

# School inspection report

10 to 12 March 2026

## **Charterhouse Square School**

33–40 Charterhouse Square

London

EC1M 6EA

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

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. The school provides a welcoming and purposeful community in which staff know pupils well as individuals and support them to develop independence, confidence and resilience. Leaders provide a clear ethos for learning and behaviour, which is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and willingness to take responsibility within the school community.
2. Leaders and the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities through well-defined roles and systematic oversight of regulatory requirements. The proprietor body reviews safeguarding arrangements, recruitment procedures, attendance information and educational outcomes through regular meetings and monitoring activities. This enables them to hold leaders to account and ensure that statutory requirements are met and implemented consistently.
3. Leaders provide a broad curriculum from the early years to Year 6 which supports pupils' academic, creative and personal development. Pupils use their knowledge through creative, technological and enterprise activities that encourage them to explore ideas, develop curiosity and achieve well. Leaders monitor pupils' progress through regular review of assessment information.
4. However, in a small number of lessons teaching does not identify and effectively support pupils who are struggling or in need of extra help in their learning. Some teachers do not provide guidance and feedback to pupils to help them to improve their understanding and work.
5. Staff promote pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing through supportive relationships and established pastoral systems. Pupils have several routes through which to seek help, including worry boxes and direct discussions with staff. Behaviour across the school is typically positive, and relationships between pupils and staff are respectful. However, in a small number of lessons behaviour expectations are not applied consistently, and minor disruption is not always addressed promptly.
6. Pupils contribute positively to school life through roles such as eco-representatives, digital leaders, kindness ambassadors and school council members, developing confidence and a willingness to take responsibility and become involved in community activities. These opportunities enable pupils to develop independence and an age-appropriate understanding of democracy, fairness and responsibility.
7. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Leaders maintain clear safeguarding procedures, provide regular training and monitor safeguarding records carefully. Staff report concerns and leaders liaise with external agencies when additional support is required.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that teachers identify and support pupils who are struggling or who have gaps in their understanding and provide guidance and feedback that consistently supports pupils to learn as effectively as they can
- ensure that behaviour expectations are applied consistently so that low-level disruption among a small group of pupils is addressed promptly and effectively.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders establish well-understood expectations for staff and promote a purposeful school culture in which pupils' learning and wellbeing are prioritised in decision-making. Staff work collaboratively and maintain regular communication with leaders, parents and pupils through meetings and ongoing discussion.
9. Leaders draw on a range of feedback and records to review provision and identify priorities for improvement. They evaluate the school's effectiveness through a planned programme of monitoring that includes analysis of assessment information, lesson observations, surveys and pastoral records. Findings from this monitoring inform the school development plan and guide leaders in refining provision. Analysis of curriculum and assessment information has contributed to developments in digital learning and the wider curriculum.
10. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching through lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of assessment information. Subject leaders use this monitoring to identify strengths and areas for development within their subjects. For instance, recent review has led to the introduction of daily spelling, punctuation and grammar activities, which is improving pupils' accuracy in writing.
11. Leaders use established systems to track pupils' attainment and progress and support pupils who require additional help in their learning. Leaders' recent actions have strengthened their approach to supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, individual education plans (IEPs) are now more thoroughly reviewed with teachers, pupils and parents. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly to ensure that strategies remain appropriate to pupils' needs.
12. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. An accessibility plan is in place and reviewed regularly. Reasonable adjustments are made to the curriculum, resources and premises when needed so that pupils can access learning alongside their peers.
13. Leaders ensure that information is provided appropriately to parents and other external agencies, as required. For instance, policies are available on the school's website or on request. The local authority is notified when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points. Leaders understand local authority procedures relating to reviews of education, health and care plans (EHC plans) and know how to fulfil these duties if they have any pupils who require it. Parents receive regular reports about pupils' progress alongside information about curriculum developments and school policies.
14. A complaints procedure with clearly defined stages is implemented consistently and records are maintained appropriately. Information from complaints is reviewed so that leaders can identify patterns and inform improvement.
15. Risk management systems are well established. Staff complete risk assessments for the school site, educational visits and pupils' individual needs. These are reviewed regularly and updated when circumstances change so that risks are identified and managed appropriately.
16. Governors provide appropriate oversight and challenge. They review safeguarding information, recruitment procedures and attainment data and scrutinise the single central record of appointments (SCR). Through these processes governors ensure that the Standards are met.

