

School inspection report

4 to 6 June 2024

Staines Preparatory School

3 Gresham Road
Staines upon Thames
Surrey
TW18 2BT

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. The leadership team effectively promotes the education and wellbeing of pupils. They demonstrate suitable knowledge, skills and understanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. The leaders are held accountable for the quality of the school through effective oversight and appropriate challenge by the governors.
2. The curriculum is designed to deliver the school values, as clearly outlined in the 'Staines Prep Way'. Pupils achieve well across a wide range of subjects. To expand pupils' learning experiences, there is an extensive extra-curricular programme.
3. Children in the early years develop secure numeracy skills and effective letter formation. High-quality teaching about the sounds that letters make enables children to make good progress with their emerging decoding and writing skills. This is built upon as pupils progress through lower and upper school, where they demonstrate fluency in their reading and oracy and are able to solve more complex mathematical problems.
4. Learning support provision across the school is a significant strength. Leaders have implemented an extensive training programme for learning support assistants (LSAs), which has resulted in the provision of highly skilled and effective support that has a significant impact on the progress made by pupils across the school. Pupils' individual needs are consistently met, securing very high levels of engagement, progress and behaviour for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
5. The support for pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing is successful. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme is typically effective. However, the oldest pupils' understanding of healthy relationships is not developed in as much depth as possible.
6. Pupils are encouraged to develop roles of responsibilities as they progress through the school. Older pupils 'buddy-up' with younger pupils to provide them with support. House captains, school council and eco-committee suggest and implement ways to improve their school community and raise awareness of global issues. Pupils appreciate and respect equality and diversity and are well-prepared for their next stage in education.
7. Required health and safety checks are carried out effectively, and the premises are well maintained. Appropriate measures ensure that risks are well managed. Health and safety procedures are implemented in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.
8. Safeguarding arrangements are effective, with all staff, including the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), being appropriately trained. Governors' training ensures that they are updated about current statutory guidance and requirements. Governors oversee safeguarding effectively.

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 that the RSE programme develops the oldest pupils' understanding of healthy relationships in as much depth as possible.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders and governors effectively fulfil their responsibilities to ensure that the school consistently meets all Standards and promotes the wellbeing of pupils effectively. Governors maintain clear oversight of all aspects of school life. This is achieved by attending events, providing constructive feedback, and challenging leaders about the effectiveness of policies and procedures.
10. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. They ensure that no pupils are discriminated against. A suitable accessibility plan is in place.
11. Leaders and staff are appropriately trained in recognising and minimising risk. Leaders manage risk systematically and systematically, utilising their knowledge and skills to anticipate and mitigate potential issues. They ensure that all risk assessments, both for on- and off-site, are suitably recorded and regularly reviewed. This diligent process extends to individualised risk assessments for pupils.
12. Leaders and staff are committed to running the school in accordance with the ‘Staines Prep Way’, which is built upon the promotion of the values of honesty, listening, sharing, forgiveness, kindness, respect, and being the best you can be. These aims are communicated effectively to parents, pupils and staff, and reflected in clear policies and their consistent implementation by staff.
13. Early years leaders emphasise the importance of building positive relationships between adults and children which effectively facilitates a smooth transition for new children joining the setting, and a feeling of security for children in their care.
14. Leaders utilise their skills and knowledge highly efficiently to provide very well planned and effective learning support that is highly beneficial to pupils. Leaders ensure that LSAs are thoroughly trained for their role. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of learning support rigorously to ensure that it consistently enables pupils who have SEND to make rapid progress. Leaders also maintain effective links with external agencies and professionals involved in providing support particular pupils in the school.
15. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities carry out their roles effectively. They ensure that suitable safeguarding procedures and that all staff are appropriately trained. When appropriate, leaders liaise with relevant external agencies about safeguarding concerns that are raised.
16. Parents are provided with appropriate information via the school website. Leaders regularly communicate about pupils’ progress to parents, including through termly parents’ evenings and annual written reports. Leaders provide the local authority with the required information relating to pupils who have education, health and care (EHC) plans.
17. Leaders ensure that parents have clear lines of communication to share any concerns with the school. Such concerns are promptly addressed and leaders take swift action to try to resolve matters at the earliest opportunity, communicating clearly with parents throughout the process. All complaints are managed within the timescales communicated in the school’s policy, and any actions taken by the school in response to complaints are carefully considered, appropriately communicated and recorded thoroughly.

