

# School inspection report

21 to 23 March

## **Saint Pierre School**

16 Leigh Road

Leigh-on-Sea

Essex

SS9 1LE

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 proprietors and senior leaders use insightful self-evaluation processes that demonstrate their detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the school. As a result, the school meets the Standards, and ensures the wellbeing of pupils.
2. Leadership and management in the early years are effective. The staff successfully provide a warm and supportive environment for children. Leaders create a culture of reflective practice, within which all staff respond well to suggestions for improvement. Consequently, provision for children is continually enhanced and almost all children achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception.
3. Leaders ensure that schemes of work and programmes of activities meet the requirements of learning areas across the curriculum. Pupils make good progress and usually move onto their chosen senior schools. Planned activities are appropriate for needs, age and aptitudes of pupils. Pupils arrive in lessons keen and eager to learn. They respond well to the high expectations of their teachers. A few lessons lack clear learning objectives and the content varies from the planned activities. In these lessons pupils' progress is more limited.
4. Teachers use questioning effectively to motivate pupils, determine their understanding and address any mistakes or misconceptions. Most teachers provide effective advice and guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work. However, the school's policy on providing such advice and guidance is not followed consistently.
5. Pupils have a high level of understanding about the benefits of positive mental health and physical fitness. Early years children talk positively about physical exercise they enjoy, such as music and movement activities in dance. Older pupils enjoy their outdoor play and engaging in sports.
6. Leaders ensure that relevant health and safety requirements and fire safety regulations are met. Pupils are properly supervised through appropriate deployment of school staff.
7. Pupils respect and value diversity within their own school and wider society. They show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures, particularly their peers from different backgrounds and cultural traditions.
8. Pupils understand right and wrong and behave in a manner that reflects their awareness. They show care and consideration for each other when socialising at playtime, in the dining hall and when working cooperatively during lessons. They understand about bullying and the different forms it can take and help appoint bullying ambassadors to help support peers and younger pupils in the playground. Pupils feel very safe and know who to speak to if they have any concerns.
9. Pupils demonstrate their understanding and respect for individuality during discussions and debates related to protected characteristics, particularly those of sex, gender identity and religious belief. They leave the school confident, articulate and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should ensure that:

- all lessons enable pupils to make consistent progress against planned learning objectives
- marking and feedback consistently enable pupils to understand what they have achieved and how they can improve, in line with the school's policy.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Changes in the senior leadership team in recent years have established clearer lines of responsibility. Senior staff work well with the headteacher so that pupils achieve well and the school meets the Standards.
11. Leaders know what they need to do to ensure that Saint Pierre continues to meet the needs of pupils. They are relentless in their commitment to making sure that pupils' needs are understood and met. Staff are supported to deliver the curriculum in line with the school's ethos and aim to develop the potential in every child.
12. Early years leaders ensure that all members of staff work together and share their in-depth knowledge of individual children in their care. Their effective approach to assessing and supporting children's learning is evident in the high-quality of work in English and mathematics. Children make good progress. The early years leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They provide parents with helpful activities they can put into practice at home to support children's learning.
13. Self-evaluation processes are concise and insightful, demonstrating leaders' understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the school. Senior leaders monitoring of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work have identified variation in the consistency of feedback for pupils and that progress against planned objectives is not as strong as it could be in some lessons. Planned actions are still in the early stages of implementation.
14. The school leaders promote pupils' wellbeing through comprehensive policies, procedures, risk assessments. These are well established and implemented by staff. The proprietors, including the headteacher, make effective use of guidance from external agencies to support them in their role, including their school association.
15. The procedures for assessing risk and responding to an emergency or disruption to the normal life of the school are effective. Leaders have well-organised arrangements to ensure that the premises are safe. There are robust risk assessments and monitoring procedures in place for managing the risk of harm to pupils' wellbeing. This includes school-based activities and off-site excursions.
16. The school ensures that information is provided as required by relevant standards and made available on the school website. There is a suitable three-stage complaints procedure. It encompasses informal and formal complaints procedures appropriately. The policy is implemented effectively. Suitable records are kept, clearly detailing the stage a complaint reaches and include any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.
17. The proprietors have a thorough understanding of strengths and areas for development. They hold leaders at all levels to account and challenge them to demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Proprietors have a clear understanding of pupils' performance. A majority of pupils entered for the local 11+ examinations successfully gain places in local selective schools. There is a shared, compelling ambition amongst leaders and staff to provide a high-quality education and improve further pupils' outcomes.

