

School inspection report

10 to 12 October 2023

St Christopher's School

St Christopher's School
71 Wembley Park Drive
Wembley
HA9 8HE

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'.

Contents

Summary of inspection findings	3
The extent to which the school meets the Standards	4
Recommended next steps	4
Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance	5
Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation	7
Section 3: Pupils’ physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing	8
Section 4: Pupils’ social and economic education and contribution to society.....	10
Safeguarding.....	11
School details	12
Information about the school	13
Inspection details	13

Summary of inspection findings

1. St Christopher's School is a happy and vibrant learning environment where leaders have created a safe place for children to learn and be happy in their surroundings.
2. The proprietor, through the advisory board, is actively involved in assuring that leaders and managers provide a high-quality learning experience for pupils. The advisory board carry out regular audits of safeguarding and risk management. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors effectively question and oversee the decisions leaders make to ensure they are in the best interest of pupils.
3. The school's vigilant safeguarding culture is underpinned by leaders' thorough knowledge of appropriate safeguarding processes, their diligent approach to child protection and regular and effective staff training.
4. Leaders and managers understand their duty to actively promote and ensure pupils' wellbeing and make coherent decisions to ensure this happens. The philosophy of 'learn, care, share' informs the actions that leaders and staff take. Leaders of the school and of the early years are decisive. They have an up-to-date understanding of the regulations and the requirements for effective school provision. Leaders communicate this understanding comprehensively to staff, ensuring that policies and procedures are rigorous and well known by staff and pupils.
5. Leaders provide a positive teaching and learning environment for children in the early years.
6. Leaders provide for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, the process for identifying the particular needs of pupils is less secure. This results in a lack of precision in adapting teaching for some pupils who have SEND.
7. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) teaching has a positive impact on the relationships pupils build with each other. Although there is a suitable behaviour policy, not all staff consistently follow it. As a result, staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.
8. Pupils engage with and learn about their local community as well as grow their understanding of institutions in modern Britain. Pupils learn how to manage money, including through their fundraising efforts.

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 and managers should ensure that they take a strategic and inclusive approach to identifying and meeting the needs of pupils' special educational needs.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that staff apply the behaviour policy with consistency so that all pupils' behaviour is managed effectively.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders have high aspirations for pupils' education and development. They are successful in equipping pupils with the foundations and skills they need for their next stage of education. Leaders understand the importance of risk management and fully consider risks. Pupils feel safe and are supported. As a result, there is a happy and supportive atmosphere that is conducive to pupils' learning.
10. Leaders provide effectively for pupils' wellbeing. Pupils use the well-established 'zones of regulation' to reflect on and regulate their own behaviour. Leaders communicate and implement policies effectively and consistently so that staff and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. In this way, leaders realise their aim for the academic, social, artistic and physical development of all pupils.
11. Pupils of all ages have an appropriate understanding of equality. Staff help pupils to appreciate that people should not be judged on the basis of their personal characteristics. There is no undermining of fundamental British values and leaders are careful to ensure that teaching does not promote any political or partisan views. Leaders pay due regard to the Equality Act to make the school and curriculum accessible to all groups of pupils.
12. Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning regularly. They analyse pupils' attainment to make sure that pupils are on track to make the best possible progress. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Subject leaders have good knowledge of their area of responsibility. They ensure that staff plan and teach literacy and numeracy skills effectively across all subjects. Staff provide parents with detailed reports which outline their child's progress and next steps.
13. Children achieve well in the early years. Leaders effectively provide a wide range of learning opportunities that are adapted to suit individual needs. Leaders have a secure understanding of what the youngest children need to learn and how best to enable children to develop and make progress. Children learn in a stimulating and interesting environment.
14. Leaders are reflective practitioners. They take staff and pupils' views into consideration to help them understand what is going well and what needs to improve. Senior leaders have successfully developed communication with parents around the procedures for pupils' transition when leaving the school. They provide a clear framework for parents considering the next stage of their child's education. Parental concerns and complaints are handled effectively and recorded carefully. A full range of policies and useful information for parents is provided on the school's website.
15. Leaders help pupils to develop their spiritual and moral understanding through events such as anti-bullying week and themed assemblies. Leaders have a clear understanding of effective behaviour management and anti-bullying strategies. Typically, staff and pupils understand and follow leaders' expectations. However, some staff are less effective in following the school's policy for managing pupils' behaviour. Their positive response to pupil-initiated charity events promotes and develops their understanding of working together, their management of money and their social awareness.
16. Governors are knowledgeable and fulfil their responsibilities. They regularly check safeguarding, health and safety and risk management processes so that they can support leaders effectively and

ensure that the Standards are met. They gather and listen to pupils' views and check that pupils are making the best progress they can.

