

# School inspection report

15 to 17 October 2024

## **Dallington School**

8 Dallington Street

London

EC1V 0BW

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 proprietor and governing body liaise closely with leaders in overseeing the quality of provision. They are regular visitors to the school. Detailed updates from senior leaders keep them informed about important issues, such as pupils' attendance, filtering and monitoring of internet use, and any complaints arising. As a result, they understand the work of the school and ensure that comprehensive measures are in place to promote pupils' wellbeing.
2. The curriculum provides pupils with access to a range of subjects, which prepare them effectively for the future. Lessons are well planned to take account of the range of pupils' learning needs and prior attainment. Teachers are knowledgeable in their subjects. Their careful questioning challenges pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils increase their knowledge and skills, and deepen their learning.
3. Early years leaders maintain careful oversight of children's personal and physical development. In the early years' classes, adults demonstrate warm and purposeful relationships with children. Consequently, children grow in confidence and build successful social interactions.
4. Overall, pupils are typically well behaved. They show interest in their learning. However, in some lessons, incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour are not consistently well managed by teachers. Where this is the case, the effectiveness of learning is reduced.
5. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) have their needs identified early. Consequently, appropriate support, when necessary, is put in place quickly.
6. In most subjects, teachers check pupils' learning regularly. Leaders draw on information from formal assessments, as well as from start- and end-of-topic quizzes. They use this effectively to adapt plans and to arrange support activities as required. However, their checks on learning in relationships and sex education (RSE) are not precise enough. These checks do not provide sufficient clarity about pupils' understanding of the content taught. This means that planning is not adjusted to fully reflect pupils' future learning needs.
7. Pupils have opportunities to enhance their classroom-based learning and to embrace new skills in well-planned after-school activities. For example, they improve their cutting skills in art club, and learn correct breathing techniques in choir.
8. Leaders arrange assemblies, workshops and carefully planned programmes of study. Through these events, pupils broaden their knowledge of British values. They learn to recognise ways in which they can become responsible citizens. Pupils engage actively with their community. They understand the difference their contributions make to the lives of others.
9. The school's buildings are well maintained. Leaders check regularly on the effectiveness of health and safety arrangements across the school. Health and safety information is appropriately recorded. Staff are well trained to manage pupils' medical and dietary needs. They are vigilant in ensuring pupils' welfare during off-site outings.
10. A suitable register of staff appointments is maintained. All the required checks are carried out before a person starts work at the school. However, the references available are not routinely

obtained before the interview stage. Leaders do not consistently have information about applicants' suitability to work with children as early as possible in the recruitment process.

## 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 appropriate behaviour strategies are consistently implemented so that any instances of low-level disruption are managed effectively
- develop effective methods to assess pupils' knowledge of RSE so that future planning can be adapted precisely to fully meet pupils' learning needs
- consistently obtain references prior to interview, where permitted, so that leaders can consider applicants' suitability to work with children at the earliest point in the recruitment process.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Governors collaborate closely with leaders through regular meetings and lesson visits. These are closely linked to their assigned areas of responsibility, for example, in curriculum, early years and safeguarding. They understand the school's work. As a result, they offer leaders focused support and appropriate challenge on the effectiveness of the school's procedures and systems. They check that leaders are well trained and have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.
12. Pupils' wellbeing is prioritised. In the early years, leaders maintain clear oversight of children's development. They use the information that they hold effectively in planning to meet children's needs. Leaders keep parents regularly updated on children's progress. The well-planned curriculum takes account of children's interests, as well as their needs. Consequently, children thrive as they build self-confidence and develop their skills.
13. The school's aims, such as to establish empathy and enriched relationships, are fully embedded across daily school life. The well-structured assembly programme includes topics such as building resilience and positive mental health. This links directly to the school's aims so that pupils develop a broader understanding of the values shared. Pupils demonstrate kindness and respect in their interactions with others as a result. Leaders consult regularly with pupils, parents and staff to evaluate and review these aims.
14. School policies are checked meticulously. Leaders and governors scrutinise the content to ensure that the information presented reflects the current statutory guidance.
15. Leaders provide the required information to parents via the school's website. This includes information such as policies, aims and contact details. Parents receive regular reports about their children's progress and attainment.
16. Leaders build purposeful partnerships with external agencies. They seek specialist advice, when necessary, to continue to improve their practice. This ensures that effective systems are in place to protect pupils' wellbeing.
17. Any possible risk factors are identified and resolved promptly. Rigorous preventative measures are implemented, for example, in consideration of pupils' medical and dietary needs, pupils' welfare off-site, and safe practice for visitors. Specialist training makes sure that staff are up to date. Suitable risk assessments detail arrangements for aspects such as residential visits, classroom safety and use of local spaces for sport. Pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing is prioritised through leaders' and governors' careful oversight of their welfare.
18. A comprehensive system is in place to manage any complaints. The complaints policy is implemented effectively. Records are well documented. Any concerns that arise are dealt with in a timely manner. All parties are kept updated.
19. Leaders and governors fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 through the implementation of an appropriate accessibility plan. The plan outlines the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils. Staff receive training on important issues, such as neurodiversity, to support their classroom practice. Adaptations include handrails and specialist classroom resources to ensure appropriate access to the curriculum, to documentation and to the physical environment for all users.

