

School inspection report

19 to 21 May 2026

Finton House School

171 Trinity Road

London

SW17 7HL

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 and governors provide an effective education for pupils who have a wide range of needs and abilities. Pupils learn and interact successfully together within the school's inclusive community. The governing body undertakes its role responsibly, providing strategic oversight and support where required.
2. Leaders have thoughtfully crafted the school's values, known as 'Finton Values', of kindness, morality, self-belief, resilience and respect, which underpin all aspects of school life. Staff and pupils constantly reference and uphold these. Pupils understand that adopting the values will benefit them in their lives.
3. The curriculum is well planned, maintaining breadth across the year groups. Leaders' chosen framework to develop pupils' learning skills sits alongside the curriculum and is firmly embedded throughout the school. Pupils understand and apply these learning skills, which has a positive impact on their achievements and ability to think critically and creatively. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
4. Leaders have established an effective assessment system that tracks each pupil closely. Data is evaluated by leaders and teachers, who are proactive in analysing the academic, social and emotional progress of individual pupils and different groups. They adjust teaching and provide specific strategies accordingly, so that pupils' identified needs are met. The use of assessment data enables pupils to make consistently good progress.
5. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils age-appropriate topics, which supports their wellbeing. Pupils enjoy positive relationships and show mutual respect towards each other in their social interactions. Likewise, positive and respectful relationships between pupils and staff are evident across the school. Staff create a nurturing environment where pupils engage confidently. Pupils are happy and well supported.
6. Leaders of the early years provide children with an interesting and age-appropriate curriculum. Specialist teachers develop children's early fascination for a range of subjects. For example, children successfully produce artwork in the style of Matisse and recall interesting facts about the artist. Children receive a firm foundation to develop their technology skills, such as learning how to take photographs using devices.
7. Leaders follow the government's safer eating guidelines for children in the early years. Leaders assess risks and adjust lunchtime arrangements to meet the requirements. Consideration is given to appropriate food portion sizes. However, some fruit servings seen during the inspection were not presented as recommended in the government's guidance. Leaders and staff amended the serving style to match the requirements.
8. Leaders have successfully established close links with a range of institutions and community projects. Pupils engage in many community initiatives organised by the school. These experiences enable pupils to understand how to contribute to society for the greater good.
9. Leaders are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures reflect current requirements and are well known by staff. There are a range of mechanisms for pupils to share any concerns.

10. The school conducts the required safer recruitment checks on staff prior to appointment. These are recorded on the single central record of appointments (SCR). However, inspectors found that some checks completed for supply staff were not recorded as required. Leaders addressed these administrative errors when inspectors were on site.

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 the fruit portions prepared and served to children in the early years aligns fully with government guidelines
- ensure that the checks for supply staff undertaken by the school are recorded correctly on the single central record of appointments.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge. They have a clear vision for the school, with evidence of ongoing development and the introduction of initiatives that support pupils' wellbeing. Leaders check and evaluate that their actions meet pupils' needs and enhance pupils' educational experience. Staff share leaders' vision. They reinforce the school's values and learning skills throughout school life.
12. Governors are fully invested in the success of the school. They understand their roles and provide rigorous oversight and challenge to leaders, ensuring that the school meets the requirements of the Standards consistently. The governing body includes members with a wide range of professional skills and knowledge. This helps to ensure that the support and challenge given to leaders is relevant and constructive. Governors visit regularly and check that leaders' actions successfully enrich the education that pupils receive.
13. Leaders in the early years are knowledgeable and undertake their responsibilities well. They provide training and guidance to early years staff to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders meet with early years staff regularly to discuss the children in their care and ensure that the requirements of the statutory early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework are met.
14. Leaders have a systematic approach to assessing risk. The school chooses to use an electronic system and all risk assessments follow the same format to support consistency and expectations. Risk assessments are completed for a wide range of scenarios, such as for the use of buildings, the outdoor area, specific activities and to support pupils' additional needs. Risk assessments are detailed and there is a robust system in place for signing these off, whereby several members of staff, including leaders, check their suitability.
15. Leaders ensure that all required information is provided to parents. The school's website is well maintained with all appropriate information and policies. This includes links to all previous inspection reports since 2015. The school provides parents with suitable reports regarding their child's progress and achievements. Parents have regular opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress and understand how best to support their child's learning.
16. The school provides local authorities with details of income and expenditure when a pupil receives funding. Leaders provide the required information for annual reviews where pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
17. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Care is taken to understand and meet pupils' individual needs. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place that has clear objectives and actions for improving pupils' access to the site and the curriculum. For example, leaders provide personalised information and communication technology (ICT) support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The accessibility plan is reviewed annually to ensure that the needs of pupils who have specific needs continue to be met.
18. Leaders are suitably knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. They have established effective working partnerships with external agencies, such as the local safeguarding partners and children's services. Leaders fulfil their duties to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times.

