

School inspection report

10 to 12 February 2026

St Ives School

St Ives School
Three Gates Lane
Haslemere
GU27 2ES

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

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders and governors have extremely high expectations for their pupils. They ensure that the actions that they take prioritise the wellbeing and experience of pupils in their care. They work with precision, collectively ensuring that they always act in the best interests of pupils. Governance ensures that leaders have the skills, knowledge, expertise and resources to fulfil their obligations. Collaboratively, leaders and governors ensure that the requirements of the Standards are met consistently.
2. Leaders' planning and delivery of the curriculum is a significant strength of the school. Going well beyond statutory requirements, leaders ensure that the curriculum is skilfully interwoven across all subjects, to provide pupils with high-quality, innovative lessons that challenge and inspire them. Authentic real-world application gives pupils responsibility for their own learning. Extra-curricular activities, visiting speakers, clubs and trips are all artfully aligned, to provide the highest-quality, well-planned opportunities for pupils of all ages. Collectively, this experience allows pupils to apply their learning in the most complex ways and with high levels of skill and confidence. It ensures that pupils of all ages are well prepared to transition on to the next stage and incredibly well prepared to move on to secondary school.
3. Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are well supported by leaders. The site is well managed and maintained. Leaders invest in supporting pupils' wellbeing. Staff know the pupils well and have high expectations for their behaviour. Bullying is rare and, when it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. Leaders have identified that their previous recording system for logging and reviewing behaviour incidents lacked the level of sophistication required. The new centralised system is not yet fully embedded.
4. Leaders ensure that pupils develop important social skills and contribute meaningfully to the school and local community. Pupils particularly enjoyed decorating the local train station to mark two-hundred years of the British Railway. and creating artwork for the local hospital. They enthusiastically take on roles and responsibilities in the school. They enjoy studying different careers and learning about different cultures and faiths. Pupils become active advocates of respect, tolerance and kindness, and exhibit this in their behaviour towards others.
5. Leaders have embedded effective procedures and policies related to safeguarding, in line with statutory guidance. They work closely with external agencies to seek additional support for pupils when needed. All appropriate pre-employment checks are made on adults before they work with pupils. Governors and trustees ensure that leaders fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

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:

- further embed their new systems for monitoring and tracking behaviour, so that these provide them with more sophisticated and precise information about their collective effectiveness in supporting pupils.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

6. Leaders actively promote the school's ethos and values, which prioritise the wellbeing of pupils. They provide pupils with a secure and happy environment based upon strong community-orientated principles. They promote the values of respect and tolerance and celebrate individual abilities. They invest time and effort in nurturing and supporting pupils to realise their full potential. Support systems, including a specially trained wellbeing champion, a wellbeing room, worry boxes and wellbeing surveys, provide timely and precise support for pupils who need it.
7. Leaders have prioritised giving pupils a daily experience in the curriculum that is of the highest quality. Decisive oversight by leaders of the curriculum has had a demonstrably positive impact on outcomes for pupils. The curriculum design and implementation has ensured that pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. Through being provided with challenging realistic experiences, pupils have developed strong leadership, collaboration and communication skills. As a result, they are reflective thinkers who have a mature outlook on life.
8. Leaders are knowledgeable and skilled about their roles and responsibilities. They ensure that policies and processes are implemented and embedded. For example, leaders in the early years provide an exciting and stimulating curriculum in the natural environment of the woodland area. They ensure that all requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework are securely met. They make sure that children are well prepared to transition on to Year 1.
9. Leaders have a thorough approach to self-evaluation. They use a range of information to check on their effectiveness. For example, leaders undertake regular and close monitoring of pupil outcomes and wellbeing. They adapt the curriculum and provide additional training to staff in response. It has also allowed them to continue to evolve and develop a highly effective curriculum for pupils over time. This ensures that pupils are very well supported to learn and achieve.
10. Governors and trustees ensure that leaders are well trained and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They check that policies are in place, in line with statutory guidance and are implemented appropriately. They visit the school routinely, undertake a range of activities, scrutinise records and documentation, and speak with staff and pupils. They ensure that the requirements of the Standards are met consistently.
11. The school provides parents with detailed reports about their child's attainment and progress routinely. Leaders make available other required information to parents, for example school policies, often through the school's website. The accessibility plan is detailed and is effectively implemented through adjustments to the curriculum and to the physical environment. The school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school has a detailed complaints policy that is suitably implemented.
12. The school liaises effectively with relevant external agencies about individual pupils. Leaders inform the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times. They seek guidance and refer concerns to the local authority children's services team, when needed. Although there were no pupils who had an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) at the time of the inspection, leaders understand their statutory responsibilities for working with, and reporting to, the local authority regarding pupils who have an EHC plan.