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

**20. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. The curriculum is planned to allow all pupils to acquire new skills and knowledge in a range of subjects, including through a focus on performing arts. Regular checks and analysis of assessment information in core subjects ensure that leaders understand and meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils make good progress from their starting points as they develop the skills to prepare them for the future.
22. By the end of Year 6, pupils typically achieve in line with national expectations or above, notably in reading, oracy and comprehension. Leaders act promptly when concerns arise. To address a recent dip in spelling, for example, plans were adapted and a range of practise sessions provided to support pupils to improve.
23. Checks on pupils' progress over time are generally thorough. Leaders mostly tailor methods of assessment in individual subjects appropriately. However, measures to assess pupils' attainment in RSE are not precise enough. This means that these checks are not as effective as they should be in identifying gaps in learning.
24. Teachers' specialist subject knowledge is typically used well to motivate pupils to learn. Investigative and problem-solving activities are often well designed to extend pupils' thinking. In most cases, purposeful planning helps pupils to make connections between subjects and to apply their learning in different contexts. Teachers generally deploy additional staff effectively to help meet pupils' needs. Pupils are able to deepen their knowledge and understanding as a result.
25. Most teachers make appropriate use of the school's behaviour policy. They typically demonstrate high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils often engage actively and attentively in their learning. They contribute maturely to discussions and ask pertinent questions. However, in some lessons, instances of low-level disruptive behaviour are not consistently well managed by teachers. The effectiveness of pupils' learning in these lessons is reduced as a result.
26. Leaders identify pupils who have SEND early. They arrange support measures accordingly. Through focused teaching, as well as in small group and individual support sessions in class, these pupils make good progress. In comprehension, for example, the focus on how to draw specific information from a passage enhances pupils' overall understanding of the text. Pupils who have education, health and care (EHC) plans have clear targets set out to support their ongoing knowledge and skills development.
27. Pupils who speak EAL are assessed on entry for language fluency. Where additional support needs are identified, measures such as visual prompts, language development sessions and modelling of core vocabulary enable pupils to develop confidence and written accuracy in their English.
28. In the early years, children become confident communicators. Adults model subject-specific vocabulary clearly in their conversations with children. As a result, children become familiar with new words and phrases quickly. They then apply them in their own conversations and through song.
29. Leaders share information about pupils' performance so that parents are kept updated.



30. Leaders provide an effective programme of extra-curricular activities. Off-site visits are well planned to complement classroom-based learning. A visit to a rollercoaster park, for example, was designed to help broaden pupils' understanding of forces. After-school activities, such as dance, coding and art, enable pupils to enhance existing techniques and to experience new ones.