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

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

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

18. The curriculum plans effectively for pupils to acquire knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Curriculum plans sequence mathematical, linguistic, technological, creative and practical skills carefully to support pupils to build knowledge and understanding over time. Leaders have planned a curriculum that explicitly supports pupils to make connections between different subjects through planned links in their learning, such as by designing board games while using music technology software to create soundtracks to accompany them. The curriculum also provides a wide range of well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their foundational reading, writing and mathematical knowledge, so that they are well prepared for the transition to secondary school by the end of Year 6.
19. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. They explain new learning effectively so that pupils understand how to approach unfamiliar knowledge and tasks. Most teachers use a range of assessment methods to check pupils' learning and determine what they need to learn next, enabling them to build new learning on what pupils already know. In the most effective lessons, teaching includes a range of approaches to support pupils, such as visual prompts, practical resources and consistent routines to help them access learning. Questioning and discussion are used to check pupils' understanding, and teachers address misconceptions during lessons. Teaching also provides appropriate challenge for pupils who are ready to apply their learning in more complex ways.
20. However, the use of assessment information to identify and support pupils is not consistently effective across all teaching. Sometimes teachers do not identify precisely when pupils need additional help or are struggling with the work. They do not adapt their teaching, use effective resources, rephrase their questioning, or ensure that support staff are supporting pupils' learning effectively. Not all teachers routinely provide guidance and feedback to pupils to help them to understand how to improve their understanding and their work.
21. Leaders support pupils who have SEND through established systems for identification, review and targeted support. Leaders review pupils' needs regularly with staff, pupils and parents so that strategies remain appropriate to pupils' needs. When needed, leaders provide targeted learning and pastoral support, including through a dedicated support space where pupils receive additional academic support and opportunities to regulate their emotions before returning to lessons. Although pupils are well supported in most lessons to learn effectively alongside their peers, where there are occasional weaknesses in teaching, this also has an impact on pupils with SEND.
22. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported through targeted vocabulary development, visual cues and planned speaking opportunities. Teachers check pupils' understanding and adapt support when required. Teachers recognise pupils' languages and cultural backgrounds through classroom texts, discussion and planned activities that reflect different languages and cultures. This enables pupils to participate confidently in lessons and develop their spoken and written English.
23. Pupils learn the intended curriculum effectively. They develop their early reading through regular phonics teaching in the younger years and well-organised reading activities as they get older. They strengthen their writing through opportunities to apply grammar, vocabulary and punctuation in extended work. In science, pupils deepen their understanding through practical investigation, for

example when they explore how materials change between solid, liquid and gas. Pupils often combine their subject knowledge and learning across different subjects, work collaboratively and explain their thinking. For example, they use their mathematical and economic understanding by calculating production costs and considering income streams before presenting their ideas to others.

24. Leaders review assessment information regularly. They discuss pupils' progress with staff so that additional support or challenge can be introduced when required. Collectively, leaders and staff ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable and achieve well. Many pupils go on to highly selective secondary schools, with scholarships.
25. Leaders and staff in the early years implement an ambitious curriculum that combines adult-led teaching with purposeful play and opportunities for independent learning. Staff support children to develop communication and language through discussion, talk with partners and the introduction of ambitious vocabulary. Daily phonics, reading activities and carefully planned literacy tasks support the development of early reading and writing skills. Staff use ongoing observations to monitor children's development and adapt activities as needed. The strengths in the school's delivery are evident across all other areas of children's learning, including in building secure foundations in early mathematics. Children are well prepared for their next stages of learning.
26. Leaders provide a range of enrichment opportunities that extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Opportunities have been enhanced through the introduction of an innovation hub where pupils explore technology, music technology and creative arts. Pupils use creative and digital tools confidently when producing artwork, designing products, creating podcasts and composing soundtracks linked to their projects. Additional opportunities such as coding, sports, music, chess and art clubs further broaden pupils' interests. Educational visits and themed events, such as science week, enable pupils to use their learning in new contexts and deepen their curiosity about the world around them.

