

School inspection report

26 to 28 November 2024

Queen's Gate School

131 – 133 Queen's Gate

Kensington

London

SW7 5LE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors and leaders share a clear vision for the school based around developing the individual within a supportive school environment. Governors and leaders work together to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision, actively involving the views of the pupils and parents in this process. This helps inform the school's continuing development.
2. Pupils are at the heart of leaders' decision making. Leaders have put in place a diverse and ambitious curriculum which enables pupils to pursue their own interests and develop well academically. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs and societies encourage pupils to develop their skills and interests beyond the curriculum.
3. Teachers have extensive subject knowledge and use a range of techniques to deliver lessons which enthuse the pupils. This is particularly effective in the junior school and sixth form, where teachers skilfully adapt lessons to the needs of pupils and respond to their interests and questions. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well in public examinations. However, in some lessons for younger pupils in the senior school the teaching and resources are not sufficiently well adapted to build on prior knowledge and pupils become disengaged with their learning.
4. Pupils develop a wide range of creative and artistic skills both through lessons and extra-curricular activities. Younger pupils develop musical and dramatic skills in dedicated lessons and pupils remain involved in musical performances in assemblies and house competitions throughout the school. Pupils produce high quality artwork. They apply their knowledge of techniques in a range of subjects including fine art, design technology and graphic communication.
5. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sport and other physical activities in the school gym and at venues in the local area. Pupils enjoy exercise and involve themselves enthusiastically in school teams which compete at a high level. A wide range of recreational activities are available in which pupils develop skills such as how to work together effectively and undertake projects based on their own interests.
6. Relationships throughout the school are positive. Teachers know the pupils well. Pupils feel that staff are interested in them and what they have to say. Pupils feel valued. This helps pupils grow in self-esteem. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and consistent implementation of a clear behaviour policy results in a calm, ordered environment around the school. Incidents of bullying and poor behaviour are rare. Leaders monitor closely potential bullying concerns and poor behaviour and intervene effectively. Leaders consider patterns of behaviour concerns and respond to any potential trends.
7. Through the school's assembly programme and curriculum pupils develop their understanding of different cultures, traditions and beliefs. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and mutual respect which they consistently demonstrate in their positive attitudes in school.
8. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life beyond school. In the junior school pupils are provided with greater independence in Year 6 and older pupils are provided with extensive advice to help them make their subject choices. A well-developed careers programme is in place throughout the school. Pupils are confident to plan their next steps beyond school and consider a range of career and education pathways.

9. Pupils actively engage with the world around them. The school's 'wider world' programme brings speakers from a range of professions into the school to share their experiences with the pupils. Senior school pupils regularly volunteer with community partners, gaining skills and learning about the local area.

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 teachers in the senior school adapt their teaching and resources consistently well to build on pupils' prior knowledge.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors and leaders share a strategic vision for the school which puts pupils' needs at the heart of their decision making. This vision is ambitious for every pupil to develop fully whatever their starting point. Leaders actively promote pupils' wellbeing.
11. Leaders reflect regularly on the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's provision. They use a range of data and surveys to monitor current practice and update policies and procedures in response. Leaders understand their statutory obligations and ensure that these obligations are incorporated into policy development. The school's processes and procedures comply with relevant legislation, are implemented effectively by staff and undergo constant improvement.
12. Pupils' views are actively incorporated into the running of the school. Pupils' views are regularly sought through discussions in the school council and through surveys. These views are then considered as part of the school's strategic planning, including curriculum development. Pupils contribute to decision making, for instance in choosing new caterers or planning refurbishment works.
13. Governors know the school well. They maintain regular contact with the school through meetings and visits where they speak to staff and pupils. They receive detailed reports at their meetings and scrutinise surveys of parents, pupils and staff. Governors use this information to challenge leaders appropriately and monitor the impact of their decisions. Governors ensure that leaders have suitable knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles and deliver the school's aims.
14. Leaders, including those with responsibility for safeguarding, are effective at assessing risk. Robust systems are in place to ensure that risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly. Leaders liaise effectively with local agencies to monitor emerging risks in the locality. Risks are managed appropriately, allowing pupils to make the most of the school site and central London location.
15. Leaders have established a school culture and curriculum which fosters understanding and celebrates diversity. The school's accessibility plan is up to date. Leaders have carefully considered the arrangements in place to support access to all aspects of school life. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met.
16. The school's website provides comprehensive information to parents. Parents are kept informed of pupils' attainment and progress regularly throughout the year. Leaders provide appropriate financial information to the local authority in relation to pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
17. There is a clear complaints policy which is effectively implemented. The number of formal complaints is low. Detailed records are kept and are considered as part of the school's self-evaluation. Governors maintain effective oversight of the implementation of complaints policy.

