

School inspection report

21 to 23 April 2026

Trinity School

Buckeridge Road

Teignmouth

TQ14 8LY

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 work effectively throughout the school to create a supportive environment for pupils. They understand their roles, maintain relevant skills through training and performance reviews, and prioritise safeguarding, wellbeing and inclusion.
2. Leaders ensure that staff receive suitable training in the assessment of risk. Staff effectively apply systems to identify and manage risk. Comprehensive risk assessments cover the curriculum, welfare, the school site, and off-site activities. However, some site-related risk assessments are not consistently reviewed as frequently as leaders intend and some administrative record-keeping is not well organised.
3. Lesson planning across the school is thorough, with well-structured lessons that build on prior learning, helping pupils to consolidate their knowledge. However, some teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils, when they are ready, nor promote independent thinking. The progress of pupils in these lessons is limited.
4. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are appropriately identified and their needs are regularly reviewed. Support is provided both within the classroom and through targeted support, with knowledgeable staff trained to meet individual requirements. Specialist provision is arranged when needed, ensuring pupils can fully participate and learn effectively alongside their peers.
5. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and are in the early stages of learning English have their linguistic needs identified at the point that they join the school. For younger pupils, teachers are given precise guidance about how to support them and pupils' progress is tracked through ongoing assessments. However, older pupils' needs are not as well supported or monitored. This means that leaders do not know precisely the difference that the school is making to their development of important linguistic skills.
6. Boarding staff offer consistent care and support across all houses. Well-trained and experienced staff ensure pupils' wellbeing through individual pastoral guidance and a comprehensive programme of evening and weekend activities.
7. The school fosters pupils' emotional wellbeing and self-esteem throughout their education. Through a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme incorporating relationships and sex education (RSE), as well as through assemblies and tutor time, pupils develop skills of self-reflection and emotional regulation in a nurturing environment. Pupils do not develop the same rich understanding of all of the topics that they are taught. Leaders' monitoring of the PSHE curriculum is less well developed. They do not know precisely how well pupils are learning the intended content.
8. Pupils follow a comprehensive careers programme, beginning in the early years and developing throughout the pupils' time in school. Pupils receive impartial, tailored advice on education, training and employment options, helping them make informed choices based on their abilities and interests.
9. Children in the early years benefit from a well-planned curriculum that promotes communication skills and language development, along with social skills and emotional regulation. Leaders and staff

are knowledgeable about how the youngest children learn and develop. They use a range of assessment information to identify and support children, to ensure that they are ready to successfully transition to Year 1.

10. The school has a robust safeguarding culture, with clear policies reviewed annually, well-trained staff, regular governor oversight and effective work with external agencies. The wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted, including safety online. Recruitment checks are thorough and accurately recorded on the single central record of appointments (SCR).

