

School inspection report

21 to 23 May 2024

Maple Walk School

62a Crownhill Road

London

NW10 4EB

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 have created a clear vision for the school, which is understood and embraced by members of the school community. Pupils are well known by the staff and supported in all aspects of their school lives. Pupils feel valued as individuals, and they understand the school's values to be curious, creative and positive members of the community.
2. The school provides a well-planned curriculum which delivers a broad range of subjects. This is effectively enriched by an extensive array of themed days, educational visits, visiting speakers and innovations such as regular current affairs lessons and opportunities for pupils to be prepared for life in British society.
3. Teaching is well planned, and resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. As a result of effective and consistent implementation of the behaviour policy, pupils engage well in lessons and speak confidently about their learning. Teachers provide pupils with useful verbal and written feedback and pupils respond positively to advice given, which helps to ensure they make good progress.
4. Pupils' attainment and progress are effectively monitored to ensure pupils are suitably supported. Parents are regularly informed of this progress through informative reports.
5. As a result of careful and thoughtful curriculum planning, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are enabled to make good progress and build on their strengths in relation to their starting points.
6. Leaders have developed an effective programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, which enables pupils to contribute positively to their school and wider communities. Pupils develop a secure sense of self and are respectful towards others.
7. Governors are well informed about the school's work and provide appropriate support and challenge for school leaders. Effective self-evaluation informs leaders' decision-making and planning, which governors monitor.
8. Risk is managed well across the school. Pupils are appropriately supervised and suitable steps are taken to reduce the risk of fire. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
9. The premises and accommodation are suitably maintained. However, governors do not always ensure that leaders demonstrate the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles effectively. Whilst arrangements are in place to record regular checks, monitoring of the temperature of hot water over a period of several months failed to identify a potential risk of scalding and no action was taken to rectify the problem.
10. Suitable recruitment arrangements are in place and an appropriate record of appointments is maintained. However, a small number of administrative errors regarding the recording of dates in the single central record (SCR) and staff files were discovered. These were quickly corrected before the end of the visit.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that:

- the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and
- they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils

so that:

- robust systems are in place to monitor the recording of hot water testing to ensure the temperature at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure systems are in place to identify and rectify administrative errors in the single central record of appointments and personnel files.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Leaders have developed a clear vision for the school which focuses on the key qualities of curiosity, creativity and community. These values are well known and understood by all members of the school community, and they help to shape the teaching and learning environment as well as the pastoral care of pupils.
12. Governors are well informed about the work and performance of the school and have appropriate oversight as a result of reports from leaders, visits to the school and board meetings. School policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. Leaders effectively evaluate the work of the school and a three-year development plan in which the views of pupils, staff and parents are considered is in place. This plan is regularly reviewed by governors and an annual update is created.
13. Risk is managed well across the school. Appropriate risk assessments are put in place to ensure the health, safety and safeguarding of pupils and staff. Risks for pupils with specific needs are carefully assessed and reviewed so that appropriate support can be put in place through the use of pupil passports and care plans.
14. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures safeguarding procedures are effective and that constructive relationships are developed with external agencies to further support the work of the school. Appropriate training is provided for all adults working with children. Staff actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
15. Governors do not always ensure that leaders demonstrate the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles effectively with respect to the suitability of the premises and accommodation. Appropriate arrangements are in place to carry out regular checks on various aspects of the buildings' functions, but monitoring of the temperature of the hot water taps failed to identify a potential risk of scalding and no action was taken to rectify the problem, despite repeated high readings over a period of months.
16. Parental concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. Formal complaints are managed effectively by senior leaders. Suitable records of all concerns are maintained.
17. An appropriate accessibility plan is regularly reviewed. Leaders ensure that no pupil or groups are discriminated against in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The school ensures that pupils with an education and health care (EHC) plan are supported and that any such plan is reviewed annually. Reviews and accounts of income received, and expenditure incurred by the school, are provided to the local authority annually.
18. Parents access a range of useful information on the school's website and are provided with regular reports on their children's progress and attainment.

