



Inspectie van het Onderwijs
Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur
en Wetenschap

Haagsche Schoolvereniging Foundation

This report is a translation of the original Dutch report, which can be found at <https://toezichtresultaten.onderwijsinspectie.nl/zoek?q=95694&page=1>

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Board review

Date of adoption: 22 May 2026

Summary

Between March and April 2026, the Education Inspectorate carried out a board investigation at the Hague School Association Foundation (hereinafter: HSV) and the schools under its leadership.

At HSV, we investigated whether the board's oversight of the quality of education at the schools is adequate and whether sound financial management is in place (see the 2021 Investigation Framework).

Final assessment

We rate the quality of HSV's governance, quality assurance and ambition as 'Satisfactory'. All standards examined are rated 'Satisfactory', and we rate the BKA 2 standard on Implementation and Quality Culture as 'Good'.

Context

HSV is a school board in The Hague comprising three schools, spread across different departments and locations. The board currently has one school consisting of a Dutch department, a mainstream internationally oriented department and an internationally-oriented special educational needs department. This school also includes a department affiliated with the Royal Conservatoire, for pupils in Years 7 and 8 with specific talents. The second school is a school for special primary education. The third school is a mainstream primary school with a department for pupils in the upper years with specific support needs, focusing on dyslexia and dyscalculia.

What is going well?

The Haagsche Schoolvereniging Foundation has drawn up a widely supported vision for good education and translated this into ambitions and objectives.

Together with the schools, the board is realising the objectives for quality, ensures the necessary conditions are in place and makes effective adjustments. In addition, the board aims to foster a culture of quality, centred on collaboration between nationally and internationally oriented education, with a focus on language, culture and global citizenship. The board is also delivering on this ambition by ensuring distributed leadership within the organisation and promoting collaboration. As a result, we routinely rate 'Implementation' and 'Culture of Quality' as 'Good'. Furthermore, the board systematically evaluates and analyses whether it is achieving its objectives and is accountable for this. It adjusts its policy and engages internal and external stakeholders in a well-functioning dialogue.

Board:

95694 - Stichting Haagsche Schoolvereniging

Number of schools under the board's management: 3

List of schools/courses where we have carried out verification activities:
05VW | C1 de Haagsche Schoolvereniging
15DG | C1 Willemsparkschool

Financial management is sound and transparent. The board is able to meet, in both the short and medium term, the financial obligations associated with providing high-quality education. Furthermore, the board has a good understanding of the key internal and external financial developments and takes corrective action where necessary. When making financial decisions, the board actively involves relevant sections of the organisation, ensuring that decisions are made carefully, enjoy broad support and are well-founded.

What could be improved?

The board could consider refining the measurable or observable indicators linked to the set objectives. This would provide the schools, the supervisory body and the representative bodies with more management information and greater clarity regarding what can be expected of one another. The board could also strengthen its quality policy by specifying more clearly which indicators it takes into account and what its expectations are in this regard, so that the schools know exactly what they are required to account for.

The strategic focus of the multi-year budget could be improved. Specifically, the multi-year budget lacks a link between financial resources and strategic objectives. Furthermore, in its annual reporting, the board could provide a clearer account of how the internal risk management system is structured, how it operates and what results it has delivered. Finally, the informational value of the internal auditor's report on the oversight of the effective use of resources could be improved.

Follow-up supervision

We assess the quality of HSV's governance, quality assurance and ambition as 'Satisfactory'. The board is subject to regular supervision. This means that we carry out an annual performance and risk analysis of the board, which may lead to an investigation. The board may also be eligible for a board visit.

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1. Scope of the board investigation

This chapter begins by setting out the background and purpose of the board investigation. We then describe the scope of the investigation and the investigative activities. We conclude the chapter with a guide to reading this report.

