

School inspection report

23 to 25 June 2026

St John's School

Potter Street Hill

Pinner

HA5 3ZF

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

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Summary of inspection findings

1. The governing body and leaders have a clear vision for the school, which is well promoted and effectively realised. Leaders, supported by governors, ensure that the Standards are consistently met.
2. The school is a calm and welcoming place where pupils and children in the early years work and play well together. Leaders emphasise the importance of good manners, politeness and mutual respect for all members of the school community and, as result, there is a positive atmosphere in all areas of school life.
3. Leaders have a clear focus on the curriculum and have carefully considered how teaching builds upon prior learning. The curriculum is well planned to ensure pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress in their understanding.
4. Feedback is regularly given to pupils about their work. Teachers use assessment well to inform pupils and parents about how skills are developing, using a range of formal and standardised tests. Leaders have recently introduced weekly feedback and reflection opportunities so that pupils in the older years take personal responsibility as they consider how they might improve. However, these opportunities are not currently delivered effectively across all subjects.
5. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Leaders ensure that planning is effective and lessons suitably challenging. Leaders encourage teachers to use the extensive outdoor areas of the school to enrich the learning experiences of children in the early years and pupils across the school. As a result, children and pupils make good progress.
6. The early years provision makes a positive difference to children's first experiences of school. Staff are caring and nurture children's interests, alongside delivering a well-considered curriculum that ensures most children meet their early learning goals. Children are carefully prepared for their transition into Year 1.
7. The personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is well integrated into school life. Through lessons and assemblies, as well as other activities, children and pupils are prepared for later life. They learn about the importance of being kind, working together to solve problems and how to help each other. The curriculum gives pupils and children opportunities to learn about health, safety and wellbeing. Economic education is delivered in an age-appropriate way throughout the school. Pupils understand, and are respectful of, protected characteristics such as race and religion, and understand the difference between right and wrong.
8. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their independence and take responsibility, from helping in classrooms and supporting their friends, to more formal leadership roles. Leaders ensure pupils' views impact the development of the school, for example in the creation of a new garden space.
9. Pupils regularly take part in activities on the school site to support charities and the local area, such as raising funds for city foodbanks or creating flower planters for the local station. As a result, children and pupils develop a good sense of how to be useful members of a community.
10. Safeguarding is effective. The culture of the school places a strong emphasis on ensuring all children and pupils are safe. Leaders and staff ensure that safeguarding processes are rigorously followed in

all aspects of school life. Staff are well trained with regular updating on local and national issues and statutory responsibilities. Staff report concerns promptly and leaders act on this quickly and carefully, taking advice from local safeguarding partners when required.

11. The school provides parents and other stakeholders with a wide range of information, including policies, on its website, and updates parents directly through newsletters. Communication with parents is regular and informative.

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 consistently apply the school's feedback policy so that pupils can reflect on their work and deepen their understanding across all subjects.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Leaders have a clear vision and aim for the school. They share their vision effectively so that it is well understood by all members of the school community and is implemented well. Leaders promote academic excellence and personal development and clearly demonstrate core values such as good manners, kindness and helping one another. As a result, pupils and children act with maturity and consideration in their day-to-day experiences.
13. Leaders in the early years ensure that children experience a curriculum which is aligned to their interests and provides a wide range of experiences across all required areas of learning. As a result, children are well prepared for their next steps and form positive relationships with each other.
14. The governing body is actively involved in the day-to-day life of the school and governors visit regularly to understand how leaders' decision-making affects members of the school community. Regular contact between leaders and governors through in-person meetings and written reports helps to assure the governors that leaders have the skills and knowledge they need, as well as allowing for reflection on areas for development. The governors hold leaders to account effectively so that the Standards are consistently met.
15. Leaders are self-reflective and consider carefully what is working well and where areas for development may be. They understand their school and use this knowledge to develop appropriate plans for improvement. Leaders monitor teaching and pupils' progress carefully, and regularly evaluate the curriculum, introducing changes where appropriate. They work closely with staff to ensure that the journey is one of shared endeavour.
16. Risk management processes are effective. Leaders and staff have appropriate skills and knowledge that enable them to identify possible risks both on site and for off-site activities. They put suitable measures in place to mitigate any risks identified. Where risks change, leaders have appropriate systems to identify this and they make adjustments if required.
17. The school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have a suitable accessibility plan in place which is focused on ensuring access to the site and pupils' access to the curriculum. Equality is promoted well through the PSHE programme and other aspects of the school's curriculum such as in celebrations of female scientists and charitable activities.
18. The school's policies reflect current statutory guidance and legislation. Leaders stay up to date with changes and update policies promptly when necessary. Policies are implemented consistently. They are shared effectively with pupils, staff and parents so that they are understood well.
19. The school implements a suitable three-stage complaints procedure effectively. When required, the complaints policy is followed with care and precision. Leaders review records of complaints regularly to identify trends and take appropriate action.
20. Leaders maintain appropriate links with external agencies, such as children's services and safeguarding staff in the local authority, to promote pupils' wellbeing. Leaders inform the local authority appropriately when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.
21. Leaders provide parents with a wide range of information through the school's website and regular updates. Parents receive termly updates on their child's attainment and progress and written

reports at the end of each year. Regular in-person meetings between staff and parents ensure all parents know how their child is progressing.