19. Leaders ensure that a suitable complaints policy is in place and published on the school's website. Leaders' records are comprehensive and well maintained. These demonstrate that the school follows the complaints procedure appropriately. Leaders and staff maintain an open-door approach with parents. This enables most concerns raised to be dealt with promptly and at an informal stage. As a result, formal complaints are rare. Leaders always reflect on lessons learned from complaints. They are reflective and put suitable measures in place to address any issues where appropriate.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. Leaders and teachers deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. This is carefully planned and reviewed so that it continues to meet pupils' needs. Subject specialists plan a curriculum that enables pupils to develop secure skills and interest in subjects such as art, ICT, design and technology (DT), languages and music. Alongside the curriculum, pupils learn about the skills of communication, collaboration, leadership, independence, critical thinking and self-reflection. These characteristics help pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how they learn best and develop greater confidence. For example, younger pupils talk about the benefits of working together, and older pupils confidently reflect on themselves as learners as they prepare for their transition to senior school.
22. Pupils acquire well-developed literacy skills. They use a broad range of vocabulary and creative, imaginative language in their writing. Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their confidence in speaking and listening. For example, pupils across different year groups articulate their thoughts and ideas during weekly school podcasts, expressing their views clearly.
23. The mathematics curriculum successfully enables pupils to embed their numeracy skills. Staff use a range of effective resources to help pupils grasp concepts. Teachers continually adapt their lessons and provide well-matched activities to suit pupils' different abilities. For example, pupils with higher prior attainment complete extension tasks that include an appropriate level of challenge. These require pupils to recall and apply their prior learning. Such activities help to sustain pupils' interest and enable pupils to deepen their learning.
24. Teachers deliver well-planned, interactive lessons that encourage pupils' engagement and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are enthusiastic and motivated. Pupils in Year 6 complete an extended research project that enables them to apply their skills in many directions.
25. Leaders implement a thorough assessment system that has a positive impact on the progress of pupils. This is because staff conduct a detailed analysis of each individual pupil's progress and use this to shape the provision. Staff use assessment and tracking data as live documents. They use this precise knowledge of pupils to adapt their planning and teaching. Staff also use data for identifying any specific short-term support needed for pupils with a gap in their learning. This means that pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly with their reading. Pupils are well prepared for their move to senior school.
26. Leaders and teachers are ambitious for pupils who have SEND. They identify pupils' additional needs at an early stage. Specific and effective support enables pupils who have SEND to make good progress. Pupils who have SEND are monitored closely to ensure their continued positive learning outcomes.
27. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive personalised support to enable them to make good progress. For example, pupils are given help and encouragement from staff who speak pupils' first language. Pupils access additional tuition before and after school when necessary. Pupils who speak EAL successfully increase their confidence and fluency to speak and write in the English language.
28. Staff in the early years plan an interesting and appropriately challenging curriculum that enthuses children and encourages them to develop a love for learning. Care is taken to ensure that children

receive a solid introduction to literacy and numeracy, in preparation for Year 1. Children confidently self-select activities from the learning environment, such as choosing to write about sea creatures from a wide range of meaningful tasks linked to their topic about under the sea. Staff know children well and meticulously track their achievements and progress. They use this information to plan and teach children's individual next steps. Children thrive because staff provide precise support that helps children gain in confidence, make good progress and enjoy their learning. Specialist teaching in the early years supports children to develop their creative, physical and technological skills.

29. Leaders support pupils' broader development through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, such as a farm, film and dodgeball clubs. These are carefully selected to cater for pupils' interests and help them to develop new skills across a range of experiences. Clubs are well attended and pupils show enjoyment in their activities. Staff plan visits and residential trips that provide an added dimension to pupils' learning and reinforce what pupils are taught during lessons.