1.1 Reason

Between March and April 2026, the Inspectorate carried out a board investigation at HSV and the schools falling under its remit (Article 11(3) of the Education Supervision Act). The reason for this investigation is that HSV is a governing body comprising various schools and departments, including mainstream primary education, special needs primary education, bilingual primary education, international primary education, international special needs education and primary education for pupils with specific educational needs. In our annual performance and risk analysis, we receive limited information regarding the internationally oriented institutions. We have not recently carried out any investigations into various underlying entities subject to supervision. Due to the methodology, we employ when conducting random inspections or visits to schools, there is little chance that one of the entities subject to supervision will be selected. This has prompted us to carry out a board investigation.

The administrative investigation focuses on the following research questions:

1. Does the board ensure quality in the schools through its management and oversight?
2. Is there sound financial management?

1.2 Content and methodology

The audit focuses on the standards set out below at board level.

Standard	Assessed
Governance, Quality Assurance and Ambition	
GQA1. Vision, ambitions and objectives	•
GQA2. Implementation and quality culture	•
GQA3. Evaluation, accountability and dialogue	•

To answer the research questions, we carry out verification activities at school and board level. We may also involve other stakeholders in this process.

1.3 Research activities

Prior to the on-site investigation, we analysed the information already available. Examples of this include any indications of concern and documents previously provided by the board. We tailored the board investigation at HSV to the specific circumstances, and it comprises the following investigative activities.

Discussions with governing bodies

To gain a detailed understanding of how the board monitors educational quality, identifies risks in a timely manner and ensures high-quality education at the schools through its quality assurance system, we conduct interviews with various levels of the board. The following aspects are central to this process:

1. Director and location leaders. In this discussion, we examine how the board monitors the quality of education at the schools. We discuss the tasks delegated by the board and how the directors and location leaders report to the board.

2. Financial manager/ controller. In this discussion, we focus on how the board sets up a system to identify financial risks in a timely manner. For verification purposes, we will examine, amongst other things, the multi-year budget, the planning and control cycle (hereinafter: P&C cycle), the internal risk management and control system – including the control measures for any risks identified by the board – and the quality of the annual reporting. We will discuss how the board monitors financial data, which indicators it uses to identify risks, and how this information is fed back to the board and the schools. In addition, we will examine the role of the controller in ensuring financial stability and how this contributes to the quality of education.

These verification activities provide us with an insight into how the board ensures governance and risk management, thereby safeguarding the quality of education and financial continuity.

Discussions with the internal supervisor and the joint participation council

In our discussions with the supervisory board (hereinafter: SB) and the joint participation council (hereinafter: JPC), we aim to examine in greater depth the role they play within the governing body with regard to risks. We are examining the extent to which they are involved in both risks relating to the quality of education and financial risks. In addition, we are examining the role of these bodies in relation to the educational quality system and the impact of this system. We are looking at how the SB and the JPC monitor the quality processes established by the board and how they fulfil their roles.

These verification activities enable us to gain an understanding of how internal oversight and participation are organised and whether they thereby comply with the statutory requirements.

Verification activities at schools

We carry out verification activities at a selection of schools. These verification activities include, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. A meeting with the school leaders and, where applicable, coordinators, to discuss the educational process, safety and the quality assurance system.
2. A follow-up meeting with the leadership team regarding the board's oversight and guidance.
3. A tour led by pupils, during which we ask them about their well-being at school.

Through these verification activities, we gain an understanding, from the perspective of the school leaders and pupils, of the board's objectives and how these are implemented in practice.

No need for signal-driven activities

When preparing for each inspection, we review any reports that have been received by the inspectorate. Sometimes this affects how the inspection is carried out. We have not received any reports concerning HSV and its schools that require follow-up.

1.4 Guide

Chapter 2 sets out the final assessment at board level and the assessments against the standards in the 'Governance, quality assurance and ambition' quality area. The agreements regarding follow-up supervision are set out in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 contains the board's policy response to the investigation and the report. This describes how the board will incorporate the findings of the investigation into the further development of educational quality.

2. Results of the board investigation

In this chapter, we present the results of the board investigation.

Summary assessment

The results are summarised in the figure below. It shows the final assessment at board level and the assessments against the underlying standards.