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

All the relevant Standards are met

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. Pupils gain new knowledge and develop skills in a range of subjects. Pupils are given the opportunity to express themselves creatively and develop their own styles including in art and in their writing. Pupils' intellectual and social development is promoted well, including in regular assemblies. Pupils listen attentively and engage fully. Teachers think and plan carefully. They tailor teaching to meet most pupils' needs, providing them with the support they need to achieve high standards in their learning. Teachers give high-quality and focused feedback, both in lessons and on written work. Pupils respond positively to the advice they are given, helping them to improve their work.
18. Teachers use effective questioning and challenging activities to enable pupils to make good progress when completing investigative and practical work. In both science and mathematics, pupils have the opportunity to deepen their understanding and assimilate new knowledge and skills through the engaging activities teachers provide. Most teaching excites and interests pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and convey it to the pupils so that they are motivated to learn.
19. Assessment processes are effective. Senior leaders and subject leaders check how well pupils are achieving and consider pupils' individual needs and next steps, including any support that pupils might need. Teachers consider the assessment information when planning new learning for pupils.
20. In the early years, children are highly engaged in their learning and make good progress. They enjoy the role play area and develop high level vocabulary that they use appropriately and well. Children can express their thoughts and feelings clearly and explain their activities confidently. Children take part in a broad range of learning activities which ensure a positive and successful start to their education. Staff plan the outside areas effectively and children use these areas well to enhance their physical development. Children have a wide range of good quality resources to encourage them to write and explore the formation of letters.
21. Pupils who have been identified as having SEND and who are on the SEND register are well provided for. They make progress in line with expectations as a result of the effective support that adults provide. However, the identification of other pupils who may have additional needs are not always promptly considered. This means that appropriate planning, adaptation of the curriculum or additional support are delayed and this slows progress for a small minority of pupils. The intervention groups, which provide for those pupils yet to be diagnosed, are effective.
22. Leaders have designed a varied recreational extra-curricular programme. Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy a variety of activities and visits that provide them with positive experiences and develop their life skills. Pupils of all ages are provided with an understanding and appreciation of healthy relationships and the diversity of modern-day family life through the effective relationships education programme.

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

23. Teachers' enthusiasm and care, together with the successful planning and teaching of the relationships education programme have a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and on promoting good behaviour. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their positive relationships with teachers and each other. Staff encourage pupils to think about their own behaviour and the affect poor behaviour has on others. Leaders consider different ways to positively develop pupils' physical and mental health, such as the regular mindfulness sessions and providing extra-curricular activities.
24. Pupils can articulate their knowledge, opinions and understanding of fundamental British values and the need for tolerance and respect. The pupils' engagement with "Britain Gets Talking" helps them to appreciate and value the importance of discussing their concerns. Staff know the pupils well and pupils are proud to have the opportunity to discuss their learning and any worries with staff.
25. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the spiritual and moral values of the school. In assemblies, pupils say their own prayers and reflect on the topic under discussion. Pupils show mature understanding of right from wrong.
26. Leaders provide numerous opportunities for pupils to work effectively together. They consistently encourage pupils to communicate confidently with each other and with adults. Teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to undertake personal research and pupils are focused and diligent when developing effective study skills.
27. Leaders are diligent to all matters of health and safety. Sufficient staff are well trained in administering first aid. Suitable arrangements are in place to care for pupils who may need medical attention or who become unwell.
28. Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is and its potential negative impact. There are robust procedures in place and staff take prompt and appropriate action to protect pupils. Pupils are confident that should any bullying occur, it would be dealt with quickly and well. Pupils say that they feel safe and that they always have someone they can talk to if needed.
29. Pupils behave well in the majority of lessons. However, there are inconsistencies in the way that staff apply the behaviour policy. When this happens some pupils' behaviour falls below the expected standards. When staff use and apply the behaviour policy consistently the impact on pupils is positive.
30. The school premises are well maintained. Precautions are taken to reduce the risk from fire. Fire evacuation drills take place regularly. Attendance and admissions registers are maintained properly. Staff are quick to follow up on any unexplained absence.
31. Leaders have effective systems in place for the supervision of pupils. However, the level of supervision is not as consistent as it should be. At times supervision during less structured times is not sufficiently effective to ensure positive pupil behaviour.