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

**31. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

32. A comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education enables pupils to build self-understanding and self-esteem. Pupils learn how to understand and manage their emotions through topics that cover, for example, emotional resilience and coping strategies. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise calm breathing methods. Relaxation areas and mood boards in classrooms ensure that pupils' emotional wellbeing remains a priority.
33. Leaders arrange visits to local places of worship and organise assemblies designed to broaden pupils' spiritual awareness.
34. Well-planned physical education (PE) lessons and regular participation in swimming and outdoor learning activities enable pupils to understand ways in which they can keep physically fit and active. Specialist sports teaching ensures that pupils learn a range of techniques, such as ball control and use of space. Pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet and adopting a healthy lifestyle.
35. The well-structured programme of PSHE, including RSE, is appropriate to pupils' ages and needs. Topics such as dental health, puberty and the dangers of tobacco offer pupils the insight to make informed decisions in the future. Leaders provide pupils with some opportunities to reflect on their learning. However, checks on pupils' learning in RSE do not provide leaders with a full understanding of pupils' knowledge of the topics taught. This limits the opportunity for leaders to adapt their planning so that it fully reflects pupils' future learning needs.
36. Pupils are generally well behaved, motivated and attentive. However, in some lessons, incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour are not always followed up effectively. Teachers do not always implement the school's behaviour policy as well as they should when such incidents arise.
37. Incidents of bullying are rare. Leaders follow up promptly and sensitively, offering support to all parties. They keep detailed records so that trends can be identified and acted upon when behaviour falls below the school's expected standards.
38. Pupils are closely monitored when they walk to local playground areas and during breaktimes. Teachers are vigilant. They ensure that pupils understand boundaries to protect their safety.
39. Leaders are knowledgeable about the importance of monitoring pupils' attendance. Pupils' absences are carefully tracked. Any subsequent actions taken are carried out in close liaison with parents. Support is offered in the event of any prolonged absence. Leaders promote a positive culture of regular school attendance. The local authority is informed when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard transition points.
40. School buildings are well maintained. Appropriate safety checks are carried out on a regular basis. Health and safety documentation is recorded accurately. Timed fire drills, emergency lighting testing and clear evacuation procedures ensure that the potential risks to pupils are reduced in the event of fire.
41. First aid provision is effective. Prescribed medication is securely stored. Staff are well trained to meet pupils' needs. Records of incidents, including the administration of medication, are detailed.

Well-considered measures are in place to support the welfare of pupils taking part in educational visits and activities off-site.

42. Children in the early years flourish in their physical development through weekly PE lessons and regular opportunities for outdoor learning. For example, they practise balance and coordination in their use of playground apparatus. Warm and nurturing relationships with adults in school help children to grow in self-esteem and self-understanding.

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

- 43. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

44. Leaders have created a well-planned PSHE curriculum which enables pupils to increase their economic and social awareness. Pupils are provided with an introduction to banking and budgeting. They learn how to distinguish between financial need and want. A visit to a publishing company offers older pupils an insight into the rudiments of marketing and business. In this way, leaders equip pupils with a relevant toolkit for the future.
45. Through assemblies and across a wide range of subjects, leaders plan opportunities for pupils to understand the importance of mutual respect, for example, in challenging gender stereotypes. In other examples, pupils learn how toy preferences have changed through the years and about women's contributions to World War 2. Pupils demonstrate an appreciation of others' views and beliefs as a result.
46. Pupils are introduced to world religions and a range of different cultural traditions. Participation in activities, such as the French café, African art projects and singing songs in Hebrew, help to develop pupils' understanding of a diverse range of faiths and customs.
47. Leaders arrange workshops to introduce pupils to potential future career options. Talks about occupations in law, coding and photography, as well as pupils' participation in a local design week, also offer pupils relevant insight in readiness for their adult lives.
48. Pupils are confident in distinguishing between right and wrong. This confidence is reflected in their discussions and actions. The school council has contributed to the writing of the 'kind, compassionate and caring' code of conduct, which reflects the school's values. The council has also created posters offering pupils guidance on online safety. Overall, pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how a system of rules and moral values contributes to a safe and respectful community.
49. Pupils understand their responsibilities to each other and to society. They respond positively to leadership opportunities in roles such as library and assembly monitors. Anti-bullying ambassadors can explain how training helps them to fulfil their roles. Events such as a presentation by university students about air pollution raise pupils' awareness of the need to mitigate future risks through their actions now. In this way, pupils develop as responsible citizens, demonstrating concern for the wider needs of others.
50. Pupils engage regularly with their local community. They raise funds, for example, for the local food bank, and arrange bake sales in support of mental health charities. 'Eco warriors' are in contact with the local council in support of traffic calming measures. Through their actions, pupils show their understanding of how they can contribute to the current and future needs of their community.
51. Pupils learn about public services and institutions from an early age. Older pupils take part in an annual emergency services workshop. In doing so, they develop a broad understanding of how public services can help to keep them safe.
52. Leaders arrange opportunities for pupils to understand democratic processes. Pupils, for example, apply their knowledge of parliamentary systems to their own school elections and take part in role

