

# School inspection report

24 to 26 February 2026

## **Norland Place School**

162 – 166 Holland Park Avenue

London

W11 4UH

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 create a positive, caring ethos in the school. They are aspirational in achieving their aims to develop confident and independent pupils. The school's values are shared effectively so that relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and kind. Pupils are articulate and engage in conversations with maturity. Leaders carefully evaluate the impact of their actions and respond appropriately when required. For instance, leaders recently improved the balance between pupils' academic and sport commitments to support pupils' wellbeing.
2. The proprietor has appointed an advisory panel to support the school. Advisers meet regularly with staff and visit the school to review policies and their implementation. Procedures to manage risk are robust and effective in most areas and include regular audits. Inspectors found that risk assessments for a few facilities in the school were not sufficiently comprehensive. Leaders addressed these promptly during the inspection. At the start of the inspection, not all of the required inspection reports were available on the school's website. This was rectified while inspectors were on site.
3. The curriculum is ambitious and enables pupils to extend their knowledge and skills in a range of subjects including current affairs, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and critical thinking. Across the school, pupils acquire a wide vocabulary and have planned opportunities to develop their linguistic skills in English and French. Pupils with higher prior attainment are challenged appropriately. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their starting points because teaching and learning is adapted to meet their needs.
4. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported with their acquisition of English, where needed, through additional help and suitable resources. They improve their fluency and confidence in speaking and writing and make good progress.
5. Teachers plan engaging and purposeful lessons. They choose topics, texts and resources thoughtfully so that pupils are highly motivated and apply effort in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils are involved in reflecting on, and improving, their learning. Teachers use assessment information to build on pupils' prior learning. As a result, pupils make good progress, achieve well and are equipped for the next stage in their education. Staff in the early years develop positive relationships with children and their families so that children settle quickly and make good progress in their communication and language, and social and emotional skills.
6. The school's premises are well maintained. There are effective health and safety procedures with robust checks, including audits from external specialists, to ensure the Standards are met. During the inspection a few minor issues were rectified following the amendments made to risk assessments. Procedures to provide supervision, first aid, and to monitor pupils' attendance are well established and reviewed regularly to make sure these systems support pupils' safety and wellbeing.
7. Pupils understand the expectations and rationale in the school's behaviour policy and behave well. Leaders address any issues promptly and sensitively so that bullying is rare. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned and teaches pupils how to develop positive relationships and demonstrate respect for all.
8. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and how to make moral choices. Pupils across the school have opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding about a range of careers.

They develop financial awareness, an understanding of democracy and the importance of social contribution in age-appropriate ways.

9. The school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that staff are knowledgeable about statutory guidance and the school's procedures for reporting concerns. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and know how to report a concern, including anonymously.

## 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 all required inspection reports are available on the school's website
- improve the rigour, oversight and implementation of all risk assessments to mitigate risks to pupils' health and safety effectively.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders articulate and embed the ethos and values of the school throughout the school day. They promote the individuality of every pupil. This is borne out by pupils' high levels of self-confidence in their interactions with each other and with adults. Leaders and staff are caring and model kind language and behaviour so that pupils in turn are polite, respectful and helpful to each other.
11. The advisory panel attends termly meetings with leaders to provide support and challenge. Members of the panel visit the school, listen to pupils and attend events to evaluate how leaders fulfil their responsibilities. The proprietor chooses to use external agencies with specific expertise to carry out audits including for safer recruitment, health and safety, and fire regulations to support the school and ensure that the Standards are met.
12. Risk assessment and management is effective in most areas. Staff are trained to complete, implement and review risk assessments. They do this successfully in most instances, such as for trips and visits, including daily walks to nearby facilities for sports and outdoor play. However, inspectors noted that the risk assessments for the safe use of a few areas on the school site, such as the art and STEM rooms, were not as thorough as they could be. These risk assessments were promptly amended during the inspection.
13. Leaders regularly review aspects of the school's provision. They involve staff and consider the views of pupils and parents when planning for improvement. Responding to recent feedback, leaders adjusted the timings of the school day to increase the range and impact of sports and physical activities on pupils' wellbeing and achievement. Leaders in the early years guide and train staff to ensure they have the appropriate knowledge and understanding to provide high levels of care and support for children to flourish.
14. The school has established links with relevant local authority agencies and the police to seek advice and make referrals as necessary. The school informs the local authority, as required, when pupils leave or join at non-standard times. Currently there are no pupils in the school with an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) or for whom the school is in receipt of any state funding. Leaders liaise with experts such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and educational psychologists to provide suitable and specific support for pupils. Leaders maintain positive links with local secondary schools to facilitate pupils' successful transition from Year 6 to the next phase of their education.
15. Leaders provide parents with useful information about their child's progress including through termly parents' evenings, end of year reports and carefully designed online platforms. As a result, parents are well informed and aware of the progress their children make. Most of the required information for parents of current and prospective pupils is available on the school's website. When the inspection began, not all previous inspection reports were published as required by the Standards. This was addressed during the inspection.
16. The school's complaints policy is implemented effectively. Leaders are proactive about listening to parents' views and concerns. Most complaints are resolved at the informal stage. Complaint records are kept confidentially and reviewed regularly, including by the advisory panel. Leaders take swift and appropriate actions to prevent recurrences.

17. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. They provide staff with appropriate training so they understand the importance of diversity and equality and recognise unconscious bias. A suitable accessibility plan is in place. This sets out the reasonable adjustments leaders make to meet pupils' needs and ensure pupils access the curriculum and premises fully.

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

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

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

19. The school's curriculum is well planned with opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and skills beyond the requirements of the national curriculum. For instance, pupils in the prep have lessons about current affairs and critical thinking to help them develop skills for life beyond school. Leaders ensure that teaching includes a clear progression of skills and is adapted to build on pupils' prior attainment. The curriculum is modified and taught with thoughtful support and challenge to match pupils' different needs. Staff use interesting and engaging topics so that learning is purposeful and relevant. Pupils make meaningful links across subjects that extend their understanding. Pupils are highly motivated. They apply effort and explain what they are learning, and why, eloquently.
20. Leaders plan opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening through poetry and reading competitions, plays, performances and discussions. Pupils develop confidence reading aloud to adults and to their peers and discuss a wide range of genres. They are taught subject specific vocabulary and use the skills they learn in English to write in other subjects including humanities and science. Children in Reception begin to develop linguistic skills in French so that by Year 6, pupils confidently perform a play in French. In mathematics, pupils develop speed and accuracy in mental mathematics skills and apply these to solve problems and explain their mathematical reasoning. Pupils understand the scientific method and develop scientific enquiry skills when carrying out investigations, recording their findings systematically.
21. Pupils develop creative and aesthetic skills in a range of subjects such as art, music and drama. They showcase these skills in performances and exhibitions. Pupils in pre-prep develop technological skills, creativity and imagination using construction toys or when designing an invention to solve a problem. Older pupils create animated movies, design products in a 3D printer and make mechanical toys. Pupils are encouraged to express opinions and creative ideas of their own during discussions.
22. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to plan lessons well. During lessons, they refer pupils to previous lesson content to emphasise key learning points and ensure pupils have remembered these. Teachers make skilful use of good quality resources to deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers use effective strategies such as modelling, particularly in the pre-prep, so that pupils know how to succeed. They give pupils thinking time or time to share their ideas with a partner so they develop the confidence to contribute meaningfully to class discussions. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils are comfortable learning from their mistakes. Pupils across the school are encouraged to think for themselves, share their ideas and ask questions to move their learning forward.
23. The school gathers a range of assessment information to evaluate pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders and teachers provide targeted support for pupils who need additional help that enables them to make good progress. For instance, the 'move and go' club helps pupils to develop physical confidence. Additional lessons held before or after school, which include more complex tasks, challenge pupils with higher prior attainment in subjects such as English, mathematics and French. Pupils across the school are clear about what they do well and what they need to do to improve through the age-appropriate marking systems teachers use in pupils' books. Verbal feedback from teachers and from their peers, alongside time to redraft or make corrections, enable pupils to learn more. Pupils reflect on their own work frequently and plan their next steps with their teachers. This supports pupils' progress and achievements across the curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils are prepared academically and socially for the transition to their chosen secondary schools.

24. The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND has established a robust system for identifying pupils' needs early. Staff work together with parents so they can plan relevant strategies to use in lessons or in one-to-one and small group support. Pupils who have SEND learn successfully and make good progress from their starting points.
25. Most pupils who speak EAL are proficient in English and support is tailored to match their level of need. Teachers use additional resources and approaches such as the use of vocabulary cards or reading comprehension in small groups that support pupils to make good progress. Pupils who speak EAL are encouraged to celebrate their own languages through whole school events such as 'European languages week'.
26. In the early years, staff check what children know and can do when they join the school to identify their starting points in all areas of learning. Leaders and teachers adjust the curriculum to meet children's needs and interests. Teachers model how to form letters correctly and blend sounds to read and write so that children make good progress in their phonics skills and develop a wide vocabulary. Relationships between staff and children are positive. Staff consistently and skilfully engage children in conversations to develop their social and communication and language skills.
27. The school provides a range of clubs for pupils to cultivate new interests and develop talents. Children in Reception practise balance and co-ordination in ballet. Older pupils develop their self-confidence through participating in performances during the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) club, choir and orchestra. Pupils enjoy the range of sports clubs which enable them to keep physically active and develop team building skills. In the critical thinking club, pupils discuss strategies to improve their logical thinking through a wide variety of games.