We assess the quality of HSV's governance, quality assurance and ambition as 'Satisfactory'. This assessment is the result of the decision-making criteria applied by the Inspectorate. The criterion leading to the 'Satisfactory' assessment is as follows:

All three standards within the 'Governance, quality assurance and ambition' quality area are rated at least 'Satisfactory'.

Context

HSV is a governing body comprising three schools in The Hague. Within these three schools, there are various departments focusing on mainstream education, internationally oriented primary education (hereinafter: IOPE) and education for pupils with specific educational needs. The board as a whole is subject to Dutch supervision, although there are specific laws and regulations governing IOPE in the areas of finance. International education receives funding from three sources: standard funding for primary education, supplementary funding for IOPE and parental contributions for IOPE. These parental contributions are not voluntary. Standard funding and supplementary funding constitute public revenue. IOPE parental contributions constitute private revenue and may be used by the board to a limited extent for staffing purposes, namely for additional or specialist staff, such as native-speaking teachers or additional support staff for the educational provision specifically associated with the international character of the department.

2.1. Governance, quality assurance and ambition

In the table below, we set out the assessments and ratings against the standards in the 'Governance, quality assurance and ambition' quality area. We then provide an explanation of these assessments.

GOVERNANCE, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND AMBITION	O	S	G
GQA1 Vision, ambitions and objectives		•	
GQA2 Implementation and quality culture			•
GQA3 Evaluation, accountability and dialogue		•	

GQA1. Vision, ambitions and objectives

We rate this standard as 'Satisfactory'. The board has a vision for quality, has set out ambitions and objectives to achieve this, and is working towards realising them. An explanation follows below.

The board has translated the vision into appropriate ambitions and objectives

HSV has a widely supported vision of good education and actively promotes this. The board sets out this vision in its strategic policy, which it has drawn up collaboratively. In the strategic policy, the board has translated this vision into clear ambitions and objectives. The policy is not merely a paper exercise, but has a clear impact on the entire organisation. For instance, the board considers it important that the strategic direction leads to concrete school plans and their implementation on the ground. We have seen evidence of this in the documents and heard this from various interviewees.

The objectives formulated by the board in the strategic policy are sufficiently concrete. Nevertheless, the board could consider refining them into measurable or observable indicators. This would provide the schools, the supervisory body and the staff representative body with more management information and clarity regarding what can be expected of one another.

The quality assurance system contributes to the quality of education

HSV has a quality assurance system through which it ensures and monitors compliance with the statutory requirements for the educational provision, the teaching and learning process, and the outcomes. The board has performance targets for both national and international education. The Executive Board is kept well informed on these matters by two cluster directors and retrieves data from various administrative systems. From discussions with the Executive Board, the Supervisory Board and the school leaders, combined with the insight provided by the director regarding, for example, the results achieved, we conclude that the board has established a system that works and ensures the provision of accurate information. This enables all levels of the organisation to fulfil their respective responsibilities.

The board could strengthen the quality assurance system by explicitly setting out in the quality policy which indicators and supporting documents form part of the quality assurance system. It is currently working very well, as the board has focused specifically on the quality assurance system in recent years. As a result, everyone in the organisation is able to clearly explain which indicators are important and what the board expects from them. However, this is not set out in the current quality policy. To ensure continuity in the event of staff changes and structural changes, a refinement of the quality policy could be the next step, making the indicators and expected outcomes clear and easily accessible to all stakeholders.

Overview of key internal and external financial developments

The board's financial position is sound and stable, and we see no risks to financial continuity in the short and medium term. In the longer term, however, the board anticipates a number of financial challenges, particularly as a result of an expected decline in pupil numbers in international education.

The Board has identified these developments and, as a result, has a clear understanding of the risks involved. It is taking targeted measures, including working with target figures for expenditure and maintaining a higher level of financial resilience. Staff policy has also been adapted accordingly.

The quarterly reports that have been developed enable the board to monitor the most important internal financial developments, allowing it to make adjustments where necessary. This enables the board to respond proactively to future changes.