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

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

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

31. The school teaches pupils to be kind and respectful. Pupils demonstrate politeness and empathy towards others. Pupils understand the importance of individuality and are respectful of personal characteristics. As a result, pupils are not judgemental, they listen to one another and are tolerant towards those who come from a different country, religion or culture. Collectively, this supports a calm, inclusive and happy learning environment.
32. Staff deliver a broad and relevant religious education (RE) curriculum that encourages pupils to be respectfully curious and consider their own thoughts and opinions. For example, older pupils reflect on different views of how the world was created.
33. Pupils' mental health and emotional wellbeing is well supported across the school. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of specialist staff, including a school counsellor, an occupational therapist and three trained emotional literacy support assistants, as well as access to external specialists if required.
34. The physical education (PE) curriculum enables pupils to develop their physical skills and personal health and fitness. Pupils participate in regular physical games and sports fixtures, with high levels of success. Subjects such as PE, science and PSHE help pupils to understand the benefits of such activities and to be healthy, confident and content.
35. The PSHE and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculums are taught effectively and cover the required content for pupils' different ages. For instance, pupils learn about emotions and feelings, as well as basic first aid. This equips them with the knowledge and confidence to navigate real-life scenarios. Form teachers are suitably trained to deliver these lessons and are supported by subject co-ordinators. Pupils recall the content they are taught and speak confidently about their learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 explain personal boundaries accurately and maturely.
36. The school has effective behaviour and anti-bullying strategies that are well known by staff and pupils. Serious behaviour or bullying issues seldom occur. Staff apply a consistent approach to behaviour management. This helps pupils to understand the school's expectations and the systems for rewards and sanctions. Pupils are motivated by rewards that encourage them to try their best and embrace challenge. As a result, pupils typically behave well.
37. Leaders ensure that health and safety measures are thorough and meticulously followed. Fire safety arrangements are appropriate and include regular drills and checks of fire equipment. Premises and accommodation are well kept, providing a comfortable and attractive learning environment for pupils.
38. Pupils are supervised appropriately throughout the school day. This includes rigorous procedures for the supervision of pupils during breaktimes and when they take part in lessons off site.
39. Leaders are aware of the safer eating requirements for children in the early years and take steps to adapt meal and snack time arrangements accordingly. Staff trained in paediatric first aid are present when children eat, including during off-site school trips. Leaders liaise with catering staff to check that the food offered is appropriately sized. However, during the inspection, watermelon was served

in large chunks rather than the recommended practice of smaller slices. This was addressed while inspectors were on site, so that large fruit is served in appropriately sized slices.

40. The school maintains admission and attendance registers in line with statutory guidance. Leaders closely monitor pupils' attendance and act appropriately to address any absence concerns.
41. Staff are appropriately trained in paediatric and general first aid. Suitable systems for pupils' medical care and dietary needs are consistently implemented. Individual care plans and efficient recording processes enhance the support pupils receive and reduce risk. This contributes to a safe and caring environment.
42. Staff in the early years use effective systems to help children develop self-esteem, confidence and independence. Pictorial timetables are used well to help children understand routines and expectations. Children engage in a wide range of activities to develop their physical skills, such as through specialist gym, games and swimming lessons. Staff plan activities that help to develop children's fine motor skills and co-ordination, for instance painting with cotton buds.
43. The school provides opportunities for pupils to hold positions such as prefects and head boy and head girl. This helps older pupils to develop their leadership, communication and organisational skills, alongside a sense of responsibility.

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

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

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

45. The school's 'Finton values' align closely with British values. Pupils gain first-hand experience of these concepts through a variety of age-appropriate opportunities. For example, democratic processes are explored through voting for book choices in Reception and election to the school council throughout the school. Opportunities to extend and enrich pupils' understanding are provided through assemblies, discussions with external speakers and community visits. Pupils are taught the benefits of different laws and the role that democracy has in modern society. Pupils reflect how the school's values are central to a fulfilling life and are relevant to uphold in the future.
46. Pupils develop a broad social and cultural knowledge through RE lessons. This is further enhanced by visits to local places of worship, meetings with leaders of different faiths in the local community and termly cultural celebration days in school. Pupils ask relevant questions to gain a greater understanding of different beliefs. Pupils embrace and celebrate diversity. Teachers promote mutual respect in lessons and provide pupils with opportunities to explore social and cultural aspects of life in Britain.
47. Leaders establish meaningful links with the local community that benefit pupils. Planned experiences help pupils to develop compassion for others as well as confidence in engaging with a range of people. For example, pupils visit a local care home on a weekly basis to socialise and play games with residents. Pupils work together to organise and contribute to charitable events. Staff ensure that pupils understand how their charitable acts help others. For example, pupils engage in taking donated produce to a local foodbank. Pupils actively help to improve the local area, such as through the creation of a secret garden for the community to use as well as raising funds for a local hospital. Leaders develop partnerships with other schools in the local area, which help pupils build mutually beneficial connections with their peers in the wider community, such as pupils in Year 4 participating in joint drama workshops.
48. Pupils develop their social and economic understanding through the PSHE curriculum, which is often enriched by collaborative, real-life scenario projects and visits from professionals. For example, children in the early years learn to use money during role play. Pupils in Year 6 learn about saving, spending, fraud, mortgages and credit cards, gaining useful guidance from an expert speaker.
49. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to undertake roles of responsibility from an early age. For instance, the school council includes representatives from all year groups, including children in Reception. Pupil council members consider ideas and report back to the school community, such as sharing the results of a poll to involve the school dog in more lessons and activities. Pupils' ideas are listened to and acted upon, when appropriate, creating a sense of being valued and belonging.
50. Children in the early years display well-developed social skills and behave positively. They are polite and confident, speaking freely about their school experiences to visitors and engaging kindly with their peers. Staff deal with any behavioural matters discreetly by using a series of small pictures to provide visual prompts that children understand. Staff consistently reinforce the school's values, helping children in the early years to learn how to make the right choices. For instance, by being kind and respectful through asking permission to take photos during ICT lessons.

