

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Finton House School

May 2023

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School's Details

School	Finton House School		
DfE number	212/6365		
Registered charity number	296588		
Address	171 Trinity Road London SW17 7HL		
Telephone number	020 8682 0921		
Email address	office@fintonhouse.org.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Ben Freeman		
Chair of the Governors	Ms Liz Buckley		
Proprietor	Finton House Educational Trust		
Age range	4 to 11		
Number of pupils on roll	344		
	EYFS 56 Juniors 288		
Inspection dates	16 to 18 May 2023		

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1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 Finton House School is an independent, co-educational day school situated in south London, in a residential area near Wandsworth Common. It is a charitable trust administered by a governing board. The school was founded in 1987 and occupies two Victorian town houses which have been redeveloped over the years. For games, the school utilises nearby sports fields, hard courts and swimming pools.

1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has restructured the senior and middle management. Outdoor Learning has been introduced and takes place in the school grounds, Wandsworth Common, Trinity Fields and a nearby small farm.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to ensure that all pupils feel safe, happy and valued and that all, including the most able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are nurtured and challenged to make excellent personal and academic progress. It aspires to enable pupils to discover their own strengths and passions, whilst learning how to live a healthy life in order to flourish in a rapidly changing world.

About the pupils

1.4 Pupils are drawn from the local area. Standardised assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared with pupils taking the same tests nationally. Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has identified 73 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia, dyspraxia and speech and language difficulties, all of whom receive additional specialist help. English is an additional language (EAL) for one pupil, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 68 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for five other pupils because of their special talents in sport.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 - Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.
- 2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.
- 2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
 - Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning, working both collaboratively and individually with independence. They display high levels of focus and interest.
 - Pupils develop excellent knowledge across all areas of learning, naturally making links across subjects to extend their learning.
 - Pupils are eloquent speakers, attentive listeners, fluent readers and skilful writers.
 - Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of creativity.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
 - Pupils have excellent social skills, enabling them to make positive relationships and work effectively with others.
 - Pupils have high levels of intellectual curiosity and a strong awareness of the non-material world.
 - Pupils are highly self-aware, confident and resilient.
 - Pupils exhibit strong moral awareness and high respect for their 'Finton' goals, taking responsibility for their actions.

Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
 - Ensure pupils thinking skills are further enhanced by fully embedding the approach to creative thinking across the whole curriculum.
 - Enable pupils to contribute more to the wider local community beyond the school.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages and abilities have outstanding attitudes to learning. They come to lessons ready to learn, quickly settle to carry out planned tasks and remain fully engaged for considerable lengths of time. They are particularly strong collaborative learners because of the many opportunities planned for them to work in this way. The school nurtures pupils' natural curiosity from an early age. Reception pupils demonstrate assured independence when they enter the classroom, calmly moving a molar tooth image onto their photographs to self-register. Pupils explained how their ability to

take the lead in learning is enhanced by their experiences on residential and other trips, which support the curriculum and are thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated. A high level of initiative is rewarded, for example in art. Pupils often 'run' with an idea and voluntarily produce additional artwork at home in the style of that taught in school and this is then celebrated in display in school. In technology lessons, Year 3 pupils worked with notable independence to create their Roman helmet, using scissors, glue and card responsibly and accurately. In music, older pupils listened carefully to one another, giving a successful rendition of an 'a cappella' song, with confident solo performances included, in preparation for their assembly.