13. Governors and leaders with oversight of risk management have the appropriate skills to identify, manage and mitigate risks. There are a range of well-crafted and effectively implemented risk assessments, including those related to the site, off-site activities, the curriculum and pupils. Leaders undertake regular checks to ensure that risk management processes are being used appropriately by staff and pupils. They ensure that pupils' health needs are met and that their physical and mental health are actively promoted. Governors check on leaders' work through regular visits and scrutiny of records.

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

14. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

15. Leaders have invested time and expertise to create a curriculum that goes significantly beyond the statutory requirements. Plans and schemes of work across every subject are artfully shaped and carefully structured to ensure that learning experiences relate to everyday life. Leaders ensure that pupils have a plethora of very high-quality learning experiences that allow pupils to apply their learning in real-world situations. Leaders constantly review, adapt and enhance the curriculum planning so that it provides an exceptional quality of experience for pupils of all ages. This leads to many pupils following the Pre-Senior Baccalaureate (PSB) programme or undertaking London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) examinations successfully. This prepares pupils well for the rigours of moving on to secondary school.
16. Leaders have created a highly sophisticated curriculum that embodies and embeds the school's aim to provide pupils with the skills to support them in a changing world. They are highly creative and innovative in the approaches that they take. The additional extra-curricular opportunities are precisely planned against the school's curriculum, to ensure that they enhance pupils' experiences in meaningful ways. Examples include enrichment weeks, such as the school's finance festival, and clubs across sport, art and drama. Visits from architects, surgeons, finance experts and sports professionals are well chosen and planned at times when it corresponds with pupils' wider curriculum learning. Pupils are given a huge array of opportunities to develop reflective problem-solving skills, such as when building electric kit cars.
17. Teachers deliver leaders' intended curriculum adeptly. Specialist staff, who know their subjects well, challenge pupils to embed important foundation knowledge and apply this with increasing complexity. For instance, in art, pupils create sophisticated textile designs, expressive portraits and original ceramic landscapes inspired by a local art gallery. In information, communication and technology (ICT) lessons, pupils in Year 2 explore the dangers of sharing photographic images, alongside lessons in how to create the perfect shot by considering light and background. Older pupils consider the ecological impact of different electrical appliances and prioritise them in a budgeting exercise. Teachers ensure that pupils apply multiple skills and an array of knowledge through practical experience.
18. In the early years, well-trained staff ensure that they provide high-quality opportunities for children to develop an early understanding of phonics, reading and early writing skills. They help children to develop a thorough understanding of early number, shape and space. Teachers use a range of planned and play opportunities, using children's interests and well-timed interactions to support their communication and language skills. The curriculum is enriched with visiting speakers from the police, fire brigade, a dentist and a trip to a local racetrack to learn about finance and helmet design. Children explore, investigate and play purposefully in an environment that stimulates curiosity and independence. By the end of the Reception class, children are confident, inquisitive learners who are ready to transition on to Year 1.
19. There is an appropriate assessment framework in place that aligns closely with the curriculum experiences and intended learning. Leaders review an array of assessment information to ensure that academic standards are maintained. They use well-timed and precise interventions effectively where pupils need extra help. Strong academic outcomes are achieved through a very high-quality curriculum experience, skilled teaching and positive pupil attitudes. Pupils become highly competent in reading, writing, and mathematics knowledge and skills. They also learn very well across the wider

curriculum, including in sport at both local and national levels, in art competitions, and music and LAMDA examinations. Pupils are well prepared to transition to secondary school by the end of Year 6. Many go on to schools with selective entry requirements and/or with scholarships.

20. Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and supported effectively. Leaders provide teachers with specific guidance about how best to help pupils. They use effective strategies in lessons so that pupils can access the curriculum successfully. Where needed, leaders provide tailored additional small-group or one-to-one interventions where pupils need extra help. Leaders plan collaboratively with pupils, parents and external agencies for the support that pupils receive. They adapt this in a timely way, when needed, to ensure that pupils learn and develop effectively.
21. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported effectively within lessons. They benefit from targeted support in lessons and more individualised support adapted to their needs, when required. Pupils who speak EAL acquire appropriate linguistic skills and this enables pupils to access the curriculum with increasing effectiveness.

