

# School inspection report

11 to 13 March 2025

## Hurlingham School

122 Putney Bridge Road

London

SW15 2NQ

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 leaders work together closely, complete regular training and meet with the advisory board termly. In these ways, they maintain informed oversight of the school and ensure that the Standards are met. Leaders review the impact of their decisions on pupils and plan for ongoing development. They fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
2. Leaders liaise with external agencies for advice and support, particularly regarding safeguarding. They ensure a proactive and effective approach to the management of risk to maintain pupils' safety and wellbeing, including when online.
3. Leaders provide the required information to parents, including regular updates on their child's progress. An appropriate parental complaints procedure is followed by leaders when a complaint is raised. Complaints are addressed and resolved in a timely manner.
4. The broad and balanced curriculum is taught effectively to enable pupils to make good progress across a range of subjects. In the early years, teaching is tailored to children's needs and interests, supporting their development in the seven areas of learning. English and mathematics are carefully planned to develop competent literacy and numeracy skills from an early age.
5. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well-managed, with targeted support and resources enabling them to make good progress. Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) ensures they develop proficiency in English.
6. Leaders track pupils' achievements in regular assessments effectively so that they are well supported and make good progress. Teachers give pupils constructive feedback so they know how to improve. The diverse extra-curricular programme, including activities like chess, sports and the arts, allows pupils to explore their interests and develop their skills.
7. Leaders actively promote pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing. The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, along with assemblies, trips and visiting speakers, supports pupils' development of self-awareness and self-confidence.
8. In the early years, engaging activities foster children's independence and self-confidence. Knowledgeable teaching, appropriate calming teaching methods and use of resources enable children to recognise and manage their feelings and emotions independently. They use resources in the calm corner and mindfulness techniques spontaneously and effectively. Staff work closely with parents so that children employ the same strategies at home. This means that children are able to monitor and modify their emotional development particularly well for their age. This is a significant strength of the school.
9. Suitable systems are in place so that pupils can communicate concerns. Appropriate first aid procedures and effective supervision are in place. The schools' sites are well maintained. Pupils' behaviour is typically positive. However, in a few lessons, low-level misbehaviour is not managed consistently well, which interrupts learning.
10. The PSHE curriculum, assemblies and personal development lessons provide a comprehensive social and economic education. This helps pupils to develop essential life skills and promotes responsible

decision-making. Pupils learn about rules and laws through trips and visiting speakers so that they develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. Leaders encourage pupils to contribute to the school and local communities actively through engaging in charitable activities without expecting reward. Cultural celebrations and visits to places of worship develop pupils' respect for diversity, supporting their growth as positive, responsible citizens.

11. There is a positive safeguarding culture throughout the school. Staff are appropriately and routinely trained and understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Those with responsibility for safeguarding respond swiftly to concerns and work effectively with external agencies. A suitable filtering and monitoring system is in place to oversee internet use. Leaders ensure that the required pre-employment checks are completed to assess the suitability of adults working at the school and maintain an accurate record of appointments.

## 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

The proprietor should:

- ensure that staff implement the behaviour policy consistently effectively so that instances of low-level misbehaviour are reduced.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. The proprietor and leaders maintain effective oversight of the school, including the early years. They undertake regular training and meet the advisory board each term so that their knowledge of current legislation and guidance is up to date. Leaders and staff provide regular reports and presentations to inform the proprietor and advisors of current procedures, achievements and concerns. The proprietor works within the school on behalf of both directors, which enables frequent discussions with leaders, staff and pupils. In these ways, the proprietor maintains a clear picture of what it is like to be a pupil at the school and ensures that the Standards are met. The proprietor supports and challenges leaders well to ensure that they possess the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their roles well.
13. Leaders ensure that a broad curriculum and a range of experiences for pupils is provided within a supportive environment. They actively promote the school's aim, for pupils to be the best that they can be, in assemblies and in their positive communications with staff and pupils.
14. The proprietor and leaders systematically review the school's effectiveness in supporting all aspects of pupils' wellbeing. They evaluate the whole school development plan regularly in consultation with staff to ensure continual development in all areas of the school. For example, artificial intelligence (AI) literacy has been included in the computing curriculum for the oldest pupils to support the development of creative writing, and a new Nursery library has been developed to help make reading central to learning for the youngest children.
15. Leaders liaise with external agencies to seek advice and support when it is required, particularly in relation to safeguarding. Leaders commission independent audits of the school's procedures and practices and follow recommendations to ensure that what they do is thorough and effective.
16. The school implements a suitable policy for handling parental complaints, which sets out appropriate procedures. Leaders prioritise the resolving of concerns quickly before they escalate. They maintain detailed records securely.
17. Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of statutory guidance and safeguarding practices when identifying and managing risks. They are effective in recognising and assessing possible risks to pupils' wellbeing, including those that are not obvious. Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken for on-site and off-site activities, including trips and sporting events. Staff identify potential risks and take appropriate action to mitigate them. The proprietor discusses any incidents or near misses with leaders to inform future assessment of risk. Leaders and staff remain vigilant in looking for potential risks to individual pupils' welfare, including when online.
18. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. They actively promote an environment that promotes inclusivity and respect. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place that sets out how the school develops access to education for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, increased access to assistive technology such as speech to text is in place to improve the provision of information for those who require it. On-site therapy has been established to support any pupils with mental health difficulties and challenging life experiences.
19. Parents can access relevant information about the school via the website which includes key policies and procedures. Regular written and verbal reports inform parents about their child's progress.

