

# School inspection report

11 to 13 March 2025

## **Dwight School London**

6 Friern Barnet Lane

London

N11 3LX

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'.

## Contents

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS .....	4
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	6
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	8
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	10
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	12
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	13
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders are suitably skilled and knowledgeable. They implement school policies consistently and effectively ensuring that they are clearly understood by pupils and staff. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of the school and provides suitable challenge to school leaders.
2. Leaders implement well-judged development plans for the continued growth of the school. These plans are informed by a comprehensive process of self-evaluation in which leaders place high value on the views and opinions of pupils, parents and staff.
3. Pupils understand the importance of mutual respect which characterises the school community. They are open-minded and enjoy listening to and also challenging their peers. They are actively involved in the local community and understand the importance of supporting others. Pupils are well prepared for life in both British and global society.
4. Leaders actively promote the wellbeing of pupils through a well-organised system of pastoral care which supports pupils on an individual basis. Across the junior and senior school, class teachers and form tutors have a detailed understanding of the needs of their pupils. This has a positive effect on the growth of pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.
5. Leaders provide an ambitious age-appropriate curriculum that enriches pupils' learning. The curriculum and teaching develop pupils' skills in independent and collaborative learning very well. As a result, pupils develop an enthusiastic and determined approach to their academic work which enables them to make good progress relative to their starting points.
6. The majority of teaching is well planned and delivered effectively. It challenges pupils to think independently and develop their own ideas. However, some teaching does not effectively ensure that the small number of pupils who occasionally become disengaged from their learning regain their focus, resulting in inconsistent progress when this is the case.
7. The early years curriculum and learning environment support the needs and interests of the children, enabling them to make good progress from their starting points and to develop socially. Children learn how to work and play collaboratively and develop increasing independence in preparation for the next stage of their education.
8. There is a systematic and well-managed approach to all aspects of health and safety at the school including fire safety and first aid procedures. Leaders and staff identify and mitigate any potential risks effectively. Leaders review risk assessments regularly to ensure their continued suitability.
9. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that these remain suitable. Staff are well trained and have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders carry out appropriate recruitment checks and these are recorded accurately. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when online, and have many trusted adults to whom they can turn should they have concerns or worries.

## 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 classroom management is consistently effective in ensuring that all pupils are fully engaged in their learning to enhance their academic progress.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders have the required knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively and with the primary focus of actively promoting the wellbeing of pupils. The proprietor and the governing executive management team maintain effective oversight of the school, assuring themselves that the Standards are consistently met. They provide suitable challenge for school leaders and scrutinise all areas of the school's operation.
11. Leaders take a rigorous approach to self-evaluating the school's educational provision. They actively listen to the views of pupils, staff and parents which informs the school's developmental planning. Their planning ensures that the school is sharply focused on providing the most effective opportunities for pupils to enhance their personal development and academic learning. Leaders constantly evaluate the school against the cornerstones of their values, which embrace personalised learning, a global perspective and living in a mutually supportive community.
12. Leaders carefully monitor pupils' progress in their learning across the different stages of the school. This enables them to regularly identify new opportunities to enrich the curriculum. There is a constant drive for improvement in the school. Regular training and ongoing opportunities for teachers' professional development ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged in their learning. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress across the curriculum.
13. Across all aspects of life at the school, leaders ensure that there is equality of opportunity for pupils and that everyone is treated equally and without any discrimination. An appropriate accessibility plan is in place. The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act (2010).
14. Leaders have a comprehensive and rigorous approach to the mitigation of risk. Staff are well trained and are proactive in identifying potential risks to pupils' wellbeing. There are detailed and suitable risk assessments in place which are regularly reviewed. These clearly identify and manage potential risks to pupils, including with regard to school trips, movement between the school sites, activities, and individual pupils' welfare.
15. Leaders in the early years have levels of skill and knowledge appropriate to their roles. They are well trained and hold regular supervision meetings with their staff to aid their professional development. Safeguarding, health and safety and risk assessment policies are robustly implemented to ensure the wellbeing of the children.
16. Leaders effectively manage any parental concerns or complaints that the school receives. They maintain clear records of complaints and action taken by the school in response to these. Leaders respond to complaints within the time frames stated in the school's policy.
17. The school regularly provides parents, including those of children in the early years, with information on the progress of their own child throughout the school year. Other required information such as policies and required contact details are provided on the school website or otherwise made available to parents.
18. The school liaises effectively with a range of external agencies such as safeguarding partners and external professionals who support various aspects of the school's provision, such as health and safety audits. Leaders also work closely with the local authority, including through informing them

appropriately about the use of funding to support pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).