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

22. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

23. The school's curriculum is appropriate, broad and balanced. A wide range of subjects including the arts, design technology and humanities are taught, alongside the core subjects of mathematics, English and sciences. The school delivers discrete provision from specialist teachers for pupils from Year 3 in subjects such as art and technology, and from nursery in music and physical education (PE). The curriculum allows the continued building of pupils' knowledge and understanding and provides good preparation for leaving the school at the end of Year 6 or Year 8.
24. Provision for English and maths ensures pupils develop their literacy and numeracy. In English, pupils read with pleasure and the school encourages this through careful choices of text which also incorporate wider themes, such as ethical questions or the impact of war. In maths, teachers make activities relevant and use the school site well to develop understanding of area and angles, such as the correct slope of an access ramp.
25. Teachers across the school demonstrate secure subject knowledge and plan their lessons carefully to build on pupils' prior learning. Consequently, they provide continuity and progression for pupils. For example, in music, children in Reception can demonstrate an accurate understanding of pulse and rhythm, whilst older pupils can maintain inner pulse as they perform unaccompanied pieces. In science, pupils effectively build upon their knowledge of materials to explore concepts such as density and volume. Mathematics teachers carefully assess individual pupils continually to ensure that the work they are completing is sufficiently challenging.
26. In the early years, children take part in a variety of play-based activities which reflect their interests. As a result, they develop their understanding in enjoyable ways. Teachers use ambitious and expressive vocabulary when talking to children so that children develop their communication skills effectively. The youngest children can request items they wish to play with and describe what they are doing to their peers and to adults. In Reception, children use imaginative words to describe how the climbing equipment might feature in a fantasy story. Formal learning skills, such as learning about the sounds letters make and about numbers, are introduced incrementally so that children are well prepared for their transition to Year 1.
27. Teachers prioritise the development of communication and language skills across the school. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and to discuss with each other as they collaborate in lessons and other activities. For example, in science, pupils are encouraged to explore their own hypotheses in practical activities. As a result, they enjoy their learning and develop their intellectual curiosity.
28. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and what they can achieve. They create a challenging and stimulating environment across the school that makes pupils think hard about their learning. Leaders link skills learned in the classroom with activities. For example, in English lessons, older pupils study novels to support their dramatic performances. As a result, they increase in confidence and develop a more detailed and effective understanding of creative writing and classic literature. Teachers tailor the curriculum to individual needs by adapting teaching and activities well, such as changing settings on the whiteboard or using custom layouts in books. As a result, pupils across the school make good progress.
29. Leaders implement a detailed system of tracking pupils' progress. Data is analysed for trends and teaching adjusted as required to ensure support and challenge for pupils. For example, as a result of

looking at children's progress, leaders recently adapted phonics teaching to meet the needs of a cohort in the early years. As a result, children make good progress in their literacy. Pupils in the prep setting complete regular assessments, and those in Year 6 and Year 8 are successful in achieving places in senior schools of their choice.

30. Leaders ensure that parents are kept informed of how their child is progressing. Progress information is shared through formal assessments of attainment and engagement in lessons, and informally through open classroom events and an annual arts evening. For the latter, pupils are supported to build up a portfolio of artwork over time, and this shows how skills develop, as well as helping pupils feel proud of their accomplishments.
31. Teachers regularly give feedback to pupils through written comments in books and when explaining test results. This helps pupils understand what they did well and identify areas where they could improve. Leaders have recently introduced a weekly reflective feedback process where pupils reflect and provide formal responses to teacher feedback, but this is not yet consistently applied in all subjects.
32. Leaders ensure that pupils who have SEND are identified promptly by the leader of this provision who has regular meetings with key staff in the prep, pre-prep and early years. Careful and regular assessment of pupils allows support to be put in place, including with external specialists when appropriate. The targeted use of additional support such as pre-teaching and specific phonics work in the early years, alongside physical adjustments to some classrooms, means that pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.
33. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported. Leaders have adopted a broad definition of EAL, encompassing pupils where additional languages are spoken at home. Staff work closely with these pupils to ensure that they can access the curriculum effectively and, as result, pupils who speak EAL make good progress
34. The school provides pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Leaders have put in place a programme that promotes the development of social and personal skills in pupils such as confidence, resilience and inter-year group friendship. Leaders prioritise outdoor learning and the programme enables pupils to develop new skills and interests through activities such as bushcraft, gardening and orienteering.

