

School inspection report

20 to 22 January 2026

Coworth-Flexlands School

Chertsey Road

Chobham

Woking

Surrey

GU24 8TE

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

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

Summary of inspection findings

1. The proprietor works effectively with the local governance board and school leaders to support pupils' wellbeing and ensure Standards are met. A detailed process of review results in a clear development plan which sets out the school's objectives for the year ahead. Leaders take appropriate action to mitigate risk and implement an effective strategy so that the school satisfies the requirements of equality legislation. Parents receive regular and helpful reports on their child's progress and they have frequent opportunities, both formal and informal, for further discussion with their child's teachers. Leaders provide parents with detailed information about the school and its policies on the website. However, when the inspection began, the policy for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) was not available to parents.
2. Leaders promote pupils' skills and intellectual development with a well-designed and wide-ranging curriculum. Staff organise a variety of extra-curricular activities which capture pupils' interests and further extend their knowledge and abilities. At all levels, pupils make good progress in numeracy and literacy and develop understanding of key concepts in science and the humanities. Most teaching challenges pupils and motivates them to produce their best work. Teachers' written and verbal feedback builds pupils' self-confidence and provides constructive guidance as they take the next steps in their learning. However, in some lessons teaching does not take appropriate account of pupils' learning needs and provide them with sufficient challenge and support.
3. Leaders successfully create an environment which supports pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils learn the importance of kindness and understand that harmonious communities are based on mutual respect. The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum teaches pupils about differences in society and how to manage relationships successfully. Teachers' thoughtful and sensitive implementation of the code of conduct contributes positively to the pupils' typically good behaviour. Leaders promote pupils' physical development and ensure they learn how physical wellbeing and mental health are inter-connected. The systematic programme of site maintenance checks and the availability of appropriate medical care, when required, promote pupils' general health and safety.
4. Regular discussion of contemporary social and political issues and participation in a national programme of voting give pupils practical experience of democracy in action. Adults teach early years children to share and co-operate. Older pupils learn about human rights in assemblies and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons and discuss moral issues such as racism and misogyny. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to support members of the local community. Pupils also take on roles of responsibility in school so that they learn how to help their peers. Through a well-planned programme of financial and economic education, pupils learn about money, including saving, borrowing, taxation and public expenditure.
5. Consistently effective proprietorial oversight ensures that all aspects of safeguarding are suitably well managed. Staff know, therefore, how to respond to any concerns about pupils' wellbeing and do so in a timely manner, when this is necessary.

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 lesson planning consistently takes account of pupils' learning needs so that they are always well supported and challenged
- ensure the policy for pupils who speak English as an additional language is consistently made available to parents.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

6. Through regular audits and close liaison with the local governance board, the proprietor provides effective oversight of school life. The proprietor and governors collaborate to ensure leaders' training equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop the pupils' learning and support their personal, social and emotional development successfully. Governors visit the school regularly to meet with staff, parents and pupils and to observe lessons. This enables governors to assure themselves that Standards are met and that leaders promote the school's aim and ethos consistently.
7. Proprietorial audits and the views of parents, pupils and staff, which are gathered through regular surveys, enable leaders to identify the areas where the school does well and those which require further development. This process of review results in a school development plan which sets out the objectives for the year ahead and the actions required to realise these objectives.
8. Leaders ensure the effective implementation of a suitable risk assessment policy. Appropriately trained staff mitigate risk through the provision of detailed risk assessments for the premises, on-site activities, educational visits and the welfare of individual pupils. Risk assessments are amended, when appropriate, following a process of systematic and regular review. This enables leaders to ensure their continued effectiveness.
9. Through the school's website, leaders provide parents and prospective parents with information about school activities and policies. Parents receive detailed termly reports about their child's progress and attainment which include suitable targets to support the next steps in their learning. Staff meet with parents at regular, formal meetings and are also available for informal discussions with parents at drop-off and pick-up times. However, when the inspection began, the policy setting out provision for pupils who speak EAL was not available on the website. This omission was rectified before the conclusion of the on-site inspection.
10. Leaders maintain regular and beneficial links with external agencies, including the local authority, children services and educational professionals such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. Leaders report to the local authority those pupils who leave or join the school at times other than the standard transition points.
11. Parents have access to an appropriate complaints policy. Leaders take prompt and suitable action in response to any parental concerns and maintain detailed records setting out the nature of any complaints and how they are resolved.
12. Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from suitable support provided by well-trained staff. Individual action plans set out clear targets for these pupils and enable them to make good progress together with their peers. This strategy, alongside the implementation of an appropriate accessibility plan, ensures that the school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
13. Early years staff benefit from regular training which enables them to support children's learning successfully. Children make good progress developing their language and communication skills and understanding of number. A variety of experiences promote children's learning and their personal development thereby enhancing their confidence and self-esteem.

