

D A L L I N G T O N

2024 ISI INSPECTION SUMMARY

OCTOBER 2024



 *Dallington School*



DALLINGTON SCHOOL

INSPECTION REPORT 2024



Inspection Headlines

- **Strong Leadership and Supportive Governance:** The report emphasises the effective oversight by the proprietor and governing body, highlighting their close collaboration with school leaders. "Governors collaborate closely with leaders through regular meetings and lesson visits."
- **Inclusive and Well-Structured Curriculum:** The curriculum is designed to cater to a range of learning needs, preparing pupils for future success. Teachers are knowledgeable and use well-planned lessons to challenge pupils' thinking, allowing them to deepen their knowledge and skills. "The well-planned curriculum takes account of children's interests, as well as their needs."
- **Emphasis on Pupils' Well-being and Community Engagement:** The school places a strong focus on pupils' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. "Pupils understand their responsibilities to each other and to society."

Dear Dallington Families and Friends,

I am thrilled to share the results of our recent Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) report, following their visit in October 2024. The report reflects the incredible efforts of our staff, the enthusiasm of our pupils, and the unwavering support of our school community.

At Dallington School, our values – **Relationships, Empathy, Creativity, Individuality, Play** and **Enjoy the Journey** – are our RECIPE for success and shape everything we do. The inspectors recognised these values in action, noting how they are "fully embedded across daily school life" and celebrating our inclusive, nurturing environment where "children grow in confidence and build successful social interactions."

Our curriculum was praised for preparing pupils effectively for the future with engaging lessons that "deepen their knowledge and skills." The inspectors also commended our early identification of pupils' needs, ensuring inclusivity for all, and our "robust culture of safeguarding," reflecting our commitment to pupil well-being.

This success would not have been possible without our talented and dedicated staff, who consistently go above and beyond to bring learning to life. To our families, thank you for your trust and support—you are an integral part of our community. And to our children, who inspire us daily: your kindness, curiosity, and enthusiasm are what make Dallington so special.

As we continue this school year, we look forward to building on this success, ensuring Dallington School remains a place where children love learning, grow in confidence, and succeed in all they do.

Warm regards,

James Griffiths

[**View the full report here**](#)



"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."

Dear parents,

It is an absolute pleasure to share with you our recent ISI inspection report, conducted by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Moving to their supervision has been long-awaited and after a transitional period in our school's life, it is wonderful to have a report that reflects so positively on the developments we have made during this time.

The report recognises that we have securely met all standards and that is testament to the positive impact that James has had on our school and its community and to the commitment made by everyone. This inspection was a truly collaborative achievement. Well done all!

I am particularly delighted that the report highlights our children's appreciation of others, their mutual respect and the positive impact of both The School Council and The Eco Warriors on our School and local communities. We nurture the 'movers and shakers' of the future and for that, we are proud.

James, the Senior Leadership Team, Staff, Governors and children, thank you for your hard work and dedication to our unique school. Furthermore, thanks to you, our parents for believing in the Dallington Difference.

Best wishes,

Abi Hercules
Proprietor



"Children thrive as they build self-confidence and develop their skills."

Inspection Overview

Who are ISI?

ISI is an organisation responsible for inspecting Independent schools in England. It is a government-approved, independent body that provides objective evaluations of schools, focusing on educational quality and pupil wellbeing. OFSTED validates and accredits the ISI to conduct inspections. They report their findings to the Secretary of State for Education.

What happens during an ISI inspection?

A team of inspectors visit the school to observe staff and children. They review school documentation, processes, and pupil work and conduct surveys and interviews with staff, parents and pupils, ensuring they have a holistic understanding of the school.

The ISI framework encourages collaboration between inspectors, school leaders, and parents. We embrace this process as an opportunity to continually reflect, grow, and enhance the educational experience for your child.

What should I expect to read in the ISI report?

ISI no longer use final gradings of 'excellent', 'good', etc. Under the new ISI framework, the reports award schools "met or "not met" against five key standards and concisely summarise their findings.

