

School inspection report

12 to 14 March 2024

Spratton Hall School

Smith Street

Spratton

Northamptonshire

NN6 8HP

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. Spratton Hall School is a caring and vibrant community underpinned by the values of respect and tolerance. Governors and leaders discharge their responsibilities effectively so that pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing are actively promoted. Governors are vigilant in ensuring that leaders have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.
2. Leaders set out a clear vision for the school and are successful in ensuring that the school's aims are well known to the pupils. Through its focus on pupil welfare, pupils feel secure and happy, confident that their voices are heard and considered.
3. Governors and leaders demonstrate a proactive approach to considering risk and take prompt action to implement measures when needed.
4. The system for the handling of complaints is well managed and careful records are kept so that any matters arising are followed up suitably and within the timeframes of the policy.
5. Policy oversight by governors and leaders is rigorous and care is taken to ensure that policies are updated and reviewed regularly and reflect the current guidance.
6. A balanced curriculum enables pupils to broaden their skills and knowledge across the range of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, aesthetic, physical, creative, and technical areas. The broad subject base establishes a foundation for the pupils' skills and knowledge in preparation for entry into senior school.
7. Leaders draw upon a comprehensive framework for assessment to monitor pupils' progress and attainment. Ongoing analysis of pupils' progress and effort scores enables leaders to implement intervention strategies, when needed.
8. Lesson planning is detailed, and teachers are knowledgeable, ensuring that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Teachers have high expectations for pupil outcomes and offer feedback to pupils on how to develop their skills. In a few lessons where teaching methods and activities are not as closely matched to pupils' needs, pupils make less progress.
9. Pupils who have SEND make good levels of progress from their starting points and are well supported through early identification, various interventions, use of technology and study skills support.
10. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported, when needed, with resources such as subject glossary cards, careful monitoring of reading scores and different styles of assessments, when needed.
11. Leaders ensure that a programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE), including relationships and sex education, is suitable for the ages and needs of the pupils and supports pupils' understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
12. Behaviour rarely falls below the school's expectations and instances of bullying seldom occur. The anti-bullying strategy is implemented effectively. When incidents do arise, leaders use their detailed understanding of the pupils to follow up in a timely and sensitive manner.

13. Governors and leaders have a rigorous approach to health and safety and the buildings and grounds are well maintained.
14. A well-planned curriculum covering personal, social and economic education prepares pupils appropriately for later life in modern British society. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and their knowledge is complemented by opportunities to learn about democracy and the rule of law.
15. Governors and leaders understand their safeguarding responsibilities and have implemented effective procedures, such as the safeguarding policy and regular training opportunities for staff, so that pupils' wellbeing is promoted. A suitable register of staff appointments is maintained, and appropriate checks are carried out before a member of staff starts work.

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 teaching consistently provides appropriate support and challenge so that pupils can maximise the development of their skills and knowledge.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

16. Governors and leaders are committed to prioritising pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing across all areas of school life. They enable pupils to feel valued as part of a respectful, collaborative and caring environment.
17. Leaders are successful in making the school's aims well known to the pupils who take pride in applying their understanding of them through their daily interactions and behaviours.
18. Policy oversight by governors and leaders is stringent and the process of review is well structured. Leaders are vigilant in ensuring that policies, such as those relating to safeguarding and health and safety, reflect the current guidance and are well understood by staff. Information provided within policies is presented in clear and accessible language so that all parties understand their roles and responsibilities from health and safety to behaviour and safeguarding.
19. A suitable complaints process is in place and record-keeping is meticulous. Leaders follow up in an effective manner when concerns are raised. They communicate regularly with parents, who speak positively of leaders' swift responses and attention to detail.
20. Leaders maintain detailed records which support their responses when behaviour falls below the school's expectations. They use the skills and knowledge pertaining to their roles to consider any trends and patterns arising so that they can review and adjust procedures, where needed. Teachers' insightful understanding of the pupils as individuals allows them to tailor their decision-making to match the pupils' emotional needs. Any sanctions are consistently implemented, and the process is well understood by the pupils. Communication between leaders is regular so that any incidents arising are quickly discussed and addressed.
21. Leaders provide parents with the required information such as contact details at the school, recent examination results, a range of policies and the school's aims and ethos. Leaders arrange for parents to receive regular reports so that they can remain updated about their child's progress and attainment.
22. Governors are proactive in their engagement with leaders and they collaborate closely with them to reassure themselves that requirements are met. As part of the various governors' committees, governors interrogate policies and practices with a view to identifying any possible risks and ensuring their mitigation. Regular communication between governors and leaders allows them to respond in a timely manner when required. Leaders and governors respond effectively in implementing measures when needed, such as arranging a review of the school's practice in relation to its recording of staff suitability checks and more recently driving forward initiatives to enhance the delivery of mathematics across the school. Their emphasis upon safeguarding has resulted in the appointment of a governor with oversight for compliance, including for the register of staff appointments, and recently another governor was assigned to take responsibility for online safety. Through their regular interactions with senior leaders, governors have overseen the introduction of a new safeguarding training programme for staff and the appointment of a mental health lead.
23. Leaders keep governors regularly updated on matters arising from health and safety to learning support and bullying. Governors speak with teachers during routine visits to the school, using these opportunities to understand how teachers use their knowledge of pupils to tailor feedback and support.

