

School inspection report

10 to 12 June 2025

St Wystan's School

High Street

Repton

Derby

DE65 6GE

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 is well led and managed. Leaders ensure a rich and diverse curriculum, supported by the school's personalised 'habits for learning' framework, that encourages resilience, persistence and curiosity in its pupils. Pupils are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to embrace future challenges. Children in the early years enjoy a well-resourced learning environment, both inside and outside, supported by a well-planned curriculum that actively encourages their learning.
2. Governors maintain effective oversight of leaders' work. Collectively, they evaluate the school's performance, plan for future developments and ensure that the Standards are met.
3. Leaders have a clear awareness of pupils' daily experiences and use their knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure that their wellbeing is prioritised and promoted. Because leaders actively listen to pupils' views, they develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem through the many opportunities provided.
4. Lessons are well planned and adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers make effective use of classroom resources and outdoor learning areas to engage and motivate pupils. Skilful questioning encourages debate and discussion. Teachers demonstrate a clear understanding of the aptitudes of individuals and provide effective feedback. Senior leaders analyse assessment data effectively to track and monitor pupil progress in core subjects, but the lack of analysis of data across foundation subjects makes planning less effective.
5. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress and are well supported at all stages of their learning throughout the school.
6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) benefit from additional support in lessons and make good progress.
7. Leaders ensure that pupils' individual physical health and wellbeing is suitably promoted. A comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, alongside a broad assembly programme, supports pupils' development of a strong sense of self-worth and value.
8. Leaders have put in a place a rewards and sanctions system which encourages positive pupil behaviour. However, the use of rewards is inconsistent, which leads to a lack of clarity and understanding and does not provide appropriate encouragement for all pupils.
9. Leaders implement robust health and safety procedures. The school follows relevant medical, fire and health and safety guidelines.
10. Pupils have a strong understanding of their social identity and civic responsibility through connections with the local and wider community. Their awareness of British values is reflected in their respect for all those around them. The school effectively develops leadership skills by providing numerous opportunities for pupils to serve their community.
11. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures are robust. Staff are appropriately trained to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, which the safeguarding team acts upon in a timely

manner to ensure pupils receive the necessary support. Leaders ensure that all appropriate staff recruitment checks are completed effectively.

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 staff understand and apply rewards and sanctions consistently across the school
- ensure a consistent approach to assessment in foundation subjects to enable a detailed awareness of the skills and knowledge of all pupils.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. School leaders have a secure, strategic approach to school development, working closely with the board of governors to prioritise the wellbeing of pupils. When initiating change, leaders are responsive and reflective, seeking views from all stakeholders. Leaders are ambitious to improve the curriculum, for example securing school-wide resourcing of technology, developing new schemes of work and constructing a 'trim trail' in the playground. These initiatives have significantly improved learning opportunities for all pupils. In recognition of the need to support pupils' mental health, additional training of staff has been undertaken in order to provide further emotional support.
13. The governors know the school very well and liaise regularly with school leaders to help develop the provision. They monitor and review policies and procedures by means of committees and regular visits to the school, ensuring adherence to statutory guidance and effective implementation. Senior leaders carry out regular self-evaluation, and outcomes are shared with governors to develop future targets. Leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles and thus ensure that the Standards are met.
14. In the early years, leaders have a clear overview of the provision and ensure it provides a well-structured environment which meets the needs of all children. Staff plan purposeful activities, inside and outside the classroom, which are carefully constructed to develop children's independence, their social and language skills and their physical confidence and agility. The woodland school area enables them to develop further their skills and knowledge.
15. Leaders are knowledgeable and experienced. They clearly understand their responsibilities and prioritise the pastoral care and wellbeing of all pupils. As a result, the school community is supportive, nurturing and caring. The school's aims and ethos are actively embedded, and pupils are encouraged to be kind, considerate and respectful, developing a strong understanding of differences between people. The school's values are reinforced through a purposeful assembly programme involving pupils throughout the school. Pupils embody the school values and do their best to live them out daily.
16. Leaders support pupils' learning through the personalised 'Habits for Learning' (H4L) programme and, as a result, pupils develop persistence, creativity and positive thinking. These habits are reinforced in lessons and are reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to work. Pupils understand that trying things out and taking acceptable risks in their learning are important steps to eventual success. This further reinforces pupils' learning and helps build their resilience as they move through the school.
17. The school has a thorough approach to the management of risk. Leaders are very aware of the consequences of planned changes, including those which may not be intended. They make decisions with care and consideration. Suitable risk assessments are in place for the site and for any trips and visits, including residential and overseas. Leaders provide a systematic oversight of all risks and ensure that, when appropriate, staff have carefully considered the needs of individual pupils.
18. The school website provides parental access to all necessary information and hard copies of the required documents are available on request. Regular communication is encouraged through a weekly newsletter, a termly newspaper written by pupils and regular emails and phone calls to provide appropriate information to parents. Parents receive regular reports about the academic

progress made by their child. The school maintains close and productive links with external agencies such as the local authority. The expertise they provide informs and develops school policies and practices. The school informs the local authority about how it uses funds for pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