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

19. Standards relating to Leadership and Management, and Governance are not met consistently.
- 20. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. The curriculum is planned effectively and supported by appropriate schemes of work to ensure pupils learn across a wide range of subjects. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed through enrichment activities, and children in the early years develop communication and language skills through discreet phonics lessons and supportive interactions with adults. Pupils speak about their work with confidence and are well supported in their learning by teachers who understand how best to help them.
22. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan carefully to meet the needs of pupils. They use a range of methods and activities to ensure effective learning takes place and that pupils are engaged and motivated. This helps to ensure that pupils make good progress. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of teaching through regular progress meetings, book reviews, learning walks and lesson observations to ensure pupils acquire new skills and knowledge.
23. Well-planned themed weeks and educational visits further enrich the curriculum and enable pupils to deepen their understanding in a range of areas. For example, mathematics week enabled pupils to put their mathematical skills into the wider context of other curriculum areas. On a 'French day', pupils used their language skills to purchase croissants at morning break.
24. Leaders have developed an effective system to identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers use supportive strategies effectively so that pupils are supported and make good progress.
25. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. They are supported through a programme of planned activities in lessons, and through access to an online learning platform. These strategies help to support their acquisition of vocabulary and language skills.
26. Pupils are offered an extensive programme of recreational activities that develop a range of skills through extra-curricular activities. This programme is used by a high proportion of pupils across the school. Children in the early years benefit from extending their experiences, for example, by developing their culinary skills in cooking club.
27. Leaders ensure that teaching promotes fundamental British values and helps pupils develop mutual respect and to understand that everyone has a right to be heard. Visiting speakers are effectively evaluated and risk assessed to ensure that pupils are not exposed to extremist or partisan views.
28. A comprehensive assessment framework ensures that pupils' attainment and progress are carefully monitored. Teachers use assessment data to identify gaps in pupils' learning or areas for further support or challenge. Assessment of pupils' progress is further supported by a marking and feedback policy which is effectively implemented by teachers and well understood by pupils.

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. A well-established PSHE education programme enables teachers to develop pupils' understanding of self and mutual respect. Well-planned resources support teachers to deliver the programme effectively. PSHE leaders monitor the quality of teaching and ensure progress is made in the age-appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE) aspects of the curriculum. A suitable RSE policy is in place and parents are consulted on any changes.
31. Pupils' behaviour towards members of their community is caring and supportive. The ethos of community, creativity and curiosity is embedded and clearly evident in pupils' everyday learning environment. Good behaviour and moral understanding are developed through effective use of the clear rewards and sanctions system. Senior pupils interact positively with younger pupils and know all or most by name. Pupils develop respect and understanding of a range of faiths and cultures through the PSHE curriculum, international evenings, and the celebration of a range of different religious festivals in assemblies.
32. Physical education (PE) features highly in the curriculum and is supplemented by after-school activities. Leaders ensure that resources are allocated to ensure team and individual sports provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their teamwork and leadership skills and to engage in competitions both locally and regionally.
33. Leaders have developed a programme of mental health and emotional wellbeing education that has a successful impact on pupils' lives. Pupils are encouraged to register their feelings each day and to talk about issues which may affect them. As a result, pupils consistently demonstrate high levels of self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through the care and support of their own wellbeing and that of others. Pupils value the wellbeing zone as a safe place, and they engage in mindfulness sessions provided in school and encouraged at home which helps them to value non-material aspects of life.
34. The school's admission and attendance registers are maintained and stored appropriately. Pupil absences are effectively followed up. Staff ensure pupils who leave the school are subsequently admitted at their destination schools. The school informs the local authority of pupils who join or leave at non-standard times.
35. The management of fire risk and first aid is effective. Staff are trained in first aid and fire safety. Suitable arrangements are in place for the medical care of pupils including children in the early years.
36. Premises and accommodation are suitably maintained. Checks are undertaken regularly and carefully recorded. However, the temperature of the hot water was recorded as being above that which may cause scalding, over a period of several months. Leaders failed to respond to these records, or assess the risk appropriately, thus placing pupils at risk of scalding.