- 3.6 Pupils have excellent knowledge and high levels of skill across all areas of learning. Almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt that their skills and knowledge improved in most lessons. Year 1 pupils successfully applied their strong reading skills to discover information about Queen Victoria. Year 6 pupils applied their mathematical knowledge in personal, social and health education (PSHE) to investigate the effect of interest on different savings accounts and suggested which one would be recommended. Pupils make natural links in their knowledge from one subject to another, which considerably enhances their learning. This is because of the focus on cross curricula planning as part of a whole school approach to learning. Following a microbe topic in science, Year 6 pupils analysed their scientific knowledge. They drew key facts together about harmful bacteria, the Food Standards Agency guidance and correct food storage. They thoroughly enjoyed writing detailed letters of complaint to the 'Greasy Spoon Café' about the impact of food poisoning on customers. All pupils have high technological skills in terms of understanding the design, make and construction process, as seen in the excellent bridges made by a group of Year 2 pupils. They also demonstrate high ability when using information and communication technology (ICT) skills to enhance their learning. Pupils are extremely creative. They are excellent artists using a wide range of genre, particularly using 3D media, modelling and sculpting. Year 4 pupils created intricate mehndi patterns in pen and ink showing real understanding of the traditional shapes. Pupils sculpted highly creative and imaginative forms to enhance the schools' secret garden, its outdoor learning area. Pupils show strongly competent physical skills. Year 2 pupils made observable progress during a physical education (PE) lesson, developing their passing skills in a game of handball. The acquisition of pupils' skills is supported by the high levels of staff knowledge, the specialist facilities and resources available, as well as a high teacher to pupil ratio. These strengths in the school's provision are purposefully enabled and prioritised by governance.
- 3.7 By the time pupils leave the school, all have made at least good and often rapid progress relative to their starting points. This was confirmed by observations of pupils' work in books and in lessons, and by analysis of the school's own assessment data. Pupils' attainment in standardised tests is above the average for pupils taking the same test nationally. Pupils with SEND make rapid progress from their starting points. This is because of the effective individual support that they receive. Pupils are academically well prepared for entry to their future schools, with the majority of leavers gaining places at independent schools with competitive entrance criteria. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that teaching enabled their child to make progress.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages are excellent communicators. Pupils speak with great fluency and confidence and contribute in a valuable and considered way to class discussions, as well as being attentive and intelligent listeners. This is because of a focus on the acquisition of these skills in the broad curriculum. Reception children demonstrate strong phonic knowledge, with the more able confidently using their high frequency words and words with the 'ea' phoneme when speaking and writing sentences. Year 2 pupils write correctly constructed sentences, as when explaining which conditions would promote germination. Pupils understand and use vocabulary well above that expected for their age, both in speaking and writing. Year 2 pupils wrote about a 'scorching day' and feeling 'defeated'. Pupils apply their strong communication skills across all areas of the curriculum. In history, Year 6 pupils wrote a convincing letter from the point of view of an evacuee to their parents. The letter was highly evocative of the era, showed excellent understanding of the feelings

- of the evacuee, and communicated this to the reader through well-chosen vocabulary and complex sentence construction.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly numerate. Reception children have an excellent understanding of three-dimensional shapes for their age. They can name 3D shapes and identify the shape of the 2D faces. Less able Year 4 mathematicians achieve in line with their peers to calculate fractions of a whole number. This is enabled through working in small groups with high staff to pupil ratios, as well as by well-chosen, carefully planned and targeted support. Year 6 pupils confidently described and explained patterns in a graph showing fluctuations in the value of the Euro against the Pound over time. They competently used general knowledge to relate to what was happening in the country at the time, identifying the impact of Covid-19 on the drop in monetary value of the Euro. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge effectively in science investigations, working out averages from tables of results, knowing this will increase the results' reliability. Pupils learning is supported by access to high-quality mathematical resources. All pupils succeed, as staff conscientiously plan effective lessons to build understanding sequentially.
- 3.10 Pupils use technology with high levels of competence both to support learning across the curriculum and when learning specific skills. This is because of the specialist teaching and readily available resources. Reception children open computer programs independently to access resources to support learning. Pupils learn how to code and create their own programs with increasing skill as they progress through the school. In Year 6, pupils wrote a report on their trip to France which successfully incorporated photographs and demonstrated strong linguistic and technological understanding of the tools of journalism. Year 5 pupils progress from the simple skills of video making to using green screens to adapt and change videos. Year 6 pupils successfully used 3D modelling software to recreate their playground.
- 3.11 From Reception, pupils develop strong age-related study skills. Reception children accurately analysed repeat shape patterns and synthesised this information to successfully identify which shapes would then continue the pattern. Year 2 pupils successfully compared life in the UK with the rural life of modern Kenya, showing strong skills of synthesis and evaluation. In Year 4, pupils showed excellent skill in comparing two moral stories from different religions and recognising the universality of certain concepts and ideals. Year 6 pupils support their predictions with previous scientific knowledge, at a level above that expected for their age. They hypothesised about the size of parachutes and the impact of air resistance. The vast majority of parents felt that the school equips their children with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. Pupils' excellent thinking skills are enhanced by the school's increasing focus on creative and critical thinking in the curriculum although this approach is not yet fully embedded across the whole school.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve effective individual and group success. Some pupils achieve highly in their graded music exams. A quarter of year 6 leavers in recent years have gained academic, sports and art scholarships to their selected senior schools. A team of Year 6 able readers achieved the 'top primary school' award in a regional reading competition and another team succeeded as national general knowledge finalists. Pupils' artwork has been highly commended in national exhibitions. Other pupils have gained awards in the national primary mathematics challenge and those with sporting talents have performed well at county level in cricket and swimming. Pupils have competed with success as a team and individually at the IAPs swimming finals.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have highly developed social skills, working extremely effectively with others to achieve common goals. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire felt the school helped their children develop strong teamwork and social skills. Year 1 pupils worked effectively in groups to order the events of the story of Joseph and the Pharaoh. Pupils work supportively in larger groups.