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

18. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

19. Pupils receive a broad, challenging and age-appropriate curriculum that covers a suitably broad range of subjects and is tailored to meet the individual needs of pupils. Specialist teachers and other staff collaborate to identify and implement effective and engaging strategies to support pupils in developing their social, emotional and academic skills. A bespoke programme is made available to supplement the individual needs of pupils with high prior attainment.
20. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this to challenge, educate and interest pupils, enabling them to achieve outcomes beyond age-related expectations. Lessons make effective use of time and resources of high quality and pupils are consistently encouraged to think in depth and be creative in applying the subject-specific skills that they learn. Pupils respond positively to their teachers' high expectations. They are consistently on task, listen attentively and make good progress.
21. Pupils who have SEND are extremely well supported and challenged because of the highly effective learning support provided and the detailed oversight of their progress. LSAs receive extensive training and play a key role in classroom planning. Before pupils start at school, LSAs, under the guidance of the leader of provision for pupils who have SEND, are involved in evaluating pupils' individual needs in depth and preparing early additional support. The support then provided to these pupils enables them to engage with their learning very well, demonstrate positive behaviour, and make rapid progress from their starting points.
22. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are assessed to evaluate the level support needed. Where appropriate, their literacy skills are prioritised to enable full access to the school curriculum. One-to-one support is also provided when required. This support accelerates the pupils' comprehension skills highly effectively.
23. In early years, children are provided with an engaging and stimulating learning environment where they can freely move between enticing activities. Staff use a thematic approach to deliver all seven areas of learning. Guided by experienced and knowledgeable leaders, staff deliver a tailored curriculum that is adapted to meet the individual needs of the children and reflect their personal interests. All staff, including LSAs, have a detailed knowledge of the children in their care and monitor their progress closely. They provide well-judged and timed support, enabling children to explore and observe carefully and express their perspectives. Consequently, children in early years make good progress.
24. Detailed assessment data is methodically recorded and tracked. Starting from Nursery and progressing through the school years, leaders use this data to check if pupils are meeting expectations and to inform any required targeted support. Pupils consistently perform above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally.
25. The school's co-curricular provision is diverse and well-attended. It includes a selection of sporting activities, such as dodgeball and table tennis, together with creative opportunities through music, dance, and drama. Pupils are highly engaged in the challenges and investigations provided in the science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) club. Consequently, pupils explore their interests whilst developing their physical, creative and intellectual skills in these areas.

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

26. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

27. Pupils are supported in developing their emotional wellbeing through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme and themed assemblies that teach pupils how to recognise and talk about their emotions, develop self-care techniques and know when and how to seek support when they need it. Leaders utilise a 'multi-sensory room' effectively when required to enable pupils who have SEND to self-regulate their emotions and return quickly to their learning. The qualified emotional literacy support assistants (ELSAs) make effective use of the school's 'rainbow room' and its resources to address the emotional needs of individual pupils through tailored additional support aligned to the pupils' identified needs.
28. PSHE provision, together with religious education (RE) lessons, develops in an age-appropriate way pupils' understanding of the importance of respecting diversity and people's protected characteristics, such as their race, religion or sex.
29. The RSE programme enables pupils to develop some understanding of how to recognise and maintain safe and healthy relationships. However, the programme does not develop the oldest pupils' understanding and consideration of healthy relationships as deeply as possible.
30. Pupils develop their respect for different faiths, beliefs and traditions by learning about these in RE lessons, which are consolidated by visits to religious places of worship in the local community. During these visits, and their subsequent studying, pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their own spirituality by reflecting on their own, and others', beliefs and how they influence their perspective on life. For example, Year 6 pupils explore the distinctions between faith and belief and ideas about what the term 'community' ultimately means.
31. Leaders and staff deal promptly and effectively with any rare behavioural issues. They implement a clear policy that uses graduated sanctions to promote restorative practice. Staff are trained to apply rewards and sanctions consistently and have a clear understanding of thresholds for identifying bullying and safeguarding concerns. Staff record and categorise all concerns to provide leaders with oversight of behavioural trends across the school. Pupils exhibit consistently good behaviour and understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour.
32. Pupils benefit from comprehensive programmes of sporting activities and physical education, including gymnastics, and dance, that promote their physical health and enable them to develop their individual skills, sometimes at a competitive level. This is further developed by 'The Staines Prep Sporting Way' that staff refer to effectively to foster sporting effort and perseverance. Pupils are taught the importance of eating a healthy and balanced diet and are given a variety of healthy food options.
33. Leaders have established an effective culture of health and safety, maintaining the premises efficiently to provide a suitable environment for pupils of all ages. Regular checks of equipment are conducted, along with termly fire evacuation drills. First aid provision and procedures are appropriate, and records include concise details of pupils' medical needs and of any accidents.
34. Pupils are consistently well-supervised around school through effective deployment of sufficient staff. Leaders maintain suitable staff-to-child ratios in the early years at all times.

35. Attendance is closely monitored, and any unexplained absences are followed up thoroughly. Consequently, there are consistently high attendance levels. The admission and attendance registers contain all required information. Leaders inform the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard times of transition.