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

14. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

15. Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum which successfully develops their conceptual understanding and skills in the principal subjects, including art, music, drama and dance, introduces modern foreign languages from Reception through to Year 6 and provides regular opportunities for learning in the forest area. Schemes of work, supported by appropriate medium-term plans, ensure topics are covered methodically and pupils' understanding progresses beyond the expectations of the National Curriculum.
16. Pupils typically make good progress across the curriculum in acquiring both knowledge and a range of skills. In numeracy, younger pupils learn different ways to make twenty. Older pupils apply an understanding of tax rules to calculate monthly income from annual salaries, working confidently with six-figure numbers. In English, pupils use alliteration and personification to good effect in their descriptive writing. They use information technology successfully for independent research and categorise materials accurately using appropriate scientific language.
17. Staff develop the communication skills of early years children through purposeful interaction and by encouraging them to engage in conversation. Adults successfully promote children's independence and stimulate cross-curricular role play. For example, a child's imaginary crime scene leads to an energetic investigation, with children enthusiastically exploring the school and using their knowledge of number to count footprints in search of the culprit. Staff model the sounds that letters make clearly and repeat them frequently so that children make good progress in their understanding of phonics. Children learn the different sounds successfully and how to spell three-letter words. As a result, Reception children are ready to move confidently to the next stage of their learning in Year 1.
18. Teaching at its best is purposeful and well planned so that lessons inspire and engage pupils' interest. Knowledgeable, skilful teachers manage classroom time effectively and use resources such as tablets, photographs, dictionaries and thoughtfully structured worksheets to develop pupils' understanding successfully. They use suitably targeted questioning effectively and teach pupils to reason, debate and analyse different perspectives. In response, pupils work with enthusiasm, curiosity and a desire to acquire new knowledge and skills. However, this is not the case in all lessons, and teachers' planning does not consistently take account of the learning needs of individual pupils.
19. Leaders employ formal assessment of pupils' work and regular marking of their assignments in order to evaluate their attainment and progress alongside surveys of their attitudes to their learning. This assessment framework provides data which most teachers use effectively to provide pupils with the academic and pastoral support they require.
20. The early identification of pupils who have SEND through assessment on entry and careful monitoring of pupils' progress enables leaders to provide them with appropriate support. Leaders draw up individual action plans for pupils which include clear targets. Staff benefit from suitable relevant training and, in most lessons, tailor activities and resources so that pupils attain the targets set for them and make progress in line with their peers.
21. The small number of pupils who speak EAL currently in the school do not require any additional support for their English. However, the school's approach to early identification of need enables staff to provide support for pupils who speak EAL, should this be required.

22. Leaders provide pupils with a varied programme of extra-curricular activities. For example, pupils participate enthusiastically in football, science, creative arts and musical performance clubs. These activities enable pupils to pursue existing interests, acquire new ones and develop a wider range of skills.