24. Leaders work effectively with a range of safeguarding partners to seek advice when needed and to keep themselves updated on changes to guidance as they arise so that measures are in place to protect pupils from harm.
25. Leaders and governors fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act by giving careful consideration to creating equal opportunities for pupils across the school's curricular provision. The accessibility plan is regularly reviewed, with proactive steps taken to assess the need for any enhancements so that all pupils have full access to learning, resources and facilities and can benefit from the wider extra-curricular offering such as residential visits and activities.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

27. Leaders have designed a balanced curriculum which offers pupils the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding across all areas. Careful consideration is given by subject leaders when planning schemes so that teaching content does not discriminate against different groups. Listening and speaking skills are prioritised through events such as drama performances, public speaking competitions and church readings. Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed and applied across science and technology. Creative opportunities are explored through music where Year 8 pupils skilfully use compositional devices and in art where Year 7 pupils handle clay confidently to create models of heads reflecting various cultural influences. Teachers' detailed subject knowledge motivates pupils, allowing them to build their understanding so that they make sustained progress.
28. Pupils make good levels of progress from their starting points and are generally working at above average attainment levels based upon the school's data on standardised tests. Teachers prepare Year 8 pupils well ahead of Common Entrance resulting in many pupils being awarded scholarships to senior schools.
29. A majority of children in the early years achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception, some working at greater depth. Children in Reception are confident and articulate communicators, eager to experiment with newly learnt vocabulary. During problem-solving activities, they embrace challenge and show a curiosity to learn. When using a timer to measure how long it takes to complete a jigsaw, a group of children in Reception delight in their success.
30. Pupils who have SEND make good levels of progress from their starting points. Their needs are identified early so as to maximise opportunities for intervention strategies to be implemented. Support is offered as individual sessions, but also in pairs and groups, enabling pupils to receive regular ongoing support. Pupils' writing skills are supported alongside their use of technology through sessions in study skills. Leaders seek the thoughts of the pupils in creating targets to support their progress so that pupils feel actively involved in their learning.
31. EAL pupils are well supported, when needed. As well as support in lessons, they are provided with word cards for each subject bearing definitions alongside visual images and specific assessments allow leaders to carefully monitor reading scores, with a particular focus upon comprehension.
32. Where teaching is most effective, expectations of outcomes are high and pupils receive clear feedback as to how to develop their skills. Teachers draw upon their in-depth subject knowledge to stimulate pupils' interests and lesson pace is purposeful. Pupils embrace the variety of activities provided which allows them to make progress and embed new skills. In a Year 2 multiplication lesson, the breadth of activities presents pupils with opportunities to practise a new concept. Pupils select counters when needed to solve repeated addition problems and take pride in recording their correct answers.
33. In a few lessons, teaching activities are not always as closely matched to the pupils' varying needs. In these cases, pupils are either not consistently challenged in ways which allow them to extend their knowledge, or they are not fully supported in securing their understanding. As a result, pupils' progress in these lessons can be limited.
34. Pupils have well-developed attitudes towards learning. They are largely self-motivated and resilient, demonstrating high levels of concentration. In the early years, children understand the expectations

of them and they cooperate with their partners enthusiastically when gathering twigs and moss to make a cosy bed for their woodland puppet characters.

35. Leaders draw upon a comprehensive framework of assessment through grade cards, effort grades and test score analysis to monitor pupils' progress and attainment. As a result, subject leaders adjust planning models and intervention strategies if required. Relevant data is shared with parents, and pupils in Years 7 and 8 evaluate their effort and progress grades, enabling them to carefully plan their next steps in learning.
36. There is an extensive range of recreational spaces, including forest school areas for pupils from Reception to Year 2, so that pupils can socialise and be physically active. A broad range of activities from ballet and media club to jazz complements the curriculum and allows pupils to practise existing skills and be introduced to new ones. Pupils value the breadth of activities open to them.