19. There is an effective complaints policy in place which outlines a suitable three-stage process. Leaders monitor any complaints carefully, respond promptly and keep thorough records, which include any actions taken in response.
20. Leaders effectively fulfil their responsibilities, under the Equality Act 2010, to protect individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place which makes clear how the site is accessible to all, including visitors, and how the curriculum is made accessible for all pupils, including those who have SEND.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. Leaders have developed a well-planned curriculum which covers all the required areas and meets the needs and interests of all pupils so that they acquire new skills and knowledge. The core curriculum of English and mathematics is supported by a range of subjects to provide a suitably broad and enriching experience for all pupils. Pupils develop strong communication skills such as active listening through studying French, and drama lessons enable the strengthening of speaking and presentation skills. The curriculum encourages outdoor learning, and effective use is made of the immediate school grounds and the local woodland school area. Younger pupils benefit from an effective and systematic programme that allows them to identify the sounds that letters make, thus embedding strong reading and writing skills from an early age.
22. In the early years, the curriculum is focused on developing the interests of the children and meets the requirements of the early years learning goals. Teachers use sensitive questioning in focused conversations and create thoughtful and meaningful play areas, both inside and outside the classroom, to enable children to develop their language skills as they interact with each other and talk about what they are doing. The children go to a woodland area once a week to further develop their physical, speech and language skills. Pupils have leadership opportunities in assemblies, take part in productions and are members of the school choir, developing confidence and presentation skills.
23. Teaching is effective. Teachers carefully plan and provide stimulating and interesting lessons. They make effective use of resources which are appropriate to the age and aptitudes of the pupils. Teachers' insightful questioning encourages discussion and debate. The school has developed a series of 8 habits for learning which are well understood by pupils and reinforce, for example, their persistence, creativity and curiosity.
24. Teachers challenge pupils to push past their initial ideas and add complexity to their work. All pupils are extremely proud of their achievements and want to improve. Whilst teachers recognise the importance of positive reinforcement, their lack of a clear understanding and consistent use of the different reward systems reduces their effectiveness and does not provide the encouragement that would benefit all pupils.
25. Pupils, including the youngest children, achieve well across all year groups and are prepared effectively for the next stage of their learning. By the end of Year 6, pupils have well-developed knowledge and understanding across the curriculum, including age-appropriate reading, writing and mathematical skills. This prepares them well for the next stages of their studies. Pupils are successful in gaining places at senior schools of their choice.
26. Pupils receive effective and timely feedback about their work. Teachers give pupils a clear and immediate understanding of how they can improve, and set clear targets. As a result, pupils make good progress because of instantaneous and purposeful feedback.
27. The school's assessment framework is generally effective in monitoring the progress of pupils. The analysis of assessments in English and mathematics is detailed, and careful monitoring of data in these subjects throughout the school leads to focused and targeted planning to meet pupils' needs and enable good progress. However, assessment in foundation subjects is not as consistent, and information about pupils' skills and knowledge is less well understood. In early years, assessment is

ongoing, adapting and extending children's learning immediately. Progress in fine motor development is monitored closely and focused activities such as sewing and moving small counters are introduced, leading to pupils' positive skill acquisition.

28. Provision for pupils who have SEND is effective and wide-ranging. With the help of detailed information outlining individual pupils' needs, teachers provide clear and effective tailored support. Leaders provide well for the emotional needs of pupils who have SEND through a targeted and focused programme. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress.
29. Pupils who speak EAL are supported by staff who reinforce learning through adaptations to their teaching, through the use of technology, through one-to-one support, where appropriate, and through adapted classroom resources to develop language understanding.
30. Leaders provide numerous opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities such as dance, gardening, choir, knitting and technology clubs. These activities further extend learning opportunities, support the development of new skills and enable pupils to establish relationships across a wider age range.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