Leaders share information appropriately with parents and provide the local authority with all required information about pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

**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 broad and balanced curriculum is carefully planned to promote pupils' good progress across a range of subjects. Teaching in the early years responds to children's needs and interests, carefully covering the seven areas of learning. Most children in the early years and pupils in the main school achieve levels of attainment beyond national age-related expectations. Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports the needs of pupils and includes opportunities for academic, sporting, technological and creative enrichment.
22. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and provide specialist expertise in areas such as modern foreign languages, science, computing, creative arts and sport. Lessons are well planned to include a well-judged and effective variety of activities and resources. Teaching employs thoughtful questioning to develop and challenge pupils' independent thinking. As a result, pupils are typically curious, interested in their work and motivated to learn. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
23. The emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills from the earliest years helps pupils become confident communicators and competent mathematicians. Effective teaching enables pupils to write for different purposes, employing rich vocabulary and literary techniques, such as personification, onomatopoeia and oxymoron, to engage the reader. Reading time expands vocabulary, develops comprehension skills and encourages reading for pleasure. Suitable challenges and open questions motivate pupils to think independently in mathematics. Pupils apply secure knowledge to problem solve and transfer mathematical skills to other subjects confidently.
24. Adults interact warmly and clearly with children in the early years to enhance their language skills. Children are taught the sounds that letters make and are introduced to well-chosen books to foster early reading skills. Children in Reception use their knowledge of letter sounds to write the countries they come from. They form letters correctly and write simple sentences. Children in the Nursery are taught to count confidently. They count objects and fingers in play, songs and games. Children in Reception are taught to count and manipulate numbers up to at least 20, to recognise two-dimensional shapes and to use vocabulary such as 'full' and 'half-full' when playing with water.
25. The leaders of provision for pupils who have SEND effectively identify, monitor and review pupils' individual needs. They work closely with leaders and teachers to ensure that they employ suitable teaching strategies and that they make effective use of appropriate resources to help pupils make good progress. Targeted support in lessons and practical resources such as wobble cushions and movement breaks are available, if required.
26. The small number of pupils who require support because they speak English as an additional language (EAL) benefit from regular individual sessions and appropriate support in lessons, as required. For example, early years staff use pictures and visual images to help children learn key vocabulary. Well-planned activities and an effective identification and tracking programme support pupils in developing their English-speaking skills quickly so that they make good progress.
27. A suitable cycle of assessments is in place. Leaders record and analyse assessment data to track pupils' progress. They identify pupils who require targeted support and ensure that it is provided and has the desired result. Teachers provide constructive and helpful feedback to pupils in lessons so that they understand how to improve their work and extend their learning.



28. The extra-curricular programme is broad and encourages pupils of all ages to pursue their interests. Pupils participate in sporting, performing and creative clubs and develop their skills in areas including chess, karate, hockey, ballet, choir, gardening and art.