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

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

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

23. Pupils' spiritual and moral knowledge and understanding is actively developed through a well-considered programme of visits, festival celebrations and assemblies. Spirituality is explored through topics such as 'spirituality and me'. These topics encourage pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values. Pupils explore the natural environment and learn to appreciate nature through the programme of learning that takes place in the woodland area.
24. Leaders and staff prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing. Staff model the positive behaviours that they expect from pupils. They are vigilant to any signs of concern and act to support pupils quickly. Staff teach pupils to be curious and resilient, learning from their mistakes. They encourage pupils to discuss their views, developing their confidence and independence. In the early years, the youngest children are taught to understand their own emotions and think about the feelings of others. Structured activities, such as circle time, support children to do this. As a result, pupils develop confidence, enjoyment and self-esteem.
25. There is a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum and relationship and sex education (RSE) programme. Teachers teach pupils about important topics, in an age-appropriate way. Younger pupils learn how to keep safe, be resilient and develop healthy friendships. Older pupils benefit from specialist teaching in lessons that address key topics such as peer-pressure. Specialist teachers carefully plan and deliver the curriculum to ensure that sensitive content is delivered effectively.
26. There is a well-planned and effectively delivered physical education (PE) curriculum. Pupils learn a range of sports and develop an understanding of the different methods of developing their fitness. In lessons, teachers help pupils to develop resilience, teamwork skills and respect for others. The curriculum is enhanced by competitive opportunities including in netball, hockey, rounders, football, cricket, swimming and athletics. Pupils have considerable success at regional and national levels.
27. Leaders have implemented an effective behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy. Pupils behave well. Behaviour at the school is consistently good, with pupils understanding the importance of behaving well and taking responsibility for their actions. Leaders ensure that any instances of bullying and behaviour are managed effectively. Leaders are seeking more sophisticated ways in which to review trends and themes in behaviour and bullying, so that they can be even more precise and effective in their work. They have recently introduced a new recording system to do this. This system, and leaders' use of it, is not fully embedded.
28. Leaders ensure that health and safety requirements are met, including those related to fire safety. Leaders monitor the site and maintain a system of regular checks. They use external specialists where needed, for example a tree surgeon to check on the safety of the grounds. The premises and accommodation are well maintained. Leaders invest in an ongoing programme for improving the site, such as fencing and windows. Pupils are well supervised during on- and off-site activities.
29. There is appropriate provision for medical care and first aid. Staff are well trained, including in paediatric first aid. First aid and medical care are delivered in a timely manner in well-maintained accommodation. Medication is stored securely and detailed records are kept, including of any incidents or accidents that take place.

30. Admission and attendance records are maintained effectively, in keeping with statutory guidance. The school attendance champion tracks trends of absence. Systems are timely in identifying and checking up on pupils who are late or absent. Leaders work with families and the local authority when there are concerns about pupils' attendance.

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

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

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

32. Staff ensure that pupils' social education is well supported and create an atmosphere where kindness is celebrated. For example, in the early years, teachers provide a carefully structured environment where they model and promote social skills, such as taking turns and listening. Children develop confidence and co-operate well with one another. As they get older, pupils develop a more complex understanding of right and wrong, and the importance of taking responsibility for their actions. Many enthusiastically collect their school feathers as a reward for acts of exceptional kindness and others write spontaneous letters of thanks to the kitchen staff for their lunch.
33. Pupils are respectful of those with different religions, beliefs and cultures. They understand the value of all people. This starts with the youngest children, who learn about Chinese New Year. Through the religious education (RE) and PSHE curriculum and assemblies, pupils learn about different faiths, such as Taoism and Confucianism. Younger pupils discuss what a kinder world would look like for different people. Older pupils study the reasons for migration, the experiences of refugees and issues such as prejudice and disability in the workplace. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of speakers who challenge stereotypes.
34. Pupils develop a strong understanding of significant values, such as democracy, and the role of important public bodies, such as the police. The curriculum is enriched by giving pupils practical opportunities to see democracy in action. For example, pupils engage in mock elections to be awarded a place on the school council. Leaders help pupils to understand democratic principles by encouraging them to engage with local councillors to effect positive change. For example, members of the school's eco-club write to their local MP about children around the world having equal access to education.
35. Many pupils contribute positively to the school and local community. Pupils initiate their own charity work to support local and global issues that they care about, such as saving the local hedgehogs. They take an active part in Remembrance Day services in the local community. Pupils in Year 6 hold positions of responsibility, including as prefects and house captains, where they are given the opportunity to take on leadership roles. They host luncheons each year for local dignitaries and special guests and run an enterprise fair. The annual school festival last year focused on the local train station and its impact on the local community.
36. Children learn about a range of careers. This starts with the youngest children, who learn about the important people who help us, such as nurses and the fire brigade. As they get older, pupils learn more about different careers through the curriculum. Leaders adapt the curriculum to ensure that it remains up to date. For example, the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEAM) curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to look at wide-ranging careers available, such as designing prosthetics.
37. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with a full, age-appropriate economic and financial understanding. This curriculum is enriched by a range of additional activities, trips and visits. For example, pupils engage in enterprise and financial education through festival days, budgeting activities and business-focused cross-curricular projects. Pupils visit a rugby stadium, studying design, finance, investment, branding and advertising. This is followed by talks from a professional golfer, an athlete and stunt double, and a finance advisor.