The ukelele ensemble focused closely together to give a competent performance, with obvious enjoyment, in preparation for their concert. Pupils' strong social skills are enabled because most lessons are planned to engender positive social interactions as a teaching method. This is encouraged by the school's leaders and enabled through the commitment of governance to provide high levels of staffing to manage such active learning for all.

- 3.15 Pupils are strongly spiritually aware. Pupils explained this is developed through looking at different world faiths in religious education. Their understanding is brought to life through associated visits to local places of worship, including using their local parish church to celebrate Christmas. Pupils say they value the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of prayer for different faiths. Muslim pupils and staff used the room set aside for them for prayer during Ramadan and explained their traditions to the whole school. Pupils demonstrate deep philosophical reflection about questions posed in critical thinking lessons and on the challenge board. They ponder such issues as 'What would be your utopia?' or 'What is happiness?' Reception children gleefully showed appreciation of the natural world when getting muddy in the secret garden. Older pupils marvelled at the wonder of wriggling eggs and newly hatched chicks hatching in the incubator, caught on 'class cams' for all to enjoy. Year 6 pupils used Tai Chi in an art lesson, to imagine the shape and peacefulness of trees in nature. They used thought-provoking words to express how this made them feel such as peaceful, reflective, calm and less anxious.
- 3.16 Pupils have excellent understanding of themselves as learners, their strengths and areas for improvement, because of the high-quality and supportive feedback and guidance from staff and peers. The vast majority of parents felt the school helped their children to be confident and independent. In a Year 6 English lesson, valuable peer editing helped pupils improve their report writing by reminding each other to use the third person and other journalistic methods. Older pupils explained that they value the opportunity, in personalised homework, to focus on particular areas for revision in preparation for external entrance examinations. Pupils are highly resilient and prepared to persevere to learn and improve skills. They are prepared to take risks in their learning. Year 1 pupils showed strong self-discipline when completing balances on a beam and against the wall, improving their control and form after receiving affirming feedback from their teacher. Pupils explained how they have high levels of self-confidence because they are happy in school. They are given many opportunities to perform in front of different audiences, starting from an early age, participating in school poetry reciting competitions, singing in concerts, taking the lead in assemblies and making public speeches. These opportunities firmly embed a feeling of self-belief, one of the school's core values.
- 3.17 Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong because of the school behaviour code which is clearly understood and consistently applied. Pupils value the time to reflect and consider the impact of their actions as part of the sanction system. They independently apologise when they recognise that they have not behaved well and follow the school's guidance to forgive and move on when their feelings have been hurt. Pupils quietly carry out random acts of kindness, clearing up after their peers or spontaneously saying thank you after lunch time. They are supportive of one another and move around the school calmly and responsibly. They take excellent care of each other in the playground and discuss problems sensibly. Pupils are quick to nominate others for kindness awards, recognising the enactment of the school goals. They readily make sacrifices to their individual benefit to ensure they achieve as a team. In a Year 3 history lesson on the Romans, pupils displayed a strong moral stance when expressing their opinions on the wrongs of slavery.
- 3.18 Pupils are assured decision-makers; they identify strategies for themselves which will improve their own performance or likelihood of future success. Pupils say they feel empowered to decide for themselves because of the excellent support and guidance from their teachers and the way lessons incorporate choice. Children in Reception choose to face 'spicy' challenges as they know this will improve their understanding in mathematics. Pupils opt to join activities such as the mindfulness club, as they know this will give them skills to help focus and relaxation. They then make suitable