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

**19. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

20. The school provides a broad, age-appropriate and enriching curriculum which is systematically planned to challenge pupils and allow them to follow their interests. The curriculum enables pupils to progressively develop knowledge, skills and understanding by effectively connecting the International Baccalaureate Programmes for the Primary Years (IB PYP), Middle Years (IB MYP) and the Diploma (IB DP) for sixth-form pupils. Through this co-ordinated approach to learning, pupils develop their understanding of how different subjects relate to each other and how skills can be transferred from one area of study to another.
21. Across all stages of the curriculum, pupils undertake 'units of inquiry' in which they are able to follow their interests through independent research. From an early age, teachers show pupils how to conduct their own academic inquiries, work collaboratively and challenge each other's thinking with an open mind. As a consequence, pupils have much enthusiasm for new knowledge, learning from each other and being challenged.
22. A suitable framework for assessment is implemented by school leaders. They evaluate pupils' progress effectively and then put in place action plans to support pupils who need extra help with their learning. Assessments enable pupils to have a clear understanding of how well they are progressing and they are motivated by seeing gradual improvements in their attainment.
23. Leaders maintain oversight of teaching throughout the school. They regularly visit lessons, review pupils' work and talk to pupils about their learning. This, together with pupil progress data, allows leaders to evaluate how effectively the school is delivering its teaching and learning aims. A well-planned programme of weekly professional development allows teachers to reflect on their work and develop their strategies to enhance pupils' achievement. Overall, pupils make good progress relative to their starting points. Pupils' attainment levels in the IB DP and IB MYP are above the respective worldwide averages.
24. Leaders in the early years provide opportunities for children to learn through play and exploration of the world around them. The well-planned and challenging curriculum enables children to make good progress across the areas of learning, such as in numeracy and their understanding of the sounds that letters make, as well as their agility and fine motor skills, which are further enhanced by regular visits to the school's outdoor forest area. Children are constantly encouraged to be independent learners and express themselves confidently using a range of age-appropriate vocabulary.
25. Teachers consistently demonstrate good subject knowledge. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and prior attainment to plan lessons typically effectively, ensuring that pupils are appropriately challenged and given opportunities to develop their own ideas. However, classroom management is not always consistent in maintaining pupils' intellectual focus. Some teachers do not always notice or respond effectively when a minority of pupils becomes disengaged with their learning, which hinders their progress.
26. The school effectively identifies the learning requirements of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Subject teachers and specialists work together to put in place appropriate support, both inside and outside lessons. Pupils respond positively to this targeted support and consequently make rapid progress from their starting points.

27. When required, pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are effectively supported through a range of tailored language acquisition classes and subject specific guidance in lessons. Pupils make good progress with their English in response to this individual support.
28. The curriculum is complemented by a suitable programme of activities for pupils of all ages. The activities programme provides pupils with opportunities to extend their learning including developing leadership and collaborative working skills. Activities range from various sports, music groups, art, academic enrichment and various clubs. Pupils can also participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE) which enables them to develop their resilience and teamwork skills.

