

Progress monitoring inspection report

20 March 2026

Austin Friars

Etterby Scaur

Carlisle

CA3 9PB

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); EYFS 3.5, 3.30 and 3.32

1. Staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, and the safeguarding culture is well-embedded. The safeguarding policy fulfils the requirements of current statutory guidance and leaders ensure it is implemented effectively.
2. Members of the safeguarding team are suitably trained in line with the local authority's safeguarding procedures. They understand the contextual risks to the pupils in their care. The safeguarding and pastoral teams meet weekly to monitor any concerns relating to pupil welfare.
3. Staff throughout the school are well trained in safeguarding procedures. Every two years all staff complete a formal online safeguarding course, which is in addition to annual training and weekly safeguarding updates. Since the previous inspection, leaders have effectively put in place an online system for recording all staff training, which enables them to monitor when staff need updates on specific aspects of safeguarding such as the 'Prevent' duty that relates to risks of radicalisation and extremism. New staff take part in a well organised and comprehensive induction programme so that they are clear about the school's safeguarding arrangements.
4. Staff know pupils well and identify changes of behaviour which could indicate a potential safeguarding concern. They report to the safeguarding team and record their concerns using the school's online system. This is done in a timely and appropriate way. This allows the safeguarding team to be proactive in putting in place early and effective support. They seek and act 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 taken and decisions made.
5. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow should there be any concerns about, or allegations against, adults working at the school. Since the previous inspection, leaders have put in place an updated and appropriate low level concerns policy and a more detailed recording log for those concerns. This allows leaders to monitor, review and take appropriate action when such concerns are reported, including providing members of staff with additional support and training if needed. Leaders understand reporting thresholds, 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. 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 policies and procedures including through detailed written reports from the safeguarding team and visits to the school to scrutinise records such as the staff low-level concerns log. The governing board discuss

safeguarding issues with leaders at their termly meetings. They undertake a formal review of the safeguarding policy and its implementation at least annually.

8. The school meets the Standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

9. 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.
10. The school meets the Standards.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

ISSR paragraph 33; EYFS 3.98

11. Since the previous inspection leaders have updated the complaints policy which is available on the school's website and applies to all sections of the school. It clearly outlines the stages and timescales of actions implemented by leaders in the case of any complaint. All complaints, both formal and informal, are now recorded in detail on an electronic complaints log, which was put in place after the last inspection. The complaints policy is now effectively implemented within published timescales. Records of complaints are kept securely and are reviewed by leaders to identify any patterns which may emerge and this informs their actions and future planning. The log of complaints is reviewed appropriately by governors on a termly basis.
12. The school meets the Standards.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34

13. Leaders have effectively implemented the school's action plan to ensure compliance with the Standards which were not met at the previous inspection. They have established a systematic and rigorous online system to record and monitor staff safeguarding training. This allows them to efficiently monitor training requirements for members of staff. Leaders have also now put in place suitably detailed logs to record low-level concerns about members of staff and complaints raised by parents at the school. Leaders review these records on a regular basis to ensure any lessons are learnt and appropriate actions are taken.
14. 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, staff training and complaints. 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 and to ensure that the Standards which were the focus of this inspection are met.
15. The school meets the Standards.

School details

School	Austin Friars
Department for Education number	942/6032
Registered charity number	516289
Address	Austin Friars Etterby Scour Carlisle Cumbria CA3 9PB
Phone number	01228 528042
Email address	office@austinfriars.co.uk
Website	www.austinfriars.co.uk
Proprietor	Austin Friars
Chair	Mr Ewen Swinton
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Hattam
Age range	3 to 18
Number of pupils	284
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 October 2025

Information about the school

16. Austin Friars is a co-educational day school located in Carlisle, Cumbria. The school consists of a junior school for pupils aged 3 to 11 years and a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 18 years, which includes a sixth form. The school is overseen by a board of governors.
17. There are 26 children in the early years setting, comprising one Nursery class and one Reception class.
18. The school has identified 71 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
19. The school has identified 18 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
20. The school states its aims are to provide an excellent all-round education inspired by its Augustinian values of unity, truth and love. It intends to nurture the individuality of each pupil while challenging them to discover and develop their ability to think critically, solve problems and learn independently.

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, Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and any other requirements that the school was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

20 March 2026

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

22. 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 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

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