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

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

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

28. Staff promote pupils' emotional wellbeing through supportive relationships and carefully managed pastoral systems. Staff know pupils well and respond promptly when concerns arise. Pupils have several routes through which to raise concerns, including worry boxes and direct discussion with staff. Additional support is available through a dedicated support space that provides a calm environment where pupils can regulate their emotions or receive targeted support before returning to lessons. Leaders review pastoral information so that concerns are followed up and pupils receive appropriate support.
29. Staff teach a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme which includes relationships and health education. Teaching follows a published scheme of work and covers topics such as healthy relationships, personal responsibility and wellbeing. Assemblies and themed initiatives reinforce these messages and encourage respectful behaviour. Visiting speakers and workshops extend pupils' understanding of health, relationships and personal safety.
30. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to reflect through assemblies, music, art and moments of quiet thought. Teaching helps pupils consider ideas such as kindness, gratitude and respect for others. These experiences support pupils' spiritual development in ways that are appropriate for their age.
31. Staff apply behaviour expectations through systems that encourage pupils to reflect on and take responsibility for their actions. Rewards and sanctions help pupils understand the consequences of their actions. Leaders analyse behaviour records and review patterns so that emerging concerns can be identified and reported to governors. Behaviour across the school is typically positive, and relationships between pupils and staff are respectful. Bullying is infrequent and staff deal with it promptly when it occurs. However, behaviour expectations are not applied consistently by staff across all classes, and low-level disruption is not always addressed promptly.
32. Leaders ensure that supervision arrangements are appropriate throughout the school day. Staff supervise pupils carefully during lessons, breaktimes and educational visits, maintaining clear oversight of pupils' safety and wellbeing. Breaktimes are organised in staggered groups so pupils can access the available outdoor spaces. Within the constraints of the site, leaders make thoughtful and creative use of both indoor and outdoor areas to ensure that pupils have opportunities for physical activity and movement during the school day. Staff remain vigilant in their supervision and clear routines help pupils move safely between activities.
33. Leaders maintain well-organised arrangements for pupils' medical and welfare needs. Trained staff, including those with paediatric first aid qualifications who work with early years children, provide first aid and record medical incidents using the school's electronic system. Parents are notified when treatment is provided. Medication is stored securely and administered by trained staff when required. Regular checks of medical supplies ensure that equipment remains suitable for use.
34. Leaders ensure that physical education (PE) and sport are well planned and taught regularly. Leaders make creative use of both the available space and nearby sports facilities to extend pupils' opportunities for physical activity. Pupils participate in structured PE lessons, swimming lessons from Year 1 and a range of team and individual sports, as well as dance. Through these activities pupils develop co-ordination, stamina and teamwork.

35. In the early years, staff provide daily opportunities for children’s physical development across indoor and outdoor environments. Children develop co-ordination and balance through climbing equipment, balance toys and structured movement activities. Fine-motor development is promoted through activities such as cutting, drawing and manipulating small tools. Staff maintain clear routines and provide reassurance so that children develop independence and an increasing understanding of how to manage their emotions as they participate in learning and play.
36. Leaders maintain thorough oversight of health and safety across the school and the premises and accommodation are well maintained. Fire safety systems are tested routinely, and evacuation and emergency procedures are practised so pupils understand how to respond. Risk assessments are completed for the school site, educational visits and specialist activities and are reviewed regularly. Accident logs are maintained and reviewed so that leaders can identify patterns and take appropriate action to reduce risks.
37. Leaders monitor attendance carefully so that absence does not become a barrier to learning or wellbeing. Attendance information is reviewed regularly, and absences are followed up promptly with parents. Leaders liaise closely with the local authority on matters relating to admission and attendance.

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

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

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

39. Staff promote respectful interaction through assemblies, daily routines and curriculum teaching. Pupils co-operate well with one another in lessons and shared activities and demonstrate consideration for others as they move around the school. Teaching across subjects such as religious education (RE), literature and humanities encourages pupils to reflect on fairness, empathy and responsibility. For example, pupils explore themes of migration and fairness through work linked to the class text *Boy Overboard*. They produce artwork inspired by the sculptor Issam Kourbaj and discuss the experiences of people travelling in small boats. Through this work pupils develop a deeper understanding of the experiences of others.
40. In the early years, staff promote children's social development through consistent routines, collaborative play and supportive adult interaction. Staff model positive relationships and guide children in resolving minor disagreements and sharing resources. Role-play activities, including areas such as a baby clinic, encourage children to co-operate with their peers and practise language in social situations. Children take turns, share resources and begin to take responsibility for simple classroom tasks. These experiences enable children to develop confidence and positive relationships in preparation for the next stage of their learning.
41. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life through a range of leadership and responsibility roles. Pupils serve as eco-representatives, digital leaders, kindness ambassadors and school council members. Elections for the school council enable pupils to experience democratic processes and present ideas for improvement. Older pupils also undertake responsibilities such as acting as tour guides and supporting younger pupils. These opportunities enable pupils to develop independence and understand how their actions contribute to the wider school community.
42. Leaders promote pupils' understanding of British values through the curriculum and wider school experiences. Teaching in PSHE education, RE and humanities introduces pupils to themes such as democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and the rule of law. Teachers support pupils in discussing topical issues through age-appropriate news resources and guided classroom discussion. Pupils also learn about public institutions through visits from organisations such as the police and through educational visits to national museums and archives. These experiences broaden pupils' understanding of the role of public services within society.
43. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to the wider community through charitable and community initiatives. Pupils participate in charitable activities and help to select causes for the school to support. They also take part in community activities such as singing with the Charterhouse community choir alongside members of the local community and preparing care packages for people experiencing homelessness. These experiences enable pupils to engage with people beyond the school and understand how they can contribute positively to their community.
44. Teachers develop pupils' economic understanding, including through practical tasks that require pupils to cost ideas, plan spending and evaluate financial choices. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge in real-life financial contexts through enterprise projects and budgeting activities. For instance, older pupils develop budgets and organise resources for stalls and activities at the summer fair or design and create rooms within a set budget. These experiences help pupils develop an understanding of financial responsibility and decision-making.