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 the linguistic needs of older pupils who speak English as an additional language are adeptly supported and effectively monitored, so that leaders can be assured that pupils are developing essential skills and knowledge
- ensure teachers identify and challenge pupils who are ready to apply their learning in more complex ways or with greater independence, so that they make the progress of which they are capable
- refine their monitoring of risk assessments to ensure the consistent review and effective administrative organisation and storage of records
- develop their monitoring of the impact of the personal, social, health and economic education and relationships and sex education curriculums, to ensure that pupils are developing a rich understanding of the knowledge they are required to learn.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Governance is robust. The board of governors actively engages with school life, visiting regularly and providing support and guidance in key areas such as safeguarding and health and safety. Governors monitor policies and their implementation closely to ensure that the Standards are met consistently. They routinely check on the effectiveness of leaders' work.
12. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of pupils and ensure that they are nurtured and supported within a positive learning environment. Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They possess relevant skills and knowledge, which are enhanced through regular training and systematic performance review. Staff are confident that school leaders place a strong emphasis on safeguarding, wellbeing and inclusion.
13. Leaders work collaboratively and effectively to identify what needs to improve in the school's provision. They work with staff, pupils and parents to evaluate their performance and to create the school development plan. This plan provides a clear pathway for the school's future direction, in the short and long term. Collectively, leaders have a clear awareness of developing areas and a strong commitment to improvement.
14. Leaders work effectively with external specialist teams and agencies to secure timely support for pupils. For example, leaders engage appropriately with the local authority regarding the provision for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan), including reporting on finance and funding arrangements. Leaders inform the local authority about any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition points. Leaders work closely with agencies related to safeguarding and mental health for pupils who need further specialist support.
15. The information required for parents of current and prospective pupils is available on the school's website. Parents receive regular communications to ensure that they are well informed. They receive regular reports detailing their child's academic progress and personal development. These reports include targets for further improvement, so that parents can support their child at home. Complaints are handled in a timely manner, in line with the school's policy. Detailed records are kept of all concerns, the investigation, outcome and actions taken.
16. Leaders employ effective procedures for identifying and mitigating risks. There is an appropriate array of risk assessments in place that consider all reasonable risks related to the curriculum, welfare, the site and off-site activities. Typically, staff are well trained and enact leaders' risk management systems effectively. However, occasionally, the review of some risk assessments is not undertaken as routinely as leaders intend. There are also inconsistent and weaker approaches to the administrative organisation and storage of some of this information. Leaders had not identified this in their own monitoring.
17. Boarding staff and leaders provide a caring and supportive environment for pupils. Boarding principles and procedures are applied consistently across the houses. Staff are well trained and experienced. They provide a caring and supportive physical and social environment for their pupils. A well-planned programme of activities in the evenings and at weekends, along with individual pastoral support, actively promotes pupils' wellbeing.
18. Leadership in the early years is highly effective. Leaders ensure that the learning environment, resources, staffing and planning support children's learning and development. Systems are in place

for the induction, supervision, monitoring and professional development of staff, to ensure that they are well trained and effectively supported. Leaders ensure that children get off to the best start.

19. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 through the effective implementation and regular review of an accessibility plan. Leaders ensure that the curriculum and site are accessible for all pupils and staff, such as appropriate consideration for noise sensitivity and physical impairments.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. The curriculum is comprehensive and well developed, consisting of a framework of well-planned schemes of work. It facilitates the advancement of pupils' foundation skills in speaking, listening, literacy and mathematics. Leaders plan opportunities to support pupils' readiness for their life as adults, thinking carefully about how pupils develop an increasingly mature understanding of subjects, as well as important values such as respect, tolerance and liberty. The curriculum supports pupils to be ready to study a range of qualifications. Leaders routinely review and adjust the curriculum, so that it is relevant to pupils' abilities, interests and aspirations. For example, photography has recently been included in the subjects available for pupils to study.
22. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They stimulate and manage classroom discussions effectively. A diverse range of resources, such as GCSE revision materials, topic-based workbooks and online resources, are employed to consolidate knowledge and assist pupils in their learning. Pupils benefit from guided learning, effective modelling and opportunities to reflect on errors, enhancing their comprehension. Pupils respond to challenge with enthusiasm, as seen in a music lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, where pupils choose instruments with which to tap out a rhythm. Pupils show positive attitudes towards learning, act responsibly and try hard in their learning. They value the support offered by their teachers and the constructive verbal and written feedback, which helps them to improve.
23. Typically, teachers use a thorough understanding of what pupils know and can do, to adapt lessons and support pupils to apply their learning in more complex ways, when they are ready to do so. For instance, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils use their knowledge of angles to investigate more complex shapes and calculate their angles. However, in some lessons, teachers do not use a range of assessment information to identify when some pupils are ready to apply their learning in more complex ways or with increasing independence. When this happens, pupils find work too easy and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
24. Pupils' progress is monitored by leaders through the school's assessment system and framework. Leaders use this information to identify individual pupils requiring further support. Timely academic or pastoral assistance is provided to pupils according to need, ensuring pupils are supported to make good progress. Pupils in Years 11 and 13 take a range of subjects and go on to appropriate destinations in further education and training.
25. Pupils who have SEND are identified via appropriate screening and referral processes, with regular reviews of their needs. Support is delivered through classroom teaching, supplemented by teaching assistants and, where required, one-to-one or small-group sessions. Staff are informed of individual requirements and receive training in how to adapt their teaching to support pupils. Specialist provision, such as support for hearing needs, is arranged using external specialist guidance, when necessary. This ensures that pupils who have SEND participate fully in lessons alongside their peers and learn effectively.
26. Younger pupils who speak EAL and are in the early stages of learning English have their linguistic needs identified effectively. Leaders provide guidance to staff about how best to support pupils' individual requirements, such as through the use of glossaries, translation tools and structured vocabulary guidance. The support for the development of pupils' reading, writing and oral skills is effective for younger pupils. However, in the senior school, leaders do not monitor the strategies for

