

School inspection report

14 November 2023 to 16 November 2023

The Gregg Preparatory School

17–19 Winn Road
Southampton
SO17 1EJ

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. Governors' oversight is not sufficiently effective and leaders do not fulfil all of their responsibilities consistently. In consequence, the school does not meet all of the Standards relating to safeguarding, fire safety, risk assessment and governance, leadership and management.
2. Leaders are nevertheless successful in developing the quality of education for pupils. They have evaluated the academic and extra-curricular provision effectively to inform their plans for ongoing school improvement. This has resulted in several new initiatives, including the adoption of a new curriculum scheme and programme for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Their aim is to develop pupils' skills and knowledge and understanding, but it is too soon to evaluate their impact.
3. School policies require that risk assessments across all areas are completed or updated on an annual basis. However, there is no defined process for leaders to review and monitor these to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
4. Leaders provide a broad range of subjects in the curriculum. However, they recognise the need to improve their oversight of this and of teaching. Leaders have recently introduced new staff roles as subject leaders. Their role is to develop a curriculum that ensures pupils build on their prior learning and to support leaders in the oversight of teaching, including improving the consistency of staff feedback to pupils.
5. Overall, pupils make good progress from their starting points. Children in the early years have a well-planned curriculum and most achieve the expected levels of development. Leaders have identified a need to enhance support for pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL). This initiative has helped these pupils make rapid progress with their English language skills. Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective and enables them to access the curriculum and make good progress.
6. Leaders now provide greater opportunities for pupils to learn and perform music in order to increase pupils' independence and self-confidence. As a result, pupils progress rapidly with their musical skills and benefit from singing and performing in front of an audience. Leaders have also increased the physical education (PE) provision and opportunities for pupils engaged in sport, improving their fitness and skill levels.
7. Suitable health and safety and first aid procedures are in place and leaders ensure that regular checks are undertaken. However, fire safety arrangements do not meet the requirements because the appointed person for fire safety has not completed suitable training for the role. Training was booked during the inspection. The recent introduction of specialist support sessions for pupils with emotional and mental health needs has had a positive effect on the wellbeing of pupils.
8. Leaders prepare pupils well for life in British society. Through initiatives such as the eco committee and charity events, pupils learn how they can play their part in caring for the environment and enhancing the lives of others in the community. Older pupils feel well prepared for their move to senior school.
9. Governors do not maintain an effective oversight of safeguarding. Leaders do not follow appropriate safeguarding procedures with regard to referrals to external agencies and recordkeeping of

concerns. Staff do not have an adequate understanding of low-level concerns, and how to respond should they arise.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards:

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met consistently
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met
- Standards relating to safeguarding are not met

Areas for action

- The governors must ensure that:
 - the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and
 - they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils

so that:

- the appointed person designated for ensuring fire safety receives suitable training to be able to carry out the role effectively
- risk assessments are monitored to ensure that they remain fit for purpose
- safeguarding concerns are referred to external agencies when the level of potential risk makes this appropriate
- appropriately kept safeguarding records record any liaison with local safeguarding partners and subsequent actions
- staff have sufficient understanding of what constitutes a low-level safeguarding concern and the procedures to follow should these arise
- governors maintain an effective oversight of the school's safeguarding procedures.