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 with responsibility for safeguarding are competent and display a secure knowledge of requirements. They know the local authority systems for reporting concerns and refer to these when there is a need. Leaders ensure that procedures are well known and information posters are appropriate for the reader, such as simplifying safeguarding posters so that children in the early years understand to whom they can turn with a concern.
53. Governors increase their safeguarding skills and knowledge through completing suitable training, including advanced-level safeguarding training. Governors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements. This includes completing audits and taking appropriate action to improve practice. Governors with responsibility for safeguarding meet with safeguarding leaders regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and procedures. Governors provide valued support where needed.
54. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding keep comprehensive records. These demonstrate prompt and appropriate action in response to any safeguarding concerns. Leaders keep abreast of any issues both in school and the local area. Leaders meet weekly to discuss safeguarding matters, facilitating continual monitoring and prompt information sharing to help keep pupils safe.
55. Leaders are proactive and get involved in initiatives to help keep children safe, such as working with the police through 'Operation Encompass', a programme that helps children who experience domestic abuse.
56. Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding training so that staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff engage in regular safeguarding updates that encourage them to reflect on a range of scenarios and consider how best to respond. Staff are aware and vigilant of safeguarding risks for pupils, such as radicalisation. Leaders foster a culture of openness and staff report any concerns about other adults or themselves to relevant leaders.
57. Online safety measures are carefully executed. A suitable system for filtering and monitoring pupils' internet use is in place. Prompt action is taken when an inappropriate search is flagged. Pupils are taught about online safety from Reception upwards, so they learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. The school's mobile phone policy does not allow pupils to bring smart phones onsite. . This is received positively by parents and pupils are taught the benefits of this policy to their safety and wellbeing. Non-smartphones are restricted to Year 6 only and are handed in on arrival at school.
58. Safeguarding leaders teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, such as by discussing the NSPCC's 'PANTS' rules, which help keep children safe from sexual abuse, and introducing the 'Clever Never Goes' strategy, which teaches pupils how to stay safe from abduction.
59. Staff responsible for safer recruitment checks understand the requirements. They maintain a comprehensive system to ensure the suitability of staff and other adults appointed by the school. Appropriate checks are completed prior to staff starting work at the school and having access to pupils. These are recorded and stored electronically on the SCR. However, at the start of the inspection, the checks for supply staff, although complete, were not always recorded correctly. This was rectified during the inspection, so that the SCR accurately records the dates the school receives confirmation from supply agencies that the checks for supply staff have been undertaken.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

60. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Finton House School
Department for Education number	212/6365
Registered charity number	269588
Address	Finton House School 171 Trinity Road London SW17 7HL
Phone number	020 8682 0921
Email address	office@fintonhouse.org.uk
Website	www.fintonhouse.org.uk
Proprietor	Finton House Educational Trust
Chair of Governors	Mr James Vickers
Headteacher	Mr Ben Freeman
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	348
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 May 2023

Information about the school

61. Finton House School is a co-educational day school located in south London. The school is a charitable trust. A board of governors provides strategic oversight. Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors was appointed in June 2025.
62. There are 65 children in the early years, comprising three Reception classes.
63. The school has identified 75 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
64. The school has identified English as an additional language for a small number of pupils.
65. The school states that the school's motto 'open hearts and guiding hands' encapsulates its aim to promote warm and caring relationships in order to deliver the best education. The school aims to nurture and challenge all pupils so that they make excellent personal and academic progress. The objective is to provide a broad and inspiring curriculum, empowering pupils for the next stage of their education and their future lives. The school has five values that it instils in pupils: kindness, morality, self-belief, resilience and respect.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

19 to 21 May 2026

66. A team of four 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 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.

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**.

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