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

23. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

24. A warm, friendly and respectful atmosphere characterises the school. Leaders support pupils in managing their own personal, social and emotional development. Through assemblies, PSHE lessons and the mentoring programme, pupils learn to discuss and share ideas and work co-operatively with each other to resolve problems. Topics in PSHE cover important themes such as managing conflict, race and ethnicity and healthy lifestyles. Pupils can raise any concerns using communication cards and worry boxes, and trusted adults respond promptly and sensitively. Adults focus consistently on the school's aim 'to nurture spirit' so as to support and promote a community which celebrates kindness, empathy and thought for others.
25. In consultation with parents, leaders develop an effective RSE curriculum which begins in the Nursery with the use of age-appropriate books. The curriculum is taught through assemblies, form-time sessions and PSHE lessons. Pupils learn about consent, different family structures, respect and inclusivity and how to form and maintain healthy relationships. Leaders consult with staff and take account of pupils' views during the annual review of the curriculum so that it can be amended appropriately to better support their needs and interests.
26. Staff apply the school's code of conduct consistently and recognise exemplary pupil behaviour with the award of house points. Leaders employ rigorous systems to track and analyse behavioural trends and provide pupils with appropriate pastoral support if they misbehave. As a result, typically good behaviour is evident throughout the school. Through assemblies, circle-time discussions and PSHE lessons, teachers emphasise the importance of mutual respect and promote an anti-bullying culture. Instances of bullying are, therefore, rare. However, if they do occur, staff respond thoughtfully, giving support to both the victim and perpetrator so that good relations can be restored and behaviour modified appropriately.
27. Leaders support pupils' sense of security and self-confidence by ensuring effective supervision throughout the school day and especially during breaktimes and extra-curricular activities. This contributes positively to the consistently good relations between staff and pupils and the pupils' ease in talking to adults. Early years leaders maintain the required adult-to-child ratios in Nursery and Reception and ensure that children are always within sight or sound of an adult.
28. Leaders successfully promote pupils' spiritual development. Religious studies lessons and exploration of the forest area by early years children build knowledge and understanding of different faiths and an appreciation of the natural world. Pupils learn about the key features of Christian churches, Sikh gurdwaras and Jewish synagogues. Initial discussion about pupils' own wishes in life introduces purposeful discussion of Buddhist teaching on human happiness. Younger children take an active, enthusiastic interest in exploring the forest area using magnifying boxes and expressing delight at their discoveries.
29. Leaders successfully promote the physical development of pupils throughout the school. Early years staff plan activities to support children's emerging physical skills. Children have opportunities to climb in the playground, negotiate logs in the forest area, cut, stick and engage in junk modelling. Staff teach them how to colour, paint, hold a pencil and form letters. In physical education (PE) lessons, agility, balance and co-ordination are successfully developed through running, jumping, dance and gymnastics. Older pupils learn to swim and build the skills required to participate in

competitive sports such as football, hockey and netball. In these ways, staff teach pupils how physical health supports mental health and the importance of accepting victory and defeat with grace and courtesy.

30. In accordance with statutory guidance, leaders maintain accurate admission and attendance registers. They ensure that staff analyse attendance data regularly, share the required information with the local authority and provide prompt support to parents if their child's attendance levels become a source of concern.
31. Rigorous management of health and safety ensures that the premises are suitably maintained. As a result of regular fire evacuation drills, pupils know how to respond to an emergency. Leaders implement regular checks and maintenance, including of fire safety equipment and gas, electrical and water systems.
32. Pupils benefit from the provision of suitable accommodation to support their medical needs. Staff suitably qualified in first aid, including paediatric first aid, provide appropriate first aid and medical care to any pupils injured or unwell. Staff ensure the safe storage of any medicines and maintain accurate records of the administration of first aid and medication.

