ISI INSPECTION REPORT

Results and Highlights

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL

JANUARY 2026

> **“The positive relationships between staff and pupils support pupils in developing high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.”**

It is with enormous pride...

...and genuine delight to share the outcome of our January 2026 Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) inspection.

It reflects what matters most to us at Derby High School - how our pupils are known, supported and cared for every day.

Amy Chapman,
Head

A New Inspection Framework

Since our previous inspection in 2023, where the school was judged "Excellent" in all areas, the inspection framework has changed.

One-word judgements have been removed, and inspections now focus on whether schools meet the Independent School Standards Regulations, a set of rigorous statutory requirements that underpin every aspect of school life.

Derby High School was judged to have met **all of these standards.**

2023 PREVIOUS INSPECTION

One-word judgements were used.

Derby High was judged **'Excellent'** in all areas -the highest possible accolade under that framework.

2026 THIS INSPECTION

One-word judgements removed.

Schools are now assessed against the **Independent School Standards Regulations** - rigorous statutory requirements covering every aspect of school life.

Derby High School Met Every Single Standard

- ✓ Leadership, Management & Governance
- ✓ Quality of Education, Training & Recreation
- ✓ Pupils' Physical & Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing
- ✓ Pupils' Social & Economic Education & Contribution to Society
- ✓ Safeguarding

“Leaders demonstrate high levels of skill and insight when evaluating the success of the school in promoting pupils’ wellbeing.”

We Were Awarded a Significant Strength

1 in 10

Only one in ten independent schools nationally receives a **Significant Strength**.

What makes this inspection outcome particularly special is that it also identified a Significant Strength, the highest possible accolade awarded by ISI. Only one in ten independent schools nationally receive a Significant Strength.

A Significant Strength recognises an area of a school's provision that goes well beyond the standards, demonstrating a deep understanding of pupils' development and having a clear and highly beneficial impact on pupils.

This level of recognition is incredibly rare and reflects something that is deeply embedded in the everyday life of a school. We were delighted to receive a significant strength for our approach to behaviour through Relational Practice.

> **"Leaders successfully promote very high standards of behaviour and respect between pupils throughout the school through a 'relational practice' approach."**

> Staff notice and celebrate positive behaviour, including acts of kindness and adhering to expectations.

> Leaders and staff in the school create a culture where pupils behave calmly, courteously and with high levels of respect for those around them.

What the Inspectors Celebrated

LEADERSHIP

Leaders demonstrate 'high levels of skill and insight' - implementing plans that have a highly beneficial impact on pupils.

CURRICULUM

Broad and ambitious - pupils 'make good progress throughout the school and score above national averages in public examinations.'.

GOVERNANCE

Governors 'know the school well' and maintain effective oversight, ensuring leaders have the skills to fulfil their responsibilities.

TEACHING

Teachers promote curiosity and depth of thinking, helping pupils become 'articulate and confident in expressing themselves.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Teachers adapt their lessons to take account of individual pupils' needs and support their progress effectively. Teachers throughout the school are ambitious for all pupils.

SAFEGUARDING

Leaders 'promote a robust and highly effective safeguarding culture' embedded in the school's daily practice.

More to Celebrate

- ✓ Pupils develop understanding and respect for different cultures and learn to debate moral issues with sensitivity and understanding.

- ✓ Governors know the school well and ensure that leaders have the skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

- ✓ Teachers plan lessons that enable pupils to develop literacy and oracy over time, so that they become articulate and confident in expressing themselves.

More to Celebrate

> “Leaders in the early years understand their responsibilities well. They create a stimulating and nurturing environment that successfully promotes children’s learning and development.”

> “Pupils make good progress throughout the school and score above national averages in public examinations.”

> “Teachers combine this knowledge with a deep understanding of their subjects to plan lessons that make effective use of the time available to engage pupils and challenge them to think deeply.”

This report is a celebration of our pupils..

..their confidence, curiosity, kindness and courage - and of a community that believes deeply in educating the whole child.

We have created a community where pupils feel confident, valued and supported, and where they are able to flourish as individuals.

This is a **moment to be proud** of what we have built together.

CURIOSITY

Kindness

COURAGE

> **"Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. They learn about a range of careers and develop the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace."**

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL

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