

**NURSERY
& PREP SCHOOL**

Embley Park, Romsey SO51 6ZA
Tel: 01794 515737
Email: prep@embley.org.uk
www.embley.org.uk



EMBLEY
HAMPSHIRE

**SENIOR SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM**

Embley Park, Romsey SO51 6ZE
Tel: 01794 512206
Email: info@embley.org.uk
www.embley.org.uk

CMC/ERW

22 June 2026

Dear Parents,

ISI Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

In May, we welcomed inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) for a Progress Monitoring Inspection, following the outcome of ISI's Routine Inspection in September 2025. I am delighted to inform you that the latest report confirms that we meet all relevant standards.

We were pleased to work with the most recent inspection team who, as they shared with us on the day of inspection, were themselves perplexed as to why two window catches, that were rectified immediately during the September team's visit, had necessitated the subsequent outcome and a further ISI visit. Nonetheless, they carried out a thorough review of the actions we had taken in response to the original report and we were highly praised for the outcomes.

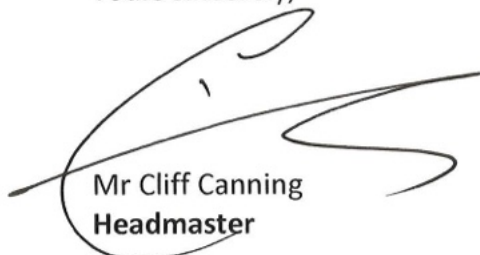
Regardless of United Learning's and Embley's views about the factual inaccuracies, disproportionality and the reliability of the evidence base used to reach the findings of ISI's Routine Inspection Report, we took the matters raised seriously and addressed each point thoroughly. Our priority has and always will be to uphold the highest standards of education, care and compliance for every child in our care.

The outcome of the Progress Monitoring Inspection reflects the dedication, expertise, professionalism and commitment of our staff and the support of our parents. Most importantly, it reaffirms our continued focus on providing the best learning environment that achieve outstanding outcomes for children.

We will always remain committed to continuous improvement in every aspect of school life.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Cliff Canning
Headmaster

Headmaster: Mr Cliff Canning, BA Hons, BD Hons, HDipEd, NUI

Progress monitoring inspection report

14 May 2026

Embley

Embley Park

Romsey

SO51 6ZE

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 meets all the relevant Standards that were considered during this inspection.

Inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b), 8(a) and 8(b), 11, 16; NMS 8, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3

1. Leaders oversee the effective implementation of a safeguarding policy and procedures which fulfil the requirements of current statutory guidance. They ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and that the safeguarding culture is well embedded.
2. The safeguarding team is suitably trained and in line with the local authority's safeguarding procedures. They understand the contextual risks to the pupils in their care and take suitable steps to mitigate these. The safeguarding team meets weekly to monitor any concerns relating to pupil welfare. They liaise effectively with pastoral leaders and tutors to ensure that appropriate support is provided for pupils when required.
3. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that staff are trained effectively and regularly in safeguarding practices, including through termly briefings, online learning and quizzes to review their understanding. Leaders implement a thorough induction programme for new staff, so that they are clear about the school's safeguarding arrangements as soon as they join the school.
4. Staff understand how to identify and report safeguarding concerns and do so promptly. This allows the safeguarding team to be proactive in putting in place early and effective support. The safeguarding team seeks and acts on advice from the local authority, including children's services, when required. Safeguarding concerns are suitably recorded, and child protection records are maintained effectively, showing actions leaders have taken and decisions they have made.
5. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow should there be any low-level concerns about, or allegations against, adults working at the school. Leaders take appropriate action when these are reported, including providing members of staff with additional support and training if needed. Leaders monitor concerns about adults diligently to identify patterns or trends. They understand thresholds for reporting any such concerns, taking advice from the local authority and making referrals when required.
6. Pupils are aware that they can talk to and confide in many trusted adults in the school, including an independent person for boarders. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. A suitable internet filtering and monitoring system is in place, which is externally tested on a termly basis. The safeguarding team receives daily reports relating to internet activity and responds promptly to any online concerns that arise.
7. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's implementation of safeguarding procedures. They meet with the safeguarding team regularly and receive detailed termly reports, which are discussed and scrutinised at board meetings.
8. Leaders implement the health and safety policy effectively. Since the previous inspection, they have established a new health and safety leadership team which has developed a rigorous approach to monitoring all aspects of safety across the school site. This leadership team is well trained and its members have a clear understanding of their health and safety responsibilities. Leaders ensure that

