

Report summary for parents and carers on Haberdashers' Monmouth School

Date of inspection: 02/02/2026

Summary

Haberdashers' Monmouth School was formed in 2024. Since the appointment of the new head in September 2025, senior leaders and governors have worked with coherence and purpose to unite the identities of the former schools and establish a clear strategic vision. They have drawn upon internal and external expertise to identify strengths within the school, including strong pastoral care, well-being provision and well-qualified specialist teaching staff, and have prioritised improvements in curriculum design and pedagogy. Development plans for the prep and senior phases are complementary and outline well-sequenced actions, though the impact of these early changes is not yet fully evident.

Leadership capacity is developing, particularly among middle leaders who feel trusted and empowered. Professional development is increasingly focused on pedagogy and supported by collaboration with partner schools. Quality assurance processes are developing. However, internal monitoring does not always focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on learning. Governance provides valuable expertise and challenge. However, weaknesses in oversight have led to statutory non-compliance in relation to staff checks, and as a result the school does not currently meet all Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

The curriculum across all phases is broad, balanced and enriched by extensive co-curricular opportunities. The prep school offers a well-sequenced curriculum supported by a strong skills framework, while the senior school provides a wide range of academic and vocational pathways, complemented by a vibrant enrichment programme. Exceptional sporting and performing arts provision is in place across the school.

Prep pupils make strong progress because of clear routines, strong relationships and responsive teaching, though occasional over-direction limits their independence. Senior and sixth form pupils develop strong communication skills and progress in many subject-specific skills developed securely.

Across the school, teaching is effective. The most effective lessons are dynamic and challenging, and a strong culture of reading is evident. However, where teaching is less effective, teaching is overly prescriptive and provides limited opportunities for pupils to learn and respond independently.

Pastoral care is a significant strength of the school. Pupils feel safe, supported and welcomed and safeguarding systems are well-structured and understood. The emerging 'Futures Programme' supports preparation for next steps and guidance for GCSE, Sixth Form and university pathways is particularly strong.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made three recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Comply fully with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024
- R2 Build on existing effective practice to improve the consistency and quality of teaching
- R3 Strengthen opportunities within lessons for pupils to develop as independent learners

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Full Report

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#).

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