

School inspection report

23 to 25 January 2024

Leicester Grammar School Trust

London Road

Great Glen

Leicester

LE8 9FL

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. Trustees provide challenge and support to ensure that the school meets the Standards. Thoughtful self-evaluation and a willingness to canvass the views of pupils, parents and staff mean that leaders have a clear awareness of strategic priorities.
2. Pupils' wellbeing is an important priority for leaders. The school has made a significant investment in increasing the capacity of those responsible for pupils' pastoral care so that pupils are supported emotionally as well as academically.
3. Collaboration between senior and middle leaders ensures that the school successfully promotes pupils' physical and emotional welfare. Collaboration between and within academic departments in the senior school is less consistent, which means that the most effective teaching practice is not always shared.
4. Leaders plan a broad and stimulating curriculum throughout the school, enhanced by an extensive programme of extra-curricular opportunities, which allow pupils to develop skills and confidence in a variety of areas, including academic enrichment. Pupils perform to a high level in these areas and participation is high.
5. The curriculum is typically taught effectively so that pupils achieve well and make typically good progress in relation to their starting points. Relationships between teachers and pupils are founded on respect and a shared love of learning.
6. Leaders are effective in ensuring that the needs of all groups of pupils are identified and supported, including through specific strategies for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). As a result, those pupils achieve in line with their peers.
7. Pupils have self-belief and the confidence to make a positive contribution to school life. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities afforded to them to express their opinions.
8. Leaders' decision to adopt a restorative approach to pupils' behaviour has impacted positively on the way in which pupils conduct themselves. Pupils are mostly kind and considerate, and they recognise the importance of rules in establishing a well-ordered community. A calm atmosphere prevails.
9. Leaders have been successful in creating a culture where diversity and inclusion are valued. Pupils are accepting and tolerant of those with faiths and beliefs different to their own and respect the differences between people.
10. The school implements an effective careers programme which allows pupils to make informed decisions about their future pathways based on comprehensive information and supportive advice.
11. Pupils readily support local and national charities through fundraising events. They engage positively with the local community.
12. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training. Staff know what their safeguarding responsibilities are and exercise them in practice. Staff work effectively with

external agencies to promote the safeguarding of pupils and ensure that pupils have the support they need.

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 greater collaboration between and within academic departments to provide a more consistent teaching and learning experience for pupils.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

13. Trustees use their expertise to provide challenge and support through a comprehensive committee structure, strategy days in collaboration with senior leaders, and a review of school priorities. They take a keen interest in pupils' views, which they gather on regular visits. These visits enable trustees to assure themselves that the policies they have reviewed are translated into practice and benefit pupils both pastorally and academically.
14. Leaders across the school regularly review provision through a robust system of self-evaluation. For example, leaders in the early years have prioritised the provision of learning spaces to ensure that classrooms have access to outdoor learning opportunities which children use regularly to develop their knowledge and skills including through creative play.
15. In the junior school, a cross-curricular approach to tracking key skills has enabled teachers to devise bespoke strategies for individuals, for example by providing one-to-one support. In the senior school there has been a focus on work with academic leaders to ensure the sharing of the most effective teaching and learning practice across all departments, though this is still to be embedded fully.
16. Leaders update their skills and knowledge through regular professional development and the provision of specialist training for specific staff. For example, all heads of year receive high-level safeguarding training. Leaders promote pupils' wellbeing by striving to ensure that they are accessible, approachable and aware of the academic, physical and emotional needs of pupils.
17. Regular communication between senior and middle pastoral leaders ensures that messages are consistent and information is shared so that pupils promptly receive the support they require. The school has increased staffing in the area of pupil wellbeing and extended its nursing hours so that it can respond more readily to pastoral needs. As a result, leaders have created a school in which pupils feel safe and supported.
18. The school maintains effective links with external agencies such as children's services, safeguarding development officers, the local police and counselling services, so that pupils have access to appropriate support beyond the school.
19. There is a systematic approach to the management of risk through a written risk assessment policy, appropriate training for staff and effective risk assessments, which are monitored and reviewed to ensure they are implemented effectively. The range of risks identified is comprehensive and includes those relating to harmful behaviours and pupils' wellbeing.
20. Leaders provide all the required information to parents in handbooks, on the school's website and in annual pupil reports. They ensure that information such as that relating to absence is shared promptly with the local authority, as required.
21. The school has a suitable three-stage complaints process and deals with concerns in line with its policy, making sure that they are responded to and decisions communicated within the published time frames.
22. The school makes appropriate adjustments to facilities and resources to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access facilities and the curriculum, in line with the Equality Act.