a system of daily and weekly checks of buildings, including the boarding house, is rigorously carried out and reported. They ensure that any required remedial work is carried out in a timely manner. Leaders provide a comprehensive programme of staff training which is recorded effectively. Leaders also ensure that pupils, including boarders, are regularly briefed on health and safety issues. Leaders' and governors' oversight of health and safety matters is informed by an annual audit of health and safety carried out by external specialists.

9. The school's risk assessment policy is reviewed and updated at least annually. Leaders ensure that staff implement the policy effectively, including in boarding. Staff are well trained and can identify, record and mitigate risks. Leaders implement formal risk assessments for all aspects of school life, including school trips, boarding accommodation, sporting activities, and vehicular movement on the school site. Since the previous inspection, leaders have put in place a digitalised register of all risk assessments in the school. This allows leaders to regularly review and update risk assessments on an annual basis, or more frequently if required. Risk assessments are further scrutinised by the school's health and safety committee and must be signed off by two separate leaders before they become active.
10. The school meets the Standards.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraph 25

11. The school's campus and buildings, including boarding accommodation, are well maintained. Leaders have put in place a detailed plan for maintenance and development work which incorporates the boarding house. This is implemented effectively. Any required repair work is carried out in a timely manner. Leaders ensure that the school's equipment is regularly serviced by external consultants. Regular monitoring of the school's buildings is systematically recorded and reviewed by leaders. This enables the estates team to be proactive in ensuring that the school site provides a suitable environment in which pupils can learn, play and socialise. In particular, leaders ensure that windows in boarding accommodation are fitted with suitable window restrictors.
12. The school meets the Standard.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

13. The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. The arrangements and procedures for safeguarding at the school are published on the school's website.
14. The school meets the Standard.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), (b), (c); NMS 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5

15. Leaders have effectively implemented the school's action plan to address the Standards which were not met at the previous inspection. They have established systematic and rigorous procedures to review and record all the school's risk assessments. The new health and safety leadership team have all received suitable training and ensure that all staff receive regular health and safety training, including the mitigation of risk in school activities. Leaders ensure that the regular monitoring of the

school's premises is recorded and reviewed effectively. This allows maintenance work to be completed in a timely manner.

16. Governors exercise effective oversight of the work of school leaders through regular visits to the school and termly reports on key aspects such as safeguarding and health and safety. Since the previous inspection, governors have monitored the effective implementation of the action plan. As a result, leaders have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the Standards which were the focus of this inspection are met.
17. The school meets the Standards.

School details

School	Embley
Department for Education number	850/6035
Registered charity number	1016538
Address	Embley Embley Park Romsey Hampshire SO51 6ZE
Phone number	01794 512206
Email address	info@embley.org.uk
Website	www.embley.org.uk
Proprietor	United Church Schools Trust (United Learning)
Chair	Dr Rosalind Given-Wilson
Headteacher	Mr Cliff Canning
Age range	2 to 19
Number of pupils	686
Number of boarding pupils	34
Date of previous inspection	23 to 25 September 2025

Information about the school

18. Embley is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school located near Romsey, Hampshire. The school consists of a nursery, a prep school and a senior school which includes a sixth form. The school is owned by the United Church Schools Trust (United Learning), whose trustees hold responsibility for its governance, supported by a local advisory board.
19. There is one boarding house, situated on the school site, for pupils aged 11 years or above, which caters for full and weekly boarding.
20. There are 56 children in the early years, comprising three Nursery classes and one Reception class.
21. The school has identified 142 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Five pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
22. The school has identified 31 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
23. The school states its aims are to create an environment in which all work collaboratively to encourage academic ambition, belief in oneself and compassion for others, and where all are valued as individuals. It seeks to provide the opportunity for participation in a rich and diverse co-curricular programme and to establish a culture of respect for oneself and others.