- conscious and independent decisions to apply these skills to manage their own behaviours, or ask for time out of lessons when they know they need breaks.
- 3.19 Pupils enjoy exploring how they can have impact for good to the benefit of others, and this is a strength within the school and focus of the school's leaders. Pupils make excellent contributions to their own school community. Each Year 6 pupil has a position of responsibility in the school such as house captains, prefects and sports captains. Younger pupils also have roles in their class as monitors. School council representatives from across the classes make suggestions to improve their environment. They suggested setting up a mindfulness corner in the playground and writing to the bursar to request recycling bins. Older pupils independently organise activities to raise money for different charities. Pupils have provided artwork for a community exhibition, completed a litter pick on Wandsworth common and contributed to the design and construction of the secret garden, which is used by others in the local area. In response to suggestions put forward by the school council, a movie night was organised to raise money for children sponsored by the school in Nairobi. Pupils' current involvement in contributing to the wider local community beyond the school is not, however, as broadly established as it could be.
- 3.20 Pupils have a high level of respect for diversity in all its forms in the wider community because of the focus on respect as a 'Finton goal'. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of those of neurodiversity in their own community. Parents responding to the questionnaire explained that teachers really take the time to understand the individual needs and differences of their children. Pupils expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn and share sign language and showed deep appreciation for the skill of a visiting deaf musician. Pupils embrace their differences and individuality and show respectful curiosity when using the different skin tone pencils in each classroom. They are respectful of different faiths and cultures, enjoying learning about how their peers celebrate Sikh or Islamic festivals from pupil and parent presentations in assembly, or at the school international day, how different cultures use food and clothing to celebrate their traditions. Pupils understand that people have different life experiences, and that these are equally valid, supported in this through the diversity of reading books specially selected to engender respect and tolerance.
- 3.21 Pupils have an excellent appreciation of the need to stay safe in a wide variety of contexts. Almost all parents and pupils in their questionnaire responses felt the school encouraged them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the benefits and dangers of the 'online' world, though their computing and PSHE lessons. Pupils have good traffic and road safety awareness. They understand how to make appropriate healthy food choices through the provision of fruit at snack times and an open salad bar, which included fresh herbs grown by the gardening club. Pupils are physically active, taking opportunities provided through the sports curriculum and the many playground resources. Pupils have a profound understanding of the importance of strong mental health and can independently identify many strategies to employ to support their own wellbeing. They take the opportunity to ask for help using the class worry boxes. This is because of the high importance this area is given by all staff and the common use of the 'zones of regulation' in giving pupils the vocabulary to express their emotions and feelings. Pupils know that this is a good thing to do. Pupils well-developed understanding of mental health is enabled because of the commitment by governance in ensuring specialist trained adult support is available as well as through the highly appreciated contribution to wellbeing by 'Fin' the school support dog, who helps individuals and groups in therapy sessions.

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4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Vivien Sergeant Reporting inspector

Mr Jason Gayler Compliance team inspector (Former Head of pre-prep and nursery,

IAPS school)

Mrs Jeanette Adams Team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school)

Mrs Faith Potter Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)