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

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

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

19. Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from a wide-ranging curriculum and make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics in preparation for the local 11+ assessments. Pupils discuss their learning in lessons and can apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts. This includes discussions of British values, such as democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.
20. Carefully planned activities in a stimulating and challenging early years environment enable children to choose different activities such as 'messy work' and role play. They engage purposefully and productively. For example, the mystery of placing eggs into a range of drinks overnight enthused the children to produce predictions about what would happen. Speaking and listening skills are developed well because children are encouraged to speak in full sentences when possible. Phonics teaching is skilfully matched to children's needs. These sessions encourage the repetition of sounds and consolidate children's learning successfully, even during snack time. The children demonstrate a well-practised use of mathematical language while comparing 2D and 3D shapes. They hypothesised about whether cuboids and spheres stack, roll and slide. Consequently, almost all children achieve a good level of development in all areas of learning by the end of Reception.
21. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and become confident communicators. Pupils extend their learning beyond the classroom and involve themselves in research homework tasks or individual projects related to their school work. For example, by independently making posters for the local park urging people not to buy palm oil. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in asking the pupils probing questions to test their understanding. As a result, pupils use subject vocabulary and terminology well. For example, they engaged effectively in paired discussions about the male and female parts of flowers during a dissection of lilies.
22. Teachers promote high-quality writing by reinforcing the importance of accurate, grammatically correct sentences and the accurate use of spelling across all subjects. They identify when pupils make mistakes in the use of vocabulary. Many younger pupils write well independently, producing high-quality stories as well as descriptive and persuasive writing. The teaching of mathematics expects older pupils to explain their reasoning and show how they have solved problems. This enables pupils to apply and deepen their skills and identify patterns.
23. The majority of lessons are well planned and structured. As a result, pupils make good progress in subjects such as science, humanities and music. A few lessons lack clear objectives, and the content varies from the planned sequence of learning. In these lessons pupils' progress is more limited.
24. Teachers regularly assess their pupils' needs using a variety of strategies. Typically, marking and feedback includes verbal encouragement and identifies next steps for improvement and targets for learning, in line with the school's marking and feedback policy. However, this approach is not consistently implemented across the school.
25. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are sensitively and skilfully identified. These pupils are provided with effective resources and support. Work is well matched to their needs and additional adults are very effective in ensuring that they make consistently good progress against their targets. Those pupils who benefit from practical activities have personalised the room with chalk paint on desks for number work and writing words. Pupils benefit from using

the learning support area, 'the nurture room', enthusiastically making signs and posters about their learning area.

26. Leaders identified the need to increase the range of clubs and sporting activities for older pupils and provided physical education specialist lessons as well as more sports activities. This has increased the number of pupils using the outdoor play area and local parks for recreation and sport activities. They learn new skills, and develop new interests. Pupils expressed appreciation for the recently refurbished pirate ship where pupils can socialise, make friends and develop their physical dexterity.
27. Pupils make good progress and by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 a majority successfully gain entrance to local selective senior schools.

