

# School inspection report

14 to 16 May 2024

## **Wellesley Prep School**

Stratfield Turgis

Hook

Hampshire

RG27 0AR

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

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
AREAS FOR ACTION.....	4
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS .....	4
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	6
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	8
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	10
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	12
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	13
<b>SCHEDULE OF UNMET STANDARDS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Section 3: Pupils’ physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>17</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. The school is an inclusive and happy community. Senior leaders encourage pupils and staff to embrace diversity and be kind and respectful towards others. Consequently, relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils, are notably positive.
2. However, leaders and managers do not comply with the statutory requirement to inform the local authority when pupils transition between schools at non-standard times. In consequence, the Standard relating to leadership, management and governance is not met.
3. Governors and leaders are reflective and frequently review provision to support the wellbeing of pupils. They provide extensive information for parents and involve them in school life through workshops and assemblies. Leaders seek and listen to the views of pupils, and pupils feel they are well cared for and safe.
4. Pupils make good progress because teaching is adapted to suit their needs. Pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) also make good progress from their starting points. A broad and balanced curriculum ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders carefully plan learning experiences so that pupils develop a global outlook, whilst appreciating their local environment. Pupils gain new knowledge in a wide range of subjects, whilst developing personal and social skills to equip them for the future. In the early years, teachers create stimulating and safe learning environments and tailor adult support to match individual children's needs and interests.
5. Across the school, teachers know individual pupils well. Attainment and progress are tracked through a combination of teacher assessments and a variety of tests. However, pupils' work is assessed in different ways across ages and subjects. Systems to collect and monitor data are inconsistent. This makes it challenging for leaders to evaluate and analyse trends in data, and plan effectively to meet pupils' evolving needs.
6. A well-planned, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme is woven into the curriculum. The scheme of work is adapted by leaders and teachers so that it meets the needs of pupils and ethos of the school. Themes are communicated to parents through weekly newsletters so they can support their children's learning. Pupils behave well and willingly take responsibility for their own actions, from the early years. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and demonstrate self-confidence, tolerance and respect for each other.
7. The school premises and buildings are maintained well and pupils feel safe. Governors oversee health and safety procedures, checks and records and undertake reviews to mitigate risks, with support from external specialists where required.
8. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and develop their self-knowledge, whilst emphasizing their role in the school community and society. As a consequence, pupils are empathetic and caring. They contribute in a variety of ways to support local, national and international charities. Pupils respect and help to care for their local environment.
9. Pupils' safeguarding arrangements are carefully monitored by staff. Leaders provide a variety of ways to ensure pupils' voices are heard. Leaders are attuned to the contextual risks, including those related to online learning.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

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

### Areas for action

The proprietor 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:

- when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard times, the relevant local authorities are informed.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- develop a more effective system to assess, track and monitor pupils' progress, from their starting points, across all ages and subjects so that leaders can adapt provision to meet their needs.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders create an inclusive culture for pupils and staff, actively promoting mutual respect. As a result, pupils are confident in their own individuality, yet have a secure sense of belonging. They appreciate their local surroundings but have an understanding of global affairs.
11. However, leaders were unaware of the requirement to report pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard times to the local authority. In this respect, leaders did not follow statutory guidance.
12. Governors work closely with leaders to make strategic decisions to improve the school. They know the school well, visit regularly, talk to staff and pupils and provide effective support and challenge for leaders. Through committees, they review policies and procedures, including those for health and safety and safeguarding.
13. Leaders revise and adjust planning and provision through effective self-evaluation and listening to the views of all members of the community. They identify initiatives that work well as well as understand the need for continuous review and improvement. For example, pastoral leads now meet more regularly to discuss and adapt initiatives to measure the impact on pupils' mental health and wellbeing.
14. Governors and leaders are aware of risks, including any unintended consequences of their actions, and take steps to mitigate them. For instance, they understand the need to review and monitor the outcomes of their new approach to teaching and assessing progress in humanities subjects. They invite parents to observe lessons so they can listen to their views on the changes.
15. Leaders develop links with outside agencies. Safeguarding leaders consult these agencies as appropriate to provide advice. Leaders train staff effectively so that they understand how to keep pupils safe.
16. Leaders ensure that the aims of the school to develop pupils' problem-solving skills are put into practice through a variety of learning experiences. As a result, pupils are curious, keen to learn and enjoy working problems out for themselves.
17. Leaders in the early years are knowledgeable about their roles. They promote positive relationships and create a safe environment for children to learn. They understand and meet the needs of individual children so that they thrive and are well prepared for their move into the main school.
18. Key documents and information are shared with parents via the website, handbooks, newsletters and emails. Parents receive regular information about their children's progress, attainment and attitudes to learning through termly reports and meetings with teachers. The complaints procedure is implemented effectively to resolve complaints. Actions are recorded, in line with the school policy, and there are suitable records.
19. The proprietor commissions external health and safety audits to identify, minimise and mitigate the risks of the school site. Leaders are aware of the health and safety requirements and aim to manage risks without restricting access to a wide range of facilities and activities. They ensure that staff are appropriately trained in health and safety matters, for example through regular fire training and first aid training. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and makes improvements so that the site is accessible to those with physical disabilities.