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

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

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

36. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing by ensuring that strategies are in place to support pupils' needs and promote positive mental wellbeing through healthy relationships. Pupils in school know there is always an adult to talk to if they feel worried or anxious.
37. Leaders ensure the timetable supports the aims of the school and the wellbeing of pupils. Scheduled daily pastoral time enables staff to prepare children and pupils for the day ahead and discuss any concerns, and there is a school counsellor who provides support to the whole school community. As a result, children and pupils can talk about their feelings and share any worries in a supportive, mutually respectful environment.
38. Pupils respond positively to the high standards for behaviour that leaders set. They value their peers and the opportunities they have to work together on shared goals, and their behaviour is supported through an effective range of rewards and sanctions. As a result, pupils are polite and consistently engage in positive interactions with each other and adults. Leaders have implemented an effective anti-bullying strategy and, consequently, pupils understand what bullying is, know how to report it and are confident that it will be addressed. Bullying is rare.
39. The school's attendance register is maintained accurately in line with current guidance. Attendance rates are high. Leaders follow up on absence diligently, including in the early years.
40. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting activities, games and active outdoor learning. Specialist PE staff, supported by assistants, deliver a range of physical coaching in their lessons which broadens pupils' skills. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn about and practise different methods of jumping, including techniques for high jump, long jump and hurdles. The physical education curriculum incorporates a range of individual and team sports, such as rugby and cricket, as well as wider activities such as cycling and badminton. As a result, pupils gain new physical skills and understand the importance of exercise in maintaining their health.
41. Leaders promote the regular use of outdoor learning, and this broadens engagement with nature and the wider world. Leaders encourage pupils in this regard, enabling an eco-council made up of pupils who come together to suggest ideas for improving the site. The council is enthusiastically supported by pupils and staff and has resulted in a new garden in a redundant space, as well as expansion of woodland play areas. Where pupils see opportunities for change, they happily work together to make the changes happen and celebrate their collective achievements.
42. Children in the early years develop their gross motor skills through specialist teaching in PE and the use of outdoor apparatus where they learn how to balance and climb. Fine motor skills develop through manipulating drawing and writing utensils as children experiment with mark making. Teachers plan a range of activities that develop independence as well as helping children understand their own needs. For example, children water plants, can explain how they also need water and make their own choice as to when they need to fill their own water bottle.
43. Delivery of the PSHE curriculum, including relationships and sex education (RSE), is carefully planned by teachers. Pupils know the importance of positive relationships which enables them to understand why, for example, consent is an important factor. Relationships education is age-appropriate.

44. Through the religious education curriculum, pupils learn about major world faiths and the features of them. The school has a Christian ethos, but leaders ensure that those pupils of other faiths or none have opportunities to take part in events throughout the year, such as harvest festivals linked to charitable activities or assembly celebrations of Chinese New Year. As a result, pupils learn how to consider their place in the world and develop an understanding of the diverse nature of society.
45. Leaders use a rigorous framework to ensure the safety of the site and those who use it. The vigilance and care of leaders mean that risks are carefully assessed and any health and safety issues are rapidly identified and swiftly rectified. Well-qualified and vigilant staff ensure the site is clean and well maintained.
46. Leaders ensure that measures to reduce the risk from fire are in place. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers are regularly checked. Pupils and children in the early years take part in regular fire drills so that they know what to do if an emergency should arise.
47. Appropriate arrangements are in place for first aid and the management of medicines. There are suitable numbers of staff with specialist paediatric first aid training to ensure that pupils receive appropriate care if they are injured or unwell. In the early years, staff ensure children are safe while they eat.
48. Across the school, leaders ensure that supervision of pupils is effective, including at break and lunchtimes. In the early years, appropriate ratios for supervision of children are rigorously maintained.