Recommended next steps

- Leaders should provide effective oversight of the curriculum, teaching and learning across the school to ensure their consistent effectiveness, and that teachers provide effective feedback to pupils to help them improve their work.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors do not always provide effective oversight and guidance to ensure that leaders carry out their roles consistently well. This includes an ineffective review of the safeguarding procedures. Leaders have a lack of understanding of aspects of safeguarding, risk assessment and fire safety. As a result, the school does not meet all of the Standards.
11. Leaders have undertaken a detailed evaluation of the school's educational provision to guide the school's improvement plans. They have accurately identified areas for improvement in the school's educational provision and taken effective steps to address some of these. For example, leaders recognised the need to increase support for pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL).
12. Leaders and staff have jointly drawn up new aims for the school 'to inspire curiosity and challenge in our community'. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum in order to fulfil these aims and also to enhance their monitoring of teaching and learning. For example, they have created new subject lead roles.
13. Leaders do not undertake an effective assessment of risk. Staff complete risk assessments for areas and activities for which they are responsible, such as the school site, trips and other activities. However, staff have not received training to undertake this task and leaders do not systematically review these risk assessments to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Potential safeguarding risks to pupils are not referred to external agencies as required.
14. Children in the early years make good progress due to a suitably planned curriculum. Managers demonstrate a knowledge of the early years requirements and staff are suitably trained for their roles. Whilst regular staff meetings take place, staff supervision had not been undertaken, limiting opportunities to reflect upon and improve their practice. These meetings have now commenced.
15. Leaders and managers work with external agencies to support individual pupil's needs. In particular, they have developed a positive relationship with agencies who support pupils who have SEND, so they receive support and make good progress.
16. Any complaints are taken seriously, and leaders follow them up in a timely manner in line with the published policy. There are appropriate records of complaints and any actions taken in response, including those at an informal stage.
17. Leaders fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010. This can be seen in adjustments made to meet the individual needs of pupils with SEND, ensuring they can access the curriculum effectively.

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

18. Standards are not met with respect to the management of risk and governance, leadership and management.

Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

19. Throughout the school, leaders ensure there is a suitable curriculum with a broad range of subjects that enables pupils to gain knowledge and develop their skills in the required areas. As a result of their recent self-evaluation, leaders have introduced several initiatives that have developed pupils' knowledge and skills.
20. In order to strengthen their strategic oversight of the curriculum as a whole, leaders have appointed subject leads to ensure there is continuity in the curriculum as pupils move through the school, which builds on their prior knowledge and understanding. Subject leads also monitor standards of teaching and learning in their subjects. Leaders have reviewed and changed the PSHE programme, and embarked upon a new curriculum scheme that aims to provide for the consistent development of learning skills, values and attitudes across a variety of subjects.
21. Pupils develop effective linguistic, literacy and numeracy skills through a daily focus in these areas of learning. Staff have secure subject knowledge and use resources effectively to help pupils gain a greater understanding in lessons. As a result, pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in Maths and English. Most gain a place at their choice of senior school.
22. Teachers know the pupils well and tailor activities to meet pupils' needs. Typically, lessons are well planned and activities are carefully matched to the range of abilities in the class. Staff reinforce behavioural expectations consistently so that pupils readily engage in their learning and work hard in lessons. Staff check pupils' understanding through effective questioning, which helps ensure that pupils meet the learning objectives.
23. Leaders have recently increased specialist support for pupils who have EAL. This enables them to make rapid progress. They become proficient in the English language quickly and integrate well with their peers. Pupils who have SEND are well supported. There is an effective system in place to identify and provide for specific needs, with specialist external help sought where necessary. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress and are able to access the curriculum well in lessons.
24. Leaders ensure the suitable assessment of the quality of pupils' work. However, the use of feedback and target setting is inconsistent, which means that not all pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.
25. In the early years, managers plan a suitable curriculum that covers the required areas of learning. Children are introduced to age-appropriate concepts, such as the sounds that letters make and letter formation, in effective ways, such as by singing songs. A varied range of suitable resources piques their interest. Children learn about the natural world in the woodland learning environment. Most children in the early years make good progress by the end of the Reception year.
26. Leaders' recent decision to enhance the provision for music in the curriculum has already made a positive impact: it has increased pupils' confidence and skills, and increased their ability to take risks in their learning. Leaders provide a suitable range of extra-curricular activities such as football, netball and art. Pupils' engagement in these is high because leaders shape the extra-curricular offering to meet the pupils' needs and interests, and pupils enjoy learning new skills.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

