

School inspection report

13 to 15 January 2026

Kensington Prep School GDST

596 Fulham Road

London

SW6 5PA

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. Leaders' use of self-evaluation leads to highly effective action to promote pupils' wellbeing. The manner in which pupils are taught to express and manage their feelings, especially in moments of anxiety, encourages pupils to approach their work and their daily lives with high levels of confidence.
2. Governors, trustees and employed representatives of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) support and oversee the work of leaders and assure themselves that the Standards are being met. Together with leaders, they appropriately consider how to manage risk both at school and on trips.
3. Leaders use data and feedback from teachers and pupils in a highly sophisticated manner to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. Leaders and teachers swiftly adapt and refine teaching strategies should it become apparent that pupils could make better progress. Leaders' detailed plans to improve the pupils' learning experience are developed in partnership with teachers and based on current academic research. The way in which teachers plan and deliver lessons, informed by up-to-date research about effective teaching and substantial subject knowledge, ensures that pupils make good and often rapid progress in their learning, achieve highly in standardised assessments and succeed in gaining places at selective senior schools. This is a significant strength of the school.
4. Teachers monitor the progress of the large number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) to check if any support is needed and, where appropriate, individualised assistance is provided so that they continue to make good progress.
5. Leaders organise, evaluate and refine a number of opportunities for pupils to develop their self-confidence and learn to express their emotions. This includes a personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme that is frequently modified in light of the changing needs of pupils. Staff have received specialist training to equip them to teach lessons in mental wellbeing and to provide individualised support in emotional literacy. Pupils develop high levels of self-knowledge and are equipped to manage potentially stressful situations.
6. Pupils, including children in the early years, behave well at school because teachers and leaders communicate high expectations, model appropriate behaviours and language, and implement consistent behaviour management strategies in the classroom. Any acts of unkindness or bullying are addressed in a timely manner.
7. Pupils develop a thorough appreciation of the importance of equality and respect for all. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to begin to understand about the different career pathways they might choose in the future and equip them to challenge any gender stereotyping relating to possible careers.
8. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, including through the pupil council. Although pupils appreciate the opportunity to be involved in submitting ideas to the council, they do not always receive feedback from the school about these suggestions and how these have been taken into account.
9. Leaders ensure that all staff are appropriately trained to be vigilant so that any safeguarding concerns are reported and acted upon in a timely manner. Leaders recruit new members of staff in accordance with safeguarding guidance, undertaking and recording the necessary suitability checks effectively.

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:

- consistently provide pupils with feedback about the suggestions put forward by the pupil council so that they understand how these suggestions have been taken into account.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders, together with representatives of the proprietor, actively promote the school's aims of 'growing great minds and big hearts', developing pupils' confidence and emotional awareness alongside their academic progress. Leaders evaluate the school's provision and take highly effective action to enact ambitious plans and initiatives to improve pupils' learning and wellbeing. Leaders encourage teachers to engage with current research and employ their understanding of best practice to contribute towards the development of the academic and pastoral curriculum. Leaders consider the views of teachers, pupils and parents as part of their self-evaluation.
11. Leaders understand how to manage and mitigate risk. Risk assessments are thorough, and staff are appropriately trained to consider a range of risks in the school's physical environment and during learning activities, as well as on trips outside the school. As part of their self-evaluation, leaders consider what risks might be most relevant to the school's context, including potential risks to the emotional wellbeing of pupils. For example, they effectively manage and mitigate anxiety that pupils might have about senior school entry assessments.
12. All pupils benefit highly from the decisions and actions taken by leaders. Children and pupils make good and often rapid progress in their learning, and they engage thoughtfully with their learning as a result of the classroom strategies employed by their teachers. Many pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and pride as a result of the guidance and support they receive from staff.
13. The GDST exercises appropriate and thoughtful oversight of the school's policies and procedures, supported by the local governing body. The GDST and advisory governors support leaders and hold them to account for all aspects of the school, including education, health and safety, safeguarding and risk management. A regular programme of meetings and reports ensures that the proprietary body and advisory governors have an appropriate awareness of the school's context, and governors listen directly to the views of staff and pupils during their visits to the school. The GDST also provides opportunities for leaders of their schools to share effective practice, and leaders with responsibility for safeguarding meet their counterparts from other GDST schools regularly for professional development.
14. Leaders provide the required information to parents either directly or via the school's website. The school regularly reports to parents with detailed information about the progress their child is making.
15. The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010. A suitable accessibility plan promotes effective access to the physical buildings, as well as to the curriculum, for any pupil who has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who may be temporarily physically incapacitated. The school maintains effective links with external agencies, such as local safeguarding partners, to support pupils and their families, where appropriate.
16. Leaders effectively implement the complaints procedure, which is in line with statutory guidance. They respond to any concerns that parents have in a timely manner and keep appropriate records of the complaints submitted, together with actions taken as a result of these.

