

School inspection report

9 to 11 June 2026

Buxlow School

5/6 Castleton Gardens

Wembley

HA9 7QJ

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 proprietor body maintains thorough and effective oversight of leaders' work and supports them in promoting the school's aims and ethos. Through regular visits, review of leaders' reports and ongoing dialogue with staff, parents and pupils, the chair develops a well-informed understanding of the school's effectiveness and priorities for improvement. Leaders communicate effectively with parents, work closely with external agencies and maintain robust systems for risk management and safeguarding. They implement and review an appropriate accessibility plan, ensuring that pupils can access the curriculum and wider opportunities available at the school, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
2. Leaders ensure that teachers, teaching assistants and therapists work together successfully to support pupils' communication and access to learning. Pupils experience a broad curriculum and develop knowledge and skills, including in basic literacy and numeracy, the sciences, humanities and creative arts. They make effective use of a variety of resources to engage pupils' interest. Leaders have established appropriate systems to assess pupils' progress and plan the next steps in their learning. However, some curriculum planning does not identify with sufficient precision the knowledge and skills that pupils should develop over time. Consequently, some teaching is not consistently effective. Some pupils, particularly those capable of learning more, do not make as much progress in some subjects as they could.
3. Leaders promote the emotional and physical wellbeing of the pupils successfully. They ensure that staff understand pupils' individual needs and respond sensitively and effectively to any signs of dysregulation. Staff act as exemplary role models through their calm, warm, respectful and sensitive approach to behaviour. They recognise that pupils' behaviour may communicate underlying needs and use appropriate strategies to support emotional regulation. Staff provide frequent praise for pupils' positive engagement and kindness towards others. This helps pupils to develop confidence, self-esteem and positive relationships. The proprietor and leaders ensure that all aspects of health and safety are properly managed and that the premises are well maintained. As a result, pupils are safe, secure and well supported.
4. Leaders begin the process of preparing pupils for life in British society successfully. Through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons, pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and key British values. Pupils learn about democratic principles in an age-appropriate way. They develop an understanding of the rule of law through their participation in drawing up classroom rules. Leaders give pupils opportunities to gain experience in using money, and support them in preparing for their next stages of education. Pupils begin learning about the wider community through activities such as road safety training, swimming lessons and visits to local facilities. However, pupils do not develop as full an understanding of the services, institutions and public bodies that play an important role in British society.
5. The proprietor body ensures that safeguarding is managed effectively. Appropriate training ensures that staff know how to respond to concerns about pupils' wellbeing and do so promptly. Leaders manage staff recruitment efficiently so that all the required pre-employment checks are completed before any adult begins working at the school.

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 curriculum planning identifies the precise knowledge and skills that pupils should develop over time, so that teachers can implement the intended curriculum consistently
- ensure that teaching is planned and adapted consistently to provide appropriate challenge for those pupils who are ready for more demanding learning
- broaden pupils' understanding of services, institutions and public bodies that play an important role in British society, so that they are well prepared to participate in contemporary life.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

6. The proprietor and leaders collaborate effectively to promote the school's aims and ethos. They establish a culture which prioritises pupils' education and wellbeing equally. Leaders ensure that staff understand pupils' individual needs and implement consistent approaches to help pupils to feel safe, build trusting relationships and engage successfully in learning. Pupils benefit from this nurturing and consistent approach which creates a secure environment where pupils can learn and thrive.
7. The proprietor body maintains effective oversight of the school's work. The proprietor body undertakes a number of activities to ensure that leaders possess the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities. For example, the chair visits the school regularly to meet with staff, parents and pupils and observe lessons. He receives and reviews regular reports from school leaders about key aspects of the school's work, such as safeguarding and health and safety. As a result, the proprietor body has a well-informed understanding of the school's work. The chair uses this understanding to support leaders, including many who are newer to their roles, to plan and implement an effective school improvement plan.
8. Leaders ensure that parents can access relevant and appropriate information about the school, including its aims, ethos and policies through the school's website. Staff provide parents with a formal written report on their child's progress, attainment and development at the end of the academic year. Leaders ensure that parents have regular opportunities to discuss their child's learning and wellbeing through termly formal review meetings and regular meetings with teachers. Informal communication, such as at the daily drop-off and pick-up times, further supports effective relationships between parents and staff.
9. Leaders liaise effectively with external agencies, including the local authority, children's services and external specialists, such as occupational and speech and language therapists. They report to the local authority, as required, when pupils join or leave the school at times other than the standard transition points. Leaders work in effective partnership with the local authorities which place and fund pupils in the school. They ensure that relevant information is shared promptly with the local authority, particularly in relation to pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plans), including details relating to finance and funding.
10. Leaders provide an appropriate risk assessment policy and manage risk carefully and rigorously. They draw up thorough risk assessments which cover the school premises, the curriculum, off-site activity, educational trips and the welfare of pupils. Leaders review risk assessments regularly to ensure they remain effective. Leaders ensure that staff are suitably trained to enact these risk mitigations and prioritise pupils' wellbeing. Staff implement appropriate strategies, as leaders intend, to mitigate any potential risks and keep pupils safe.
11. Leaders provide parents with an appropriate complaints policy on the school's website. If parents raise any concerns, leaders follow the procedures set out in the policy and respond promptly and effectively. They maintain detailed records of any complaints and the actions taken to address them.
12. The school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, through the creation, implementation and review of an appropriate accessibility plan. Through this approach, leaders ensure all pupils can access the school site, the curriculum and wider opportunities available at the

school. Regular review of the learning environment enables leaders to identify and remove potential barriers to participation. Appropriate adaptations, including calm spaces and sensory spaces, help pupils to engage successfully in their learning.

