carefully to identify any emerging concerns. They take swift action to support individuals who are starting to encounter difficulties. Pupils make good progress over time and are able to achieve well in their chosen pathways. Pupils consistently attain scores in the IB diploma that are above the global average. They go on to follow degree courses at prestigious universities across the world.
22. Leaders identify any learning needs swiftly when pupils join the school. Teachers' planning includes specific strategies to support pupils who have SEND. Teachers make effective use of the individualised action plans provided by the learning support department. They ensure that when a task is set, guidelines are provided that make the task accessible to all, such as identifying clear and sequenced steps for pupils to follow. Teachers give particular attention to meeting the needs of pupils who have SEND, supporting them effectively so that they make consistent progress from their starting points.

23. Leaders identify the individual needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils who are less confident in their understanding of English are given well-tailored support by specialist teachers. Leaders ensure that they are placed in English classes appropriate to their levels of proficiency, so that their vocabulary and fluency can develop swiftly. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.
24. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning and pupils respond positively, showing initiative and well-developed organisational skills. Boarders make sensible use of the organised study sessions in the evenings to manage their workload. Pupils are self-motivated and academically ambitious. In lessons they are focused and collaborative, providing useful and perceptive comments to classmates to help them improve their work. They undertake research with assurance and cite sources correctly, using their study skills effectively to deepen their learning. They are well prepared for the challenges of studying at university.
25. Leaders maintain a programme of extra-curricular activities that includes musical activities, use of the gym, and clubs focused on charitable activities. A range of different activities are available to boarders in the evening and at weekends, and as a result, their boarding experience is enjoyable and rewarding.

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

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

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

27. Leaders and teachers are committed to ensuring that the school's ethos permeates all aspects of school life and actively promotes pupils' wellbeing. Leaders frequently link activities to the school's values of compassion, kindness and commitment to service. As a result, pupils develop a deep-rooted understanding of these and of the school's focus on the inherent value of every individual regardless of differences such as physical abilities or racial background.
28. The house structure and boarding arrangements help pupils to integrate quickly and to feel part of a happy and welcoming community in which they know they are respected and that their mental wellbeing matters to school leaders. Leaders' success in creating a community in which everyone's personal dignity and worth is recognised supports pupils' developing self-knowledge and self-confidence.
29. Pupils develop their awareness of spiritual and non-material values through their everyday experiences in the school. House meetings and assemblies provide opportunities for quiet personal reflection and allow for exploration of the values that are shared by different cultures. They provide opportunities for pupils to express gratitude for the small joys of daily life, for example by creating exuberant rap songs or writing messages on paper hearts to display around the school. Pupils develop an appreciation of the common moral truths that are shared by all, irrespective of faith. This is evident in their classroom discussions, where pupils' comments also demonstrate a willingness to challenge behaviours that do not live up to those moral codes.
30. Leaders set clear behavioural expectations which focus on encouraging positive conduct. Pupils understand these expectations and live up to them. Their interactions with each other are characterised by kindness, mutual trust and respect. Incidents of poor behaviour are few and are managed by staff in line with school policy. Pupils are unanimous in stating that bullying is unacceptable and contrary to the school's values. Staff are alert to any emerging signs of friendship tensions and, should these happen, step in quickly to help pupils resolve them.
31. The PSHE programme is carefully planned to help pupils develop an understanding of themselves and others. Pupils learn about the importance of caring for their physical and mental wellbeing, for example in discussions on strategies for coping with pressures and the importance of exercise.
32. The RSE programme provides age-appropriate information and guidance. Teachers help pupils to develop their understanding of matters such as healthy relationships, contraception, consent and how to take care of their sexual health. Pupils learn about the risks of alcohol or drug misuse and appreciate the practical advice given on how to take care of themselves and their friends in situations where this might occur.
33. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for physical activities in the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities. These include yoga, football, volleyball, tennis and athletics. In addition, boarders are able to access sports facilities in the evenings and at weekends. Pupils are enthusiastic about these opportunities and use them well to support their physical and mental wellbeing. Expert coaching from staff ensures that pupils develop their skills swiftly, alongside their grasp of the strategies needed in team games. Leaders implement a programme that encourages pupils to make their own decisions about which activities to engage in. Pupils respond well to the sense of

autonomy this gives them in managing their physical wellbeing, by making informed choices about their participation in team and individual sports. Pupils' appreciation of the impact of different activities on their wellbeing is evident in their increased use of the gym to build their physical stamina and strength since this approach was adopted.

34. Leaders ensure there are appropriate numbers of staff on duty during breaks in lesson times. The boarding houses are appropriately staffed and there are always houseparents sleeping in the boarding houses overnight, easily accessible to boarders. Admission and attendance procedures are well managed. Any absences are followed up promptly and the local authority is informed of any pupils who leave or join the school outside normal transition times.
35. Systems for oversight of all matters of health and safety are robust and records of all required checks are thorough. Leaders ensure that fire prevention measures for all the buildings are rigorously enforced; this includes regular fire drills, including during the night for boarders. Suitable numbers of staff are trained in first aid and there is comfortable provision for a sick or injured boarder to be cared for in the house.
36. Boarding accommodation is suitable, with décor and furnishing creating a welcoming space for boarders. Boarding houses are clean, warm, comfortable and well maintained. They provide a secure space in which boarders can study or relax in the evenings.

