

# School inspection report

19 to 21 March 2024

## **Streatham & Clapham High School**

42 Abbotswood Road

Streatham

London

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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 are resolute in their commitment to achieving the school's aims. They understand the school's strengths and areas requiring further development and effectively communicate them to stakeholders. Leaders are aware of risks to pupils' wellbeing and take well-planned swift action when necessary.
2. The governing body ensures that school leaders possess the essential skills and experience to promote pupils' wellbeing actively. The local governing board and the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) maintain effective oversight of leaders.
3. Leaders ensure that a focus on equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging permeates the school. Teachers use planned and spontaneous opportunities to engage pupils in discussions that deepen understanding. Pupils appreciate and respect diversity and have a strong sense of belonging.
4. In the early years, staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver a well-rounded, age-appropriate curriculum. Pupils in these early stages make good progress across all areas of their development, facilitated by teachers who cultivate trusting relationships with them.
5. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress due to a cohesive and effectively taught curriculum. Well-trained teachers teach lessons that match pupils' ages, abilities and needs. They cultivate an environment in the classroom that is purposeful yet relaxed. Pupils support each other with compassion when they make mistakes. Teachers encourage pupils to share their thoughts, listen to others, and develop new knowledge, skills and understanding.
6. School leaders set high expectations for behaviour, which the pupils share. Pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. Leaders take effective action to address any cases of bullying.
7. Leaders and teachers communicate effectively about pupils' learning and pastoral needs. They successfully support pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing in a variety of ways, including through teacher awareness training and academic clinics. Pupils can self-refer to wellbeing support and the school counsellor. Most pupils have a variety of staff they can approach if they need support and are confident they can easily access someone to talk to, should the need arise.
8. The school's health and safety, as well as fire safety management procedures, are robust. Pupils and staff participate in regular fire drills, and leaders regularly review risk assessments to mitigate potential hazards.
9. Parents receive regular written reports on their child's progress. However, certain aspects of the report such as the awarding of only effort grades to Year 7 pupils, do not consistently help parents to fully understand pupils' progress and achievement.
10. Enrichment programs for senior and sixth-form pupils are integrated into the school day to support participation and signal their importance. These effective programmes develop a broad range of pupils' skills, including pupil leadership, musical and artistic skills.
11. Leaders actively promote a culture of safeguarding and prioritise the welfare of pupils. All staff are appropriately trained and can access multiple reporting channels to report any concerns. Staff

understand when to refer to external agencies when appropriate. Leaders conduct appropriate pre-employment checks for all adults working with pupils. However, some minor administrative errors in recording the dates of checks were corrected on inspection.

## 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:

- develop the school's system of academic reporting to parents so that parents and pupils have a greater understanding of pupils' progress and achievement
- ensure that dates of recruitment checks are correctly recorded when monitoring staff recruitment procedures.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Leadership of equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging is distributed amongst the senior leadership team and this conveys a clear message of prioritisation to all stakeholders and supports integration into every aspect of school life.
13. Leaders effectively identify potential risks of harm to the physical and emotional wellbeing of pupils. They plan actions for improvement, act and review the impact. For example, at the start of the academic year, leaders identified a gap in the pupils' perception of their sense of belonging to the school. Subsequent swift action has addressed this effectively.
14. Leaders monitor the consistent implementation of policies which reflect the school's ethos and adhere to relevant guidance. They maintain robust procedures for all areas of the Standards, including quality assurance of teaching and learning, pupil welfare and safety, and safeguarding. Leaders provide whole-group and individual support and training to staff on all appropriate areas of their work.
15. Leaders in the early years ensure that staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver a well-balanced, age-appropriate curriculum in a suitably resourced provision.
16. Members of the governing body ensure that leaders have the necessary skills and experience to actively promote pupils' wellbeing. The local governing board and GDST provide robust support and oversight of leaders. Governors use a wide range of information, including data analysis, meetings with leaders, reports from external bodies and visits to the school to quality assure provision at the school.
17. Pupils have many opportunities to share their opinions. For example, school councils represent a large proportion of the pupil population. Leaders regularly survey pupils' views and are constantly curious about how they can improve provision for all pupils. Leaders regularly review provision and make adjustments in order to improve pupils' experiences.
18. Parents receive regular written pupil progress reports. However, some parents find aspects such as effort grades and the timing of reports for some year groups unhelpful. Leaders are aware of this and have begun work to address this for September 2024.
19. Leaders proactively consider how to make reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities. The plan for increasing accessibility and other relevant policies and procedures is published on the website in line with requirements.
20. Leaders endeavour to reach informal resolutions to complaints as specified in the published policy. These resolutions are achieved through open communication with parents to address concerns. A clear formal pathway exists, including seeking resolution by involving the GDST or an independent panel. Leaders implement this policy effectively.