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

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



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

29. Children in the early years have access to a stimulating environment that includes outdoor learning areas. These promote their physical, personal and emotional development. Children engage in activities such as reflection and exploring what courage is. As a result, they understand and talk about their feelings and learn how to get on with others and make friends. Older pupils develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through initiatives such as friendship intervention groups or classroom affirmation mirrors, which encourage them to make positive statements about themselves while looking in the mirror. Respectful and positive relationships between the pupils and members of staff underpin pupils' confidence and pride in doing well.
30. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and science lessons include wide-ranging relationship education topics that reflect statutory guidance and are appropriate to pupils' needs. The school's wellbeing, physical and emotional health programme enables older pupils to reflect about their capability, talent and to proactively engage in 'food and mood' activities which provide information about how eating well can make a difference to their mental wellbeing. Pupils enjoy discussions around human and children's rights, armed conflict and international law. Older pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities, including swimming and after-school clubs, that develop their physical skills and fitness. Pupils also have the opportunity to be sports leaders.
31. Pupils engage enthusiastically with the school's 'nourish' programme of assemblies and activities that encourages them to drink water frequently, get sufficient sleep and choose colourful plates that include vegetables at lunchtimes. Pupils recognise their own insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes, and that values influence them in their own lives. These and other opportunities help to develop pupils' spiritual understanding. They explore other religions, including reflecting upon the beauty of Hindu mandirs and worship.
32. The additional physical education and sport activities introduced into the curriculum for older pupils have been enhanced through the use of a local sports centre and swimming pool. This has increased the number of pupils involved in sport and contributes to their understanding of healthy lifestyles.
33. The school's behaviour policy is effectively implemented. This is evident in pupils' interactions with each other and adults. Good behaviour is rewarded through house points and awards at certificate assembly. Pupils acknowledged that sanctions were reasonable and appropriate.
34. Leaders are dedicated to eliminating unkindness and bullying as far as is reasonably possible and ensure that the anti-bullying policy is understood and implemented by all staff. The recording and monitoring of behaviour and bullying is effective. Pupils know about various types of bullying and know what to do if they have any concerns. They have voted for the appointment of anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils confirm that they have trusted adults and friends who they can speak with if they have any concerns.
35. Staff respond to the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of pupils and adapt their plans accordingly; for example, in response to a family event or incident. Pupils are made to feel safe within their school environment and therefore supported in their learning. The school provides safe and suitable accommodation for all pupils including provision and recording of first aid and medication.

36. Health and safety monitoring procedures ensure that pupils are safeguarded from harm around the school site. Issues identified by staff are resolved through an effective maintenance request system. The school carries out and reviews regular evacuation drills, maintains detailed fire safety logs and makes use of external specialists to ensure high standards of health and fire safety.
37. Leaders check that admissions processes include all necessary information and that the school's attendance register is maintained in accordance with regulations. They inform the local authority if a child is absent for more than ten days, or when they join or leave the school. There is plentiful supervision at arrival and departure times and during break times.

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

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

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

39. Pupils recognise that their school community is diverse and are tolerant and kind towards each other. This is demonstrated by pupils understanding and respect for individuality, particularly those characteristics such as sex, gender identity and faith. These features are exemplified in the school song, with lyrics focusing on values of respect for every race and living together in peace and harmony, which the pupils sing with enthusiasm and understanding. Typically, pupils are sufficiently confident and self-assured to challenge stereotypes and keep an open mind. This prepares them well to challenge extremist or discriminatory views in the future.
40. Early years staff provide a rich learning experience beyond the classroom in the local community. Children travel on local transport to the library, visit the local bakery to buy gingerbread cookies and regularly visit local residential homes. They develop their economic understanding by purchasing and measuring ingredients to make gingerbread dough and create individual shapes to bake in preparation for the charity bake sale that takes place annually. They work out how much money they have spent and how much they can give to charity. During their activities they take turns and listen to each other carefully whilst explaining the reasons for their choices. Through their creative play and experimentation, children explore the role of a dentist and they understand the importance of good oral hygiene such as when brushing their teeth and eating non-sugary foods. They extract teeth from toy crocodiles with tweezers, explaining that they are decayed.
41. Leaders promote older pupils' understanding of economic and social wellbeing through activities such as apprentice week. Pupils are given the opportunity to make items to sell, with the proceeds being donated to a local homeless charity. These activities enable pupils in an age-appropriate manner to evaluate entrepreneurial events and link them to different types of career opportunities.
42. The school's promotion of British values enables pupils to understand the democratic system of British government, including recognising why laws play an important role in protecting people. Pupils can explain how members of parliament are elected and can relate this to their own experiences of voting for school councillors and anti-bullying ambassadors. This understanding is enhanced with an annual trip to parliament and the pupils' involvement in the Children's Parliament, a concept which originated in Saint Pierre. Pupils take part in discussions with other schools both locally and nationally and benefit from discussions and debates about dignity in school, democracy and learning for sustainability. Pupils recognise the role the monarchy plays in British society.
43. Pupils are able to reflect upon and learn from historical events and current affairs during form time and apply their knowledge in the context of the school's values. Teaching staff across the school use this time to consider local and international news stories enabling pupils to consider and develop opinions about life beyond the school and its local community.
44. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities such as head girl and boy. All pupils recognise that they are expected to carry out duties such as cleaning the dining hall tables or serving desserts at lunchtime, enabling them to develop their social awareness of the importance of collective responsibility. These life skills prepare them for their next stage of education and their role in modern Britain.