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

37. Standards are not met with respect to the suitability of the premises and accommodation.

38. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

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

39. Effective implementation of the curriculum policy enables pupils to develop human, social and economic awareness. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate their economic understanding when planning and budgeting for an annual business enterprise fair. They design and advertise products and successfully raise funds to support carefully selected charities. Pupils further develop their economic understanding through the study of the work of the G7. Children in the early years develop social skills in a variety of ways both in their own setting and as part of the whole school. They regard their Year 6 buddies as positive role models.
40. Leaders encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour through the successful implementation of the behaviour policy. Pupils know that when they modify their behaviour, it is recognised by teachers and as a result, pupils learn to self-regulate.
41. Pupils learn to develop mutual respect for others through the implementation of the *Maple Walk Way*. Character traits of the week highlighted in assemblies include themes of kindness, helpfulness and courtesy which support one of the school's core values of community and aims to foster a sense of belonging. Leaders enable pupils to further develop their sense of respect for others through the study of black history month, pride month and visits to a range of places of worship.
42. Pupils are well prepared for life in British society through the inclusion of current affairs in the curriculum. They raise topics for discussion including the cost of living, changes in the prices of bread, and global environmental issues. Pupils develop a good understanding of democracy through voting for pupil leaders, school council members, and the names of their school pets. Pupils discuss the role of general elections in the UK enthusiastically.
43. Pupils' development of a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions in England, and the concept of law and order, is supported through a range of well-planned educational trips and visits, for example to the Royal Courts of Justice and the Houses of Parliament. Pupils relate the concept of right and wrong from the school setting to the adult world. They are also helped to develop their awareness of how to stay safe by visiting speakers, for example, from Transport for London who helped pupils develop their safety awareness when using public transport.
44. Pupils show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality and wider society. Older pupils demonstrate this by visiting local nurseries to read to younger children, singing in a nearby care home and litter picking in the local park. Pupils are confident to take responsibility for their personal contribution to society through choosing which charities they donate to. For example, pupils in Year 4 support a local homeless organisation through the donation of winter coats.
45. Pupils feel well prepared for transition to their senior schools as a result of activities carefully designed by leaders to support them.

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

46. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

47. Leaders ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and that an appropriate safeguarding policy, which pays due regard to statutory requirements, is implemented well.
48. The designated safeguarding governor ensures effective oversight of procedures, and the joint board of directors and advisors offer appropriate challenge. A review of safeguarding is carried out by governors annually.
49. Suitable induction is provided for new members of staff. Regular safeguarding training, including the 'Prevent' duty, is provided for all staff throughout the year. The DSL and the deputy safeguarding leads receive appropriate higher-level training in line with local and national requirements.
50. The DSL liaises appropriately with external agencies, including children's services and the police. Leaders ensure that pupils are well supported and follow advice and guidance promptly, so that any concerns about pupils are dealt with in a timely manner.
51. Staff are confident about the actions they should take when dealing with a concern about a child. They respond appropriately and report any concerns to the DSL without delay. Safeguarding records are systematically maintained and stored securely. Leaders and staff are aware of contextual risks in the local area.
52. Staff who are responsible for the recruitment process have appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to effectively carry out the required checks before members of staff take up their appointments. A suitable single central record (SCR) of appointments is in place. The designated safeguarding governor provides oversight of this function, which is reviewed annually by the joint board of directors and advisors. During the inspection, a small number of administrative errors regarding the recording of dates in the SCR and staff files were found and were corrected before the end of the visit.
53. Pupils know how to stay safe online and regular guidance is provided to them in curriculum and pastoral meetings. The school has suitable systems in place to filter and monitor pupils' access to the internet and governors review these annually.
54. Pupils feel safe in their school environment because they are confident that staff will look after them, listen to their concerns, and support them.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR ¹ Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

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

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 5, paragraph 28(1)(d)	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

¹ The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('ISSR')

School details

School	Maple Walk School
Department for Education number	304/6113
Address	Maple Walk School 62a Crownhill Road London NW10 4EB
Phone number	020 8963 3890
Email address	admin@maplewalkschool.co.uk
Website	www.maplewalkschool.co.uk
Proprietor	The New Model School Company Ltd
Chair	Mr Xavier Villers
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Murdoch
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	173
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 March 2020

Information about the school

56. Maple Walk School is an independent co-educational school. The school is owned by The New Model School Company Limited and managed by its board of directors and supported by an advisory board. The school is organised into two sections, the lower school for pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2, and the upper school for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
57. Early years consists of 31 pupils in two Reception classes.
58. The school has identified 39 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), three of whom have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
59. English is an additional language for 12 pupils.
60. The school states its aims are to provide a forward-thinking education that inspires and challenges every child. It aims to instil a love of learning through a broad curriculum with strong foundations in literacy and numeracy, and to empower pupils with a sense of belonging, allowing them to fulfil their potential and grow in confidence. The school strives to enable children to understand their world and to make a positive difference.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

21 to 23 May 2024

61. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

62. 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 a governor
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

63. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net