The structure of the inspection framework and report is:

- **Routine Inspections:** These take place every three years to assess how schools meet ISI standards.
- **Reporting:** Findings highlight strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring transparency and accountability in the following areas:
 - Leadership and management, and governance
 - Quality of pupils' education, training and recreation
 - Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
 - Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society
 - Safeguarding

DALLINGTON SCHOOL HAS MET ALL FIVE KEY STANDARDS



"Pupils often engage actively and attentively in their learning. They contribute maturely to discussions and ask pertinent questions."

Leadership, Management and Governance

At Dallington School, strong leadership and dedicated governance create an exceptional educational environment where every child can thrive. Our leaders work hand-in-hand with the governing body to ensure the highest standards across all aspects of school life, fostering a community where children are nurtured, valued, and supported.



"The proprietor and governing body liaise closely with leaders in overseeing the quality of provision."

Collaborative Governance and Focused Support

Our governors are deeply engaged with school life, regularly visiting lessons and attending focused meetings. This hands-on approach means they "offer leaders focused support and appropriate challenge" while ensuring that all procedures are effective. Their oversight guarantees that "leaders are well trained and have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their roles," driving the school's continuous improvement.

Prioritising Well-being and Personal Development

The well-being of every child that walks through our big blue doors is a priority. In the Early Years, our leadership team "maintains clear oversight of children's development" and ensures that our "well-planned curriculum takes account of children's interests, as well as their needs." This supportive environment allows children to "grow in confidence and build successful social interactions," creating a foundation for lifelong learning.

Values-Driven Education

We have proudly woven our values into the fabric of daily school life. Our well-structured assembly programme, featuring topics like "building resilience and positive mental health," ensures that "pupils develop a broader understanding of the values shared." This dedication means that our children "demonstrate kindness and respect in their interactions with others."

Meticulous Oversight and Continuous Improvement

From carefully scrutinised school policies to regular communication with parents, Dallington's leadership team maintains the highest standards. Governors "check that leaders are well trained and have the appropriate skills and knowledge" to meet our children's needs. Rigorous risk assessments and strong partnerships with external agencies guarantee a safe and inclusive environment for all our children. As a result, "children thrive as they build self-confidence and develop their skills."

Quality of Education, Training and Recreation

Dallington School is committed to delivering a high-quality education that equips every child with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed. Our carefully planned curriculum, expert teaching, and enriching extracurricular activities create an engaging, holistic and well-rounded learning experience for every child.

"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."

Inclusive and Well-Structured Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to "prepare pupils effectively for the future" by providing them with access to a diverse range of subjects, including a focus on performing arts. Lessons are "well planned to take account of the range of pupils' learning needs and prior attainment," ensuring that every child can thrive.

Specialist Teaching and Engaging Learning

Our teachers are passionate and knowledgeable, using "specialist subject knowledge... to motivate pupils to learn." Lessons are often designed to include investigative and problem-solving activities, encouraging our children to "deepen their knowledge and understanding" through engaging content. In the Early Years, children quickly become "confident communicators," thanks to the clear and consistent modelling of subject-specific vocabulary by our dedicated educators.

"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."



Quality of Education, Training and Recreation

Individual Support for Every Child

We recognise that each child is unique and respect them as individuals. Small group sessions, focused teaching, and individualised support enable pupils to make "good progress" from their starting points. Our inclusive approach ensures that every child receives the attention they deserve.

"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."

Rich Extracurricular Opportunities

We believe in learning beyond the classroom. Pupils have opportunities to "embrace new skills in well-planned after-school activities," from dance and coding to art and sports. Off-site visits are also an essential part of our curriculum, helping pupils to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. A recent workshop at LEGOLand, for example, broadened pupils' understanding of scientific concepts like forces when designing rollercoasters.