Purpose of the progress monitoring inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. This inspection was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection which was carried out at the request of the Department for Education. The purpose of this inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the Independent School Standards, National Minimum Standards for boarding schools, and any other requirements that the school was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

14 May 2026

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

25. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- discussions with the chair of governors and members of the governing body
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- a tour of the boarding house accompanied by staff.

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](http://www.isi.net)

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28 January 2026



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Dear Parents,

ISI Inspection of Embley

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) has published its inspection report of Embley from September 2025 and I'd like to share this report with you.

Within the report, inspectors praised how *"Leaders and teachers communicate and implement the school's principles of ambition, belief and compassion to produce a community characterised by empathetic and respectful pupils. Relationship between teachers and pupils are positive. Leaders ensure that pupils are valued and supported in their learning and at school."*

The quality of education, training and recreation offered to pupils is highly praised by inspectors, as is a comprehensive and balanced curriculum, and how we create an environment in which pupils feel confident to ask for help when needed. Boarders were noted to benefit from a broad range of activities designed to reflect their interests and develop their abilities, while the school's extensive co-curricular programme was recognised for promoting teamwork, mutual respect and leadership skills.

The inspectors also commended staff for encouraging pupils to consider different points of view and to listen thoughtfully to the opinions and ideas of others. Core values such as respect, tolerance and individual liberty were noted as being consistently promoted across the school, alongside a strong emphasis on developing pupils' social responsibility. In addition, the school's comprehensive careers programme was acknowledged for supporting pupils to make informed and confident decisions about their future pathways. Our robust and effective safeguarding measures were found to meet all required standards.

However, while we are always proud to celebrate our strengths and successes, we will always approach challenges with openness and honesty.

Aside from a bureaucratic detail (an out-of-date attendance policy on the website which was corrected during the inspection), the inspectors also reported on the following areas:

1. Restrictors were not fitted on two windows in the boarding house (this was immediately rectified during the inspection).
2. A concern was raised about a store cupboard (directly contradicting a safety certification provided by an external specialist).

As a result of these two instances, inspectors judged that Embley had not met the ISI standard of 'Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing'. Consequently, this also meant that a second standard – 'Leadership, management and governance' – was not met.

The publication of this report was delayed due to the submission of three formal complaints made by United Learning and Embley to ISI. These complaints raised concerns about factual inaccuracies, disproportionality and a failure to consider the overall reliability of the evidence base used to reach the findings. We have objected to the schedule of unmet standards; the language used is overly broad and implies systemic non-compliance across the school, which is misleading and inaccurate.

Headmaster: Mr Cliff Canning, BA Hons, BD Hons, HDipEd, NUI

However, we have now received a response from the ISI's own internal independent adjudicator which states that they are not going to overturn the inspector's decisions. To go further with our claim would require a judicial review and a significant cost to the school. Therefore, having pursued our challenge as far as we feel reasonable, we have taken the decision to withdraw from the process so that our full focus can remain on what matters most: providing the best quality learning experience for our children.

We are grateful to staff and pupils for going above and beyond to help inspectors see the authentic Embley of which we are so very proud. In the ISI pupil survey conducted during the inspection, 95% of pupils strongly agreed/agreed that they are happy at school, 98% said they feel safe in school and 97% said that teachers give them the help they need to learn.

We also thank parents for their engagement in the inspection process through completion of the ISI survey, with findings such as 97% of parents strongly agreed/agreed that their child is happy at school; 95% said the school helps their child make good progress; and 93% said that the school is governed, led and managed effectively.

I also attach a letter addressed to Embley parents from Fiona Boulton, Director of Independent Schools at United Learning.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this report with me in greater depth then I would be very happy to meet with you. Please contact my Executive Assistant, EmmaRuth Wellington (emmaruth.wellington@embley.org.uk), to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cliff Canning', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Cliff Canning
Headmaster

28 January 2026

Dear Parents,

ISI Inspection Report

As you may remember, in September 2025, Embley was visited by ISI inspectors. The inspection team spent three days with staff and pupils and examined all aspects of the school including its academic and pastoral support, boarding facilities, governance, safeguarding and administration. Their report has now been published.