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

#### **21. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

22. Pupils make good progress. Leaders plan a cohesive curriculum and ensure that it is taught effectively. The curriculum supports the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and provides a wide range of learning opportunities. Leaders review and make changes to the curriculum where necessary.
23. Teachers plan lessons that match pupils' ages, abilities and needs. They use engaging resources that encourage independent thinking. Teachers adeptly question pupils in groups and as individuals to ascertain understanding, adapt teaching and support new learning. They provide pupils with feedback on what they have done well. Pupils say this feedback is most effective when teachers suggest how to improve their work rather than what to improve. Pupils respond well, acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding.
24. Teachers create a purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils freely share their ideas, listen to others well and extend their thinking. When pupils make mistakes, they support each other kindly. This atmosphere allows pupils to take risks in their learning, which supports them to make good progress.
25. Children are well supported in their early development in the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults are trained in supporting children's early speech, language and communication. Adults use a range of planned and in-the-moment opportunities to help children develop socially, emotionally and physically and children access high-quality resources, which support their learning. Adults are role models, know the children well and foster trusting relationships with them.
26. Pupils develop their physical, creative and scientific skills through a carefully planned programme that begins in the early years. Opportunities to learn and practise these skills are frequent throughout the school via the planned curriculum and co-curricular activities.
27. Leaders plan a broad choice of activities for prep pupils to access at lunchtime and after school; this includes art, music, gymnastics, and coding. Senior pupils experience a wide range of co-curricular activities such as choirs, art, sports and science. Leaders have extended senior lunchtime to increase participation. Sixth-form pupils co-lead or support many of these activities as part of the school's bespoke 'Lux' programme which develops leadership skills.
28. By integrating an effective and specifically tailored enrichment programme into the timetable, leaders communicate the importance of the bi-weekly sessions and ensure access by all senior pupils. This programme is consistent with the school's aim for pupils to achieve across a spectrum of endeavours. Pupils experience new activities, are academically challenged, and collaborate with pupils with whom they may not typically work.
29. Pupils understand local and global issues. Their written skills are well developed, and they eloquently express sophisticated ideas throughout the curriculum. Pupils readily recall background information and apply their knowledge and moral understanding to form well-evidenced and reasoned arguments. Teachers facilitate these discussions appropriately.
30. Pupils who have SEND are supported to be successful, both in and out of the classroom. Teachers use information about individual needs to inform lesson planning. Regular meetings between the pastoral, SEND and attendance teams create a holistic view of pupils' needs. This view enables staff

to implement appropriate interventions, including individual tutoring, skills groups, and emotional wellbeing support. Pupils who have SEND make progress in line with their peers.

31. Leaders robustly track and monitor pupil progress. Leaders and teachers adapt the curriculum and their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, and plan suitable interventions such as small study groups. As a result, pupils who need extra help are quickly identified and are supported appropriately. Pupils make good progress in the school and attainment at GCSE and A level exceeds national averages for all schools.
32. Teachers support pupils who speak English as an additional language appropriately. Younger pupils use a range of resources to support them such as visual timetables and access to first-language storybooks. Workshops support parents in understanding their child's acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders provide older pupils with a pastoral buddy when they join the school and implement additional English lessons where appropriate.