older pupils who speak EAL and their effectiveness. They do not know whether they are supporting the development of pupils' linguistic needs as well as they could.

27. Children in the early years access a well-planned and sequenced curriculum. Staff are adept at using a range of planned and play-based activities that incorporate children's interests. These activities include shared reading, music and singing, and practical work on floating and sinking designed to develop vocabulary and scientific understanding. Staff use a range of assessment information to adapt teaching to support children's learning. Children's early language, communication, reading, writing and numeracy skills develop through effective teaching. As a result, children are well supported to transition to Year 1.
28. The co-curricular programme is extensive, offering pupils a wide array of opportunities to cultivate interests and social competencies. Numerous clubs and sporting activities are available, including computing, puzzles and mindfulness for younger pupils, and cooking, performing arts, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) and sign language for senior pupils. Sporting opportunities are rotated seasonally. Participation in these activities helps to foster confidence, communication skills and resilience among pupils. Boarders benefit from a specific programme of evening and weekend activities such as surfing, kayaking, visits to local towns and in-house activities, for example cooking and board game evenings.

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

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

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

30. Pupils' emotional wellbeing is effectively supported. In the early years, children are supported to understand their emotions and the feelings of others. They learn about the importance of taking care of themselves and each other. As they get older, pupils benefit from peer support initiatives such as the 'buddy bench', which provides a practical mechanism for pupils to seek and offer assistance during times of need, reinforcing a culture of empathy and mutual support. When needed, leaders provide more specialist support for pupils, including related mental health support.
31. Pupils' self-esteem is actively supported and developed. Throughout the school, a nurturing environment is created in which pupils are equipped to show respect, care and consideration for their peers. Older pupils, through the curriculum, assemblies and tutor time, help learn to confidently manage periods of stress and anxiety. Pupils enjoy the opportunities given to take on roles of responsibility, such as prefect, boarding prefect or house captain, where they develop skills of leadership and learn the importance of co-operation. Collectively, these opportunities help pupils to develop self-confidence in their own abilities and positive relationships with others.
32. Through experiences in religious studies (RS) lessons, assemblies and whole-school singing, pupils collectively foster a sense of community and are given regular occasions for reflection. Teaching broadens pupils' understanding of different beliefs. Recent assemblies have focused on themes of personal responsibility and ethical impact, using a Sir David Attenborough quotation to prompt reflection. Classroom discussions further support pupils in exploring moral decision-making, particularly in relation to community safety, responsibility and respect.
33. The school delivers a well-structured programme of PSHE and RSE, which encompasses topics on relationships, respect and safeguarding. Pupils engage in respectful discussion of sensitive, age-appropriate matters, including social media, extremism, abuse and pornography. However, pupils' recollection of RSE content varies across year groups. Teachers do not check routinely that pupils understand the topics being taught and ensure that pupils are developing the rich understanding that they need.
34. There is a well-planned, well-delivered physical education (PE) curriculum. In the early years, children develop core strength and co-ordination through structured activities such as using balance bikes and ballet lessons. Older pupils develop their physical fitness and understanding of sports. The extensive extra-curricular sporting programme offers pupils opportunities in swimming, dodgeball, basketball and access to a well-equipped fitness suite. Many pupils engage in the school's football academy, which offers specialised training and a holistic programme of education focusing on physical and emotional wellbeing.
35. Leaders' approaches to behaviour and anti-bullying are well thought out and implemented effectively. Instances of poor behaviour are rare and pupils are confident that incidents are addressed swiftly and effectively, contributing to a safe and supportive environment. When incidents do occur, the school employs a restorative process that encourages pupils to acknowledge and take responsibility for their actions. The school actively promotes positive behaviour, for example through initiatives such as 'anti-bullying week'.