Multi-year budget could be more policy-driven

We have noted that, whilst the board has included ambitions regarding policy-driven budgeting in the strategic policy plan, it has not explicitly elaborated on these in the multi-year budget or the annual report in terms of available budgets or a direct link to the allocation of resources. In the internal multi-year budget, policy choices are visible in certain areas, particularly within human resources policy, but a comprehensive link to the strategic objectives is lacking.

In the multi-year budget, it is important for the board to link financial resources to the strategic objectives. This makes it clear whether sufficient financial resources are available to achieve the strategic objectives. We therefore ask the board to pay greater attention in future annual reports to explicitly linking strategic objectives and the allocation of financial resources.

Internal risk management and control system is functioning

We have established that risk identification and management form part of the P&C cycle. Once every three years, the board identifies the key risks in consultation with the directors and the Supervisory Board. In addition, the board discusses risks periodically with both the directors and the Supervisory Board, taking new developments and priorities into account. In practice, the Board implements risk management in various ways. Risks are monitored, discussed and, where necessary, addressed with control measures. Attention is paid to educational, personnel and financial risks alike.

Although risk identification and management are embedded in the P&C cycle, the Board could present a clearer and more coherent description of this in its annual reports. We ask the Board to provide a better description in future annual reports of how the internal risk management system is structured, how it functions in practice and what results it has achieved.

GQA2. Implementation and quality culture

We rate the standard as 'Good'. Together with the schools, the board achieves the quality objectives, ensures the necessary conditions are in place and makes effective adjustments. Furthermore, the board aims to foster a culture of quality, focused on collaboration between nationally and internationally oriented education, with an emphasis on language, culture and global citizenship. The board is successfully realising this ambition. An explanation follows below.

HSV is working purposefully towards a transparent and ethical culture of quality based on shared responsibility

In recent years, the board has fostered a transparent and ethical culture of quality centred on collaboration, thereby fostering greater unity and a sense of community within a rich cultural environment. HSV's motto, *'In varietate unitas!'* – *'Through connection, unity is created without uniformity, and diversity with inclusion'* – clearly reflects this ambition. The board has ensured that the natural differences arising from varying curriculum requirements and cultural backgrounds are brought together within a shared vision and a focus on commonalities rather than differences. A fine example of this is the commitment to high-quality education based on international research in the fields of pedagogy and didactics, which is applicable to both nationally and internationally oriented education. At the administrative level, members of the leadership team collaborate in subject-specific working groups. These, in turn, interact with working groups at school level, with team members working together on the same topics. We have heard this in various discussions and have also observed it in the schools.

A culture of quality based on distributed leadership

The board has established a structure that ensures distributed leadership within the organisation. In line with its administrative responsibilities, the executive board has delegated educational leadership to two directors. These directors provide leadership to the location leaders of various departments and sites. Although the location leaders do not report directly to the board regarding the quality of education, they do find the board approachable. This enables them to seek input and put questions to the board when necessary.

In addition, the board has established various structures to ensure knowledge-sharing and educational development. For example, alongside working groups, there are also networking meetings, such as those for internal counsellors. The board also facilitates joint training opportunities. Furthermore, the board has established consultation structures for all members of management, but there are also separate meetings for the Dutch and international departments. "Separately where necessary, jointly where possible," as one of the school leaders put it.

The board is making adjustments

Although the structures put in place work well for HSV, evolving insights and the dynamic environment make change necessary. For instance, the board recognises that current global politics are affecting the number of pupils who meet the IOPE criteria. For example, pupil numbers are falling because parents are deciding to stay in the Netherlands. In such cases, pupils are not permitted to remain at an IOPE school and must transfer to mainstream education. The board is responding to this by, for example, expanding the options for bilingual primary education (BPE). The board is offering staff members who wish to make the transition from international education to BPE the opportunity to gain the necessary skills.

In addition, the board recognises that complex and increasingly stringent education legislation makes it difficult to deliver more specialised education within a separate department. Consequently, the board has decided to disseminate this knowledge and experience more widely within the schools and, where possible, to collaborate with other school boards in the area.