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

23. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

24. The early years curriculum provides a range of stimulating learning opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor and communication skills, social interactions and understanding of the world around them. In the junior school, subject leaders monitor the curriculum to ensure it is appropriate to pupils' age, ability and needs. The curriculum provides coverage of all required areas. Pupils work at or above national expectations across all subjects.
25. The senior school curriculum enables pupils to make progress that often exceeds predictions based on their starting points, as shown by pupils' grades at GCSE and A level. Pupils' needs and aptitudes are central to decisions taken about the curriculum. For example, leaders' decision to provide extra English and mathematics classes and study skills support for some pupils instead of a possible tenth GCSE subject has had a positive impact on their progress in other areas of study.
26. Throughout the school, leaders identify, understand and meet the needs of pupils who have SEND so that they make progress at least in line with their peers. Teachers provide individualised support either themselves or through the effective deployment of teaching assistants. They select or adapt tasks appropriately for the needs of the children. This allows pupils who have SEND to be engaged in their learning, demonstrate confidence in what they do and show resilience when improving their own work. Teachers and teaching assistants provide for pupils with EAL with understanding and kindness, using a variety of strategies depending on the needs of the individual. Consequently, these pupils make good progress in developing their fluency in English.
27. From Nursery to Year 6 teachers enable pupils to build on a range of knowledge and skills. Most teachers deploy a variety of teaching methods, practical activities and engaging behaviour management strategies. As a result, teaching motivates pupils and enables them to make good progress. Senior school teachers typically model high levels of scholarship and a passion for their subject, to which pupils respond and aspire. Most planning is thorough so that work is appropriate to the ages and aptitudes of the pupils. High expectations contribute to successful outcomes, characterised by intellectual engagement and curiosity, effective knowledge acquisition and profound understanding. Where teaching strategies are less effective, progress is not as consistent. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils help to create a purposeful learning environment where effort and motivation are the norm.
28. Leaders in the junior school share assessment information effectively so that all staff are aware of the needs of individual pupils and devise strategies to meet them. However, whilst some teachers in the junior school provide verbal feedback or written comments which allow pupils to understand how well they are achieving, others are not always clear about the steps pupils need to take to improve further. Regular assessments and a focus on examination strategies are central to courses in the senior school. Pupils value the advice they are given on how to improve their academic performance.
29. The school provides extra-curricular activities that appeal to children of all ages, in line with pupil demand. Because pupils are consulted about the clubs on offer, they feel a sense of involvement and are happy with the range of opportunities. All tastes are catered for, including academic enrichment and niche interests, as well as sports and the arts so that pupils develop their self-confidence by learning new skills.

30. Leaders are careful to ensure that teaching avoids political bias, for example in the sensitive dialogue about current international conflicts. This extends to ensuring that the visits of outside speakers are carefully planned, with an effective monitoring system in place to make sure pupils are not exposed to extreme views.