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 have implemented a broad and balanced curriculum. Children in the Reception class study a curriculum which allows them to explore the world and develop essential skills through range of purposeful activities. The curriculum throughout the school is carefully sequenced to introduce pupils to increasingly demanding topics whilst maintaining breadth across a range of subjects, including modern foreign languages. There is a broad range of subjects on offer for pupils in the sixth form which caters well for pupils differing aptitudes and interests.
20. Teachers throughout the school use their extensive subject knowledge to teach well-planned lessons which enable pupils to extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding. In the junior school this allows teachers to encourage pupils to think more deeply, for example when analysing poetry or when solving problems in mathematics. In the sixth form, teachers build on pupils' knowledge to encourage spontaneous discussions in which pupils go well beyond the confines of the examination specification. However, in some lessons in the senior school teaching and the resources used are not sufficiently well adapted to build on pupils' prior knowledge so that they are interested in their learning and deepen their understanding.
21. Pupils develop their scientific and technological skills across the curriculum. All pupils learn to use digital technology in specific lessons up to Year 9, developing a wide range of skills. Pupils then apply these skills across the curriculum. For instance, Year 4 pupils use tablets confidently to access a range of resources in humanities lessons and older pupils use tablets to access personalised sets of questions in mathematics lessons.
22. The aesthetic and creative aspects of the school's curriculum are well developed. Pupils learn a variety of musical instruments in the junior school and develop their knowledge and skills in music. There are also regular opportunities for singing and performing throughout the school. Pupils produce high quality artwork across the school and extend their skills into practical projects in graphic communication and design technology.
23. Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully which informs their planning. Teachers identify pupils who may benefit from additional support in class or after school. Teachers provide pupils with detailed feedback after each assessment which helps pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Summaries of pupils' progress are shared regularly with parents. Leaders use assessment data effectively to monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school. Pupils achieve consistently well in public examinations.
24. Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified at an early stage. Staff are provided with detailed guidance so that teachers can effectively tailor their teaching to pupils' individual needs. Where necessary, additional support is provided, making use of external specialists if appropriate. Pupils who have SEND make good progress.
25. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported in class and in individual lessons if appropriate. The head of EAL liaises regularly with classroom teachers to monitor pupils' progress in lessons and support staff in implementing effective classroom strategies. Pupils who speak EAL achieve well, including in public examinations.

26. Pupils take part in a wide range of recreational activities during lunchtime and after school. In the junior school pupils enjoy projects which combine scientific and creative elements and hone their linguistic and intellectual skills in debating. Pupils in the senior school take part in collaborative activities which develop their social and intellectual skills, ranging from model united nations (MUN) to playing card games. Pupils in all year groups make regular trips to galleries and museums.

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

27. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

28. Relationships between pupils and with staff are positive across the school. Pupils feel respected and they in turn respect each other. Staff are caring and interested in pupils' wellbeing and their success in school. Pupils feel they are valued as members of the school community. This helps pupils develop confidence and self-esteem.
29. Leaders have created an environment in which pupils celebrate all faiths and backgrounds. In weekly assemblies pupils devise thoughtful presentations about contemporary events which develop pupils' moral sensibilities and spiritual awareness.
30. Leaders have designed a comprehensive curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education which also covers the statutory requirements for relationships and sex education (RSE). The PSHE curriculum is organised around the themes of positive relationships, living in the wider world, and how to foster pupils' own health and wellbeing. These themes develop in an age-appropriate way as pupils move through the school. For instance, in Reception children learn about seeking permission as part of the relationships theme, which develops into managing peer influence and sexual relationships for older pupils. The PSHE provision in the senior school has recently been re-developed with input from the pupils. This has resulted in a programme which more closely matches pupils' needs and experiences as they progress through the school.
31. Leaders with responsibility for physical education (PE) have developed an extensive programme which makes use of a range of facilities on and off the school site. Pupils learn core physical skills including swimming and team sports in their PE lessons which take place throughout the week. Many pupils compete in school teams which perform at a high level. These lessons are supplemented by other opportunities including for younger pupils to play in the park. Pupils develop their physical skills and understand the importance of being active for their physical and mental health.
32. The positive relationships between pupils and staff and the consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policy ensure that pupils behave well around the school, creating a calm and purposeful environment. All behaviour incidents are systematically recorded. This allows leaders to recognise any developing patterns and take action where necessary. Incidents of bullying are rare and if they do occur staff act quickly and appropriately.
33. Leaders have put in place robust systems for ensuring the safety and security of the school site. Access to the school buildings from the street is well controlled and closely monitored at the start and end of the day. Staff supervise the site effectively during breaks and at lunchtime. The buildings are well maintained, and regular checks are carried out with the support of external experts where appropriate. Fire evacuation practices are carried out regularly and results analysed to identify areas for improvement. First aid is provided promptly by suitably trained staff. Staff working with children in the Reception class are trained in paediatric first aid.
34. Leaders have implemented the latest statutory guidance for promoting pupils' attendance. Registers are taken accurately twice each day and any absences are followed up swiftly by the school office. The local authority is notified promptly of any leavers or joiners at non-standard admission times.