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

20. The standard relating to the admission and attendance register is not met. As a result, the standards relating to governance, leadership and management are not consistently met.

**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

21. Leaders seek to ensure that their aims to encourage curiosity and wonder, develop problem-solving attitudes and take creative risks are delivered through a broad and balanced curriculum. In addition, a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme and outdoor learning opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' learning and their physical and personal development.
22. In line with leaders' aims, teachers plan lessons with frequent opportunities for active learning and discussion so that pupils improve their communication skills. They use good-quality resources effectively, including the local woodland environment and educational trips further afield. As a result, pupils behave well and are engaged and motivated. Pupils are articulate and express their ideas clearly in presentations and debates, confidently taking questions from their peers. They explore topics related to current affairs, such as different types of government, expressing balanced and considered opinions.
23. The curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils gain new knowledge and develop skills in a range of subjects. Through a coherent approach and effective teaching, pupils make good progress. In mathematics lessons, pupils develop problem-solving skills and in science, they improve their investigation skills. Pupils are creative, including during well-planned art lessons which include photography, textiles and sculpture. They discuss the emotions evoked through a variety of musical experiences, including instrumental lessons and choir.
24. Pupils appreciate the wide and well-delivered range of activities after school which leaders' provide, allowing them to develop their talents and interests, for example in sport, ballet or ceramics.
25. Leaders have recently developed a new curriculum for humanities subjects in Years 7 and 8. Lessons are planned around topic themes to equip pupils with skills for the future such as research and presentation skills. Pupils choose projects to research on both contemporary and historical themes. Recent work has included researching the medicinal properties of plants in Britain and the Amazon. Pupils discuss human rights issues in a variety of countries across the globe. Pupils are enthusiastic about this approach learning and display a detailed knowledge of the issues they have explored.
26. In the early years, learning is planned so that children explore, develop curiosity and use their imaginations. Communication and language development is prioritised so that pupils make rapid progress in their understanding of sounds, conversations and reading. Children listen to adults and their peers, develop ideas through stories and communicate their learning confidently. Classrooms and the outdoor area are well-equipped and include natural and recycled resources available locally. Lesson themes are driven by the children's interests, so they enjoy their learning.
27. Leaders have improved training so that staff have a deep understanding of how best to support pupils who have SEND. These pupils make good progress as a result of early identification of their needs and the provision of skilled teachers, who carefully consider their needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress as they are supported with learning tasks that are well matched to their developing fluency. Learning is adapted for the more able pupils for example, adapting phonics or mathematics learning in the early years and pre-prep. The school provides additional activities such as the Junior Mathematical Challenge and the scholars programme for older pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support learning.

28. Teachers know pupils well and adjust their teaching to help them match their needs so that they make good progress. Assessment information is shared regularly with parents. Early learning goals for children in Reception are tracked and monitored. Almost all children meet these by the end of their time in Reception. Progress and attainment data across the school is gathered through a range of tests and assessment of classwork and homework. However, methods of assessment and tracking are inconsistent across ages groups and subjects. Leaders are aware of the need to simplify and improve systems to track and monitor pupils' progress consistently. They understand that prompt identification of trends through data analysis can enable them to adjust the curriculum or teaching where necessary.