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

33. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

34. Leaders relate key values in British society, such as the importance of individual freedom and respect for others, to the ethos of the school which prioritises empathy and thought for others. Staff teach pupils about the criminal justice system and the role played by the police and the civil and criminal courts. Through assemblies, form time and PSHE lessons, pupils learn to value inclusion and understand differences between people. They appreciate the harm which misogyny, racism and intolerance can cause in society. In these ways, leaders prepare pupils to play a constructive role in wider British society.
35. Pupils discuss important contemporary issues in assembly and form times. They then vote on these issues together with pupils in schools across the country and the results are shared with the participating school. Consequently, pupils' understanding of democracy and the important part debate plays in political life is enhanced. Pupils discuss topics such as whether people should still be given knighthoods and the role schools should play in preparing young people to vote at the age of sixteen. Leaders also take account of the opinions pupils express in the regular focus groups which discuss various aspects of school life, for example the different clubs available or health and safety issues. Pupils and staff also take part in an annual election to determine the charity the school will support. As a result, pupils learn about democracy in action and understand that their opinions are valued.
36. Early years staff select story books which emphasise the development of empathy and kindness so that children learn to be socially responsible. They teach children to use sand timers to determine how long each child might have with a particular toy or piece of equipment. In this way, children learn to share and take turns. This sense of right and wrong is developed among older pupils through discussion and debate in assemblies and PSHE lessons. An assembly on Malala Yousafzai, for example, enables leaders to weave together ideas around the rights of the child, specifically the right to an education, racism and the importance of standing up for what is right.
37. Leaders successfully promote pupils' understanding of financial and economic matters and entrepreneurship. Early years children are introduced to money through the use of pretend coins in their role-play shops and café. Older pupils take part in a finance project which teaches them about salaries, income tax, savings and interest rates. Through their work on different jobs, pupils research their chosen career and investigate the salary range it will merit. Pupils also design and budget for the provision of a visitors' room at a local retired people's home.
38. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to play an active role in the local community. They read to younger pupils in local primary schools, engage in litter picking and visit and sing for residents in the local care home. Through these collaborative activities, pupils understand the positive part they can play in the wider community.
39. Pupils gain valuable experience through taking on roles of responsibility for aspects of school life. Each Year 6 pupil has a specific role, for example as one of the performing arts captains, a sports captain or librarian. Year 5 pupils act as buddies to children in Reception and support them during breaktimes. Other pupils act as monitors on a rotating basis. Two ambassadors from each class in Years 1 to 6 meet regularly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They have a key role in school life and determine how money from the school shop should be spent.

40. Leaders ensure that careers education is brought to life and promoted throughout the school. Early years children take on the roles of bakers and mechanics, for example, and dress up appropriately. Older pupils learn what it is like to work in a variety of professions by listening to presentations from veterinary surgeons, construction engineers, nurses and marine scientists, amongst others.

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

41. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

42. The proprietor and local governance board ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are managed effectively. Appropriately trained leaders with responsibility for safeguarding provide thorough and comprehensive training for all staff, including at induction. Leaders provide staff with regular updates on safeguarding issues at weekly staff briefings. As a result, staff know that safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults working at the school. They identify safeguarding concerns promptly, including those raised by pupil disclosures or allegations against adults working at the school, and take timely and suitable action.
43. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding liaise effectively with external agencies, including the local authority and children's services. Any required referrals are made promptly so that pupils receive the support they need. Leaders maintain appropriate safeguarding records securely.
44. The proprietor ensures that members of the local governance board benefit from appropriate safeguarding training. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding visits the school each half-term to meet with staff, parents and pupils. He reviews the single central record of appointments and personnel files to ensure they are accurately and properly maintained. Leaders responsible for safeguarding report termly to the local governance board. The proprietor conducts an audit of safeguarding procedures every two years, and leaders with responsibility for safeguarding complete the local authority safeguarding audit annually.
45. Staff provide pupils with road safety and online safety training through PSHE lessons. Leaders implement and review the effectiveness of the systems for filtering and monitoring usage of the school's internet. They respond promptly to any notifications of potentially inappropriate use.
46. Appropriately trained leaders implement safer recruitment procedures effectively. Leaders ensure the required pre-employment checks are completed before any adult begins working at the school.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Coworth-Flexlands School
Department for Education number	936/6543
Registered charity number	309109
Address	Coworth-Flexlands School Chertsey Road Chobham Woking Surrey GU24 8TE
Phone number	01276 855707
Email address	secretary@coworthflexlands.co.uk
Website	www.coworthflexlands.co.uk
Proprietor	United Church Schools Trust
Chair	Dr Rosalind Given-Wilson
Headteacher	Miss Nicola Cowell
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	136
Date of previous inspection	28 February to 2 March 2023

Information about the school

48. Coworth-Flexlands School is a co-educational day school located in the town of Chobham in Surrey. It comprises: an early years department, for children aged two to four years; a pre-prep, for pupils aged four to seven; and a prep school, for pupils aged seven to eleven. The school is governed by the United Church Schools Trust which has delegated responsibilities to a local governing board.
49. There are 48 children in the early years, comprising two Nursery classes and one Reception class.
50. The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
51. The school has identified English as an additional language for nine pupils.
52. The school states its aims are to inspire minds, nurture spirit and bring out the best in everyone.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

20 to 22 January 2026

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

54. 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
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

55. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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

For more information, please visit isi.net