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

All the relevant Standards are met

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

32. Leaders have designed and implemented a curriculum that provides ample opportunities for pupils of all ages to acquire knowledge about society and the wider world. Pupils are actively involved in writing and following their individual class charters on behaviour and the expected approach to school life. Leaders encourage pupils to develop the skills and understanding to work as part of a community.
33. Pupils contribute meaningfully to society including by supporting local and national charities. Pupils initiate many of the fundraising events, giving them the chance to develop their economic education. They often draw up and manage a budget in order to achieve a profit. Pupils develop a strong understanding of how their contributions benefit others less fortunate than themselves and why this is important.
34. Pupils take responsibility for a number of areas to develop their understanding of teamwork and the importance of contributing to the school community as preparation for life beyond school. Leaders encourage pupils to take on posts of responsibility. Older pupils show enthusiasm, pride and dedication as role models for younger ones. They are encouraged to voice their thoughts, and leaders listen. As a result of pupils' decisions made in school council meetings there was an increase in after-school activities. Pupils have contributed to leaders' school improvement plans.
35. Leaders have established a values-based curriculum and ensure pupils are well-informed about different institutions and their role in society. Staff's consistent approach to teaching these values and the school's aims has a positive impact on pupils' social understanding and empathy. Social discussions in form time and PSHE lessons about equality help pupils to think about how to treat other people. Leaders maximise the opportunities for pupils to engage with life outside of the school. Planned visits to places of worship and other places of interest, encourage pupils to engage with other people, cultures and current affairs.
36. Pupils appreciate diversity and ensure everyone is included. Very young children develop a strong sense of themselves through topics such as 'All about me'. They appreciate that not all families are the same and differ in composition. Pupils develop social and cultural knowledge. This is because leaders actively promote the principles of accepting responsibility, acquiring an understanding of their own culture and being accepting and tolerant of others.

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

37. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are effective. Leaders encourage a culture of openness and a philosophy of 'it could happen here'. Leaders have a diligent and systematic approach to all risks and understand that some risks are harder to identify. They work effectively with external services and engage with them where necessary in a positive and constructive manner. The leadership of safeguarding is strong and promotes staff and pupil awareness. The school's written safeguarding policy is comprehensive and clear. It is implemented effectively.
38. Leaders and staff listen to pupils and take their concerns seriously. This open culture permeates the school. As a result, pupils feel confident to speak to a trusted adult, or to use the worry box, if needed.
39. Leaders train staff and volunteers and provide regular updates to enable them to identify signs that there may be safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding leads are suitably trained. They have a clear understanding of their duties and how to manage safeguarding concerns.
40. Staff are knowledgeable about the safeguarding processes and procedures leaders expect, including about online safety. They understand their duties with regard to filtering and monitoring systems. Pupils are protected while working online.
41. In the early years, children are well-supervised and kept safe by engaged and caring key workers. The supervision of staff includes discussion on any safeguarding concerns and therefore develops practitioners' understanding of the expectations for keeping children safe.
42. Leaders have robust processes in place for carefully checking pupils' attendance and reasons for absence. They also have rigorous systems in place for the recruitment of suitable staff to work with children. All pre-employment checks are carried out and the required records are well kept.

The extent to which the school meets standards relating to safeguarding

All the relevant Standards are met

School details

School	St Christopher's School
Department for Education number	304/6057
Address	71 Wembley Park Drive Wembley HA9 8HE
Website	www.stchristophersschool.org.uk
Proprietor	Mr Amit Mehta
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Coke
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	101
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 May 2019

Information about the school

43. St Christopher's School is a co-educational day school located in Wembley, London. The school consists of a single building that houses all the classrooms. The school is administered by the Inspired Learning Group, led by the sole proprietor.
44. There are 36 children in the early years comprising the Nursery and one Reception class.
45. The school has identified two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
46. There are very few pupils who have English as an additional language.
47. The school states that its aims are to realise the educational potential of pupils in full; academically, socially, artistically and physically. It seeks to encourage a sense of personal responsibility and individual worth.

Inspection details

Inspection dates 10th – 12th October 2023

48. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.
49. Inspection activities included:
- lesson observations
 - joint lesson walks with school leaders
 - discussions with senior leaders, representatives from Inspired Learning Group, staff and pupils
 - joint work scrutinies with subject leaders
 - observations of co-curricular clubs and activities
 - attendance at registrations and assembly
 - scrutiny of policies and documentation as required.
50. 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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