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

31. Leaders promote a wholly inclusive and supportive culture which inspires pupils to adopt a highly positive attitude to school. This is reinforced by a broad-ranging assembly programme. Leaders promote the development of pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem through activities such as drama and dance. As a result, pupils are happy to engage with friends, teachers and other adults, demonstrating the effective family ethos of the school.
32. A comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, with specific topics on inclusion and diversity, enables pupils to develop a well-rounded and clear understanding of differences between people. The celebration of 'World Religion Day', assemblies on Ramadan and Chinese New Year, alongside displays throughout school which advocate inclusivity, contribute to pupils' understanding of different types of spirituality. PSHE incorporates a relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum, extending pupils' understanding of how to develop positive relationships and healthy lifestyles. Content is communicated with parents appropriately. The PSHE curriculum also encourages open discussions about healthy relationships, explores topics around pupils' mental and physical wellbeing and promotes digital safety. Pupils are also taught the need for positive personal hygiene and are aware of the importance of a healthy diet, making sensible food choices when they eat at lunchtime. The school takes part in the annual Remembrance Day march through the village, encouraging pupils to reflect on conflicts, past and present, and to consider the ethical issues that surround war.
33. Leaders further support the active promotion of pupils' wellbeing through a well-defined four-part apology process and the provision of 'worry boxes', which pupils often use, enabling them to express concerns so that teachers gain insight and support resolution.
34. Pupils behave extremely well because of the school's strong emphasis on kindness and mutual respect. Leaders effectively employ a range of behaviour strategies such as restorative conversations and regular reflections with individual pupils on what good behaviour looks like. Pupils respond very quickly to teachers' reprimands and requests. They understand the school rules and the consequences for not adhering to them. Because staff model high expectations of behaviour and reinforce expectations regularly, pupils acquire a comprehensive understanding of right from wrong and accept responsibility for their actions.
35. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy. There are stringent procedures in place to deal with any bullying, should it occur, though incidents of bullying are rare. Leaders promote a culture of mutual respect, in line with school values. An anti-bullying pledge is agreed and signed by all pupils and shared with parents.
36. All Year 6 pupils have leadership roles which they embrace wholeheartedly, whether as head boy or head girl, class representatives on school council or form prefects, escorting younger children back to their classes after assembly. This encourages pupils to have greater confidence in themselves and recognise the impact they can have on others.
37. In the early years, children develop well both socially and emotionally. They learn to recognise their own feelings, and those of others, and are helped to understand them. They receive regular and frequent praise to reinforce their learning. Children take part in a wide range of mirrored indoor and

outdoor activities, benefitting from close and appropriate supervision which demonstrates the school's rigorous approach to individualised support of children's wellbeing. Children are always within sight or sound of adults in the setting.

38. The school has developed an effective physical education and swimming curriculum for pupils. Leaders deploy specialist staff appropriately to develop pupils' skills and their personal health and physical wellbeing. Pupils from Reception upwards benefit from a swimming lesson every week throughout the year, using the Repton Sports Centre swimming pool. The well-structured physical education (PE) programme, which incorporates sports such as football, hockey, athletics and netball, enables pupils to develop key knowledge and skills and to take part successfully in fixtures against other schools.
39. The school has a thorough health and safety policy, and effective monitoring procedures are in place to ensure that it is implemented appropriately. Premises are well maintained, providing an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Fire safety measures are effective, and regular monitoring of equipment and evacuation procedures ensures pupils' safety. The school provides appropriate accommodation for the treatment of pupils who are unwell or injured, and first aid is administered promptly by suitably qualified staff.
40. A suitable admission register is kept, and attendance procedures meet the most recent statutory guidelines. The school correctly reports any pupils who leave or join at non-standard transition times to the local authority.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

