

# HILL HOUSE

INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR SCHOOL



# Inspection of Hill House School

Hans Place, Knightsbridge, London SW1X 0EP

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Inspection dates: 1 to 3 July 2025

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**



## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school provides an exceptionally calm, inclusive and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe, happy, and inspired to learn. Pupils are proud to be part of a diverse, international community and develop a strong understanding of the wider world.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a highly ambitious and well-structured curriculum. Learning is engaging and purposeful, enabling pupils to achieve exceptionally well. The school values and promotes every pupil's uniqueness. Staff have extremely high expectations and use their knowledge of each pupil to support both academic and personal development.

Behaviour across the school is exemplary. Pupils are respectful, motivated, and eager to learn. The school environment is purposeful, calm and orderly. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. For example, pupils take part in a 'senate' with leaders so that they have a voice in the way the school is run.

The school offers a substantial range of enrichment opportunities, including music, debating, skiing, art and many different sporting activities. From the moment children join early years, they begin to learn how to swim. Pupils are encouraged to try these new experiences and often develop lifelong interests as a result.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Hill House School provides a broad and rich curriculum that is carefully designed to meet the diverse interests and needs of pupils. Leaders have clearly identified the essential knowledge which pupils should learn in each subject. The curriculum is well sequenced, ensuring that learning builds progressively over time. This includes support for pupils with SEND. The school works diligently to identify pupils' individual needs and staff skilfully adapt any learning for them.

Teachers carefully check what pupils know and remember. They use this information effectively to inform next steps in learning. As a result, pupils make strong academic and personal progress. Using their expert subject knowledge, teachers make timely and well-considered adjustments to learning when needed that ensure continued success. Across subjects, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of education.

The teaching of early reading is a strength of the school. The phonics programme is implemented with precision and forms the foundation of the school's approach to reading. Pupils' language development is carefully measured when they join the school. In phonics lessons, they benefit from high-quality support and well-chosen resources. The school's structured approach helps pupils to become confident, fluent readers.

The early years curriculum is exemplary. The stimulating environment enables children to be independent. Specialist teaching in languages, sports and music builds children's knowledge and vocabulary. Children display high levels of self-control and self-regulation. Routines, such as taking turns in conversation, are established from the start. Children are highly motivated and sustain concentration when participating in exciting and interesting activities.

The school places a strong emphasis on developing a lifelong love of reading. Daily opportunities to engage with stories, songs, and rich texts are embedded across the curriculum. Staff model enthusiasm for reading and create a language-rich environment that inspires curiosity and imagination.

The school's expectations of learning and behaviour are extremely high. Pupils thrive on known structures for learning, clear instructions and kind, caring interactions with staff. Pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in their attendance, which for almost all pupils is very high.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The school offers a rich programme that promotes confidence, resilience, and respect. They understand fundamental British values and show maturity in discussing equality and diversity. Careers guidance is effective, helping pupils make informed choices about their futures. Staff nurture pupils' character and well-being, ensuring they leave as thoughtful, responsible individuals. Pupils are proud of their school and are well prepared for life beyond it.

The proprietor body ensures that the school meets all of the independent school standards (the standards), including compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is a school advisory board which meets termly. Leaders prepare detailed reports for these meetings which are scrutinised robustly by board members. The school premises are maintained to a high standard, providing a safe and welcoming environment for learning. Leaders ensure robust health and safety checks are completed by trained staff.

Leaders and the proprietor body share a clear and ambitious vision for excellence. There is a strong culture of high expectations and a shared commitment to helping pupils develop the skills they need for learning and for life. Parents and carers are highly supportive about the work of the school. One parent reflected the views of many, stating that they 'could not be happier'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100518
<b>DfE registration number</b>	207/6188
<b>Local authority</b>	Kensington and Chelsea
<b>Inspection number</b>	10375099
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	460
<b>Proprietors</b>	Richard Townend, Edmund Townend, William Townend and Janet Townend
<b>Headteacher</b>	Edmund Townend
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£21,060 – £27,480
<b>Telephone number</b>	02075 841331
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hillhouseschool.co.uk">www.hillhouseschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@hillhouseschool.co.uk">info@hillhouseschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 to 7 July 2022

## Information about this school

- Hill House School is an international preparatory school located in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The school provides full-time education for boys and girls aged four to 13 years. The school was founded in Switzerland in 1949 and opened in London in 1951.
- The founding family are the four proprietors. One proprietor is the headteacher, the other proprietors also retain day-to-day contact with the running of the school.
- The school is located on four sites in the residential areas of Knightsbridge and Chelsea, in south-west London. The main site is based at Hans Place, Knightsbridge, London, SW1X 0EP
- The school has an annex in Switzerland which is visited by groups of pupils and staff during the year.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the proprietor body, a member of the advisory group, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, physical education, drama and mathematics. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- During the inspection, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' personal development and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the school's policies and procedures to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding: the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The lead inspector had a tour of the school to check the suitability of the premises against the relevant independent school standards.

### **Inspection team**

Karen Matthews, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sahreen Siddiqui

Ofsted Inspector

David Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector



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