### **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. Leaders take steps to ensure that the school environment is safe. Pupils are well supervised at breaks and lunchtimes and due care is given to make sure arrival and departure procedures are thorough. Most procedures to monitor attendance and admission are effective. However, leaders and managers were unaware of the requirement to report pupils who join or leave school at non-standard times to the local authority.
31. Carefully planned schemes of work ensure that lessons in PSHE and religious education (RE) develop pupils' understanding of mutual respect and tolerance. Leaders carefully consider when, where and how these subjects are taught throughout the curriculum so that they support pupils' wellbeing. Pupils are aware that everyone is different and respect each other as individuals. They recognize the importance of not being judgmental. In an assembly, Year 8 pupils spoke confidently about the how PSHE lessons enable them to set goals for their future.
32. Relationships education and relationships and sex education (RSE) are taught in age-appropriate ways. For example, children in the early years learn about developing healthy relationships through stories. Pupils in the prep learn these topics during form time, assemblies, PSHE and science lessons. Leaders arrange talks from external providers, for example, about drug misuse. Leaders work closely with a parent consultation group to discuss information about RSE lessons so that parents are well-informed.
33. Leaders take positive steps to improve the wellbeing of pupils by training additional Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) and encouraging older pupils to be peer listeners. Pupils feel well supported. They know how and where they can get help and seek support readily when necessary. Pupils understand the importance of their physical and mental health, referring to PSHE lessons, sports, the wellbeing room and key staff members as sources of support.
34. Leaders provide regular physical education (PE) lessons, swimming and competitive sport fixtures. In addition, regular opportunities to learn and play outdoors enable pupils to develop healthy bodies and minds. There is a varied lunch menu and pupils are educated on food waste. Pupils know what constitutes healthy eating and where their food comes from.
35. Pupils throughout the school confidently make decisions about how to present their ideas. Pupils as young as those in Year 1, offer opinions and explanations for their choices. Children in the early years are proud of their own work and are equally ready to offer praise to their peers for their ideas.
36. Children in Reception develop resilience as they spend time exploring the woodland environment during carefully planned lessons, which are risk assessed by staff. For instance, they investigate mini beasts, plants and flowers found in the natural environment. Using natural resources such as moss and grass, they create 3-D sculptures of their faces. Children give reasons for their choice of materials, reveling in their creativity and individuality.
37. Leaders ensure that pupils are aware of the behaviour policy and the system of rewards and sanctions. As a result, behaviour is good. Pupils know that class and playground rules help to keep

them safe. Children in the early years are aware of rules when playing together. For example, Nursery children can say and demonstrate the rules to follow when they are using the sandbox.

38. Bullying is rare and records show that is dealt with in a proportionate and timely manner when it happens. Pupils appreciate the thoughtful support given, in appropriate ways, to both parties involved. Pupils earn house points or super house points for their work. Achievements are celebrated in a weekly assembly which promotes pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence.
39. Leaders ensure that premises and buildings are maintained well and repairs are made promptly. They ensure that the provision for first aid is appropriate. Staff training is regularly updated. Pupils are taught how to keep safe. For example, Year 5 pupils are taught how to risk assess an area with water during a swimming lesson. Fire regulations are met and regular fire drills are carried out. Thoughtful adjustments are made to ensure that traffic arriving and leaving the school is well managed.

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

40. Standards are not consistently met with respect to the admission and attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- 41. 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

42. Lessons in PSHE and RE promote a deep understanding of different beliefs and customs in pupils. In addition, leaders plan assemblies and whole-school events such as World Religion Day to celebrate diversity. Older pupils and visitors share their beliefs and culture so pupils gain new knowledge. Pupils are invited to share a thought or prayer, of any religion, at lunch times.
43. Pupils understand the principles of democracy when electing school council representatives and house captains. They know their voice is heard when suggestions such as a ceramics after-school club and locations for additional worry boxes are enacted. Some house events are chosen by pupils, such as the obstacle course and a kindness tree to celebrate acts of kindness. Older pupils deepen their understanding of issues such as democracy and freedom of speech in their work in humanities. For example, they make links with historical events and freedom fighters in the past and recent events related to freedom.
44. The school provides ways to educate pupils about character, community and ethics. During form time, pupils watch news from around the world which helps them to understand the impact of humans on the people and the environment. Pupils are involved in supporting people in their local community and contributing to national and international charities. Older pupils raise money for a charity of their choice by taking part in a triathlon or the Three Peaks Challenge.
45. Children in the early years learn how to take care of their environment, creating 'bug hotels' in the school grounds. Each class has an opportunity to spend an extended period of time in the woodland classroom during the year. They plant trees around the estate and older pupils help to prune lower branches as part of woodland management. On Environment Day, pupils learn about laying hedges and river management with a particular focus on sustainability.
46. Pupils understand the value of money. Money symbols on the floor introduce children in the early years to British coinage. In mathematics lessons and through events such as bake sales and school fetes, pupils learn about budgeting. Older pupils discuss and understand the advantages and disadvantages of having access to money. Pupils know the difference between wants and needs and feel empowered to make appropriate decisions about how to spend or save money.
47. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills as prefects or house captains, pupil librarians, peer listeners, sports leaders, sports captains and members of the school council. 'Quiet leadership' is encouraged and championed at Wellesley and older pupils typically demonstrate this quality in the way they are role models for younger pupils. For example, Year 8 support and encourage Year 2 pupils as they travel together on their respective science trips.
48. Pupils across the school have many opportunities to discuss what is right and wrong through their discussions about current affairs. For instance, pupils in Year 7 and 8 understand the ethics of animal testing, citing the benefits as well as harmful consequences.
49. Pupils receive guidance on careers through their PSHE unit on Goals and Dreams. Year 8 pupils are provided opportunities for work experience within the school helping with gardening or assisting in the office. Visitors are invited to school to share information about a variety of careers. Information about careers was referenced by Year 8 pupils in assembly as being one of their more valuable