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

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



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

34. Leaders set high expectations for behaviour, and pupils share them. Pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. The school's behaviour policy is consistently applied and positive behaviours are suitably acknowledged and rewarded. Support systems are in place to assist pupils in increasing their self-understanding if their behaviour does not meet expectations. Leaders monitor logs of behaviour incidents, look for patterns and provide effective guidance to pupils.
35. Health and safety and fire safety management procedures are robust. Leaders and supporting staff take their roles seriously, keep accurate records and ensure the site is appropriately maintained. Pupils and staff take part in regular fire drills. Governors have regular meetings to maintain effective oversight of policies and practices.
36. Leaders plan a comprehensive curriculum for relationships and sex education (RSE). This curriculum is age-appropriate and develops depth of knowledge and understanding as pupils become older. Teachers use ongoing assessment to identify how well pupils understand the curriculum material, to address misconceptions and to identify areas where the curriculum would benefit from adjustment.
37. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the factors that positively and negatively impact their physical and emotional health. Through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum pupils learn about a variety of topics related to their health and wellbeing, such as maintaining personal hygiene, healthy relationships, and managing the risks surrounding 'party' culture.
38. Children in the early years learn to express their emotions through small group discussions and regular check-ins with 'feelings' colour charts. Leaders ensure that the outdoor environment provides many opportunities for physical development. Teaching supports children through physical challenge and encouragement to take on appropriate risks. Children are confident and express their needs due to the warm and supportive environment created by teachers.
39. At the beginning of the school year, leaders took swift action in response to pupil feedback that staff did not deal with bullying effectively. The resulting improvement is a consequence of leaders' actions to improve pupil understanding of bullying and to increase the effectiveness of the school's response by having a nominated staff member to follow through on an incident from beginning to end. Leaders have recently implemented a programme of restorative justice to further improve provision, but this is not yet embedded.
40. Systems ensure effective communication between staff to nurture pupils both pastorally and academically. Opportunities throughout the curriculum, worry boxes and pupils' weekly journals, allow pupils to raise issues or share concerns with staff. Pupils may also access an emotional literacy programme if needed. Leaders plan academic clinics and adjust internal submission dates for senior pupils as supportive measures. Pupils can also self-refer to emotional wellbeing support or may request counselling.
41. Pupils have a range of adults they can approach if they need support, and most pupils are confident that they can easily talk to someone should the need arise. Leaders provide individual support for pupils who cannot readily identify a trusted adult to speak to about their concerns.

42. Leaders regularly review risk assessments and plan effective mitigation when potential issues are identified. Staff carry out suitable risk assessments, which range from daily hazard checks in the early years classrooms and safe educational visit planning, to site security and use of science equipment.
43. Pupils are appropriately supervised by staff. If accidents occur, suitably trained adults act quickly and administer first aid in suitable, well-maintained facilities.
44. Leaders and staff follow admissions and attendance policies effectively and maintain appropriate registers. Leaders encourage pupils to maintain good attendance. The attendance officer and safeguarding lead collaborate to understand reasons for absence and keep appropriate records. Leaders support families and liaise with external services in a timely manner where appropriate.