There is a great deal in their Report that we welcome and which demonstrates the excellent work underway in the school; the quality of teaching and learning, the strong pastoral support and extra-curricular offer that pupils receive and the school's approach to safeguarding and looking after the best interests of its pupils.

The inspectors commended staff for encouraging pupils to consider different points of view and to listen thoughtfully to the opinions and ideas of others. Core values such as respect, tolerance and individual liberty were noted as being consistently promoted across the school, alongside a strong emphasis on developing pupils' social responsibility. In addition, the school's comprehensive careers programme was acknowledged for supporting pupils to make informed and confident decisions about their future pathways.

There were however, three issues that the Inspectors raised that we have appealed against as they impact on the overall assessment and judgements that the school can receive in the report. The ISI appeals process has now been exhausted, and ISI have insisted on retaining these criticisms and overall judgements, despite external qualified assessments, in what they have published.

The areas that the school has been criticised over are bureaucratic (an out of date attendance policy placed on the website) or site maintenance related (broken window catches on two windows in the boarding house) both addressed within 12 hours on the first day of inspection. The third, a safety concern about a store cupboard, directly contradicts external specialist advice that the school has received. Nevertheless, we take any feedback from inspectors extremely seriously. We remain dissatisfied, however, and concerned by the overall judgements of the Inspectors due to these disputed issues.

We do not want this Report to go unacknowledged for the very positive portrait it paints of the education and enrichment that pupils at Embley receive from Early Years to the Sixth Form.

Thank you for your continued support of the school. It is clear from what inspectors picked up from pupils and parents and which we likewise know from our own feedback, that Embley is a thriving and happy school. Leadership at Embley is well known, long established and has been transformative over the last 10 years. The ISI staff and parent surveys were universally positive in how Embley cares for children, secures their progress and allows them to be the best version of themselves.

Yours sincerely,



Fiona Boulton OBE
Director of Independent Schools

School inspection report

23 to 25 September 2025

Embley

Embley Park

Romsey

Hampshire

SO51 6ZE

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. Leaders actively promote the school's aims and ethos through assemblies as well as during lessons. However, leaders do not demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to ensure that all the Standards are met. Leaders do not address all potential risks in boarding effectively. In particular, leaders do not ensure that all windows in boarding accommodation are fitted with suitable restrictors to prevent potential risk of harm to boarders. Leaders do not ensure sufficiently rigorous oversight with regard to health and safety and the appropriate maintenance of the premises.
2. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects. Lessons are well resourced and teachers use their understanding of pupils' needs to enable them to make good progress. Teachers give pupils feedback that enables them to clearly understand what they need to do to improve. They encourage pupils to reflect on their learning. However, in some lessons, teaching strategies are less effective. As a result, pupils learn less well in these lessons.
3. In the early years, leaders ensure that children develop in all the required areas of learning through well-planned activities. They use the information gathered about children's likes and dislikes and development to devise a curriculum that takes into account children's interests as well as their needs. Children explore, investigate and develop communication and language skills as they play and learn in engaging environments.
4. Staff support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teaching is matched to their needs and enables pupils who have SEND to make good progress.
5. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are provided with additional resources, where appropriate, to help them to access the curriculum effectively. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress.
6. Boarding staff provide boarders with a welcoming approach and effective pastoral support. Sleeping accommodation is suitable. Boarders have access to an extensive programme of evening and weekend activities.
7. The school maintains attendance and admission registers appropriately. However, at the start of the inspection, the attendance policy on the school's website did not reflect current statutory guidance. Leaders rectified this during the inspection.
8. Leaders prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education, providing careers guidance aligned with national benchmarks. Pupils receive effective economic education throughout the school, from learning about money in the early years through to financial planning, budgeting and taxation in the sixth form.
9. Safeguarding is effective. The safeguarding team responds to any safeguarding concerns appropriately and provides staff with suitable safeguarding training.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:

- demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school Standards are consistently met
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school Standards are consistently met and
- actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils

so that:

- all windows in boarding accommodation are fitted with suitable restrictors that are used to prevent potential harm to boarders
- all works relating to the health, safety and welfare of pupils in the school and in boarding are carried out in a timely manner.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that all teachers use consistently effective teaching strategies to enable pupils to make good progress across all lessons
- ensure that the attendance policy published on the school website is kept up to date with current statutory guidance.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors' oversight of the school does not ensure that leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively in all respects. Leaders do not ensure that risk is always accurately assessed and mitigated in relation to boarders' safety. Leaders do not have sufficient oversight with regard to health and safety and the maintenance of the premises.
11. Leaders and teachers communicate and implement the school's principles of 'ambition, belief and compassion' to produce a community characterised by empathetic and respectful pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Leaders ensure that pupils are valued and supported in their learning and at school.
12. Leaders understand the most effective aspects of the school and areas that can be further improved. Leaders analyse teaching, learning and resource allocation through observations and learning walks to ensure that the provision meets pupils' needs.
13. Leaders understand the school's contextual risks, such as those associated with the nature of its large site. Risk assessments are in place for pupils' educational experiences, including overseas trips, such as to the United States of America. Staff receive appropriate training on completing risk assessments.
14. Leaders maintain effective links with external agencies, such as the local authority and children's services, and make use of their advice, guidance and support.
15. Leaders in the early years help children to have a positive start to their education. They give staff support that helps them provide children with a warm, attentive and thoughtful environment and effective teaching that promotes their progress.
16. Leaders of boarding ensure effective communication between boarding staff, academic staff and the pastoral team so that potential issues, including any relating to boarders' pastoral wellbeing, can be identified and responded to swiftly. Boarding staff relate to pupils in a caring and approachable manner. Boarding staff receive appropriate training for their roles.
17. Leaders ensure that parents are well informed about their child's progress. Parents regularly receive information about their child's attainment, progress and effort. Leaders provide suitable opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with staff. Leaders provide relevant financial information as required to any local authority that provides funding for the education, health and care plan (EHC plan) of any pupils.
18. The school implements an appropriate policy for handling complaints. Leaders are accessible to parents and communicate with them regularly. They address any complaints promptly and effectively. Leaders keep detailed records of all concerns and how these are followed up.
19. Leaders and governors ensure that the school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The school has a suitable and detailed accessibility plan that is regularly reviewed.

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

20. Standards are not met consistently with respect to management of the risk of harm, health and safety, and maintenance of premises.
21. As a result, Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not met.
- 22. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

23. Leaders design a curriculum that provides a comprehensive and balanced education, catering to pupils' different ages and abilities. Pupils develop skills and acquire knowledge across the broad range of subjects. In the prep school, a focus on cross-curricular links in events such as 'book week' and 'science week' enable pupils to apply knowledge learnt in one subject to their understanding in others. Pupils study the same subjects up to the end of Year 9, with the exception of their modern foreign language choice, Spanish or French, which is selected in Year 8. The curriculum is designed to enable flexibility for pupils who need additional support through extra sessions such as 'learning to learn'.
24. Pupils study the same subjects up to the end of Year 9 and the curriculum is designed to enable flexibility for pupils who need additional support through extra sessions such as 'learning to learn'. Pupils in the sixth form study from a choice of academic and practical subjects ranging from psychology to government and politics and three-dimensional design. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of well-chosen guest speakers and lectures to enrich pupils' knowledge and skills.
25. The early years curriculum is planned effectively to promote children's learning. The planned activities stimulate and interest children and motivate them to explore ideas. Teachers encourage children to express their thoughts and help them expand their vocabulary. The core curriculum is supplemented by well-planned activities and trips to develop children's personal skills and understanding of the world.
26. Teachers develop pupils' linguistic skills effectively, beginning with a well-planned programme to teach children about phonics. Teaching promotes vocabulary and language development, which pupils achieve by reading a range of suitable texts. Pupils analyse language used by authors and apply literary devices in their own writing. Older pupils further develop their speaking and listening skills through participating in school and external events. As a result, pupils become articulate and confident speakers.
27. Teaching in mathematics is well planned to help pupils build on what they know and understand. In the early years, children initially learn to use correct mathematical language when describing quantity and measurement. Teachers provide older pupils with regular opportunities to practise, become fluent in calculation and apply their knowledge in solving complex mathematical problems, such as in trigonometry and statistics. As a result of such measures, pupils become confident mathematicians.
28. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge, which they use to provide pupils with clear explanations and enable them to overcome misconceptions. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils foster an environment in which pupils feel confident to ask for help if they need it. Typically, teachers use effective strategies and resources with the result that pupils make good progress. However, in some lessons, the teaching strategies used are less effective. Consequently, pupils' progress is limited in such lessons.
29. Leaders implement a suitable assessment framework that informs teachers about pupils' progress. Teachers give pupils both written and verbal feedback that helps pupils to understand the areas that require further development. The school maintains an appropriate schedule of written reports and