play activities to support their understanding of a court trial. Pupils learn to recognise the value of fair systems and the impact of pupil voice as a result.

53. In the early years, children are introduced to the value of respect at the earliest opportunity. This means that they develop successful friendships and gradually increase their skills in social interaction. In lessons and at play, adults act as positive role models for children. They support children's understanding of different ways to resolve disagreements if they occur.

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

**54. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

55. Safeguarding is effective. A robust culture of safeguarding is maintained across the school. Staff training needs are reviewed and addressed on an ongoing basis. A detailed induction programme is in place for new staff. Consequently, they are confident to identify potential risk factors and understand the procedures for reporting concerns.
56. Safeguarding leaders remain alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. The safeguarding governor liaises closely with senior leaders and carries out regular visits to the school. Staff are encouraged to communicate any concerns openly. Effective measures ensure that pupils' worries are heard and addressed.
57. Constructive relationships are established with external safeguarding partners. Leaders seek advice to inform their ongoing practice. Record keeping is detailed. Information is used to identify trends and adapt procedures when needed. Appropriate systems are in place to protect pupils from harm.
58. Pupils are knowledgeable about ways to keep themselves safe online, in school and at home. They can explain the dangers of sharing personal information online clearly. The importance of reporting concerns quickly is well understood. Leaders have implemented a comprehensive system for filtering and monitoring internet use. They carry out testing of equipment regularly and follow up any breaches that occur. As a result, pupils' access to inappropriate websites is restricted appropriately.
59. Safeguarding leaders maintain a suitable central register of staff appointments. All the required checks, including the receipt of references, are carried out prior to a person starting work at the school. However, references are not always obtained, when permitted, prior to interview. In such cases, leaders do not have access to information at the earliest opportunity so that they can consider an applicant's suitability to work with children.
60. An effective safeguarding policy is implemented. This reflects leaders' understanding of the current statutory guidance and is kept under regular review by governors and leaders.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 61. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Dallington School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	206/6299
<b>Address</b>	Dallington School 8 Dallington Street London EC1V 0BW
<b>Phone number</b>	020 7251 2284
<b>Email address</b>	admin@dallingtonschool.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.dallingtonschool.co.uk">https://www.dallingtonschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Ms Abigail Hercules
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Cortina Butler and Ms Fiona Naylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr James Griffiths
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	65
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 to 3 December 2021

## Information about the school

62. Dallington School is a co-educational day school located in London. The school is owned by a proprietor supported by a board of governors. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2022. Ofsted previously inspected the school.
63. There are seven children in the early years across two Nursery and Reception classes.
64. The school has identified 14 pupils as having SEND. Very few pupils in the school have an EHC plan.
65. English is spoken as an additional language by 32 pupils, three of whom receive additional support.
66. The school states its aims are for all children to love learning and to grow and develop life-long skills, knowledge and attitudes to succeed in whatever they set their mind to. It encourages children to value their own worth and understand the difference in others. The school seeks to achieve this through a culture of relationships, empathy, creativity, individuality and play.



## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

15 to 17 October 2024

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

68. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the proprietor and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- discussions with learning support leaders
- visits to offsite areas and facilities for PE, swimming and outdoor learning
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

69. 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](http://www.isi.net)**.

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