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

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

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

30. The PSHE curriculum and assembly themes such as 'What makes me unique?' and 'Do I deserve respect?' support pupils' development of self-awareness and self-knowledge. Discussions in personal development lessons and reflective activities such as designing 'personality islands', help pupils to recognise and express their individuality. Philosophical questions such as 'What is love?' inspire pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and feelings. These approaches foster pupils' personal development and self-confidence effectively.
31. Well-planned activities, such as obstacle courses on arrival and exploration of how to create effects such as shadows, help children in the early years develop much self-confidence and independence. The nurturing environment and carefully planned teaching enables children to develop ways to recognise and manage their feelings and emotions. This is supported by appropriate resources in the calm corner and the use of suitable techniques to aid children to do so, such as bubble timers and breathing balls, finger tapping and deep breaths. Staff work closely with parents so that children employ the same strategies at home. As a result, children use calming resources and techniques spontaneously and well. In these ways, leaders enable children to make substantial progress in their emotional development during their time in the early years.
32. Wellbeing surveys, 'My Voice' boxes in classrooms and availability of staff ensure that pupils are able to communicate any concerns they have. Leaders analyse responses to ensure that tailored support is provided. Mental health log books help pupils to explore their feelings in pictures and text. Themed weeks, including 'Mental Health Week' and 'Speak Up Week', help pupils reflect on their own and others' emotional wellbeing. Additionally, leaders make emotional literacy support and therapy available to support pupils when required.
33. PSHE lessons include consideration of people's protected characteristics such as age, race and disability and why these should be respected. This theme and pupils' learning about people's characteristics are reinforced in assemblies, through themed weeks which recognise, for example, Rainbow Day, Pride Month, and Black History Month, and through modelling of positive interactions by staff. As a result, pupils understand the importance of mutual respect and of challenging discrimination to maintain an inclusive and respectful environment.
34. The well-structured relationships and sex education (RSE) programme meets statutory guidance. Topics include consent, healthy relationships, and puberty and adolescence. Assemblies and activities promote kindness and inclusivity to reinforce the importance of such factors in healthy friendships and relationships.
35. Pupils are taught how to maintain both physical and mental health. They learn that healthy eating, exercise, sleep and relaxation contribute to positive wellbeing. Sports activities, including football and netball, promote fitness. Younger pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy outdoor activities. They develop an appreciation of nature and sense of freedom running in outdoor spaces. Appropriate supervision is in place to keep pupils suitably looked after and supported during breaktimes, trips and off-site activities, including going off-site to games lessons.
36. Form times and assemblies reinforce the importance of positive behaviour and the school's anti-bullying strategy. Pupils are taught about different forms of bullying and the harm that can be

caused by them. Pupils are confident to share with staff any concerns about bullying that may arise. As a result, bullying and its potential impact are minimised. Typically, staff manage pupils' behaviour in lessons effectively. In a few lessons, however, low-level misbehaviour is not addressed consistently in line with the school's policy, which interferes with pupils' learning. Leaders maintain appropriate behavioural records and analyse them so that patterns or trends in misbehaviour and bullying can be spotted.

37. The school premises are well maintained, and health and safety arrangements are regularly reviewed. Leaders undertake regular checks of equipment, fire doors, fire routes and fire and security systems routinely. They also employ external consultants to quality assure health and safety and fire safety arrangements, and take appropriate action to rectify any issues that are identified. Regular fire evacuation and lockdown drills ensure that pupils are familiar with emergency procedures.
38. Procedures for the administration of first aid are appropriate and effective. Any medicine is appropriately administered and stored securely. Leaders maintain records of injuries and accidents well. There are a suitable number of first aiders, including paediatric first aiders in the early years.
39. Admission and attendance registers are maintained in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders follow up any unexplained absences swiftly and inform the local authority if pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.

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

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

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

41. The PSHE curriculum promotes fundamental British values including topics on democracy, the rule of law, and individual liberty. Pupils are introduced to the concept of democracy in the earliest years when they vote for which story their class will listen to. Pupils vote for which charities to support and for members of school committees. They learn about how Parliament works and hold mock elections at the time of general elections. In these ways they experience and understand democratic processes. Staff ensure that any discussions which contain political themes or content are conducted impartially and without bias.
42. The positive school ethos and debates on moral and ethical issues such as 'Should guns be legal?' help pupils to develop understanding of right and wrong. Staff guide them to make different choices if they make mistakes. Pupils are taught that rules and laws exist to make life pleasant and fair for everyone. The annual 'Justice Week' includes visits from a magistrate and trips to the Courts of Justice to develop pupils' understanding of the criminal justice system and the differences between civil and criminal courts.
43. PSHE lessons and theme days such as 'International Day' and 'Global Hijab Day' encourage pupils to celebrate their own and others' cultures, identities and backgrounds. The religion, philosophy and ethics (RPE) curriculum teaches pupils about different world religions. Visiting speakers talk about different cultures, beliefs and festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Pupils visit different religions' places of worship. Through these measures, pupils develop an appreciation and understanding of different beliefs and cultures. They respect that others may hold different beliefs and live differently to themselves.
44. The PSHE curriculum teaches pupils about personal finance. In the early years children play at buying and selling to understand that money and coins have a value. Older pupils are taught about using pocket money wisely, saving, debt and affordability. In mathematics, pupils are taught how to calculate costs and solve money-related word problems. The enrichment programme enables pupils in Year 6 to design, create and sell items to the school community. They learn to make business plans, manage money responsibly and calculate profit and loss. Visiting speakers talk to pupils of all ages about different professions so that they become aware of different career paths that are available. In these ways, the school prepares pupils for their future lives.
45. Leaders promote philosophies of service, such as Japanese Omotenashi, as a way of life, to encourage pupils to support others without needing to receive anything in return. Pupils support the local community through activities such as creating hampers for local families in need at Christmas and taking part in community fun runs. Pupils presented a petition to the local council as part of their successful campaign for a zebra crossing outside the school. Engagement in such activity enables pupils to develop their sense of social responsibility.
46. Leaders also provide pupils with opportunities to serve their school. Children in the early years help to tidy up the classroom. Pupils in Year 6 organise events and promote inclusion in their roles of responsibility such as house captains and sports captains. Others help younger pupils as 'lower school buddies', spending time with them at breaktimes, hearing them read and helping to organise events such as pancake day celebrations. Pupil mental health champions are a visible presence for any pupil to talk to. They promote mental health throughout the school and help staff to identify

