

# School inspection report

Date 23 to 25 January 2024

## **The Gregg School**

Townhill Park House

Cutbush Lane

Southampton

SO18 2GF

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. Governors and senior leaders provide clear strategic decision making for the whole school which middle leaders implement effectively within their departments and across year groups. In doing so, they promote high levels of pupil wellbeing.
2. The 'Respect' programme is a key influence on the successful development of pupils' social and personal skills, including listening to the points of view of others and tolerance, empathy and cultural awareness.
3. Leaders ensure that teachers structure and plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers enable pupils of all abilities to thrive and make good progress. Pupils understand their tasks and settle to their work quickly. On a few occasions, teaching methods are less effective and pupils' progress is not consistent.
4. Teachers encourage positive attitudes to learning by fostering supportive relationships with pupils. Pupils behave well and respect differences in each other. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively and quickly, with a proactive approach to addressing friendship issues. Leaders intervene appropriately in serious cases, but there are also some inconsistencies in the use of rewards and sanctions.
5. Pupils' work shows teachers' recognition and celebration of positive work habits such as independence, resilience and accuracy. Regular, detailed teacher feedback enables pupils to grow in self-knowledge and self-confidence. Pupils are proud of their progress and enjoy showing off their work and explaining their thought processes.
6. The development of leadership skills and the willingness of older pupils to take on roles of responsibility prepares them well for life in British society beyond their time in school.
7. Pupils feel safe in school. Safeguarding systems are effective, and staff and students know how to stay safe and to report any concerns. Pupils recognise that learning how to keep themselves safe is valuable and prepares them well for their next steps.

## 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 consistently.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met consistently.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met consistently.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the quality of teaching methods and activities used are more consistent so as to improve the achievement of all pupils.
- Leaders should ensure that rewards and sanctions are awarded more consistently.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. The governors and senior leaders have a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the school. Senior leaders supported by a team of skilful leaders at all levels fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They have developed an inclusive ethos across the school.
9. Senior leaders prioritise the development of pupils' social skills and personal development through the implementation of a 'Respect' programme. It has been well received by parents, pupils and staff. Frequent audits of practice in this area and the associated careers programme include learning walks and surveys. This helps leaders to evaluate outcomes. These programmes actively promote pupils' wellbeing and have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and respect for other cultures.
10. Governors are well informed about the school and the work of leaders. This enables them to challenge senior leaders effectively and hold them to account. They evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, they have a detailed understanding about how well the school culture supports pupils and their families through their review of pastoral and safeguarding records. Parents of current and prospective pupils are well informed, with required information on the school website. The school has, and follows, an appropriate procedure for recording and responding to complaints from parents.
11. Proprietors ensure that policies are implemented, and that the school's work is evaluated effectively through presentations and reports to meetings. There are well-established and clearly understood procedures for assessing risks locally, including those presented by 'county lines', radicalisation and extremism. Leaders promote and safeguard pupils' wellbeing through the implementation of an effective risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce the risks that are identified.
12. Leaders put teaching and learning at the centre of academic provision through investment in staff professional development. Leaders use data on academic and co-curricular activities to guide tutors on how to support pupils. They have made changes to the structure of the school day to make it easier for pupils to attend clubs and societies and provide sessions to support academic work.
13. Leaders have developed a well-qualified student support team who work effectively with pupils both in and out of academic lessons. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to relevant information and contribute to that held on student passports. These student passports provide detailed information about individual pupil academic and pastoral needs. Parents also have access to lesson notes so that they know what has been covered in learning support sessions, which enables them to consolidate learning at home.
14. Leaders listen to pupils and act on many of their suggestions. These are communicated by the school council and are appropriately implemented in line with Equality Act requirements, such as male pupils being able to wear shorts in the summer in response to a petition supported by pupils of both genders, or access to creative arts areas for disabled pupils. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place.