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

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

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

38. Leaders are committed to supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing and are successful in creating an inclusive community where pupils feel valued and supported. Pupils share their concerns openly with the trusted adults around them, safe in the knowledge that they will be listened to. An online reporting tool is available so that pupils can share any worries anonymously. By being able to talk through their concerns in a safe and reassuring environment, pupils develop greater self-understanding.
39. A comprehensive programme of PSHE, including relationships and sex education, is suitable for the age and needs of the pupils. Through detailed planning, pupils learn about coping strategies, self-care and boundaries in friendships which equips them with a toolkit to navigate future challenges. In the pre-prep, leaders speak positively about a focus on regulating emotions which enables pupils to better understand the different feelings they are experiencing and learn ways to manage them. Pupils speak warmly about Year 8's alphabetic guide to mental health where each week pupils are invited to reflect upon their own wellbeing, most recently through the beauty of the natural world.
40. Leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour as part of a strong pastoral care system. Careful record-keeping ensures that leaders' responses are prompt and well suited to the individual when incidents arise. A Kindness Tree celebrates examples of caring and generous acts made by pupils, who feel extremely happy and secure in school. Aware that school leaders have their best interests at heart, pupils are courteous, very well behaved and considerate of the needs of others. As a result, instances of bullying seldom occur and pupils trust that their teachers will follow up effectively when incidents arise.
41. Pupils speak highly about engaging in sporting activity and are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves physically fit, aware of the need for a balanced diet and sensible sleep habits. The extensive facilities comprising a sports dome, courts, nets, tracks and pitches enhance pupils' opportunities to be physically active and provide a full calendar of well-attended sporting fixtures and competitions. Physical education lessons are well structured to introduce and improve techniques which gives pupils greater confidence in their ability. This, coupled with regular opportunities to represent the school in sporting matches, enables pupils to learn skills in perseverance and collaboration and increase their self-esteem. A pupil who sought advice from his teacher on how to improve his play was delighted at how it had translated into enhanced performance on the pitch.
42. In the early years, outdoor learning sessions inspire children to be collaborative and enthusiastic learners. Children in Reception enjoy capturing photographs of each other interacting confidently with hand puppets as they explore the woodland environment.
43. Accurate admissions and attendance records are maintained, and leaders work closely with pupils in the event of prolonged absence. The school informs the local authority of any pupils who leave or join at times other than standard transition points.
44. Leaders demonstrate a meticulous approach to health and safety and the school buildings and facilities are well maintained, with adjustments in place to facilitate access for different types of users.

45. Detailed risk assessments are produced and routinely evaluated, and leaders are proactive in responding to change when required to ensure that pupil safety and welfare remain a priority.
46. Appropriate actions are taken to reduce the risk of fire through regular scheduling of fire equipment checks, appropriate signage in place, updated training for staff and frequent fire drills.
47. Pupils are closely supervised across the school, and they feel well supported by teachers during the different break times. Pupils make use of designated pathways so that they keep safe when moving around the wider school site.
48. There are suitable arrangements in place for when pupils feel unwell, and first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner. Leaders' systems of recording are carefully maintained ensuring that parents and teachers are made aware of any medication administered.