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

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

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

46. Strategic curriculum plans and attitudes modelled by adults and older pupils in the prep and senior schools are central to leaders' focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. Leaders and teachers challenge behaviours that do not uphold the highest standards of equality. Pupils have a profound appreciation for diversity and a strong sense of belonging.
47. During collaborative activities in the classroom, pupils show high levels of respect for others and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are actively involved in school council decision-making and are respectful of school rules. Well-planned teaching enables pupils to reflect on potentially contentious and moral issues in a balanced way. Pupils respond with sensitivity and an understanding of the right of others to hold different views.
48. Pupils take part in volunteering and in fundraising opportunities such as supporting the food bank, baby bank and homeless shelter. Pupils are aware of the cultural and social differences that exist around them. Pupils further develop national and global perspectives due to their support of school council-selected charities, including hospitals and clean water organisations.
49. Leaders ensure that pupils receive balanced and relevant careers advice through the 'futures and aspirations' programme. The curriculum prepares pupils for life beyond school. As pupils become older, they receive personal advice, access to work experience and mock interviews. A wide range of speakers allow pupils to understand the varying career opportunities available to them. This provision also supports pupils to reflect on assumptions about societal roles and stereotyping. Pupils are successful in securing their next steps in education, training or employment, with the majority achieving their internships and university applications of first choice.
50. Pupils gain a full understanding of the importance of economics in their lives. This starts with the youngest children where they learn about money and shopping through role play and games. As pupils become older, lessons begin focussing on personal finance, the world of work and global issues such as the unequal pay gap. Teaching enables pupils to develop an understanding of the financial challenges facing successive governments. Pupils can explain links between monetary policy and the environmental impact of different decisions.

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

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

## Safeguarding

52. Leaders actively prioritise safeguarding and the welfare of pupils. Training is relevant, regular and based on the latest guidance. High-quality training supports staff to understand their shared responsibility to understand policies and procedures, and when and how to escalate concerns.
53. Staff work together to reduce the risk of harm to pupils and manage incidents appropriately. This includes additional checks and supervision for the youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
54. Safeguarding leaders maintain thorough and systematic records, which enable them to act quickly and appropriately. Leaders use safeguarding information to analyse patterns and trends and deliver additional topics for staff training. Leaders work with external agencies, in a timely and effective manner when necessary.
55. Safeguarding leaders provide several methods for pupils to report safeguarding concerns including directly to staff members, school counsellors and through worry boxes. Following a review of systems, leaders increased provision to include an additional opportunity for pupils to report concerns via an app for pupils' devices.
56. Pupils are well informed about staying safe, including when using their online devices. Monitoring and filtering systems work effectively to highlight any inappropriate use of the internet. Teachers follow up promptly if incidents occur and give support to pupils.
57. Recruitment checks are carried out on staff before they start work at the school and the single central record of appointments is maintained appropriately. Leaders make additional checks and conduct monitoring activities to ensure that recruitment procedures are followed correctly. However, during the inspection, leaders corrected some minor administrative errors in the recording of recruitment checks.
58. Thorough systems are in place to manage potential concerns about adults. Low-level concerns are recorded and analysed by leaders who promptly take advice from external agencies when appropriate.
59. The local governing board and GDST have appropriate oversight of safeguarding, including training, the management of incidents, and pre-employment checks. This oversight includes an externally validated annual safeguarding audit and regular reviews.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Streatham & Clapham High School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	208/6311
<b>Address</b>	Streatham and Clapham High School GDST 42 Abbotswood Road Streatham London SW16 1AW
<b>Phone number</b>	020 8677 8400
<b>Email address</b>	senior@schs.gdst.net
<b>Website</b>	www.schs.gdst.net
<b>Proprietor</b>	Girls' Day School Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Angus Wrixon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Cathy Elliott
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 18
<b>Number of pupils</b>	857
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 October 2023

## Information about the school

61. Streatham and Clapham High School is an independent day school located in Streatham. It is registered as a single-sex school for female pupils. Founded as Brixton High School in 1887, it is governed by the Girls' Day School Trust, and a local board of governors advises the school. The school comprises an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), prep school, senior school and sixth form.
62. The school has identified 57 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
63. English is an additional language for 68 pupils.
64. There are 25 children in the early years comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
65. The school states its aims are to enable every girl to achieve beyond the bound of expectation on a daily basis, across the spectrum of endeavour.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

19 to 21 March 2024

66. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

67. 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.

68. 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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