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

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

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

16. Leaders provide a broad range of academic subject choices. They allow pupils to individualise their timetable from Year 9 onwards. Academic subjects are chosen to meet the needs of pupils and to allow all abilities to achieve and develop their strengths.
17. Teaching typically consists of well-structured and planned lessons with ample opportunities for pupils of all abilities to learn and make good progress. Pupils know what they are required to do because teachers routinely check their understanding through effective questioning. Teachers relate well to pupils and pupils contribute enthusiastically and confidently in lessons.
18. Younger pupils follow a broad curriculum that is enriched by music, drama, art, design and technology and personal social education (PSE). As a result, all pupils experience these areas of study without the need to continue study to GCSE. Pupils, in the latter half of Year 9, start their GCSE courses by “tasting and trying” subjects they have not studied previously. Teachers use opportunities to weave into lessons considerations of democracy, and respect and tolerance for others.
19. Pupils make expected progress from their starting points. In recent years more than half the pupils achieve grades 9 to 7 in English, mathematics and a range of subjects, particularly the sciences, aesthetic and creative arts. Pupils achieve high grades in sociology, technology and creative arts subjects.
20. As a result of specialist help, pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) quickly improve their written and spoken language and many achieve these top grades.
21. Progress reports across the school year, using the school’s assessment ladder, inform pupils and parents of each pupil’s expected and actual attainment.
22. Most teachers recognise and commend positive learning habits such as independence, resilience, accuracy and transferring knowledge to other subjects. Pupils are proud of their work and are pleased to be able to share it. They value the support they receive from the majority of their teachers. However, the quality of lesson planning can vary, in some cases teaching is not matched to the needs of pupils, so they make less consistent progress.
23. The support department sensitively and skilfully identifies and supports pupils who have SEND by providing well-matched and individualised programmes. Pupils see the department area as a place that they can drop into and share concerns. This enables pupils who have SEND to make good progress from their different starting points.
24. Pupils enjoy co-curricular activities and have a variety of opportunities from which to choose. The co-curricular programme utilises the school environment well and contributes to their wellbeing. The impact of leaders’ decisions to provide clubs and activities to reflect pupils’ needs and interests and adapt the school day more than doubled pupil attendance. Inclusivity is central to the programme. The House competitions are varied and allow for as many pupils as possible to take part. All activities have an appropriate risk assessment. Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of musical activities which include the choir and string group. These encourage collaboration and develop performance skills.

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

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



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

26. Governors, leaders and staff have developed a curriculum policy which reflects the aims and ethos of the school. As a result, pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They understand and show the need to be kind and non-judgemental. They wear their uniforms smartly and have a pride in their school. Leaders manage behaviour effectively. Records show that a variety of issues are accurately identified, and appropriate and swift action is taken. The school successfully intervenes at an early stage if it notices friction between individuals or groups.
27. Leaders have implemented a comprehensive rewards and sanctions programme that reflects the school's commitment to equal opportunities. Pupils respond well to praise, although some teachers use rewards and sanctions inconsistently. Teachers encourage pupils to express their views and answer questions without fear.
28. Leaders develop and deepen pupils' understanding of respect for difference, for example in gender, national background or religious belief by introducing elements of the 'Respect' programme in lessons, assemblies and during co-curricular activities. Pupils consider a wide range of moral issues which increase in complexity as they become older. As a result, they gain a sophisticated understanding for their age of ethical issues and factors affecting choice.
29. Pupils reflect purposefully on their physical and mental wellbeing. They are certain that this is a school where they are very well cared for and nurtured. The link between extra-curricular activities and mental health is well understood by staff, with tutors taking on a key role in setting targets for attendance. Many of the clubs and activities focus on physical health. Consequently, pupils effectively develop self-esteem, confidence and resilience.
30. Leaders have developed effective approaches to teaching relationships and sex education (RSE) within PSD and tutor time. Leaders have focused on eradicating pupils' attitudes that excuse unkindness as banter and that are misogynistic. Pupils feel well informed in these areas.
31. The premises are suitable and maintained to a high standard. Health and safety and fire prevention are well organised and documented. Facilities are managed effectively, and staff are well equipped to assess and mitigate potential hazards. Procedures are in place to identify maintenance tasks and areas of the school that need repair, and the system works efficiently. Medical care and procedures are suitable, and staff are trained regularly to administer first aid. The supervision of pupils is appropriate and ensures as far as possible the security of all pupils. Systems for registration and admission are effective and reports to the local authority are made when pupils join or leave at non-standard times.

