

Material change inspection report

7 July 2026

St Edmund's College

Old Hall Green

Ware

SG11 1DS

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

Inspection outcome

The school has submitted a material change request to amend its age range from 3 to 19 years to 2 to 19 years.

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 2, 3 and 4

1. Early years leaders provide a well-planned, topic-based curriculum which captures the children's interests. This curriculum ensures clear progression in the pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills. Leaders have adapted this curriculum appropriately in order to meet the needs of two-year-old children. They will develop children's communication and literacy skills and their understanding of the world through study of topics such as important religious and cultural celebrations and festivals and the different seasons.
2. Well-qualified staff plan a range of activities carefully, using suitable resources to support the development of children's communications and numeracy skills and their creative and physical education. Children will learn, for example, to take part in simple team games and how different shapes fit together. Staff take account of different prior attainment and implement suitable strategies to support each child's needs so that children make good progress.
3. Children access a suitable, secure outdoor area with appropriate climbing equipment to build their strength. Play with large toys and trikes supports the development of their gross motor skills. Painting, cutting and sticking, together with sand and water play and access to the role-play theatre, promote their fine motor skills.
4. Early years leaders provide an effective framework to support their assessment of children. In discussion with the parents, they gather information about each child's interests and their dietary and medical needs prior to their joining the school. Staff hold regular progress meetings at which they assess the attainment and development of each child. Staff provide written reports to parents and meet with them termly to discuss their child's academic and social development. Leaders have suitable plans for the progress checks at age two, the outcomes of which will be provided for the parents.
5. Leaders support children in acquiring knowledge about different jobs and careers. Speakers from the police and medical professions, for example, visit the school to tell children in the early years about their work.
6. 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

7. Through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons, religious studies teaching, assemblies, form periods and the wider cultural life of the school, pupils learn the importance of

tolerance and respect for all. Children in the early years celebrate the festivals of major world faiths, including Diwali and Eid, and learn about traditions of different cultures and beliefs.

8. Children learn about the school's Roman Catholic values and ethos. Staff support children's spiritual awareness through chapel services and prayer, appreciation of nature and reflection on the need to care for God's creation.
9. Leaders support children in learning about services and important institutions within British society. Representatives from the armed forces and the fire services talk to children in the early years about their work. Staff provide children in the early years with experience of local community life through visits to local shops, a wildlife park and performances at the local theatre.
10. Staff support children in developing a sense of right and wrong. They agree classroom rules and reflect together when there are any instances of poor behaviour. Teachers discuss cause and effect and teach children to consider the impact of their conduct on others. Pupils learn to co-operate, share and take turns. Staff provide rewards to reinforce good behaviour and help children to regulate their emotions.
11. Leaders have planned a broad social, moral, spiritual and cultural education for children aged two.
12. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a), 7(b), 8(a) and 8(b); NMS 8

13. Leaders implement safeguarding arrangements effectively. They ensure that the safeguarding policy reflects statutory requirements. Suitably trained leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that members of staff receive appropriate training, including at induction. Leaders update this knowledge through regular briefings at staff meetings and use quizzes to confirm staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and procedures. Leaders and staff use their knowledge and understanding to respond promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding team maintains detailed and secure safeguarding records which show the school has responded to concerns that have arisen.
14. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding liaise effectively with external agencies, such as children's services and the police, when appropriate. They make any required referrals to these agencies promptly.
15. Knowledgeable staff implement the staff code of conduct effectively and are alert to incidents regarding the conduct of adults working with pupils, including low-level concerns. Leaders keep suitable records of these concerns and monitor them for any patterns. They act promptly and liaise effectively with the local authority regarding these concerns where required.
16. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe, including when they are online, through PSHE lessons. Leaders implement appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet. They respond promptly to reports of any potentially inappropriate use and review the effectiveness of the internet filtering and monitoring system regularly.
17. Pupils can raise concerns with trusted adults, including the mental health lead, members of the sixth-form team and the independent person available to boarders and know they will be listened to and supported. Prep school pupils can visit a designated drop-in area to share their worries. Staff respond to concerns promptly and supportively so that pupils receive the help and support they need.

18. Governors provide effective oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements. They undertake safeguarding training and review the safeguarding policy at the start of each academic year to ensure that it is updated in line with statutory guidance. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding conduct an annual audit of the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and report to the governing body at its regular meetings. Governors implement a programme of visits to help them understand the results of leaders' decisions. Through these visits and their review of documentation, governors assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements for both day and boarding pupils are implemented effectively.
19. 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)

20. Leaders publish particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils on the school's website.
21. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c) and 34(2)

22. Governors and leaders have prepared carefully for the proposed material change. They have considered the potential impact of amending the age range, including any risks. They have ensured that the early years environment is appropriate and has the necessary resources to support the curriculum, teaching and social, moral, spiritual and cultural education planned for children aged two. Leaders plan to accommodate the two-year-old children in the Nursery which currently has sufficient capacity, both indoors and outdoors, for the planned increase. Leaders also have sufficient numbers of staff to maintain the required adult-to-child ratios and ensure children are always within sight or sound of an adult when two-year-old children join the school. Leaders also have plans to create a separate room for two-year-old children if this were required to meet increased demand.
23. If the material change is approved, they will implement planned changes to the curriculum so that the wellbeing of pupils aged two is promoted effectively and the Independent School Standards continue to be met consistently.
24. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	St Edmund's College
Department for Education number	919/6115
Registered charity number	311073
Address	St Edmund's College Old Hall Green Ware Hertfordshire SG11 1DS
Phone number	01920 821504
Email address	enquiries@stedmundscollege.org
Website	www.stedmundscollege.org
Proprietor	The Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster
Chair	Rev Paul Raynes
Headteacher	Mr Matthew Mostyn
Age range	3 to 19
Number of pupils	684
Number of boarding pupils	59
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 November 2023

Information about the school

25. St Edmund's College is a co-educational day and boarding school located in Ware, Hertfordshire. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors.
26. Boarders are accommodated in the main school building with separate areas for male and female pupils. The school offers full, weekly and flexi-boarding options.
27. There are 30 children in the early years comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
28. The school has identified 112 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
29. The school has identified 65 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
30. The school states that its aims are to realise the God-given potential in body mind and spirit of all members of its community through service and leadership.

Purpose of the material change inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards, National Minimum Standards for boarding schools, and Early Years Foundation Stage requirements if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

7 July 2026

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

32. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- a tour of the early years provision to review the proposed accommodation for pupils aged two
- discussions with the chair of governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

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

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