36. The school's admission and attendance procedures are highly effective. Leaders responsible for these areas have a comprehensive understanding of, and commitment to, the pupils in their care. All pupil absences are followed up effectively, including liaison with external agencies, as required. Pupils and parents are supported and challenged appropriately, ensuring pupils' safety and wellbeing. Leaders ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
37. Pupils benefit from a safe and caring environment. The premises are well kept, clean and well maintained. Health and safety and fire procedures are comprehensive and ensure a safe environment for the pupils and staff. The school provides appropriate first aid facilities and responsive care. There are many staff across the school who are trained in first aid, including in paediatric first aid. The school maintains comprehensive records. Pupils are adequately supervised, including in the early years.
38. Boarding pupils have good-quality sleeping and living accommodation that is comfortable and secure. Nutritious meals are provided in the refectory and there is access to snacks, fruit and drinks between mealtimes. Boarding staff establish warm and supportive relationships with boarders, contributing to their wellbeing and fostering a sense of belonging and community within the boarding houses.

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

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

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

40. The school actively promotes respect for diversity across the curriculum, including through PSHE and RS lessons. Through lessons, pupils engage in thoughtful reflection on the differences and similarities among individuals. Teachers employ diverse texts to facilitate the exploration of various cultures. Pupils study legal frameworks to clarify distinctions between freedom of expression and hate speech. The curriculum is enriched by assemblies on themes such as International Women's Day and Black History Month. As a result, pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and respect and to value people of diverse opinions, beliefs, faiths and life experiences.
41. Through the curriculum, pupils develop their understanding of important values such as democracy, the rule of law and equality. Pupils are taught about taking responsibility and the consequences of actions. They develop an understanding about the role of law courts and legislation. Assemblies, such as ones led by police officers, provide pupils with valuable perspectives on the law and their responsibilities as British citizens. External speakers provide a range of balanced viewpoints about different political, social and environmental issues. The voting system for prefects and house captains teaches pupils about democracy in practical ways. They learn about the people who help them in public professions, such as nurses.
42. Children's social awareness in the early years is very well supported. Children learn to follow golden rules, take turns, collaborate and seek help confidently. They develop essential social skills that ready them to transition to Year 1.
43. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to charitable activities supporting the local and wider communities, such as homeless charities, the local foodbank, Red Nose Day and Children in Need. Pupils campaign for the local environment, for example focusing on storm damage to the local pier. Community links are further strengthened, with pupils acting as sports ambassadors within local clubs and supporting community access to the school swimming pool by acting as qualified lifeguards. Pupils also take on roles and responsibilities in the school. For example, the democratically elected school council listens to and acts upon pupils' views. Their actions have brought many improvements for pupils across the school, such as the provision of ceramic lunch plates for Years 5 and 6, new playground equipment and new outdoor benches.
44. Pupils receive a comprehensive careers programme. This starts in the early years, where children learn about the different jobs that people do, such as their parents. As they get older, pupils benefit from careers days, which teach them, in an age-appropriate way, about the careers available. The curriculum is enriched by the use of an online careers platform, work-related learning, guest speakers and external organisations that provide additional career guidance. Pupils receive impartial and individual guidance about the range of education, training and employment opportunities available to them. They are well supported to make informed decisions about their next steps in line with their abilities, interests and aspirations. For example, many pupils benefit from targeted advice regarding pathways into professional football.
45. Pupils receive an appropriate curriculum that supports their economic education and understanding. This starts with the youngest children, who learn about the role of money in buying things. As they get older, pupils develop an understanding of investments, credit cards and banking. In the senior school, pupils learn about topics such as financial decision-making and gambling. Sixth-form pupils

benefit from a dedicated course on budgeting, equipping them with essential skills for their transition to adulthood. The co-curricular programme features an enterprise club, further supporting pupils' financial awareness and entrepreneurial skills.