Supportive and Positive Learning Environment

Dallington School maintains a positive and respectful learning environment, where pupils "engage actively and attentively in their learning" and demonstrate a strong sense of curiosity. Teachers are committed to creating a space where every child feels safe, motivated, and inspired to achieve their best.



"Pupils have opportunities to enhance their classroom-based learning and to embrace new skills in well-planned after-school activities."

Pupils' Physical and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

We prioritise the well-being of every child, ensuring they have the tools to thrive both inside and outside the classroom. Our comprehensive approach to physical and mental health, coupled with a nurturing school environment, provides a strong foundation for each pupil's personal development and emotional resilience.



"A comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education enables pupils to build self-understanding and self-esteem."

Comprehensive Well-being Programme

Dallington School offers a "comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education" that helps pupils build "self-understanding and self-esteem." Pupils learn to manage their emotions effectively through topics like emotional resilience and coping strategies. Relaxation areas and mood boards are provided in classrooms, ensuring that "pupils' emotional well-being remains a priority" throughout their time at school.

Active Lifestyles and Physical Fitness

Our well-structured physical education (PE) lessons, along with regular swimming and outdoor learning sessions, teach pupils the importance of physical fitness. Specialist sports teaching allows children to "understand ways in which they can keep physically fit and active," while weekly outdoor activities encourage a love for nature and exploration. In the Early Years, children "flourish in their physical development," practising balance and coordination in a safe and supportive environment.

Healthy Choices for a Healthy Future

Our children are guided to make informed choices about their health. Topics such as dental care, balanced diets, and the dangers of tobacco empower pupils to make "informed decisions in the future." Our curriculum also includes age-appropriate lessons on relationships and sex education (RSE), giving children the knowledge they need to navigate their lives with confidence.

Supportive and Safe Environment

We pride ourselves on creating a safe, nurturing, nurturing environment where every pupil feels valued. Bullying incidents are "rare" and are handled "promptly and sensitively" when they do occur. Detailed records are kept to track any concerns, ensuring that the school's high standards of behaviour are maintained, contributing to a positive learning atmosphere.

Our dedicated staff are trained to support pupils' well-being and safety. They are vigilant during off-site activities, ensuring that children are safe while exploring and learning outside the classroom. School buildings are "well maintained" with regular safety checks, and first aid provision is "effective," offering reassurance to parents that their children are in capable hands.

Pupils' Social and Economic Education and Contribution to Society

Our curriculum and school ethos are designed to foster social awareness, cultural understanding, and economic literacy, ensuring that our children are equipped with the skills and values they need to make a positive impact on the world around them.

Building Economic Awareness and Lifelong Skills

Through a well-planned PSHE curriculum, Dallington children are given a strong foundation in economic education. From an early age, they learn essential skills like budgeting and banking, helping them distinguish between financial need and want. For children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, for example, a visit to a local publishing company provided our children with "insight into the rudiments of marketing and business," giving them a taste of real-world economics and preparing them for the future.

Fostering Respect and Understanding

Dallington School values respect for others, and this principle is woven throughout our curriculum. Children learn about mutual respect in assemblies and lessons, challenging stereotypes and exploring topics such as gender roles and historical contributions. As a result, our children "demonstrate an appreciation of others' views and beliefs," fostering an inclusive and empathetic school community.

Leadership Opportunities and Active Citizenship

"Pupils understand their responsibilities to each other and to society." Dallington School encourages our children to take on leadership roles that make a difference in their school and local community. Positions such as library monitors, assembly leaders, Eco Warriors and anti-bullying ambassadors provide opportunities for responsibility and personal growth. Our children are "confident in distinguishing between right and wrong," and their actions reflect a strong sense of justice and fairness. The school council, for example, plays an active role in shaping school policies and contributing to a "safe and respectful community."

Engaged with the Local Community

Dallington children are regularly involved in initiatives that benefit their local community. They "raise funds for the local food bank and arrange bake sales in support of mental health charities," showing an understanding of their ability to make a positive impact. Eco Warriors engage with the local council on environmental projects, helping children understand how their contributions can support current and future needs. These experiences encourage them to be "responsible citizens, demonstrating concern for the wider needs of others."