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

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

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

30. The school actively promotes pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils are effectively supported by their tutors or class teachers who know them well. Pupils are also members of houses which promote positive relationships across the school. Staff have been well trained, including in mental health first aid, to understand the needs of their pupils and how to support them. Pastoral leaders meet weekly to discuss measures to promote pupils' emotional wellbeing.
31. Pupils respect each other and appreciate the importance of listening to each other, enabling them to learn about different perspectives to their own. Pupils' spiritual and moral understanding grows through a well-planned assembly programme encompassing events such as Remembrance, Ramadan and the Holocaust. Pupils learn about different faiths, as well as gaining an understanding of their own spirituality, through themes met in the curriculum, such as the IB PYP unit on the theme of 'Who We Are'.
32. There is a carefully planned and age-appropriate curriculum in place for the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education which is delivered through the tutorial programme. This is complemented by a comprehensive and suitable relationships and sex education (RSE) course which is taught by external specialists. This allows pupils to develop their understanding of issues such as different types of healthy relationships, puberty and the importance of consent in an age-appropriate manner. At the same time, pupils build up an awareness of the strategies to help them to avoid peer pressure and the harm caused, for example, by misogyny and toxic masculinity.
33. Pupils' wellbeing is enhanced by the school's physical and health education programme. Physical education (PE) lessons and timetabled games enable pupils to understand the value of physical fitness and develop their collaborative and teamwork skills. Typical of the school's approach to interdisciplinary learning is the co-ordinated teaching in PE and science which enables pupils to understand the links between physical health and diet.
34. In the early years setting, staff help children recognise the importance of playing and learning together. They successfully encourage children to listen to each other, share the same space and learn how to develop friendships. Consequently, children behave well in the early years setting and grow up respecting their peers.
35. Leaders recognise the importance of giving pupils age-appropriate responsibilities. There are a number of opportunities for pupil leadership. For example, pupils actively support the wellbeing of their younger peers through mentoring and buddying roles, for which they are trained. Pupils are elected to take on responsibilities in roles such as pupil leaders and representing the views of others through the school's senior and junior councils. The school's focus on pupils' development of leadership skills enhances their self-confidence and self-esteem.
36. Leaders communicate clear expectations for the conduct of everyone in the school community. As a result, the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies are clearly understood by pupils and staff. Leaders and staff implement the policies appropriately and fairly. Leaders maintain detailed behavioural records and review these to identify patterns and take prompt appropriate action when needed, including putting in place suitable support for any pupils affected. The mutual respect between teachers and pupils results in high standards of behaviour across the school.

37. The school has a robust approach to health and safety, fire safety and site maintenance. Staff training is regularly updated and appropriate checks are made on fire equipment, evacuation routes, alarms and other equipment. There is detailed record-keeping in place, such as the actions taken in response to the most recent fire risk assessment and accident reports. This enables leaders to maintain effective oversight of the suitability of the school campuses and ensure that they are well-maintained.
38. The school has suitable medical facilities to support pupils who are injured or taken ill. Across the school campuses, first aid provision is appropriate and effective. Suitable numbers of staff are appropriately trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid for those who work in the early years.
39. Leaders ensure supervision levels throughout the school, including when pupils are moving between the two senior school campuses, are appropriate. Leaders maintain suitable staff to child ratios in the early years.
40. The school's attendance and admission registers are accurately maintained in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders inform the local authority of any pupils who leave or join the school at non-standard transition points, or whose level of attendance at school is causing concern.

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

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

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

42. Leaders have established a school community characterised by mutual respect and inclusivity. The school's global vision of learning is understood by pupils who recognise the importance of listening to and respecting others who have a different social and cultural perspective or background to their own. They are taught throughout the curriculum the value of open-mindedness and learning from each other. A well-planned programme of assemblies covering themes such as Black History Month, Japanese cultural awareness and lesbian, gay and bisexual, transgender (LGBT) issues supports the curriculum and informs the discussions in tutorials. This enables pupils to understand and appreciate diverse cultures as well as the importance of respecting the protected characteristics of individuals, such as their race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.
43. The curriculum ensures that pupils are knowledgeable about the rule of law and how people can exercise their rights through the democratic process in British society. The values of democracy and the rule of law are reinforced through, for example, opportunities to elect members of the pupil councils who effectively represent their views to school leaders. Younger pupils show their awareness of issues affecting society through their IB PYP exhibition projects, on themes such as homelessness in London and how human rights in Britain contrast with other parts of the world. Older pupils can take part in Model United Nations (MUN) events by taking on the roles of ambassadors and learning about issues such as the rights of refugees. Across the curriculum, teachers ensure that pupils are consistently given a balanced representation of different political views.
44. Pupils develop a sense of right and wrong through a programme of discussions and talks in PSHE, assemblies and in their daily interactions with their tutors. From a young age, they develop a positive attitude to issues such as equality, treating others fairly and the importance of individuals taking responsibility for their actions. Pupils gain an understanding, for example, about the moral issues raised by war through their discussions on themes such as Remembrance and the conflict in Ukraine.
45. Pupils' financial literacy and economic understanding develop as they grow through the school. Through the PSHE curriculum pupils are taught how to apply their numeracy skills to understand how money works in society. This ranges from younger pupils being taught how to invest money to increase donations that can be given to local charities, to pupils learning about economic concepts such as credit and debt, tax and the management of student loans.
46. In the early years setting, children learn how to play and learn with and alongside their peers, both inside and outdoors. Teaching enables children to develop an understanding of the feelings of others, to collaborate and to resolve differences through mutual respect.
47. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to engage in voluntary work in the local community. The focus on community work is embedded in the curriculum and this has a positive effect on pupils' sense of social responsibility. For example, pupils are actively involved in supporting food banks, care homes and running a social media campaign for a local library.
48. The school provides an age-appropriate programme of careers education based on nationally available benchmarks. Using PSHE lessons, external talks and bespoke advice regarding possible