topics. Adventure, leadership and service activities planned by the school, offer pupils in Years 7 and 8 a range of recreational and life skills such as cooking, sailing and organising events.

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

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

## Safeguarding

51. Leaders promote an effective safeguarding culture which supports the welfare of pupils. Leaders, including the leader of provision for pupils who have SEND, consider pupils' individual needs carefully and provide ongoing support for any pupils of concern.
52. Through consultation with appropriate external agencies, leaders seek advice and ensure that all staff are equipped with relevant, up-to-date information about safeguarding. Staff are confident in safeguarding practices and procedures as a result of rigorous training and regular updates from leaders. Staff identify and act upon any concerns about pupils and these are logged securely and monitored frequently. The school has appropriate systems in place to respond to any allegations against staff that arise.
53. Age-appropriate information about safeguarding is displayed in all classrooms and shared during lessons and assemblies. Safeguarding leaders are known to all pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils are confident to approach staff or use worry boxes to communicate their concerns.
54. Leaders are pro-active in keeping pupils safe online. Stringent and effective monitoring and filtering systems are in place. These are constantly updated to ensure pupils are protected from online harm. Leaders carefully assess the risks involved with increased use of technology and take steps to mitigate them. Computing and PSHE lessons are thoughtfully delivered in age-appropriate ways to teach pupils how to recognise potential risks.
55. All governors are trained in safeguarding. Governors visit the school regularly to meet with safeguarding staff. They review safeguarding policies, any external audits and scrutinise records. Governors oversee staff recruitment checks in the single central record with due care and attention to statutory checks and guidance. Leaders ensure a rigorous system is in place to carry and out and record checks on all staff, as well as managing an effective process for all adults who work in the school.

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

56. All the relevant Standards are met.

## Schedule of unmet Standards

### Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	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 –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

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

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Wellesley Prep School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	850/6024
<b>Address</b>	Wellesley Prep School Stratfield Turgis Hook Hampshire RG27 0AR
<b>Phone number</b>	01256 882 707
<b>Email address</b>	office@wellesleyprep.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	Wellesleyprepschool.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Wellington Estate Holdings Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Massey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angus McDonald
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13
<b>Number of pupils</b>	296
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 to 23 March 2017

## Information about the school

57. Wellesley Prep school is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged three to thirteen years. The school is under the proprietorship and governance of Wellington Estate Holdings Ltd. The school comprises three sections; an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), a pre-prep and a prep school.
58. There are 43 children in the EYFS, of whom 16 are in the Nursery.
59. The school has changed its name to Wellesley Prep School from September 2023. It was previously known as Daneshill School. A new headmaster was appointed in September 2023 and a new chair of governors in March 2024.
60. The school has identified 40 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
61. English is an additional language for 28 pupils.
62. The school states its aims are: to develop children's problem-solving skills and attitudes; provide a safe environment for pupils to take creative risks in their learning; encourage an enduring sense of curiosity and wonder; promote mental and physical fitness; and explore each child's strengths and support their areas for development.



## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

14 to 16 May 2024

63. A team of 3 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

64. 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 chair and other governors
- 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.

65. 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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