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

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders plan and implement a suitably broad and ambitious curriculum that balances the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in core areas of learning with a range of scientific, aesthetic and linguistic studies. Some year groups have discrete lessons in reasoning which help prepare pupils for assessment and tests used by senior schools as part of their entrance procedures. Modern foreign languages (MFL) and philosophy are taught from an early age. The curriculum is designed effectively to encourage pupils to develop their enthusiasm for learning and their curiosity about the world around them.
19. Children in the early years develop their communication skills because staff model the accurate use of language. Children make rapid progress in their understanding of phonics through a stimulating range of activities that allow them to practise speaking, reading and writing skills. Adults frequently listen to children reading to further develop their understanding of letters and the sounds they represent.
20. Teachers are highly knowledgeable about their subjects and use a range of techniques and resources well to support their teaching and to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm. For example, pupils often investigate different resources or sources of evidence through appropriate activities such as moving in groups between different tables, reading what other groups have learned before them and then building on this knowledge, or editing each other's work.
21. Teachers consider pupils' needs and prior attainment in their planning, and provide clear and helpful feedback to pupils, helping them to reflect on their work and further develop their knowledge and understanding. When pupils show, for example, that they can employ advanced vocabulary and sophisticated sentence structure in their writing, or instinctively use techniques such as alliteration, teachers provide additional challenge to develop their skills further.
22. Teachers assess the progress pupils are making over time through regular reviews of their work, as well as periodic formal assessments. Leaders use data, as well as feedback from teachers and pupils, highly effectively to determine what support is required when individuals or cohorts appear to make inconsistent progress at a particular point in time. Leaders and staff use assessment data to inform teaching so that pupils are appropriately stretched and challenged.
23. Leaders and teachers implement a highly effective programme of subject reviews. They make effective use of evidence-based research to consider refinements to planning and teaching methods. For example, teachers consider how to enhance the way pupils retain and recall their prior learning in order to accelerate their progress. Pupils are interviewed as part of these subject reviews, and their views in relation to teaching and the curriculum are taken into account. Teachers share current ideas and research about effective teaching methods with their colleagues and support each other's planning. Teaching enables pupils to make good and often rapid progress from their starting points and achieve highly, both in standardised tests and in gaining places at selective secondary or senior schools.
24. Leaders of provision for pupils who have SEND ensure that any additional learning needs are identified in a timely manner, and that individual support plans are subsequently put in place. As a result, pupils who have SEND receive appropriately individualised support for their needs from staff, including teachers with specific training and responsibility for their progress. Teachers identify

particular resources and strategies that are most effective, such as adapted seating or pencil grips, and utilise these when required. Pupils who have SEND provide feedback and contribute to reviews of their own progress, informing how their targets are adapted and evaluating the effectiveness of the support given. Pupils who have SEND make good and often rapid progress.

25. Teachers monitor the progress of pupils who speak EAL to check whether they need additional assistance, such as vocabulary lists for particular subjects, individualised spelling lists or additional in-class support. Teachers ensure that these pupils develop their linguistic fluency, including by taking part in class discussions. As a result, these pupils make good and often rapid progress with their English.
26. Pupils experience a suitable range of extra-curricular activities which further their skills and interests in a variety of intellectual, sporting and artistic disciplines. Pupils are also able to enjoy recreational pursuits that promote their social and teamwork skills.