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

36. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

37. In PSHE, pupils learn the values of tolerance and individual liberty and how school rules and rules and laws in the wider community are used to maintain order and build a respectful society. The visit to the Houses of Parliament is used to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of democracy in British society. Pupils' voices are expressed through regular consultations, questionnaires and their democratically elected school council, which enables pupils to share their ideas and make a positive contribution to their school community.
38. Pupils benefit from themed events, such as 'Empathy Week' and 'Black History Month' which help pupils to reflect upon injustice and how their actions and words can affect others in society. Assemblies are used as opportunities for pupils to learn about global issues such as sustainability, which is the theme adopted for the year. Pupils learn about the impact of human behaviour on pollution levels in the ocean and the consequences of acting irresponsibly. World cultures are studied throughout the humanities curriculum and the school. These activities support pupils to develop an understanding of right and wrong. Leaders and staff ensure that any discussions of topical issues or issues with political themes are carried out in an impartial and unbiased manner.
39. Teaching develops pupils' economic understanding and practical skills effectively by exploring financial decision-making, such as during older pupils' 'My Money' week'. Pupils are engaged in real-life finance examples through activities such as the 'business club' and the junior enterprise project where pupils create a business with a budget of £5.
40. Leaders encourage pupils successfully to take on responsibilities on behalf of others. A buddy system exists for all Year 6 pupils to support younger pupils during breaks, and there are additional responsibilities for the head male and female pupils. House captains, school council members and the eco-committee make decisions designed to improve the school community and raise awareness of global issues that they have chosen. These roles of responsibility help develop pupils' leadership skills.
41. Leaders and staff instil a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement in pupils through various initiatives. For example, they participate in community litter picking and support the local food bank, a local church and various charities. Visiting speakers are used to broaden the pupils' awareness of different aspects of the local community. For example, as part of the 'Visit Staines' initiative, a visiting artist worked with pupils to explore their ideas for future recreational and cultural opportunities in the community.
42. Staff in the early years help children to understand their own and others' feelings and emotions. Focus topics, such as 'People who help us', are used to develop children's understanding of the wider community and specific roles within it.
43. All groups of pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Early years staff work closely with those in Year 1 to ensure that a detailed profile of children's achievements and areas for development is prepared and discussed. Year 6 pupils are supported in their preparation for interviews and entrance examinations. They are provided with advice to assist them with settling into a secondary environment. Leaders facilitate a 'senior school evening' to assist pupils and

parents in deciding upon their important next step and to gain an insight into the support they can access when their transition is complete.

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

44. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

45. Governors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding to ensure that the safeguarding policy and procedures adhere to current statutory guidance and are implemented effectively. The safeguarding governor conducts termly meetings with the headteacher and DSL, monitors safeguarding records appropriately, and works with leaders to produce a detailed annual review. Safeguarding is a key agenda item at all board meetings.
46. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities have a clear understanding of safeguarding thresholds and know when to contact children's services or the local authority designated officer (LADO). Leaders respond swiftly and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns that arise and maintain detailed and secure records of these.
47. Staff receive annual training at the start of each year, followed by weekly updates where they can consider different safeguarding scenarios, including those related to radicalisation, child-on-child abuse, online abuse, and children missing from education, and discuss the procedures to follow to safeguard pupils. Staff understand why and how to report low-level concerns and when it is appropriate to use the whistleblowing policy. Newly appointed staff are carefully inducted into their roles, so they have a clear working knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures and who to report any concerns to before they start work in school.
48. Staff members, volunteers, and governors undergo timely and thorough safer recruitment checks, which are accurately recorded in a single central record of appointments (SCR). The safeguarding governor and DSL regularly monitor the SCR to ensure that all required checks have been carried out.
49. The school teaches pupils how to keep safe, including when online. Information about online safety and how pupils can share worries, including through telling a trusted adult or using the 'I wish my teacher knew' post boxes, is prominently displayed around the school. Appropriate filtering and monitoring of internet usage is in place.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

50. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Staines Preparatory School
Department for Education number	936/6510
Registered charity number	296691
Address	Staines Preparatory School 3 Gresham Road Staines upon Thames Surrey TW18 2BT
Phone number	01784 450909
Email address	info@stainesprep.co.uk
Website	www.stainesprep.co.uk
Proprietor	Staines Preparatory School Trust
Chair of Governors	Mr Matthew Hall
Headteacher	Ms Samantha Sawyer
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	307
Date of previous inspection	3 to 5 December 2019

Information about the school

51. Staines Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school situated in Staines-upon-Thames, Surrey. Founded in 1935, the school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors.
52. There are 87 children in the early years, 47 of whom attend the two Nursery classes, and 40 of whom attend the three Reception classes.
53. The school has identified 29 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three pupils have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan.
54. English is an additional language for 90 pupils.
55. The school states its aims are to create an enjoyable, exciting, and interesting learning environment where everyone is given the chance to be the best that they can be, to feel good about themselves, to share their ideas, to listen, and to work well with their friends and peers.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

4 to 6 June 2024

56. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

57. 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 a representative of the governing body
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work and discussed these with staff and pupils
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

58. 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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