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

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

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

50. Leaders have designed a well-planned PSHE curriculum in line with the school's aims. As a result, pupils exhibit a clear understanding of right and wrong throughout their daily interactions and treat each other with tolerance and respect. Older pupils speak maturely about how treating others fairly and equally is central to school life and shows sensitivity when describing how they differ as learners. In the early years, Reception children enjoy the chance to learn about transport with a talk from a female lorry driver, helping teachers to dispel any early preconceptions about gender stereotyping.
51. Curriculum coverage of financial literacy is introduced through PSHE topics on managing money, debt and budgeting planned to help pupils with relevant later decision-making. Year 8 pupils discuss the impact of the cost-of-living crisis upon access to dentistry with maturity.
52. Leaders have outlined a curriculum rich with opportunities so that pupils can build an awareness of skills relevant to their adult lives. Pupils embrace the opportunities on offer, showing resilience during a Year 7 agility test in physical education and valuing drama performances for the chance to challenge themselves and build confidence in front of an audience. Popular house competitions spanning areas such as sport, music, baking and gaming reinforce valuable skills in co-operation and determination.
53. Pupils feel well prepared for senior school and their future lives. They learn revision techniques to support examination success and speak enthusiastically about the leadership programme where they take stock of their achievements and understand how these will inform direction and purpose for the future. In PSHE, a focus upon dreams and goals directs pupils to consider professional ambitions for adult life, and assemblies with visiting speakers, such as a geologist, allows insight into possible career options. In Year 6, pupils are challenged to take on a director role in drama to encourage an interest in theatre and performing arts.
54. Teachers are proactive in ensuring that pupils build awareness of wider society. Pupils learn about a range of cultures through timetabled lessons in many subjects and this is further complemented by themed events such as an India day in geography and an Iranian new year celebration in pre-prep, allowing pupils to broaden their knowledge. Teachers incorporate ample discussion time in lessons so that pupils' questions are answered and their understanding flourishes as a result.
55. Leaders create a broad range of opportunities to enable pupils to build an understanding of life in modern British society. A recent visit by a police officer to pre-prep raised pupils' awareness of how those working in public institutions can help them in their everyday lives. Similarly, by voting in their own school elections, pupils learn about the rules of law and democracy.
56. Pupils accept responsibility through a range of leadership roles and welcome opportunities to be an active part of the school community. In this way, teachers instil a sense of belonging in their pupils and reassure them that their views will be heard and valued. Pupil parliament's review of the rewards policy resulted in the recognition of pupils' achievements by awarding stationery items and the school council spoke proudly of the additions of an outdoor chess set and fish tank. Pupils take their roles seriously and feel able to make important contributions to the development of school life.

57. Pupils engage actively with their local community. They recently invited a local school to watch their drama production and talked enthusiastically about raising money for charities supporting medical research and guide dogs. They speak proudly of the impact their work has upon the lives of others.
58. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular opportunities from residential visits to Paris to trips to digital exhibitions to widen their knowledge of the world around them. A visit to a farm allows Reception children to put their classroom learning into a real-life context.

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

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

Safeguarding

60. Arrangements to safeguard the welfare of pupils are comprehensive. Governors engage frequently with safeguarding leaders creating a transparent culture where pupils' wellbeing is a priority. As a result of close collaboration between governors and leaders, a range of initiatives have been introduced including broader access to staff training resources and the appointment of a mental health lead to work closely with safeguarding leaders.
61. Leaders remain vigilant to any signs that a pupil may be at risk so that when concerns arise, they are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Careful records are kept of concerns raised and relevant information is communicated promptly to teachers.
62. Leaders work collaboratively with external safeguarding partners to seek advice, when needed, keeping themselves updated on the current guidance in order to inform their decision-making.
63. An effective safeguarding policy has been implemented which reflects leaders' understanding of the current guidance and which offers clear and accessible information to all parties. Leaders ensure that staff receive updated training, including for those joining the school, which is enhanced by the sharing of regular information to refresh teachers' knowledge on topical issues. As a result, staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding processes, including how to report a concern.
64. Suitable measures are in place to restrict pupils' access to inappropriate websites and monitoring is prompt if a breach occurs. Pupils speak knowledgeably about ways to keep themselves safe online, both in school and outside. The recent addition of a governor with responsibility for online safety recognises the importance that the school places on this area.
65. Governors and leaders carry out regular checks on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding processes, including those relating to staff suitability. An appropriate central register of staff appointments is maintained, and the required checks are completed before a member of staff starts work.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Spratton Hall School
Department for Education number	941/6032
Registered charity number	309925
Address	Spratton Hall School Smith Street Spratton Northamptonshire NN6 8HP
Phone number	01604 847292
Email address	office@sprattonhall.com
Website	https://www.sprattonhall.com
Proprietor	Spratton Hall School Trust Limited
Chair of governors	Mr James Coley
Headteacher	Mr Simon Clarke
Age range	4 to 13
Number of pupils	384
Date of previous inspection	13 to 14 November 2019

Information about the school

67. Spratton Hall School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged four to 13 located in Spratton, Northamptonshire. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors.
68. In the early years, there are 26 pupils in two Reception classes.
69. The school has identified 58 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
70. English is an additional language for 7 pupils.
71. The school states its aims are to provide a challenging, yet caring and supportive, environment for learning in which each pupil is able to develop the personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to achieve the highest standards of which he or she is capable. It also seeks to meet the personal and social needs of each individual in a healthy, safe and secure school environment which is dedicated to their care and welfare.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

12 to 14 March 2024

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

73. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and an assembly
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair of governors and the safeguarding 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.

74. 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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