parents' meetings so that parents understand the progress their child is making. Pupils achieve well in GCSE and A-level examinations and, throughout the school, pupils make good progress.

30. The school provides pupils who have SEND with comprehensive support. At the beginning of the academic year, staff receive specific training so that they can teach pupils who have SEND effectively. They provide pupils with effective in-class and one-to-one support tailored to their needs. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress.
31. Teachers ensure that pupils who speak EAL are provided with suitable support when required, such as resources including glossaries and vocabulary lists as needed. Effective strategies such as drop-in clinics and individual lessons with access to specialist teachers are used to support language development, should this be required. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress.
32. The school provides pupils with opportunities to extend their skills and interests in an extensive range of co-curricular activities, such as the marine biology club, 'science fiction - science fact' club, horse riding and sailing. These activities promote the development of pupils' teamwork, mutual respect and leadership skills. Older pupils develop and lead societies for the younger ones, helping to hone their confidence and skills.
33. Boarders have access to a large team of boarding staff representing a number of subject areas and can seek support in their learning either during homework activities or at other times. The school provides boarders with a broad range of activities designed to complement their interests and develop their abilities, including regular sports provision, cookery sessions and pupil-selected trips.

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

33. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

34. Leaders do not always ensure that health and safety arrangements are effective. Leaders do not ensure that restrictors are fitted on all windows in boarding accommodation. At the time of the inspection, two windows in one boarding house lacked restrictors, posing a risk of harm to boarders. Leaders rectified this before the end of the inspection. Leaders do not maintain sufficient oversight with regard to the appropriate maintenance of the premises.
35. The school's encouraging and positive culture leads to trusting, positive relationships between pupils and staff. In the early years, well-established routines and encouragement from staff help children feel confident to explore and play independently and with each other. Leaders and staff praise pupils for their achievement and effort. These measures, alongside effective pastoral care and assemblies, promote pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.
36. A suitable well-structured programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), including relationships and sex education (RSE) is in place. Pupils learn about themes appropriate to their particular age, such as the effects of puberty, different types of healthy relationships, ways of managing stress, how to look after one's own mental health and the dangers of sexual exploitation. Teachers check pupils' understanding through discussions in class, revisiting topics, when useful, to further develop their understanding. The PSHE programme is supplemented by regular 'wellbeing Wednesdays', which continue the focus on maintaining positive mental health and promote an attitude of resilience.
37. Staff are deployed effectively around the school site to ensure appropriate supervision is in place. Appropriate staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times in the early years. Boarders can access support from staff at all times, should the need arise.
38. Pupils develop an understanding of spirituality through religious education lessons, assemblies and the wider curriculum. Pupils study many of the major world religions. Boarders make use of the chapel as a quiet space for reflection.
39. The broad curriculum for physical education (PE) enables pupils to explore a wide variety of sports and activities. In the early years, children have many planned opportunities to help them develop their physical skills, such as movement-based play. As they get older, pupils develop their skills and strategy in a range of competitive and team sports, including sporting fixtures, tournaments and weekly coaching sessions. Pupils develop their teamwork skills and understanding of how exercise and physical activity can have an impact upon mental and physical health.
40. Leaders and staff implement the behaviour policy fairly and consistently. They reward good behaviour and encourage pupils to reflect on behaviour that falls below the school's high expectations. As a result, pupils display courteous and respectful attitudes and behave well.
41. Bullying is rare, and leaders respond quickly and effectively whenever any incidents occur. Staff encourage pupils to feel confident to report any concerns about behaviour that they might have.
42. Leaders arrange for the required health and safety checks on the water supply and electric and gas appliances to be carried out. Fire safety equipment is regularly serviced and maintained. Regular fire