higher education courses or types of employment, pupils gain an understanding of the options available to them and the consequences of subject choices as they move into the IB DP. Pupils complete work experience placements prior to entering the sixth form which enable them to reflect on how their interests and skills relate to the work place. The well-planned careers guidance prepares pupils well for the next stages of their education or employment.

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

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

## Safeguarding

50. Leaders have embedded a school culture in which staff understand and prioritise their safeguarding responsibilities. This is informed by a clear and appropriate safeguarding policy and procedures which are in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders ensure that the policy is implemented effectively in all parts of the school.
51. The school's safeguarding team are trained for their role in line with local procedures. They liaise effectively with external agencies for training, seeking advice when needed and making referrals when appropriate.
52. The safeguarding team respond to safeguarding concerns promptly and effectively, ensuring that pupils affected receive appropriate support. Safeguarding concerns are suitably recorded showing actions taken and decisions made. Child protection records are maintained in line with statutory requirements.
53. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of safeguarding. Regular meetings with the safeguarding leaders and scrutiny of termly reports enable the proprietor to evaluate how the school has responded to any safeguarding concerns or issues that have arisen.
54. Staff receive effective and regular safeguarding training followed by quizzes to review their understanding. Leaders have established a suitable safeguarding induction programme for those new to the school. As a consequence, staff have a detailed understanding of safeguarding procedures and how to escalate concerns about a pupil. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow should there be any concerns about or allegations against adults working at the school.
55. Leaders have a clear understanding of the potential contextual risks faced by pupils in the wider community, including any risks relating to radicalisation and extremism. In combination with local partners they have, as far as possible, put in place suitable mitigations to minimise any such risks.
56. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Suitable filtering and monitoring of internet use is in place, which is tested regularly. The safeguarding team respond quickly when there are alerts regarding possible inappropriate use of the internet.
57. Pupils know how to access adult support to share any concerns or worries. A wide range of staff is available including a counsellor and many staff who are mental health first aiders. Staff know the pupils well and are able to identify changes of behaviour or signs that could possibly indicate a concern. As a consequence, pupils feel well looked after and safe in the school community.
58. The school carries out all required safer recruitment checks in a timely manner on all adults before they commence working with pupils. A suitable central record of appointments records these checks accurately and well-maintained staff files include all information required by current statutory guidance.

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

**59. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Dwight School London
<b>Department for Education number</b>	302/6098
<b>Address</b>	Dwight School London 6 Friern Barnet Lane London N11 3LX
<b>Phone number</b>	0208 920 0600
<b>Email address</b>	ssoffice@dwightlondon.org
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dwightlondon.org">www.dwightlondon.org</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Blake Spahn
<b>Head of school</b>	Mr Christopher Beddows
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 18
<b>Number of pupils</b>	284
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 11 March 2022

## Information about the school

60. Dwight School London is an independent co-educational day school located in Friern Barnet, North London. The school consists of a nursery, a junior school and a senior school which includes a sixth form. The nursery and junior school is located on a site approximately one and a half miles from the senior school, which is split into two campuses close to each other. The proprietor is a member of the executive management team which is responsible for the governance of the school. The current principal of the junior school took up her post in April 2024.
61. There are 31 children in the early years setting, comprising two Nursery classes and one Reception class.
62. The school has identified 51 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
63. The school has identified English as an additional language for 24 pupils.
64. The school states its aims are to produce pupils who are inquiring, knowledgeable and open-minded, by providing an environment which promotes kindness, tolerance, compassion, mutual support whilst fostering their academic growth. The school intends to equip pupils with the crucial skills and self-confidence to become active citizens and lifelong learners who will become leaders in the world.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

11 to 13 March 2025

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

66. 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 proprietor
- discussions with the head of school, 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.

67. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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