HSV contributes to more inclusive education for international pupils

By offering specialised education to pupils eligible for IOPE, HSV contributes to more inclusive education and a comprehensive support network. Although education legislation does not recognise the combination of specialised education and IOPE, HSV, together with the partnership, has created a solution for international pupils with specific educational needs that go beyond basic support. Here too, we see a board that is committed to collaboration for the benefit of pupils, both internally and externally.

Cooperation between the executive board and the internal oversight body is constructive and critical

In consultation with the board, the internal oversight body has worked on an up-to-date oversight vision and developed this into an oversight framework. Both the Supervisory Board and the Executive Board indicated that there is a constructive, critical dialogue based on mutual trust, with a focus on critical success factors. The Supervisory Board collaborates on this through various committees. In addition, the Supervisory Board also consults with the Joint Parents' Council (JPC) and visits the schools. It also consults with the school and site heads of HSV. In this way, the Supervisory Board ensures that it remains informed about developments within the organisation and how the Executive Board functions.

Supervisory Board monitors the effective use of resources

The annual report states that the Supervisory Board oversees the efficient use of resources. However, the Supervisory Board does not provide further details on how this oversight is organised and carried out. The investigation shows that, in practice, the Supervisory Board does fulfil this role. The Supervisory Board has explained verbally how it organises this oversight. We encourage the Supervisory Board to also account for this in its annual report.

GQA3. Evaluation, accountability and dialogue

We rate the standard as 'Satisfactory'. The board systematically evaluates and analyses whether it is achieving its objectives and reports on this. It adjusts its policy and engages internal and external stakeholders in a well-functioning dialogue.

The board evaluates and analyses the implementation of its policy

The board evaluates and assesses the extent to which it is achieving its ambitions, objectives and policies. This enables the board to monitor the (financial) quality achieved and the outcomes of the education provided to pupils. When evaluating and assessing policy and the quality of education, the board actively seeks out external information and uses this in its evaluation and assessment; it also carries out a self-evaluation. Based on these evaluations, the board responds promptly to potential opportunities and threats. For example, the board has responded proactively to falling pupil numbers and tighter restrictions on the use of private and public funds. This has led to changes in the educational provision and the dissemination of knowledge and skills throughout the organisation.

The board is accountable

Each year, the board publishes an accurate, up-to-date and publicly accessible annual report, in which it accounts for the quality achieved. The accountability set out in the annual report is reliable and the content of the annual report complies with statutory requirements. In the report, the board accounts for the educational provision, the teaching and learning process, the assessment methods and financial management.

HSV engages in dialogue with internal and external stakeholders

The board also organises dialogue with internal and external stakeholders regarding results achieved and policy adjustments. This involves, at the very least, pupils, parents, staff and the internal supervisor. An example of this is the way in which the board has approached the reorganisation of the organisation. We have heard in our discussions that the board has involved all stakeholders in this process in a clear and transparent manner. The director is approachable and accessible to all staff members.

The board actively collaborates with other parties

The board actively collaborates with other parties on objectives that go beyond the board's own interests and relate to its core functions. The board actively contributes to the agreements set out in the support plan of the partnership for inclusive education, for example by offering specialised education for international pupils.

2.2. Agreements and follow-up supervision

We have not identified any shortcomings in compliance with statutory requirements. The board is subject to regular supervision. This means that we carry out an annual performance and risk analysis of the board, which may lead to an investigation. The board may also be eligible for a brief board visit.

3. Response from the board

The board's policy response is set out below, describing how the findings and assessments from the inspection will be incorporated into the further development of educational quality.

We look back on an intensive and valuable inspection. The inspectors examined our organisation with an open and critically constructive eye.

We recognise ourselves in the findings of the inspection and are proud that our quality culture has been rated 'good'. This confirms that we are on the right track.

We have immediately implemented the recommendations regarding the annual report in the 2025 annual report. We will be working on the recommendation to further refine our ambitions through measurable and tangible indicators from the start of the next academic year. We will also be acting on the recommendation to make our multi-year budget even more policy-driven by further elaborating the link between financial resources and strategic objectives.

As executive director, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this excellent result.