evacuation drills take place, including during boarding time. Staff receive appropriate training in fire safety.

43. The admission and attendance registers are well maintained. Leaders track attendance robustly and take effective measures in response to any concerns about absenteeism, including working with families to promote high attendance. Leaders inform the local authority whenever pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points. However, when the inspection commenced, the attendance policy available on the school's website did not reflect current statutory guidance. This was rectified by leaders by the end of the inspection.
44. Appropriate procedures for the administration of first aid and medicines are carried out by suitably trained staff. Records are well maintained. Staff in the early years are suitably trained in paediatric first aid.
45. Boarding accommodation is comfortable and pupils are able to personalise their own spaces. Staff know pupils well and the relationships are positive and warm. Boarders are provided with nutritionally balanced meals and communal spaces with kitchens where they can engage in social activities and prepare snacks. Boarders can always contact a member of staff, including at night.

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

- 46. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

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

47. Through the curriculum and wider school experiences, pupils deepen their understanding of different cultures, traditions and beliefs and how these are celebrated, through festivals and during philosophy and religion lessons, where pupils show respect for different cultures and faiths. Regular visitors support the school in developing pupils' understanding and respect for diversity further. Staff encourage pupils to see things from different points of view and listen carefully to other opinions and ideas, such as when discussing contrasting ideologies in the study of *Animal Farm* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the impact of figures such as Martin Luther King and the Suffragettes.
48. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern British society. Values such as respect, tolerance and individual liberty are emphasised across the school. In the early years, clear expectations of conduct and courtesy, including with regard to outdoor play, encourage children to be respectful of each other. Topics on global issues such as civil war and climate change are taught and discussed with sensitivity. Pupils lead assemblies on themes such as 'Global Peace Day', enabling pupils to reflect, share ideas and promote positive values.
49. From an early age, children and pupils learn about the importance of rules that form part of our society. Teachers link respect for law to the rules that pupils follow in the playground. Pupils learn about the importance of the law to protect people from discrimination and exploitation. As a result, pupils develop their understanding of right from wrong and how this relates to the way people treat each other.
50. Pupils develop their understanding of democracy through participation in elections for their various committees and leadership roles. During mock school elections, pupils participate in hustings, engage in debate and discuss results. Pupils learn that, in a democracy, people have the opportunity to elect people to represent them in a range of roles, including in Parliament. Staff ensure that any discussions with political content or on political themes are conducted impartially and without bias.
51. The school provides a suitable economic education. In the early years, children engage in role play using pretend money to develop their understanding of how coins work and giving correct change. Clubs such as the 'money explorers club' allow pupils to explore jobs and related salaries. Pupils in the sixth form participate in an enrichment programme that teaches them about taxation, managing bank accounts, how to budget and student loans.
52. The school encourages pupils to develop their sense of social responsibility. Pupils fundraise for local and international charities, such as those funding washing facilities in Ghana, Alzheimer's research and Christmas shoe box appeals. Pupils also visit local nursing homes to read with residents and play board games, participate in singing festivals and volunteer locally. These experiences enable civic engagement, thereby preparing pupils well for life in British society.
53. The school offers a structured careers programme, including work experience opportunities, to help pupils make informed decisions about their future pathways. Pupils are given up-to-date and well-informed advice about possible future choices, including higher education options and degree apprenticeships. The comprehensive careers guidance includes individual support for pupils so they can discuss their individual goals. The curriculum is enhanced with additional opportunities such as a

comprehensive programme of outside speakers and a dedicated programme of careers education known as 'future Fridays'.