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

31. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

32. Pupils develop their self-confidence and self-esteem, whether in lessons, when presenting in assemblies or in dramatic and musical performances. This is enhanced by the respect that is central to the relationships between teachers and pupils. The school rewards positive behaviour and pupils feel valued and supported, which gives them confidence. Initiatives introduced by leaders ensure that pupils' opinions are considered and are felt by pupils to be acted upon. This opportunity to be involved directly with school decisions enhances pupils' sense of worth and belonging.
33. Pupils develop their physical skills through the physical education (PE) and games programmes, as well as a range of clubs, where pupils demonstrate agility, co-ordination and fitness. Pupils of all ages develop their skills, confidence and teamwork through a programme of competitive fixtures. Teachers in the early years incorporate use of the outdoor play area which, along with a range of activities within the classroom, promotes pupils' physical development. Assemblies exploring Christian and other beliefs, along with religious education lessons, help develop pupils' spiritual awareness. This is enhanced by pupils' exploration of their emotions and creativity through art, drama and music.
34. Leaders prioritise giving pupils greater support for their wellbeing in response to social and emotional trends identified during the post-Covid return to school. The introduction of initiatives such as the 'My Happy Mind' scheme, the appointment of a wellbeing co-ordinator and the growth of the sixth-form student support group for senior school pupils has led to improved pupil confidence and resilience. The 'life education' curriculum across all year groups has a positive impact on pupils' reflections about their physical and mental wellbeing and their willingness to share concerns with others. There is a suitable choice of healthy foods available, and pupils are taught to know what constitutes a balanced meal and choose a range of foods, with staff monitoring the choices of younger pupils.
35. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme meets the needs of pupils, including those who have SEND. The quality of RSE teaching is enhanced by having a dedicated team of teachers who receive regular training. Pupils take the subject seriously and acquire the knowledge and understanding they need at any given stage. Teachers use pupil feedback to identify progress and make adjustments to improve teaching and learning. Communication with parents takes place before sensitive topics are taught and leaders ensure that parents are suitably informed about RSE content.
36. The approach of leaders to behaviour management is reflective and considered. Expectations are high and pupils appreciate their clarity. Throughout the school pupils behave well, classrooms and study areas are calm, and interactions between pupils and staff are positive and respectful. As pupils move around the school, they are considerate and thoughtful towards others. Teachers understand the impact that bullying can have on pupils and are quick to deal with incidents that come to their attention. Acts of unkindness do occur, but leaders deal effectively with those situations.
37. Training, procedures and recordkeeping in relation to health and safety are carefully monitored to ensure that all areas of the school are maintained to a high standard. The location of medical and wellbeing facilities at the centre of the school and the expertise of the nursing staff contribute significantly to pupils' mental and physical wellbeing. Leaders guard against the risks of children

being absent from school or missing education by ensuring that appropriate registers are kept and informing the local authorities of any anomalies.

38. Leaders provide appropriate supervision throughout the school day so that pupils feel safe in the knowledge that there are adults close by. Leaders in the early years are always careful to ensure appropriate supervision ratios are in place.

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

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

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

40. Leaders promote diversity and inclusivity by welcoming pupils of diverse faiths and encouraging them to share their spiritual beliefs. The curriculum is effective in enabling pupils to learn about faiths and cultures different to their own. Consequently, there is an atmosphere of mutual respect whereby pupils take a genuine interest in the lives and backgrounds of others. Leaders in the senior school encourage a feeling of belonging and community in displays around school and by providing a forum for pupils to share information and views in the 'Embrace' society. Leaders encourage younger pupils to mix freely with others and to show interest in different cultures and faiths. Staff in the early years place much emphasis on the development of collaboration. They promote independent and teacher-led activities which develop children's social skills. Children interact positively and happily together, comfortable in sharing resources.
41. Through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) classes in the junior school and the 'life education programme' and broader curriculum, including careers, in the senior school, pupils explore scenarios and themes relating to human education. They learn about issues such as human rights, for example those of women and the LGBTQ+ community, and social and economic justice. Pupils learn about public institutions and services, including through visits from members of the emergency and health services and contact with local Members of Parliament and societies such as the debating group and politics society. The life education programme provides them with economic education, from managing and learning the value of pocket money to student loans, mortgages and the concept of debt in preparation for later life. Some pupils felt that practical money matters might be introduced earlier in the programme.
42. Values such as democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty are embedded across the curriculum and within the school's approach to pupil voice. Democracy is enacted as well as taught. Pupils can express their views through regular surveys and channels such as the school council. Junior school pupils have drawn up a behaviour charter for the playground and the school council has influenced changes relating to uniform and expectations of acceptable appearance for older pupils.
43. Pupils develop understanding of their own behaviour and what is right and wrong. The promotion of pupils' moral awareness extends beyond personal behaviour. Assemblies enable pupils to explore moral dilemmas in the world beyond school so that pupils appreciate the importance of seeing both sides of a conflict. Consequently, pupils embrace the message that you should 'treat others as you would like to be treated' and feel that most pupils do this most of the time.
44. The school provides comprehensive careers guidance. Planning is detailed and the progression from Year 7 to Year 13 is set out for pupils and parents in a very clear roadmap. Advice is impartial, and from Year 10 onwards pupils have opportunities to experience a range of vocations and industries, through external visits, careers fairs, visits by professionals and talks by alumni. Pupils receive sufficient information to make informed choices, including in relation to subject options.
45. Teachers prepare pupils for life in British society by providing them with skills, values and responsibilities that help prepare them for later life. These responsibilities include prefectship, sports and house captains, peer mentoring and leading clubs and activities. Pupils in the sixth form follow a course in personal and leadership development. Pupils make contributions to the local