45. Leaders support pupils as they prepare for the next stage of their education. Staff share information between phases and provide opportunities for pupils to meet new teachers and understand expectations for the next stage of learning. Leaders provide guidance for transition to senior school, including preparation for entrance examinations and discussion of independent travel. Visitors such as Transport for London provide guidance on the safe use of public transport.

**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 with responsibility for safeguarding maintain effective oversight of safeguarding procedures, training records and reporting systems. They review safeguarding records regularly to identify patterns, evaluate response times and determine appropriate next steps. Behaviour, attendance and pastoral information are considered alongside safeguarding records so that leaders can identify potential risks and ensure that concerns are followed up appropriately. The safeguarding team meets regularly to review concerns and monitor follow-up actions.
48. Leaders liaise appropriately with external safeguarding partners when advice or intervention is required. They record referrals and follow-up actions carefully so that support for pupils and families is co-ordinated and timely. Leaders are tenacious in seeking further guidance from the local safeguarding services and other professionals when concerns do not meet referral thresholds, but further advice and support are required.
49. Staff receive regular safeguarding training aligned with a full range of statutory guidance. Safeguarding forms part of staff induction and ongoing professional development, so staff understand how to recognise potential concerns and follow reporting procedures without delay. Updates through meetings and training sessions help ensure that staff remain alert to emerging safeguarding risks.
50. Leaders implement safer recruitment procedures in line with statutory guidance. Required pre-employment checks are completed before adults begin working with pupils and are recorded accurately on the SCR. Governors review safeguarding arrangements and recruitment procedures, including scrutiny of the SCR, as part of their oversight responsibilities.
51. Staff promote online safety through curriculum teaching and safeguarding education. Leaders maintain oversight of internet filtering and monitoring systems and review alerts so that potential concerns are identified and addressed promptly. Clear expectations for the appropriate use of technology, including arrangements for mobile phone use, help reduce potential safeguarding risks.
52. Pupils understand how to seek help if they feel unsafe and can identify trusted adults within the school. Systems that enable pupils to report concerns include speaking directly to staff and using established reporting routes. These arrangements contribute to a safeguarding culture in which pupils are typically confident that staff will listen to them and respond appropriately.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Charterhouse Square School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	201/6354
<b>Address</b>	Charterhouse Square School 33–40 Charterhouse Square London EC1M 6EA
<b>Phone number</b>	020 7600 3805
<b>Email address</b>	life@charterhousesquareschool.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.charterhousesquareschool.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cognita Schools Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Carroll
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tushi Gorasia
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	302
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 to 30 March 2023

## Information about the school

54. Charterhouse Square School is a co-educational, independent day school for pupils, located in London. The school is owned by Cognita Schools Limited. A team of managers who work for Cognita Schools provide oversight of leaders' work on behalf of the proprietor. The school comprises three sections: the early years, for children aged 3 to 5 years old; a lower house, for pupils aged 5 to 8 years old; and an upper house, for pupils aged 8 to 11 years old. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2024.
55. There are 101 children in the early years comprising two Nursery classes and two Reception classes.
56. The school has identified 23 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
57. The school has identified English as an additional language for a small number of pupils.
58. The school states its aims are to provide a safe, happy and nurturing environment, which it believes is fundamental to academic success. It seeks to instil in every pupil a love of learning, self-confidence, and effective social skills to ensure that they make the best of life's opportunities.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

10 to 12 March 2026

59. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. A shadow team inspector accompanied the team.

60. 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 of 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.

61. 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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