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

46. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

47. The school's safeguarding policy reflects local and statutory requirements and is effectively implemented. It is reviewed annually, ratified by governors and available on the school's website. Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding undertakes an array of activities, including regular visits to the school site, review of documentation and annual audits of provision. Governors provide suitable challenge and support to ensure that leaders are taking appropriate action to safeguard pupils.
48. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained to undertake their roles, including in contextual safeguarding issues and in the 'Prevent' duty. They act quickly when issues are identified. When needed, they work effectively with external agencies, such as the local authority. Referrals are made in a timely manner and records are maintained appropriately.
49. Staff receive face-to-face safeguarding training at the start of the academic year and frequent updates thereafter. Leaders check staff understanding through scenarios and discussion. Staff are vigilant to the signs of concern and report these appropriately, including those of a low-level nature about adults working with pupils. Collectively, leaders and staff ensure that pupils receive timely support.
50. Pupils are safe and well supported. Pupils are taught how to stay safe through daily routines and the PSHE and RSE curriculum, which enables pupils to learn about sensitive issues, such as misogyny, hate speech and relationships, in a well-managed manner. They are provided with a range of ways in which they can report their concerns, including through an anonymous reporting system.
51. Pupils learn about online safety through PSHE and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons. Parents receive guidance on how to keep their children safe online and are invited to attend online safety events. Appropriate internet filtering and monitoring systems are in place and are routinely checked to ensure their effectiveness. Leaders respond promptly to any alerts or concerns.
52. Safeguarding arrangements in the boarding houses are effective. Staff supervise boarders appropriately and ensure that boarders are kept safe. Boarders are made aware of the role and contact details of an independent person. Boarding arrangements support effective communication between pupils and parents. Boarders are confident in reporting their concerns and that they will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.
53. Safer recruitment procedures are appropriate. The required pre-employment checks are completed on adults before they work with pupils. These checks are recorded accurately on the SCR. Governors check the thoroughness of the recruitment processes and the accuracy of recording.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Trinity School
Department for Education number	878/6010
Address	Trinity School Buckeridge Road Teignmouth Devon TQ14 8LY
Phone number	01626 774138
Email address	enquiries@trinityschool.co.uk
Website	www.trinityschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Alpha Schools (Holdings) Limited
Chair	Mr Ali Khan
Headteacher	Ms Kate Unsworth
Age range	2 to 19
Number of pupils	256
Number of boarding pupils	34
Date of previous inspection	23 to 27 April 2023

Information about the school

55. Trinity School is a co-educational boarding school for pupils aged 2 to 19 in Teignmouth, Devon. The proprietor is Alpha Schools (Holdings) Limited. Trustees take on roles on the board of governors. The school comprises the nursery, preparatory, senior and sixth-form sections. The current headteacher assumed her role in 2025.
56. The school accommodates boarders across two boarding houses, located on the school site. One boarding house is for boarders from Years 5 to 11. The second boarding house is for boarders in Years 12 and 13.
57. There are 33 children in the early years, comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
58. The school has identified 71 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 17 pupils in the school who have an education, health and care plan.
59. The school has identified English as an additional language for 17 pupils.
60. The school states its aims are to foster personal vision and integrity in its pupils, based on its core values of optimism, confidence and charity, while promoting leadership, accountability and an appreciation for community service. Pupils are highly engaged in learning, demonstrate inquisitiveness regarding global matters and cultivate the bravery and assurance necessary to participate in new activities, pursue challenges and build resilience.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

21 to 23 April 2026

61. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

62. 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.

63. 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**.

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For more information, please visit isi.net