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

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

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

38. Leaders consistently emphasise the inherent worth of all and the consequent importance of social justice and respect. Pupils develop a mature awareness of how they can promote inclusion and diversity within their school through pupil-led activities which include events to mark Black History Month. They learn about matters such as global wealth distribution and child labour exploitation in the fashion industry through discussions in lessons and in the Model United Nations society. Leaders help pupils to use their understanding of such issues to reflect on their own behaviour; in response, pupils suggest what practical actions they can take, for example tackling litter or buying clothes that are recycled rather than new.
39. The curriculum helps pupils to understand how individuals' behaviour affects wider society, for example in topics that look at the positive and negative impacts of tourism or of industrialisation on a country. Teachers encourage thoughtful debate amongst pupils about issues such as the global impact of climate change. When political matters are raised, leaders are careful to ensure there is balanced presentation of the issues discussed.
40. Pupils learn in PSHE lessons about the political and legal structures of Britain and their importance within a fair and democratic society. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and the importance of respecting the law in any society across the world. They experience the importance of democracy when voting for leaders of a range of committees, including the pupil council. The latter meets regularly with school leaders, who take careful account of pupils' views on how to improve their daily lives.
41. Leaders promote the school's ethos of 'unity through diversity' by actively celebrating the range of nationalities and faiths within the school. Pupils share their cultural traditions, arts and national dress during the annual 'international day' and in everyday opportunities such as house meetings and assemblies. As a result, pupils understand and respect the differences to be found within cultural traditions as well as their similarities, such as the way in which food is used in celebrations of all cultures.
42. Pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility towards others. In boarding house 'families', older pupils support their juniors and sixth-form pupils help house staff in running evening routines. Pupils are keen to take part in the range of school societies and initiatives. These include an international group that meets with pupils from other RSHM schools across the world to explore and share their various pupil-led initiatives.
43. Leaders encourage pupils' engagement in charitable activities and outreach activities, including through the IB curriculum, which requires elements of service. Some of these are international, for example supporting a school in Zambia. Leaders also encourage pupils to work in the local community. Pupils are actively involved with a local charity supporting women and children and in running Saturday morning school sessions with children from a local primary school.
44. Pupils develop their financial understanding through a range of activities within the PSHE programme. These help pupils to learn about the importance of matters such as taxation and budgeting. The careers programme begins in Year 7 and provides pupils with a secure grounding in developing employability skills. Pupils gain information about potential careers at the biannual

careers fair. However, the programme provides pupils with limited insight into the range of opportunities available to them for their future working lives. Pupils are confident that they are given good advice about universities but are less sure about other options such as degree apprenticeships or entering employment.

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

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

46. Leaders consistently promote a robust culture of safeguarding. Governors are suitably trained and understand their responsibilities. They offer appropriate challenge and support to school safeguarding leads. Governors conduct a formal annual review of safeguarding within the school, drawing on comprehensive reports provided by school leaders.
47. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained and receive regular training updates. They ensure that all records of safeguarding concerns are thorough, noting actions taken and the rationales for these. All records are stored confidentially.
48. Safeguarding leaders ensure that all staff attend safeguarding training on joining the school and annually thereafter. They provide regular formal and informal updates and use quizzes to check that staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures.
49. Leaders make clear their expectations regarding staff conduct in safeguarding matters. Staff have a confident understanding of these. They know the importance of sharing with safeguarding leads any concerns about behaviour that could be misconstrued. Leaders respond to such concerns promptly and manage them appropriately.
50. Staff know their pupils well and are alert to any indications of concern. They pass these on to the safeguarding team, who take suitable action swiftly. This may include working with the local authorities, including the police, as needed. Leaders check that boarders feel comfortable and secure when staying with their guardians, as a further step in promoting pupils' wellbeing.
51. Leaders implement robust processes to ensure that all required checks are completed before an individual is allowed to start work at school. Governance provides oversight of the recruitment process and of the accuracy of the SCR.
52. There are rigorous systems for internet filtering and monitoring, which ensure that pupils are protected from accessing potentially harmful material when working online. Any concerns raised by internet usage are reported to leaders, and appropriate action is taken as a result.
53. Pupils learn in PSHE lessons about how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They know that they can approach any member of staff to discuss worries about themselves or their friends. They are confident that staff will listen to them and will take action to help them.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Marymount International School
Department for Education number	314/6058
Registered charity number	1117786
Address	Marymount International School George Road Kingston Upon Thames Surrey KT2 7PE
Phone number	020 8949 0571
Email address	reception@marymountlondon.com
Website	www.marymountlondon.com
Proprietor	Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
Chair	Ms Cristina Serrano Saenz de Teja
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Giblin
Age range	11 to 18
Number of pupils	180
Number of boarding pupils	34
Date of previous inspection	8 to 10 November 2022

Information about the school

55. Marymount International School is an independent Catholic boarding and day school for female pupils of all denominations. It is part of the Global Network of Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) schools. The school is a charitable trust, governed by a board of governors made up of members of the RSHM and lay members.
56. There are currently two boarding houses, providing for boarders in Years 7 to 13. Boarding accommodation is in a central position on the school site.
57. The school has identified 36 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
58. The school has identified English as an additional language for 100 pupils.
59. The school states its aims are to educate its pupils to contribute meaningfully as intellectual and compassionate global citizens. It aims for them to become responsible and caring members of their community. The school sets out to teach pupils to think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn continuously in an environment where the diversity of the community is valued.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

14 to 16 October 2025

60. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

61. 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 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.

62. 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**.

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