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

27. Governors and leaders have ensured that most health and safety arrangements, including the maintenance of the site, are adequate. However, although training was booked during the inspection, the appointed person with responsibility for fire safety in the school has not yet completed suitable training to undertake this role. This means that arrangements for fire safety do not meet requirements. Some fire safety arrangements are in place, including regular fire drills.
28. Leaders ensure that pupils experience a broad range of activities that promote pupils' physical health. They have increased the physical education (PE) provision and opportunities pupils have to engage in sport, improving their fitness and skill levels. This includes swimming lessons across the age range and sports such as football and netball.
29. There is effective provision to support the mental health of pupils, including those with specific emotional needs. For example, leaders facilitate emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) sessions to support individual pupils.
30. In the early years, children's physical development is enhanced through regular opportunities for outdoor play and PE lessons such as weekly gymnastics lessons. Children learn how to assess risks and take action to mitigate them, such as by making sure safety mats are placed around play equipment. Children demonstrate independence, such as during mealtimes when they are encouraged to eat their food sensibly.
31. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme, which includes suitable relationships education, strengthens pupils' understanding about their bodies and personal relationships. For example, staff reinforce pupils' understanding of the importance of oral health through classroom activities and discussions. The programme also develops pupils' self-esteem and mutual respect by recognising and celebrating individual achievements and diversity.
32. Pupils behave well in lessons as well as in the playground and around the school. This is because leaders ensure that there is a clear behaviour policy in place that outlines effective rewards and sanctions. Pupils know the expectations well and moderate their own behaviour accordingly. Bullying is rare. The schools' rewards programme positively supports pupils' wellbeing with merits given for kind and thoughtful behaviour.
33. The school has suitable accommodation for pupils who need medical attention. The first aid policy outlines a clear procedure for dealing with any medical issues in a timely and competent manner. Leaders ensure that a sufficient number of staff have first aid training, including paediatric first aid training in the early years.
34. Pupils are supervised well, both in and out of lessons. Leaders ensure that required staff to child ratios are maintained in the early years.
35. The school maintains and stores appropriate admission and attendance registers. The local authority is informed of all school transfers, both during the year and at the end of the year. Leaders follow up any patterns of absence with parents. This helps ensure a high level of attendance.

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

36. Standards are not met with respect to fire safety training.

Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

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

37. Leaders promote pupils' social development effectively. Pupils demonstrate the concept of respect and why it is important to respect one another in a diverse society. They readily offer praise and encourage each other during learning activities.
38. The PSHE curriculum and programme of assemblies develop pupils' understanding of the values which underpin modern British society. Pupils recognise that others may have views that differ from their own, that everybody is different and the need to respect the world in which they live. Pupils recognise the importance of contributing to society and understand behaviours that are acceptable and unacceptable. Pupils display empathy, for example, when reflecting on how refugees should be treated. Leaders make effective use of trips to enhance pupils' learning. Older pupils attend residential trips which help broaden their cultural understanding.
39. Children in the early years engage positively with other children and their key people. They include others in their games, learn to share resources and play equipment, and approach their classroom learning enthusiastically. This learning prepares children well for life beyond school.
40. Through the house system, pupils engage in fundraising initiatives, selecting charities of their choice. For example, they organise a movie night for a national children's society and understand why they are raising money to benefit others.
41. Pupils show a strong appreciation for the value of money, and the role it plays in society. They understand why some things are more expensive than others, reflecting on how money is required to live. Leaders have provided opportunities for older pupils to learn business, financial and entrepreneurial skills by engaging in a national enterprise programme, which further builds on their economic understanding.
42. Leaders foster pupils' leadership skills effectively. Pupils learn about the importance of democracy, and elect school councillors from across the age range. These councillors understand their roles and undertake them with maturity. Pupils in Year 6 embrace a range of responsibilities, such as taking the minutes in eco-committee. Older pupils are prepared for their transition to senior school, including by visiting senior schools for transition days. In addition, the school sets older pupils work tasks that prepare them for the expectations of their future schools.
43. Pupils are aware of ecological issues and how they can make a difference to the world in which they live. Through the eco-committee, pupils are involved in proactively caring for their local environment. They undertake activities such as gardening and litter picking and are working towards cutting the school's carbon footprint by encouraging leaders to source food locally.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

44. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are not effective. Governors do not maintain an adequate oversight of safeguarding. Leaders do not follow appropriate safeguarding procedures with regard to referrals to external agencies and the keeping of records of concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions. There are no records of any school discussions with such agencies.
45. Leaders ensure that staff complete safeguarding training regularly. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs are trained at a level appropriate for their role. Staff understand how to respond to concerns raised by individual pupils and know how to respond to cases of child-on-child abuse and potential radicalisation or extremism.
46. However, staff do not have a secure understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern or the procedures to follow should one arise. The staff code of conduct needed to be revised during the inspection to ensure that it included guidance about how to respond to low-level concerns.
47. Pupils feel safe at school and know that they can talk to any member of staff about any worries that they may have and are comfortable to do so.
48. The governors ensure that the required recruitment checks for staff, volunteers and governors are undertaken. A suitable record of pre-employment checks is maintained.
49. Pupils know how they can keep safe online. Leaders ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

50. The safeguarding arrangements do not meet the Standards.

Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The relevant Standards are not met

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34 (1) (a), (b) and (c)	<p>The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –</p> <p>(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;</p> <p>(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and</p> <p>(c) actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.</p>
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16(a) and (b)	<p>The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –</p> <p>(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and</p> <p>(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.</p>
EYFS 3.65	<p>Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.</p>
EYFS 3.66	<p>Children must be kept safe while on outings. Providers must assess the risks or hazards, which may arise for the children, and must identify the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment must include consideration of adult to child ratios. The risk assessment does not necessarily need to be in writing; this is for providers to judge.</p>

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

The relevant Standards are not met consistently.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
EYFS 3.56	Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency, and must have an emergency evacuation procedure. Providers must have appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example, fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire blankets and/or fire extinguishers) which is in working order. Fire exits must be clearly identifiable, and fire doors must be free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside.

Safeguarding

The relevant Standards are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that – (a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and (b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
EYFS 3.4	Providers must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant local safeguarding partners (LSP).
EYFS 3.7	Providers must have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. All schools are required to have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance, and other childcare providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.

School details

School	The Gregg Preparatory School
Department for Education number	852/6005
Registered charity number	1089055
Address	17–19 Winn Road Southampton SO17 1EJ
Website	thegreggprep.org
Proprietor	The Gregg Schools Trust
Chair	Mrs Jo Preston
Headteacher	Mr Matt Pascoe
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	91
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 June 2019

Information about the school

51. The Gregg Preparatory School is a co-educational day school located in Southampton. It is part of The Gregg Schools Trust which also includes a separately registered senior school. The schools are overseen by the same board of trustees, known as governors, but have separate leadership teams. Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2020. The current chair of governors has been in post since September 2019.
52. There are ten children in the early years, comprising one Reception class.
53. The school has identified 12 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Very few pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
54. English is an additional language for seven pupils.
55. The school aims to inspire children to achieve their potential through a broad-based curriculum, with a daily mission to inspire curiosity and challenge in their community. The school seeks to provide an environment where children develop holistically, academically, personally and socially.

Inspection details

Inspection dates 14 to 16 November 2023

56. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.
57. Inspection activities included:
- discussions with pupils, leaders, managers, governors and staff
 - joint lesson walks with leaders
 - observing lessons
 - attending registration, assemblies and an eco-committee meeting
 - visiting the early years setting
 - sampling documentation including policies, curriculum plans and health and safety records
 - reviewing samples of pupils' work with pupils and subject leads
 - touring the premises and accommodation.
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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