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

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

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

29. Pupils understand the importance of the 'Norland values' such as kindness and doing their best. They learn about British values, including respect for all, in PSHE, in philosophy, religion and ethics (PRE) and in current affairs lessons, as well as during assemblies and form time. Leaders ensure that pupils across the school access a broad selection of high-quality texts. Storytelling in Reception, books in the library and chosen texts for comprehension activities enable pupils to develop an appreciation of other cultures, different family structures and global issues in an age-appropriate way.
30. Pupils develop their spiritual and moral understanding through the effective implementation of the school's values. They understand that people of different faiths have different beliefs and everyone deserves respect. Pupils learn about different religions in lessons, visit the nearby Sikh temple and are taught about the significance of Ramadan and Diwali in assemblies. Older pupils discuss the meaning of spirituality in PRE lessons. They know that spirituality can mean different things to different people and that this can be experienced through faith, nature or demonstrating kindness.
31. The PSHE curriculum is well structured so that pupils learn how to keep physically and mentally healthy. Pupils are taught how to form and maintain friendships and develop positive attitudes and social skills. Across the school, pupils learn what is right and wrong. Pupils are taught, in age-appropriate ways, the meaning of consent. Older pupils learn how to take care of their bodies and how they change during puberty. They learn about drug and alcohol misuse, including the legal consequences associated with the law.
32. Leaders have recently reviewed the physical education (PE) curriculum to provide a wider range of sport including football and hockey for male and female pupils, gymnastics and swimming. The adjusted timetable allows sufficient time for pupils to apply the skills they learn during competitive sports fixtures. Children in Reception develop skills of balance and co-ordination using appropriate equipment on the playground and the outdoor areas.
33. Staff in the early years visit children in their nurseries before they join the school and liaise closely with parents to understand children's social and emotional needs. Children are taught how to recognise and regulate their emotions. They are taught to learn from their mistakes and receive praise and rewards that develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. Children in Reception engage in imaginative, creative play including in the outdoor spaces. They learn how to share resources amicably. They develop their social skills through interacting with each other, adults and older pupils. Children are considerate and play and explore both independently and in a group.
34. The school's premises are kept clean and tidy with an ongoing programme to update facilities. The school complies with fire safety laws and commissions external audits to ensure that procedures are effective, and staff complete the required training. Leaders have established a clear and meticulous approach to first aid and the administration of medication. Staff are suitably trained in paediatric first aid. Logs of incidents are reviewed to spot any patterns and actions taken to reduce recurrence. Pupils are well supervised during play time on the school playgrounds and during walks to off-site facilities for sports and outdoor play. Health and safety checks are typically thorough and most are recorded accurately. A few minor matters to reduce risks in some areas of the school site were addressed promptly during the inspection.

35. Staff and pupils understand the behaviour policy and the importance of rewards and sanctions. Pupils know how to recognise bullying, including when they are online, and how the school deals with situations if they arise. Pupils are responsive to behaviour management strategies used by staff. They behave positively and are polite and respectful.
36. Pupils take on roles of responsibility in classrooms and around the school. Pupils develop leadership skills through the school council and the eco-council. Pupils in Year 6 take turns to be head of school, deputy head of school, prefects and games, music and art captains. They complete readings at events such as the carol service and Remembrance Day and present awards during assemblies to develop their presentation and public speaking skills.
37. The school's attendance and admission registers are maintained accurately and in line with statutory guidance. Leaders take effective steps to improve any attendance concerns through clear communication with parents and pupils and by providing appropriate support.