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

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

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

50. Pupils across the school learn about fundamental British values. Leaders use a well-planned PSHE curriculum that progressively develops skills across year groups. Through taking part in a range of activities, such as voting for members of the school and eco-council, pupils learn about the importance of democracy. The PSHE curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to learn about how members of parliament are elected, how the government makes laws and how the justice system operates.
51. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and understand the importance of everyone having a voice. They understand democratic processes and take part in weekly discussions and votes on current issues. Pupils debate and consider moral questions, as well as how outcomes of decisions might impact themselves and others. As a result, they are active members in building the school's caring and respectful culture.
52. Leaders develop pupils' understanding of public institutions through a wide range of trips and visits, such as visiting nearby Royal Air Force sites, as well as providing opportunities for pupils to hear from visiting speakers to the school, such as the police and fire service.
53. Leaders actively encourage pupils to use their ideas and build leadership skills through a range of forums. For example, a collaborative group including pupils from Years 2 to 8 work together on a range of projects, fostering collective responsibility and appreciation for the local community in line with the school's aims. These include treasure hunts supporting therapy charities and wider community events involving parents. These activities help pupils feel part of the wider world and encourage them to appreciate the impacts of their actions and the value of a compassionate society.
54. Economic education is well developed through the curriculum. In the early years, children develop an understanding of the significance of money through activities such as learning about coins and discussions about what would happen if the money was all used up. Older pupils take part in budgeting activities, such as planning a family holiday, and enterprise activities. Pupils in Year 8 develop a product, pitch it to their peers and then present their ideas in assemblies to younger pupils. Leaders also ensure pupils understand the potential conflict between maximising profit and benefitting society. Pupils are able to discuss the morality of profit-making as part of the wider PSHE curriculum.
55. Transitions between phases in the school and preparation for progression to new schools are well managed, through taster events prior to moving up from the pre-prep, and links with senior schools for pupils nearing the end of their time at the school. Leaders arrange visits from leaders in several schools pupils might go on to, which helps prepare pupils for their next steps.
56. Careers provision for pupils of secondary age gives pupils the opportunity to understand the range of careers available to them. Time is spent preparing pupils for the step up to senior school, as well as having information from parents about different career paths. This is supported by careers education content within the PSHE programme. Teachers take steps to challenge gender stereotypes around particular job roles. This ensures that pupils understand the range of options available to them when they leave school.

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

57. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

58. The school has an effective safeguarding culture which is successfully promoted by leaders who consciously thread it through all school activity. They make sure that staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive appropriate and regular training, including about the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, they know about risks to pupils, including children in the early years, and how to spot signs of neglect or abuse. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns quickly.
59. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained. They work closely with local safeguarding partners which helps them to understand statutory guidance and local issues. Leaders take prompt and effective action when concerns are raised.
60. Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding. The designated safeguarding governor regularly visits the school and meets with safeguarding staff. Governors receive regular written reports on trends and ask appropriate questions in board meetings to ensure they understand what leaders are doing to ensure pupils are safe.
61. The school's processes for the safer recruitment of staff are detailed and are carefully followed. All required checks are carried out before adults begin work in the school and visiting speakers are carefully vetted. The school's single central record of pre-appointment checks is meticulously kept.
62. Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils are taught about a range of ways to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about boundaries and consent. Internet safety is highlighted for pupils during computing lessons, and regular communications with parents keep them informed. so they can be partners in ensuring their children stay safe online.
63. Suitable internet filtering and monitoring systems are in place in school. These restrict what pupils can access online. Internet use in the school is carefully monitored. Leaders regularly audit systems to assure themselves that monitoring and filtering are effective and do not overly restrict access to appropriate educational material. They act quickly if concerns are raised.
64. There is a clear code of conduct for staff, and this is emphasised during interview and induction. Staff identify and record low-level concerns effectively and leaders liaise appropriately with external agencies when necessary.
65. The school has a strict mobile phone policy which prevents pupils from accessing devices during the school day.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	St John's School
Department for Education number	312/6059
Registered charity number	1063738
Address	St John's School Potter Street Hill Pinner Middlesex HA5 3ZF
Phone number	020 8866 0067
Email address	office@st-johns.org.uk
Website	www.st-johns.org.uk
Proprietor	Merchant Taylors' Educational Trust
Chair	Mr James Fowler
Headteacher	Mr Tom Jenkin
Age range	3 to 13
Number of pupils	265
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 May 2023

Information about the school

67. St John's School is a day school for male pupils in Pinner, Middlesex. It is a registered charity and operates on a single 35-acre parkland site. The school is part of the Merchant Taylors' Educational Trust.
68. The school has 61 children in the early years. The setting comprises one Nursery class and three Reception classes.
69. The school has identified 35 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no pupils in the school who have an education, health and care plan.
70. The school has identified English as an additional language for 46 pupils.
71. The school states its aims are to provide its pupils with the space to grow and the confidence to succeed, and to nurture the individual character of every child, empowering them to achieve excellence. Leaders and teachers encourage good manners, mutual respect and tolerance alongside academic rigour. Leaders aim to encourage all children to develop a love of nature, as they engage in active play and outdoor learning.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 to 25 June 2026

72. A team of 4 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

73. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

74. 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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