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

38. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

39. Governors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding policies and procedures and their implementation. They ensure that those responsible for safeguarding are well trained and have the appropriate skills and support to fulfil their duties.
40. Leaders create an effective safeguarding culture. They ensure that arrangements are well embedded. When concerns are raised, these are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Leaders work closely with relevant external agencies and local partnerships, such as the local authority, police and children's services. Leaders identify and mitigate any contextual risks. They take timely action to safeguard pupils and keep them from harm. Records are detailed, appropriate and securely kept.
41. Staff are well trained. This training includes induction training, refresher training and routine updates. Staff are vigilant to pupils' wellbeing and report any concerns, following the school's agreed approach, including any concerns related to adults working with pupils. Staff ensure that the daily management of the school supports the wellbeing of pupils. For example, there are thorough processes for checking on pupils at the start of the day, during registration and throughout the school day, where staff are readily available, supervising pupils.
42. In the early years, comprehensive risk assessments cover a wide range of environments and activities, including outdoor provision, swimming, classroom learning and travel. Staff follow robust procedures for medication, sleep monitoring, intimate care, first aid and record-keeping.
43. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Safeguarding education is integrated within the curriculum and PSHE/RSE provision. Pupils are taught the different ways in which to manage working online safely. For instance, pupils learned about the dangers of scammers in the school's recent finance festival.
44. Suitable filtering and monitoring systems are in place, which are routinely checked by external specialists to ensure that they are robust. Leaders respond in a timely and effective way when there are any alerts. Governors monitor the effectiveness of leaders' work to keep pupils and staff safe online and when on the school's digital devices.
45. Leaders have appropriate skills and knowledge of the recruitment processes that are required for any adults working with pupils. They carry out all required pre-employment checks before adults work with pupils. The records of these checks are recorded on the school's single central record of appointments. Original records, where appropriate, are kept on staff files.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

46. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

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| School | St Ives School |
| Department for Education number | 125382 |
| Registered charity number | 1016538 |
| Address | St Ives School Three Gates Lane Haslemere Surrey GU27 2ES |
| Phone number | 01428 643734 |
| Email address | office@stiveshaslemere.com |
| Website | www.stiveshaslemere.com |
| Proprietor | United Church Schools Trust |
| Chair | Dr Rosalind Given-Wilson |
| Headteacher | Mrs Kay Goldsworthy |
| Age range | 2 to 11 |
| Number of pupils | 128 |
| Date of previous inspection | 31 January to 2 February 2023 |

Information about the school

47. St Ives School is an independent co-educational school, located in Surrey. The school is owned by United Church Schools Trust, which is a charitable company. It is run by trustees who are supported by a local governing body that acts in an advisory capacity to the trust board. The school comprises two sections: the early years, for children aged two to five years old; and the juniors, for pupils aged five to eleven years old.
48. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
49. The school has identified English as an additional language for a very small number of pupils.
50. The school states its aims are to provide a secure and happy environment based upon strong family-orientated principles, through which everyone's individual abilities and potential are fully appreciated and nurtured. It seeks to promote the qualities of integrity, kindness, charity and good manners, supporting each pupil's spiritual and social development so that they leave equipped with the attributes of care and concern for others, tolerance and trust.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

10 to 12 February 2026

51. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The on-site inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

52. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

53. 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

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