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

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

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

33. Leaders have allowed pupils to contribute to and develop the key values at the core of the school's 'Respect' programme. Pupils and their families are well informed about these through evening meetings, assemblies, enrichment activities and the student council. As a result, pupils are well engaged and so the programme successfully supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An example of respectful exploration of other cultures took place when pupils connected their geographical topic on different cultures to their understanding of the respect programme. Pupils gain credits for demonstrating their understanding of respect and incorporating this into their daily school routines. This leads to many pupils achieving certification through the school's 'Mercury Award'.
34. Tutor periods, and the content of assemblies and lessons prepare pupils well for life in British society. Pupils know right from wrong and are able to make informed choices. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their learning about health and wellbeing, careers, finance, and keeping themselves safe. For example, how saving pocket money over a period of time enables them to purchase larger items they seek to have. They readily recall and reflect on what they have learned about the persecution of people due to their sexuality, religion or disability. During the inspection, in an assembly on Holocaust Memorial Day, leaders promoted the principles of freedom and human rights, which was followed up in tutor time.
35. The 'Respect' programme strengthens pupils' resilience and development of personal responsibilities. Pupils' personal development is rich in examples of their developing understanding about how to play their part as active and responsible citizens. For example, pupils are typically confident and self-assured to challenge stereotypes and keep an open mind. They also demonstrate empathy in being able to ask searching, well-informed questions, including on sensitive themes such as breast cancer and ADHD awareness or the abolition of slavery. As a result, pupils develop values, skills, attitudes and behaviours required for them to succeed and flourish, and to respond to change in their future world. They have a detailed knowledge of democracy, respect for laws and public institutions.
36. Leaders' and teachers' emphasis on social and cultural development underpins the harmonious relationships evident across the school. Pupils understand and celebrate diversity within the school's community. Economic wellbeing is taught in an engaging manner with a focus on independent decision making, primarily through the curriculum but also in research projects in sociology and religious education. Consequently, pupils are caring and respectful towards each other.
37. The careers programme implemented by school leadership provides a focus on personalising careers advice with every pupil. For example, Year 9 pupils are provided with one-to-one interviews. Older pupils receive helpful guidance about subject choices and careers. Leaders use pupil surveys to effectively evaluate and modify careers education to make it more beneficial for pupils' future plans. Pupils are well informed and supported on the choices they have as they leave full time education.
38. Older pupils enthusiastically take on roles of responsibility. The co-curricular programme also supports the development of pupils' skills and understanding of their role in society. Pupils volunteer in ways that support the local community from litter picking to links with the elderly. Ecological concerns are also addressed by a pupil committee and focus on school-based initiatives as well as

wider concerns. Pupils are further encouraged to take part in accredited courses with a benefit to the community such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, British sign language and first aid.

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

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

## Safeguarding

40. Governors and designated safeguarding leaders (DSLs) are suitably trained and effectively manage their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. They work closely with local authorities and other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe at all times. Leaders are persistent in following up any referrals to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. The safeguarding team has developed a secure system of information sharing which ensures that concerns are addressed and closely monitored.
41. Staff receive regular up-to-date training on keeping children safe. This includes guidance on how to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and preventing extremism. Leaders routinely check on staff understanding. The school's safeguarding policy references the latest statutory guidance and is available on the website.
42. Proprietors and senior leaders ensure that checks on the suitability of staff are carefully carried out and recorded appropriately. They have robust and well-organised arrangements to ensure that the premises are safe. Carefully recorded notes of governors meetings reflect the diligent discharge of their responsibilities.
43. Pupils feel safe in school because of well-established systems that ensure they are free from risks. They are well informed about a wide range of risks, including drug and alcohol misuse, gun crime, sexual abuse, child-on child abuse, cyber bullying and grooming. Pupils know where to go to find help or support if they need it either in person or anonymously.
44. Pupils have a sophisticated understanding of how the internet works and can explain how to stay safe from the potentially malign influences they may encounter when online. The filtering and monitoring of online content used by staff and pupils is effective. This includes pupils who bring their own devices and use their own networks.

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

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

## School details

<b>School</b>	The Gregg School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	852/6000
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1089055
<b>Address</b>	The Gregg School Townhill Park House Cutbush Lane Southampton Hampshire S018 2GF
<b>Phone number</b>	023804 72133
<b>Email address</b>	office@thegreggschool.org
<b>Website</b>	www.thegreggschool.org
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Gregg Schools Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J Preston
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sherilee Sellers
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 16
<b>Number of pupils</b>	333
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 to 28 July 2021

## Information about the school

46. The Gregg School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from 11 to 16 years. The school was founded in 1901 in Southampton city centre and moved to its present site, on the northern edge of Southampton, in 1994. The Gregg Schools Trust, a registered charity, is the parent company of The Gregg School and is the proprietor of both The Gregg School and The Gregg Preparatory School. The two schools share a governing body.
47. The school has identified 30 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
48. No pupils have English as an additional language.
49. The school's aims state that it seeks to unlock children's potential by providing a learning environment where every single member of the school feels valued, enriched and able to achieve their personal best

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

23 to 25 January 2024

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

51. 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 head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- Discussions with pupils
- Visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- Discussion of their work with different groups of pupils
- 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](http://www.isi.net)**.

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