

Progress monitoring inspection report

16 June 2026

Abbey College Manchester

5 – 7 Cheapside

Off King Street

Manchester

M2 4WG

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 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 2(1)(a) and 2(2)(a)

1. Since the previous inspection, leaders have put into place an appropriate updated curriculum incorporating physical education (PE). This provides a compulsory PE and recreational programme for all pupils under 16 and an optional programme for sixth-form pupils, in which many pupils in Years 12 and 13 choose to take part. All Year 10 and Year 11 pupils now have a minimum of one hour of timetabled PE activity every week. Governors are taking an active role in monitoring and evaluating the success of the implementation of the PE curriculum across all year groups.
2. Leaders have made arrangements for pupils to take part in a range of activities, such as football, basketball, badminton, table tennis, as well as having access to an indoor running track. These activities have proved to be popular with the pupils and, following pupil feedback, further opportunities are being made available to allow pupils to take part in dance and yoga as a part of the recreation programme.
3. The school meets the Standards.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a), 7(b), 8(a), 8(b), 13 and 14; NMS 8

4. Leaders effectively maintain an established culture of safeguarding, which takes suitable account of the needs of both day and boarding pupils. Leaders recognise contextual safeguarding risks and take appropriate action to mitigate these, taking particular account of the city centre location of the school.
5. Governors ensure that the school's safeguarding policy reflects statutory guidance. Governors and staff receive comprehensive safeguarding training and regular updates, including in relation to the 'Prevent' duty, relating to risks of radicalisation and extremism. Staff are clear about the action they should take should any disclosures be made or other safeguarding concerns arise. They know how to respond to low-level concerns about adults working in the school.
6. The safeguarding team responds to any concerns appropriately and in line with local and national requirements. They keep detailed and accurate logs of concerns and of actions taken in response, including records of any external professional advice sought. When appropriate, leaders refer concerns to the relevant agencies, such as children's services, the local authority and the police, in a timely manner. Those with safeguarding responsibilities hold regular meetings, including with the group safeguarding governor. Leaders seek and act on advice from external agencies following reviews into school safeguarding procedures.
7. Pupils feel well supported and safe in school and know who to go to if they need to discuss a worry or concern. They acquire a well-developed understanding of how to stay safe, including when online, through the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme. Leaders implement a robust internet filtering and monitoring system which prevents pupils from accessing

inappropriate content or harmful social media, including when using electronic devices to support their learning.

8. Leaders oversee the effective implementation of a suitable first aid policy to support pupils who require first aid treatment. They draw up clear and appropriate guidelines governing the administration of medicines to pupils.
9. Boarders are well looked after in a caring and stimulating environment. They are supported by warm relationships with residential staff, which helps promote their wellbeing. Boarders, many of whom are international, have access to a wide range of activities, including a weekend activity programme, which enhances their experience of school life.
10. Leaders implement an effective safer recruitment process to ensure that all required pre-employment checks are carried out, including pre-employment checks for boarding staff. The single central record of appointments provides an accurate record of these checks, and staff files contain the required information. Governors monitor and support this process to ensure that practices are robust.
11. Leaders ensure that suitable levels of supervision are maintained throughout the school day and for the overnight accommodation of boarders. Staff are deployed with regard to pupils' ages and needs and are always available should pupils require support. Appropriate supervision levels are maintained when pupils are engaged in sport or recreation activities away from the main school site. Duty staff are available on site before school, during break and lunch periods and after school for the supervision of clubs or societies.
12. The school meets the Standards.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraphs 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)

13. Following the previous inspection, leaders have increased the opportunities available for all pupils to access a number of public recreation areas that are in close proximity to the school. Leaders have introduced weekly wellbeing walks to local parkland areas within the city. This a compulsory weekly activity for all pupils and is part of the PSHE curriculum's focus on mental health and wellbeing. The outside spaces provide pupils with access to seating areas and climbing and recreation equipment. These recreation and relaxation areas make available suitable outdoor provision for use by the pupils.
14. Leaders have made suitable arrangements to conduct PE lessons in a number of local sports complexes close to the college.
15. The school meets the Standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

16. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published appropriately on the school's website and are accessible to parents.
17. The school meets the Standard.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

18. Leaders have fully and successfully implemented the action plan following the previous inspection.
19. Following the previous inspection, the governors and senior leaders have adopted a more strategic approach to ensure increased rigour in monitoring the school's effectiveness in meeting the Standards. They have made effective use of the support of specialist external professionals and the expertise of members of the Abbey group of schools. This has facilitated an improvement in leaders' skills and knowledge so that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively. As a result, the Standards which were the focus of the inspection are met, including those relating to the PE curriculum and the provision of outdoor space for pupils.
20. Governors visit the school regularly so that they can see for themselves the impact of leaders' work. An effective committee structure enables governors to assure themselves that leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively, including the implementation of the action plan to address the unmet Standards identified at the previous inspection. Governors ensure that leaders monitor and implement school policy and practice in line with current statutory guidance. This enables governors and senior leaders to work together to consistently and actively support and promote the welfare and wellbeing of pupils.
21. The school meets the Standards.

School details

School	Abbey College Manchester
Department for Education number	352/6044
Address	Abbey College Manchester 5 – 7 Cheapside Off King Street Manchester M2 4WG
Phone number	0161 817 2700
Email address	admin@abbeymanchester.co.uk
Website	www.abbeymanchester.co.uk
Proprietor	Abbey DLD Colleges Ltd
Chair	Mr Tim Haynes
Executive Principal	Mr James Kidd
Age range	14 to 23
Number of pupils	154
Number of boarding pupils	64
Date of previous inspection	3 to 5 March 2026

Information about the school

22. Abbey College Manchester is an independent co-educational day and boarding school, mostly providing short courses leading to GCSE, A level or further education qualifications. The school is located in the city centre of Manchester, occupying seven floors of a modern office block. It is owned and governed by Abbey DLD Colleges Ltd.
23. The school arranges lodgings with local host families for pupils below the age of 16 on admission. Older pupils may choose to stay with a host family or in boarding accommodation, which is situated within a 10-minute walk from the school
24. The school has identified 43 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Five pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
25. The school has identified English as an additional language for 99 pupils.
26. The school states that its aims are to guide pupils to achieve academic success and fulfil their aspirations. It seeks to provide a friendly, safe and supportive environment where pupils grow in confidence, learn to make informed decisions and make a positive contribution to the community.

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

16 June 2026

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

28. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- a tour of the school site to view PE and recreation facilities
- discussion with the chair of governors
- discussions with the principal, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

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