"Pupils engage actively with their community. They understand the difference their contributions make to the lives of others."

Safeguarding

The safety and well-being of our children are our top priorities. We are committed to maintaining a safe environment where every child feels secure, valued, and protected. Our rigorous safeguarding practices are designed to ensure that our children thrive in a nurturing and supportive community.



"A robust culture of safeguarding is maintained across the school."

Robust Safeguarding Culture

Dallington School upholds a "robust culture of safeguarding" throughout the school, ensuring that every member of staff is dedicated to the protection and well-being of our children. Our detailed staff induction programme equips all new members with the skills and knowledge they need to identify potential risks and to report concerns promptly. This approach ensures that staff are "confident to identify potential risk factors" and to act swiftly when necessary.

We work closely with the safeguarding governor, who "liaises closely with senior leaders" through regular school visits, reinforcing a culture of openness and vigilance. This consistent communication means that staff are encouraged to share any concerns they might have, ensuring that pupils' worries are "heard and addressed" effectively.

Proactive and Preventative Measures

We employ proactive measures to protect our pupils. Leaders are vigilant in monitoring online safety, having implemented "a comprehensive system for filtering and monitoring internet use." Regular testing of equipment and follow-up of any breaches ensure that "pupils' access to inappropriate websites is restricted appropriately," allowing them to explore the digital world safely.

Strong Partnerships with External Agencies

Our leaders have developed constructive relationships with external safeguarding partners, seeking specialist advice when needed to ensure the best possible protection for our children. These partnerships support the development of effective systems, and our detailed record-keeping allows us to "identify trends and adapt procedures" swiftly to maintain a safe environment.

Consistent and Thorough Recruitment Processes

We follow a strict recruitment policy to ensure that only the most suitable individuals work with our children. All required checks, including references, are carried out before a person starts work at the school. This rigorous process reflects our commitment to safeguarding excellence, giving parents peace of mind that their children are in safe hands.

A Progressive Approach to Independent Education

Dallington School are committed to an educational philosophy that places each child at the heart of the learning process. Founded by educational maverick Mogg Hercules, our school embraces creativity, individuality, and an ethos that respects the pace of childhood. Through our holistic and inclusive approach, we encourage every child to explore their unique potential in a warm, welcoming environment.

"Pupils increase their knowledge and skills, and deepen their learning."



Our Values:

Relationships:

We believe in an informal, nurturing environment where children feel safe, secure and joyful. Relationships are enriched through a strong sense of community and collaboration between children, teachers and parents.

Empathy:

We believe in celebrating differences and valuing each other through compassion and mutual respect. Everyone at Dallington flourishes because everyone cares.

Creativity:

We believe all children are born with a gift and innate creativity. Every child at Dallington has something brilliant to offer, and it is our role to empower them to realise their true potential.

Individuality:

We believe in free-thinking young people who are listened to, and who are given the autonomy to express themselves with originality. This leads to authentic, grounded and empowered individuals whose self-awareness is strong.

Play:

We believe in embracing children's natural love for discovery.

At Dallington, children are immersed in an explorative, play-based approach. They experience a sense of wonder and are given the freedom to take risks, make mistakes and learn from them.

Enjoy The Journey:

We believe education is not a race and should be developmentally appropriate. This develops a love for learning where childhood can be enjoyed and celebrated without unnecessary pressures.



"In the early years, children become confident communicators."



"Pupils demonstrate kindness and respect in their interactions with others..."



"Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how a system of rules and moral values contributes to a safe and respectful community."

"The school's aims, such as to establish empathy and enriched relationships, are fully embedded across daily school life."



"A comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education enables pupils to build self-understanding and self-esteem."



"Lessons are well planned to take account of the range of pupils' learning needs and prior attainment."



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