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. Leaders arrange activities for children in the early years that promote their physical and emotional development. These include outdoor learning, which encourages children to take risks and work together whilst developing their motor skills. Staff teach and guide children to identify and express their feelings. Teachers choose storybooks that help children to develop their understanding of different emotions and how these can affect them in different ways.
29. Pupils develop their understanding of world faiths and their spiritual concepts and practices through the teaching they receive in their religious education (RE) lessons. Pupils apply the knowledge they have learned in their wider learning, for example recognising religious festivals from photographs whilst developing their creative writing skills.
30. Teachers deliver well-planned physical education (PE) lessons. These lessons suitably encourage, challenge and enable pupils to develop and improve their physical skills, speed, stamina and spatial awareness. Pupils learn about the positive impact that exercise can have on their wellbeing. Pupils can also develop their sporting interests and techniques through additional sports activities and represent the school through a range of matches and competitions.
31. Pupils receive comprehensive and age-appropriate lessons in relationships and sex education (RSE). The RSE programme, which fulfils the requirements of current statutory guidance, introduces pupils to concepts such as consent and how bodies grow and develop. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of these topics with increasing sophistication as they get older. Parents are suitably informed in advance about the topics being taught so that they can support their child's learning.
32. Teachers adapt the PSHE curriculum to meet the emerging needs of cohorts of pupils, for example by focusing on themes such as taking risks or reducing anxiety about potential failure. PSHE is planned flexibly so that it can explore topics that have been identified by teachers as especially relevant to any particular cohorts. Teachers with specific training and expertise plan and lead lessons focusing on themes such as supporting mental wellbeing. Pupils also have access to staff trained in emotional literacy support and, if needed, a counsellor. These lessons and additional provision are highly effective in helping pupils to regulate their emotions, including when they are upset or anxious.
33. Leaders incorporate additional activities, such as workshops, into the curriculum to promote self-esteem and build confidence in pupils when teachers evaluate that this would be particularly beneficial. Pupils receive praise and encouragement from their teachers and, from the early years, children are encouraged to offer praise to one another. As a result of these initiatives, alongside thoughtful guidance and support from staff, pupils develop high levels of self-knowledge and confidence.
34. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively and leaders communicate the school's values and behavioural expectations with clarity and consistency. Teachers employ age-appropriate strategies to maintain an orderly and calm learning environment in their classrooms, such as using bells or percussion instruments to quieten pupils after a period of activity or discussion. Pupils are responsive to their teachers' instructions and learn how their own behaviour impacts on their own

and others' learning. Leaders and staff model and guide expected manners and courtesy, including in the dining room or at the headteacher's 'top table lunches'.

35. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare because leaders and staff actively encourage pupils to resolve their disagreements and amend unkind behaviours. However, leaders swiftly and appropriately investigate any allegations and take action when unkindness occurs. Pupils learn about different forms of bullying and are suitably prepared for how to respond to such behaviour.
36. Leaders ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised at all times during the school day by deploying staff effectively, whether in the classroom, during periods of recreation or on trips outside school. Leaders in the early years ensure that the required staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, and that staff with paediatric first aid training appropriately supervise children when they are eating.
37. The school keeps admission and attendance registers in accordance with current statutory guidance. Attendance is above the national average. Leaders monitor attendance patterns and act on any concerns about absenteeism. Absences are only approved for appropriate reasons, in line with current guidance. The school suitably informs the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times of transition.
38. The school premises are well maintained, and any defects requiring urgent attention are promptly corrected. All the required health and safety checks are carried out, such as regular testing of water supplies and electrical systems. Suitable fire safety arrangements are in place, including an up-to-date fire risk assessment carried out by a competent person. Leaders respond to any action points resulting from this assessment in a timely manner. Staff receive appropriate fire safety training. Fire evacuation and lockdown drills take place in accordance with the regulations so that everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency. Teachers ensure that any pupils who join the school during the year receive this information as part of their induction.
39. Staff are appropriately trained in first aid and there is always at least one member of staff trained in paediatric first aid on duty in the early years. Staff administer first aid or medication promptly as needed. They record any treatment given and inform parents appropriately. The school provides a suitable facility for injured or ill pupils to use in the short term.