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

54. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

55. Leaders ensure that the safeguarding arrangements reflect local procedures as well as current statutory guidance. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's safeguarding work. They scrutinise regular safeguarding reports from leaders to monitor and quality assure the school's safeguarding arrangements.
56. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities receive suitable training to equip them for their role. They ensure that staff receive regular training that keeps their knowledge of safeguarding up to date. New staff receive suitable safeguarding training as part of their induction into the school. Staff know how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm and report any concerns promptly.
57. The safeguarding team holds regular meetings to review all safeguarding concerns, monitor trends and implement any support required. The team responds effectively if safeguarding concerns are raised, including by referring concerns on to the relevant external safeguarding agencies when appropriate. The school informs pupils, including boarders, of whom they can go to should they have a worry or concern. In such circumstances, staff listen and take appropriate action.
58. An appropriate internet filtering and monitoring system is in place. This is tested regularly to ensure its continued effectiveness. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Staff follow the school's policies in relation to the use of devices in school, including the use of mobile phones.
59. Safer recruitment arrangements are effective. The school conducts all required checks on adults before they take up their appointments. All the necessary pre-appointment checks are carefully recorded in an accurate single central record of appointments which is maintained effectively and regularly reviewed by leaders.
60. The school has appropriate procedures in place for when to refer concerns in relation to adults to the local authority. Staff understand the procedures for reporting low-level concerns in relation to staff conduct.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR ¹ Part 3, paragraph 16	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –
16(a)	The welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
16(b)	appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the well-being of pupils.
NMS ¹ 2.1	The school’s governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school and takes appropriate action where necessary.
NMS 2.2	The school’s leadership and management, including its governing body where appropriate, demonstrate good skills and knowledge, appropriate to their role and undertake appropriate training as required.
NMS 2.4	The school’s leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met.
NMS 2.5	The school’s leadership and management and governance actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
NMS 9.3	The school ensures that the welfare of boarders at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

^{1 2} National Minimum Standards for boarding schools (‘NMS’)

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 8	Where section 87(1) of the Children Act 1989 applies in relation to a school the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that
8(b)	such arrangements have regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools or, where applicable, the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools or the National Minimum Standards for Accommodation of Children under Eighteen by Further Education Colleges.
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
NMS 9.1	The school ensures compliance with relevant health and safety laws by drawing up and effectively implementing a written health and safety policy ² . Staff undertake sufficient training to ensure the policy is followed in practice.
NMS 9.2	The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn.

² [Health and safety: advice for schools](#)

School details

School	Embley
Department for Education number	850/6035
Registered charity number	1016538
Address	Embley Embley Park Romsey Hampshire SO51 6ZE
Phone number	01794 512206
Email address	info@embley.org.uk
Website	www.embley.org.uk
Proprietor	United Church Schools Trust (United Learning)
Chair	Dr R Given-Wilson
Headteacher	Mr Cliff Canning
Age range	2 to 19
Number of pupils	688
Number of boarding pupils	32
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 October 2022

Information about the school

62. Embley is an independent co-educational day and boarding school, founded in 1946. In 2005, following a merger with the Atherley School, it became part of United Learning, whose trustees hold the responsibility for its governance, supported by a local advisory board.
63. The school comprises: the Nursery, which includes the early years; the prep school; the senior school; and the sixth form.
64. There is one boarding house situated on the school site for pupils aged 11 years or above, which caters for full and weekly boarding.
65. There are 44 children in the early years comprising three Nursery classes and one Reception class.
66. The school has identified 138 pupils as having SEND. Four pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
67. The school has identified 27 pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
68. The school states its aims are to create an environment in which all work collaboratively to encourage academic ambition, belief in oneself and compassion for others, and where all are valued as individuals; one which provides the opportunity for participation in a rich and diverse co-curricular programme and which is underpinned by a culture of respect for oneself and others.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 to 25 September 2025

69. A team of seven inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

70. 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.

71. 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

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