who is not happy so that support is available. Pupils are elected to sit on the health and wellbeing committee to discuss food and help to review lunch menus by consulting with their peers.

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

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

## Safeguarding

48. A robust safeguarding culture exists throughout the school. The proprietor and leaders review the school's safeguarding policy and procedures regularly to ensure that they comply with current statutory guidance and reflect local safeguarding arrangements. The proprietor holds frequent discussions on safeguarding matters with those with designated safeguarding responsibility. Regular safeguarding reports and annual safeguarding audits by leaders provide formal records of safeguarding practice and inform the proprietor's oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
49. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures that all staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding as part of induction on joining the school and in annual training courses. The DSL provides staff with regular updates during the year. This means that staff know the school's safeguarding policy and procedures. They have secure understanding of the 'Prevent' duty with regard to potential risks from radicalisation and extremism. Staff are confident about how to report concerns and record them on the school's pupil management system. Leaders and staff have secure knowledge of the whistleblowing policy and understand the importance of reporting any low-level concerns or allegations against staff.
50. Those with designated safeguarding responsibility are trained appropriately for their roles and have senior leadership roles within the school. They respond to concerns swiftly and work closely with other leaders and the proprietor to evaluate appropriate action, with reference to pupils' individual needs and circumstances. The safeguarding team understand the range of support available to them. They liaise regularly with relevant external agencies for advice and refer concerns to them as required.
51. The computing and PSHE programmes, assemblies, visiting speakers and an annual online safety day teach pupils about online safety. Pupils learn not to divulge personal information or to communicate with strangers online and to tell an adult if something does not seem right. An appropriate filtering and monitoring system provides effective oversight of internet use at the school. Leaders and managers respond swiftly to alerts of inappropriate searches and take appropriate action when required.
52. Leaders are trained in safer recruitment procedures. All required pre-employment checks are completed before staff and volunteers join the school. The single central record of appointments is accurately maintained and regularly checked by leaders and the proprietor. In these ways they ensure the suitability of adults at the school.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Hurlingham School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	212/6147
<b>Address</b>	Hurlingham School 122 Putney Bridge Road London SW15 2NQ
<b>Phone number</b>	020 8874 7186
<b>Email address</b>	admin@hurlinghamschool.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.hurlinghamschool.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mrs Fiona Goulden
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Fiona Goulden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Simon Gould
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	411
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 11 February 2022

## Information about the school

54. Hurlingham School is a co-educational independent day school, founded in 1947. It occupies two sites: the prep school, adjacent to Wandsworth Park in Putney, and a nursery school situated on a separate site nearby, which was acquired in 2017. The school and nursery are owned by two private limited companies, operated by a family whose members form a board of two directors, one of whom assumes day-to-day proprietorial responsibility, supported by a local advisory board. The proprietor has delegated responsibility for the oversight of the day-to-day running of the school to the headteacher.
55. There are 80 children in the early years which comprises three Reception classes that form part of the main school and three Nursery classes on a separate site.
56. The school has identified 33 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
57. The school has identified English as an additional language for a very small number of pupils.
58. The school's aim is to provide a happy, secure atmosphere in which pupils can be the best that they can be. It aims to foster creativity and independence of thought, and to nurture self-confidence, self-discipline, self-motivation, self-esteem, and a thirst and enjoyment for learning, focusing on community engagement and partnership with parents.



## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

11 to 13 March 2025

59. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

60. 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 the proprietor
- discussions with the headmaster, 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
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

61. 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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