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

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

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

39. Pupils develop a 'class charter' together and refer to this often to understand the concept of fairness. Children in Reception are taught the importance of turn-taking. They quickly learn to follow rules and routines and understand their purpose. Pupils listen to a talk by the local MP so that they understand his role in the government and the principles of democracy. In current affairs lessons, pupils learn about the different ways leaders are elected in the United Kingdom, including through by-elections. Leaders arrange trips for pupils to the Houses of Parliament and the Royal Courts of Justice, so pupils understand the rule of law. Pupils vote for stories to be read at the end of the day and for appointing class leaders to practise their democratic rights.
40. Pupils access a range of talks by visitors to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the world of work. Pupils listen to journalists, authors and screen writers who share information about their careers. In Reception, parents visit and explain their careers, including banking, so children understand ways to save money. Talks from the local police enable children to understand how the police help to keep them safe. Pupils in pre-prep are taught about the different roles a soldier in the British army assumes, including guarding institutions such as Buckingham Palace, the Tower of London and Windsor Castle. Pupils learn about the skills and attitudes needed to be a soldier such as resilience and discipline. Pupils understand the role of an engineer as an inventor by creating their own solutions to everyday problems such as rising sea levels and air pollution.
41. Children in Reception begin to recognise and understand the value of coins and banknotes in role-play situations. Pupils in prep learn how to manage a budget when designing a garden for people who have SEND. In critical thinking lessons, they discuss budget management and develop negotiating skills to buy classroom resources. During current affairs lessons, pupils discuss the national budget and how governments spend money. Pupils in Year 6 develop their financial awareness through learning about concepts such as salaries, taxes and trade.
42. In current affairs lessons, pupils read articles from age-appropriate newspapers discussing topics such as biodiversity and climate change. They make comparisons between two news providers and consider how headlines are used to grab attention and sell a product. This helps them to understand the importance of balanced views.
43. Leaders provide off-site trips to local museums and institutions such as Hampton Court and the Globe Theatre that enhance what pupils have learned in their lessons. Pupils in Year 6 learn about the language, culture, currency, and the differences between a republic and a constitutional monarchy, before their trip to France. Pupils in prep develop independence and resilience when they participate in residential trips. Leaders ensure that pupils are prepared academically and socially for the next stage of their education.
44. Pupils raise money, collect food at harvest festivals and donate books to local charities. Older pupils help to sort and distribute food at a local foodbank and the choir performs at a care home. Pupils in Year 6 help to serve meals to younger pupils in the dining room.

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

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

## Safeguarding

46. The proprietor ensures there is effective oversight of safeguarding procedures in the school. A member of the advisory panel meets with the safeguarding team regularly to review the safeguarding policy and its implementation. Any updates and concerns are reviewed at weekly staff meetings so that staff are vigilant in protecting pupils from harm.
47. The safeguarding team ensures that all members are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their roles by completing the required training as well as attending training provided by the local authority. Leaders therefore understand the contextual and situational risks to pupils and take effective steps to raise awareness with staff to mitigate these.
48. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that the school's policy is understood and implemented by staff. New staff receive thorough induction about statutory guidance and the school's arrangements to protect pupils from harm. Staff undergo the required training with regular updates so that they remain watchful and know how to report a concern about a pupil. Staff are trained regarding when and how to report a concern about another adult in the school.
49. Leaders take appropriate action including seeking advice, making referrals to relevant authorities and communicating with parents. Safeguarding logs are thorough, kept securely and reviewed consistently.
50. Pupils are aware of the range of adults they can talk to if they have a worry or a concern. They can report concerns anonymously through boxes placed in classrooms and in common areas. Older pupils know when and how they can reach out to external agencies for support such as Childline.
51. The school ensures that internet filtering arrangements are monitored regularly. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding test these systems for their effectiveness. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when they are online, during information and communication technology (ICT) and PSHE lessons. They understand the need to choose and use reliable websites and be cautious about sharing personal information. Pupils and staff receive regular training so they understand the school's rules and expectations regarding the use of digital technology.
52. The school has stringent recruitment procedures in place and senior leaders are trained in safer recruitment. The single central record of appointments is maintained accurately and is reviewed regularly, including through planned audits.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Norland Place School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	207/6025
<b>Address</b>	Norland Place School 162 – 166 Holland Park Avenue London W11 4UH
<b>Phone number</b>	020 7603 9103
<b>Email address</b>	registrar@norlandplace.com
<b>Website</b>	www.norlandplace.com
<b>Proprietor</b>	Norland Place School Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Patrick Mattar
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Patrick Mattar
<b>Age range</b>	4 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	238
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 to 19 January 2023

## Information about the school

54. Norland Place School is a co-educational independent day school located in Holland Park, London. It is situated in adjacent buildings. The school is governed by a sole proprietor who is also the headteacher. The headteacher is supported by an advisory panel.
55. The school comprises two sections. The pre-prep section caters for children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. The prep section caters for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6.
56. There are 54 children in the early years who are taught in three Reception classes.
57. The school has identified 30 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
58. There are 80 pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language.
59. The school states its aims are for pupils to leave the school with a strong academic foundation, equipped with the confidence, independence and self-esteem that will enable them to engage positively and productively with the opportunities and challenges they will encounter as they grow up.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

24 to 26 February 2026

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

61. 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.

62. 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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For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)