community, including supporting a foodbank, outreach in local schools, placements at residential homes and volunteering in local charity shops in the senior school.

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. Close monitoring by trustees ensures that safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective. There are effective lines of communication to enable pupils to report any concerns, and pupils use these, confident in the knowledge that they will obtain advice or help if they are worried about something, however sensitive. Initiatives such as the 'Whisper' system in the senior school or 'Worry Monsters' for younger pupils are well established and pupils are confident to use them. Pupils learn about how to support their own personal safety as part of the 'life education' programme, and specifically RSE.
48. Safeguarding leads are prompt in making referrals to external agencies when necessary, so that pupils receive help as soon as possible. There are appropriate procedures to respond to incidents of child-on-child abuse. Leaders and staff show an appropriate awareness of any risks that pertain to the local area. They respond swiftly to emotional concerns so that pupils feel supported and able to learn. This, combined with the security of the site, enables pupils to feel safe in school.
49. Regularly updated and comprehensive safeguarding training ensures that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the school's procedures. Effective reporting mechanisms facilitate the prompt and efficient sharing of information. Staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about the way in which adults in the school interact with pupils.
50. The school carries out appropriate checks on all adults before they begin to work or volunteer at the school and maintains a suitable single central record of appointments.
51. The school teaches pupils how to stay safe online and carefully filters and monitors their online activity so that they follow guidelines for responsible use of the internet.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Leicester Grammar School Trust
Department for Education number	855/6018
Registered charity number	510809
Address	Leicester Grammar School Trust London Road Great Glen Leicester Leicestershire LE8 9FL
Phone number	0116 2591900
Email address	lgsreception@leicestergrammar.org.uk
Website	www.leicestergrammar.org.uk
Proprietor	Leicester Grammar School Trust
Chairman	Mr Steven Gasztowicz
Principal	Mr John Watson
Age range	3 to 19
Number of pupils	1296
Date of previous inspection	12 to 14 November 2019

Information about the school

53. Leicester Grammar School Trust is a co-educational day school located in Great Glen, on the south-eastern edge of the city of Leicester. Governance is provided by the Leicester Grammar School Trust, whose board of trustees has responsibility for overseeing all sections of the school.
54. The early years provision comprises two classes, Kinders for children aged between three and four, and Reception for children aged four to five years.
55. The school has identified 260 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are three pupils in the school who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
56. English is an additional language for 70 pupils.
57. The school states that its aims are to promote intellectual curiosity and academic excellence; to provide a stimulating curriculum, including a range of co-curricular activities which enhance pupils' physical, cultural and personal development; to equip pupils with the self-belief, consideration and skills required for a principled and fulfilling life; to care for the mental and emotional wellbeing of pupils and promote a healthy lifestyle; and to foster a generous contribution to charity, community service and society.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 to 25 January 2024

58. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

59. 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 vice-chairman and other trustees
- 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.

60. 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

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