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

35. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

36. Through the curriculum, in lessons and in assemblies, leaders emphasise the importance of respect and tolerance. Form tutors help pupils discuss global issues in a thoughtful and sensitive way. The theme of 'identity and discrimination' in the PSHE curriculum develops pupils' understanding of the impact of discrimination and how people are protected under the law. Pupils demonstrate a high level of respect for different cultures and understand the importance of challenging discrimination.
37. The curriculum and wider school experience prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils in Year 7 to Year 9 learn about the development of democracy and the rule of law as part of their learning in history. Pupils throughout the school participate enthusiastically in activities such as 'Parliament week' which introduce them to how the UK is governed. Pupils understand the importance of British values and how they impact our lives.
38. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to volunteer within the local community and so develop an understanding of their moral responsibility towards helping others. Within the school, older pupils are involved in a wide range of clubs and activities to support younger pupils at lunchtime and after school. Pupils in the sixth form regularly volunteer in the local area, for instance working at local charity shops, singing with dementia patients and assisting in local primary schools. These opportunities help pupils develop a greater sense of the world around them as well as gaining safeguarding and leadership skills.
39. Form tutors support pupils in preparing for their next steps in education. Pastoral and academic leaders from the junior and senior schools ensure that the curriculum and school processes align to make the transition from Year 5 to Year 6 smooth for the pupils. In Year 11, form tutors and specialist staff provide clear advice on sixth form subject choices and 'bridging the gap' between GCSE and A level. Individual tutors provide sixth form pupils with one-to-one advice which supports them in accessing a wide range of future pathways including universities, art colleges and conservatoires.
40. Pupils learn about future careers options throughout their time at the school. In the junior school pupils are involved in a careers fair in which they learn about the different types of careers available. This develops into a more formal careers education programme within PSHE and form time from Year 7 where pupils learn skills such as understanding job descriptions and writing CVs. These are supplemented by weekly 'Wider World' talks and other events where visiting speakers from different industries visit the school and share their expertise.
41. Leaders have integrated economic education into the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. In the junior school a financial literacy day introduces pupils to money, budget and tax through presentations and activities which include alumni and local business leaders. Older pupils learn about investments in mathematics, and saving and borrowing, consumer rights and financial choices in their PSHE lessons. This prepares them effectively for life beyond school.

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

42. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

43. Leaders have established a robust safeguarding culture throughout the school. Teaching and support staff understand the importance of safeguarding and prioritise it in their roles. Regular staff training combined with clear policies and procedures means that staff understand the arrangements in place and use them effectively. Any concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm are reported promptly to the safeguarding team.
44. The designated safeguarding leaders maintain up to date knowledge about safeguarding procedures and practice by attending local and national training courses. This knowledge is further developed through effective links with local safeguarding partners so that leaders are well informed about the risks which may be present in the local area. Regular surveys of pupils allow the school's safeguarding leaders to understand the needs of pupils and respond effectively to any worries pupils may have, for instance by providing additional training for pupils on staying safe on public transport.
45. The designated safeguarding leaders and the pastoral team respond to any safeguarding concerns without delay. Where necessary, they liaise closely with local partners to ensure that pupils access the necessary support. All concerns, together with actions taken, are carefully recorded in detailed and systematic records. This means that any member of the safeguarding team is ready to support pupils at any time. This extends throughout the school holidays.
46. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe in lessons and assemblies. Pastoral leaders provide additional support to pupils who are new to each part of the school so that pupils quickly become familiar with staff and processes. This means that pupils are confident in how to seek support if they need it and make use of the many opportunities for raising concerns including speaking to staff, using the dedicated email address and using online reporting tools.
47. Leaders have created a culture where online safety is a priority for staff and pupils. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe online from the earliest age. Leaders continuously review and update the curriculum to ensure that pupils' learning about online safety is relevant and up to date. An effective system for filtering and monitoring use of the internet is in place. Safeguarding leaders scrutinise reports carefully and update their processes promptly.
48. Robust procedures are in place and followed diligently for determining the suitability of staff working in the school, including supply staff. All required checks are carried out and recorded systematically in a central register of appointments.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Queen's Gate School
Department for Education number	207/6026
Registered charity number	312724
Address	Queen's Gate School 131 – 133 Queen's Gate London SW7 5LE
Phone number	020 7589 2587
Email address	principal@queensgate.org.uk
Website	www.queensgate.org.uk
Proprietor	Queen's Gate School Trust Limited
Chair	Mrs Reica Gray
Headteacher	Miss Amy Wallace
Age range	4 – 19
Number of pupils	447
Date of previous inspection	16 – 19 November 2021

Information about the school

50. Queen's Gate School is a day school for girls aged 4 to 19 located in South Kensington, London. The school consists of a junior school and a senior school which includes a sixth form. These are spread over five buildings located on the same street. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. Since the last inspection a new chair of governors was appointed in January 2022 and a new headteacher was appointed in September 2022. In November 2024, the Department for Education approved a material change request to extend the upper age range of the school to include pupils up to 19 years of age.
51. The junior school includes a reception class which is exempt from the learning and development requirements and the assessment requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.
52. The school has identified 125 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils at the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
53. English is an additional language for 279 pupils.
54. The school states its aims are to offer an education for life in a stimulating environment where sound values and individuality are nurtured within a supportive atmosphere.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

26 to 28 November 2024

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

56. 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.

57. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net