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

41. The curriculum enables pupils to develop their social and economic understanding from an early age. Through work in school and events such as visits to local historical and religious sites, a residential trip to France or Year 2 pupils joining with similar aged pupils from a local infant school to take part in a science activities afternoon led by St Wystan's Year 6 pupils, pupils develop a strong understanding and awareness of their local and wider communities.
42. Pupils develop an economic understanding through the mathematics curriculum and the PSHE programme where a topic on money and work is revisited each year in an age-appropriate manner. In early years, children use role play in the shop and outdoor kitchen to explore using money to buy and sell, and by Year 6 pupils explore financial literacy in topics such as taxation, earnings and household budgeting. Teachers use the Year 6 trip to France to enable pupils to become familiar with different currencies, whilst also encouraging a wider understanding of society and cultures.
43. Leaders listen closely and attentively to the views of pupils, who also feel empowered through the school council and regular questionnaires. Leaders encourage pupils to put forward ideas about changes they would like to make, such as uniform, mealtimes and having a school pet. Pupils choose which charities they would like the school to support, and each House arranges appropriate fundraising activities. As a result, pupils develop a deeper understanding of the ways in which people's lives can be different to their own and a greater civic awareness. For example, they make Christmas cards for the elderly in the community, sing at the local church's Christmas fair and deliver plants to local residents.
44. Through the curriculum and visits by external speakers, pupils develop a high level of respect for those who help and inspire them, for example visits by a dentist, a professional basketball player, and an Olympic swimmer who spoke about sport for all and encouraging participation whatever one's level of ability.
45. In early years, teachers foster social development effectively by actively encouraging turn-taking and sharing of resources. Children learn quickly how to co-operate and resolve conflict. Pupils have a clear understanding of British values, such as democracy and the rule of law, which are reinforced through the PSHE programme and assemblies.
46. From Reception upwards, pupils clearly understand differences between cultures and what it means to live in British society. They readily debate, discuss and explore concepts such as discrimination, equality and gender roles in PSHE lessons, in form time and in assemblies.
47. Leaders provide opportunities for all pupils to engage in a full democratic process to identify and elect the head boy and head girl. Other areas of responsibility, which include house captains, form prefects and school council representatives, are allocated appropriately and enable the development of leadership and teamwork skills.
48. The school provides discussion and research opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of future careers through assembly presentations and in PSHE lessons. The school prepares pupils for life in both a British and global society in their PSHE topic on belonging to a community. This enables pupils to develop confidence about their next steps.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

49. The school follows rigorous safeguarding protocols and procedures, as set out in a suitable safeguarding policy which is available on the school's website. Knowledgeable and well-trained leaders are effective in producing a robust whole-school safeguarding culture which prioritises pupils' wellbeing. Leaders have a clear understanding of the risks young people face outside of their family and home environment. They are rigorous in their identification of risks and put in place effective measures to mitigate them.
50. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that staff receive suitable training at induction and through workshops and regular safeguarding updates. Completion of assessments and participation in training are closely monitored. As a result, all staff are confident about the procedures to follow when a safeguarding matter arises. Staff are clear in their understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
51. Senior safeguarding leaders have a comprehensive oversight of all safeguarding matters across the school, including in the early years. They act in a timely manner and report any pupils of concern to the relevant external agency, such as the local authority's 'Starting Point' and 'Operation Encompass'. They understand and apply thresholds for referring any pupils causing concern and keep thorough and confidential records.
52. Through a thorough learning programme, pupils gain a clear understanding of both online safety and keeping safe in the physical world. Pupils feel able to speak to a trusted member of staff at any time about any concerns they have.
53. Procedures for filtering and monitoring internet content are robust. Systems are tested and weekly reports are scrutinised by the safeguarding team, who take appropriate action when required.
54. Leaders follow a careful and thorough process for the appointment of staff. Required checks on staff are completed in a timely manner and detailed accurately in the school's single central record of appointments.
55. The board of governors oversees all safeguarding provision. Governors maintain frequent and regular contact with leaders, including through visits to the site, when they undertake detailed scrutiny of key records and documentation. An annual safeguarding review is completed and a written report detailing necessary actions is discussed with the safeguarding team. Governors provide appropriate challenge and support to ensure that all reasonable action is being taken to keep pupils safe.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	St Wystan's School
Department for Education number	830/6007
Registered charity number	527181
Address	St Wystan's School High Street Repton Derby Derbyshire DE65 6GE
Phone number	01283 703258
Email address	head@stwystans.org.uk
Website	https://www.stwystans.org.uk
Proprietor	St Wystan's School
Chair	Mr Daniel Lewis
Headteacher	Ms Kara Lebihan
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	81
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2023

Information about the school

56. St Wystan's School is a co-educational independent day school. Founded in 1926, it is a charitable trust owned by the Repton Family of Schools and overseen by a board of governors. The school is divided into two sections: the pre-prep, for pupils between the ages of four and seven, which includes the early years foundation stage (EYFS); and the prep school, for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven.
57. The early years setting comprises one Reception class.
58. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
59. The school has identified English as an additional language for one pupil.
60. The school states its aims are to embrace happy, independent, smiling and confident children, to offer high standards of behaviour and attainment, to encourage confidence from a young age, to meet the intellectual, physical and emotional needs of each child by offering an inspiring wide-ranging curriculum, to inspire and develop the whole child, to work in close partnership with parents and school community and to promote a thirst for learning.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

10 to 12 June 2025

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

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.

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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