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

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

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

41. Pupils learn about the importance of treating all people with respect regardless of their background. Older pupils can join the 'Changemakers' group, which undertakes a range of activities including the preparation of assembly presentations that celebrate diversity. The curriculum explores topical issues from around the world, such as the impact of conflicts and the state of the environment. Teachers take care to ensure that discussions of any political matters are conducted without bias.
42. Leaders ensure that assemblies and visits from members of the local community representing different cultural backgrounds help pupils to develop a deep appreciation of a wide range of cultures, for example through the celebration of festivals and learning about their importance to communities. Leaders and staff reinforce pupils' understanding of the principle that all people have equal value and rights regardless of their ethnic, cultural or socio-economic differences. Leaders successfully promote a community that is inclusive and in which all pupils are valued. Pupils learn about themes such as how women have played an influential role in history and made a difference to society.
43. Pupils learn about the importance of rules in order to help a community to function effectively. For example, children in the early years learn from visiting police officers about the importance of having respect for the law. Pupils learn to disagree respectfully in the classroom and respect each other's views. They develop their understanding of moral principles and their application through the curriculum, such as in philosophy, where they study and debate ethical dilemmas.
44. Children in the early years use role play to explore occupations and learn about professionals who help their communities in different ways. Older pupils learn about different types of employment through the wider curriculum as well as during a dedicated enrichment week that introduces them to a broad range of careers. Transitions between years are carefully managed so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders provide detailed and effective support to pupils and their parents on future pathways beyond the school, and ensure that pupils are suitably prepared for applications, interviews and examinations for senior school places.
45. In the early years, children begin to understand the nature of financial transactions as they pretend to buy and sell items in their role-play area. For older pupils, leaders incorporate financial topics, such as borrowing, saving and budgeting, into the curriculum. Leaders continually evaluate the effectiveness of pupils' economic learning to ensure that they are able to develop economic skills well.
46. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, through activities such as 'changemakers', or by applying for positions of responsibility such as playground leader, digital leader or eco-warrior. Some of these roles allow older pupils to develop their leadership skills by working with and supporting younger pupils. Pupils learn about how they can collectively influence decisions through voting and about the right to vote and democratic representation. Children in the early years collectively choose books to read or games to play, learning to accept majority decisions.
47. Pupils can also stand for election to the pupil council, which meets regularly and makes a positive contribution to the life of the school by, for example, discussing the lunch menu, influencing the

design of the dining hall or deliberating on playground equipment. Councillors listen to and represent the views of their peers. However, the school does not provide pupils with consistent feedback about the suggestions put forward in pupil council meetings. As a result, pupils are not always sure how or whether their suggestions have been taken into account.

48. Pupils learn about contributing to wider society through activities such as raising money for local charities. Pupils engage in activities to support the local community, such as singing to local elderly residents and making Christmas gift bags for young hospital patients.

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

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

Safeguarding

50. There is a robust culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have the necessary skills and training to fulfil their duties. Leaders engage in professional development provided through the local authority and also have access to appropriate professional support from the proprietary body.
51. Leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that staff are appropriately trained so that they are suitably vigilant to signs that any pupil, including children in the early years, might need help. Staff know that they must report any safeguarding concerns immediately, including low-level concerns or allegations about the behaviour of adults towards pupils.
52. Leaders meticulously record any safeguarding concerns and follow through with appropriate actions, including liaising with external agencies and, when appropriate, referring concerns onwards. They meet regularly to share information and discuss potential trends or contextual risks to pupils' welfare.
53. Pupils are informed about how they can share any concerns they may have in a variety of ways, including through 'feelings charts' or 'chatboxes' or with a trusted adult. The school addresses concerns raised by pupils sensitively and in a timely manner.
54. Pupils learn about how to stay safe online through their computing and PSHE lessons and assemblies. Their access to the internet is filtered when they are at school, and on school devices that older pupils can take home during termtime. The use of school devices is monitored by leaders, who follow up promptly on any concerns that arise as a result. The internet filtering and monitoring systems are regularly tested to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.
55. Leaders undertake safer recruitment training. They undertake all the necessary suitability checks on new employees before they commence work at the school and ensure that the requisite information is recorded accurately in a single central record of appointments (SCR).
56. Representatives of the proprietor and the local governing body together exercise suitable oversight of safeguarding. This includes through regular meetings, during which they receive and interrogate reports that provide an appropriate level of detail about the number and nature of concerns leaders are addressing at that time.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Kensington Prep School GDST
Department for Education number	205/6392
Registered charity number	1026057
Address	Kensington Prep School GDST 596 Fulham Road London SW6 5PA
Phone number	020 7731 9300
Email address	enquiries@kenprep.gdst.net
Website	www.kensingtonprep.gdst.net
Proprietor	Girls' Day School Trust
Chair	Mrs Vicky Tuck
Headteacher	Mrs Rachel Floyd
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	300
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 March 2023

Information about the school

58. Kensington Prep School GDST is an independent day school for female pupils located in Parsons Green, London. The school is a member of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) and is overseen by them. The school is also supported by a local governing body which acts in an advisory capacity to the leadership team. The current headteacher and chair of the local governing body took up their positions in September 2025.
59. There are 49 children in the early years setting, comprising two Reception classes.
60. The school has identified 17 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
61. The school has identified English as an additional language for 158 pupils.
62. The school states its aims are to nurture happy, healthy, curious and creative learners within a supportive and nurturing environment. It seeks to develop pupils' character and confidence while equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of education and for lifelong learning.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

13 to 15 January 2026

63. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

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 of governors and other representatives of the proprietor
- discussions with the headteacher, 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**.

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