45. Pupils have a secure understanding of right and wrong and consider a wide range of social issues, which increase in complexity as they become older. They learn about diversity and value the opportunities to study different cultures and religions. Teachers promote pupils' understanding of cultural differences by drawing on the backgrounds of the families within the school community. Pupils of all ages learn about and celebrate different cultures and faiths through assemblies, visitors, PSHE and religious studies lessons.

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

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

## Safeguarding

47. The culture of the school is caring and supportive and puts pupil safety at the centre of all it does. Leaders are proactive in seeking ways to enhance the school's safeguarding arrangements.
48. Leaders ensure that all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They emphasise that 'it could happen here' so that staff are confident in how they identify and report concerns, including low-level concerns. Regular communication between pastoral and safeguarding leaders and the implementation of a comprehensive online monitoring system ensure that any pastoral concerns which could be safeguarding matters are identified.
49. The school's safeguarding policy makes reference to the latest statutory guidance and is available on the website. Appropriate procedures are in place regarding the employment of staff and completion of the single central record. These include comprehensive pre-appointment checks to ensure that all those who work in school are suitable to work with children.
50. Leaders have ensured that all staff have received appropriate training and fully understand the need for the timely sharing of all concerns about pupils' wellbeing. This includes the implementation of an effective induction system for all staff. They are kept up to date on safeguarding issues, including child-on-child abuse, extremism and radicalisation.
51. The open and positive relations between staff, parents and pupils mean that any concerns can be picked up quickly. Leaders consistently follow up any concerns on safeguarding. They contact local safeguarding partners promptly and are persistent in following up referrals to make sure that timely action is taken.
52. The curriculum supports pupils in learning about dangers and how to avoid them, including when they use telecommunications. Pupils learn what to do if they find themselves in potentially dangerous situations, including taking responsibility for keeping themselves safe. For example, internet safety is emphasised regularly, and pupils are able to explain clearly how to keep themselves safe online. Proprietorial monitoring and filtering of technology is effective and there is an appropriate annual review.

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

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

## School details

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|--|--|
| <b>School</b>                          | Saint Pierre School  |
| <b>Department for Education number</b> | 882/6007   |
| <b>Address</b>                         | Saint Pierre School<br>16 Leigh Road<br>Leigh-on-Sea<br>Essex<br>SS9 1LE |
| <b>Phone number</b>                    | 01702 474164   |
| <b>Email address</b>                   | info@saintpierreschool.co.uk   |
| <b>Website</b>                         | www.saintpierreschool.co.uk  |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                      | Saint Pierre School Limited  |
| <b>Chair</b>                           | Mr Peter Spencer-Lane  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                     | Mr Peter Spencer-Lane  |
| <b>Age range</b>                       | 2 to 11  |
| <b>Number of pupils</b>                | 133  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>     | 21 February 2023   |

## Information about the school

54. Saint Pierre School is a co-educational day school. Founded in 1952, it is located in a residential area of Leigh-on-Sea. The current headteacher took up his position in June 2019 and in October 2022 he became a joint proprietor and acts as the chair of proprietors.
55. The school has identified 13 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
56. No pupil in the school has English as an additional language.
57. The school states its aims are to develop the potential in every child. It desires its pupils to be intellectually curious, creative, resilient and independent. It seeks for children to contribute to the community and to aspire to be global citizens.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

19 to 21 March 2024

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

59. 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 proprietors
- discussions with the head, 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.

60. 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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