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

13. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

14. Leaders implement a curriculum which prioritises enabling pupils to develop vital foundational skills in literacy, communication, speech, oracy and numeracy. Leaders ensure that pupils experience a wide range of other curriculum subjects, including in science, the humanities, the arts, physical education and technology. However, some curriculum planning does not identify with sufficient precision the knowledge and skills that pupils should develop over time. Consequently, teachers do not have enough clarity about the intended curriculum in some subjects or how learning should build progressively. This limits teachers' ability to ensure that pupils develop knowledge and skills in a systematic and coherent way across all subject areas.
15. Teachers, teaching assistants and therapists work collaboratively to support pupils' communication, language and access to learning. Staff use their detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs when planning support. They use a range of specialist approaches and strategies, such as core language communication boards, visual resources, repetition, gestures, signs and spoken language. These help pupils to understand instructions, express preferences and participate in classroom activities. These approaches enable pupils of all abilities and needs to engage in learning, make choices and develop increasing confidence and independence in their communication.
16. Teachers use leaders' curriculum planning and pupils' EHC plans to inform their planning and organise lesson activities. They devise and use suitably varied activities and resources such as flash cards, whiteboards and educational games to help pupils acquire new knowledge, make choices and develop self-motivation. Teachers also make effective use of cross-curricular links to engage pupils' interest and reinforce learning. However, some teaching does not ensure that pupils develop knowledge and skills securely. As a result, pupils who are capable of achieving more are not consistently supported to develop their knowledge and understanding as fully or precisely as they could.
17. Pupils make good progress from a wide range of starting points, especially in their communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils develop early literacy, language and mathematical knowledge. They learn to write, describe objects using comparative vocabulary and work with numbers. As they get older, they develop greater fluency in mathematics and apply their knowledge across different areas of learning. In science, pupils develop early scientific knowledge by identifying and naming features of the human face and body. They learn about living things and life processes through studying plants, animals and humans. First-hand experiences, such as hatching and caring for chicks, help pupils to develop their understanding of the natural world.
18. Leaders support pupils' progress with an effective assessment framework. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of curriculum areas through ongoing observation and assessment. Leaders use this information to evaluate pupils' progress through the curriculum from their individual starting points. In addition, they review pupils' progress towards the targets set out in their EHC plans and individual learning plans (ILPs). Regular discussions between leaders and teachers help to identify pupils' next steps in learning and ensure that assessment informs both curriculum planning and individual support. Teachers use this information to adapt their lessons so that pupils receive appropriate support.
19. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise needed to meet pupils' needs effectively. Through training, detailed individual learning plans and regular review of pupils' EHC

plan targets, staff are well informed about pupils' needs and the most effective strategies to support them. Leaders work closely with families and external professionals to evaluate and refine provision. Collectively, they ensure that support is tailored to individual pupils and promotes their successful participation in learning.

20. Many pupils have significant communication and language needs. Leaders take account of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and consider whether any additional support is required. Leaders monitor pupils carefully and provide appropriate resources and additional support, as required.

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

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

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

22. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing. Leaders establish regular routines to provide a calm, supportive start to each day. This enables pupils to understand what will be happening during the school day, to manage any changes to their usual activities, and to regulate their emotions. Leaders deploy staff effectively to provide appropriate supervision and reassurance throughout the day, particularly at less structured times such as breaktimes. As a result, pupils feel secure and are well supported to engage positively and regulate their emotions.
23. Leaders ensure that pupils are supported to think and reflect on their feelings, communicate their views and make positive choices. Staff use a range of communication approaches, including personalised communication boards, social stories and sign language, where appropriate. This helps pupils to express their preferences and participate in decisions about their day, their classroom and their activities. Regular communication with parents and carers helps staff to understand pupils' individual interests and needs. Staff respond appropriately to pupils' views and promote pupils' self-confidence and independence.
24. Leaders have established appropriate policies and procedures to manage behaviour. Leaders take a thoughtful approach to behaviour, recognising that pupils' actions may indicate underlying communication, sensory or emotional needs. Leaders establish clear rules and expectations and ensure that these are accessible and well understood by pupils. For example, visual prompts displayed on classroom boards remind pupils of key behavioural expectations, such as 'good sitting', 'good listening' and 'good looking'. Staff respond sensitively to pupils and use a range of well-chosen strategies to reduce any anxiety. They support pupils to regulate their emotions, including consistent routines and sensory-based approaches. As a result, pupils develop positive relationships with their peers and adults.
25. Leaders promote anti-bullying strategies through the ongoing provision of PSHE. Through activities, such as Odd Socks Day, pupils learn about individuality, kindness and respect for others. These experiences help pupils to develop social awareness and an understanding of the importance of treating others with respect and consideration. Staff model the conduct that they expect from pupils, creating a calm, kind and respectful atmosphere. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils understand that bullying is unacceptable and that everyone should be treated with respect.
26. Leaders implement a well-planned PSHE curriculum. Staff teach relationships and sex education (RSE) sensitively through PSHE lessons. Through social stories, pupils learn about their safe people, the difference between good and bad choices and the importance of privacy. Staff help pupils to understand the nature of healthy relationships and how to build them.
27. Specialist staff teach a well-planned physical education (PE) curriculum. Pupils learn about a range of sports and exercise. They develop their knowledge and skills successfully, such as ball-handling and swimming skills. Leaders also promote pupils' physical development through a range of appropriately planned activities. Painting and craft activities using scissors, cotton wool, paper and glue sticks help develop pupils' fine motor skills. Outdoor play on climbing equipment develops pupils' balance and co-ordination.

28. Leaders ensure the admissions and attendance registers are maintained as required by statutory guidance. Staff monitor pupils' attendance carefully and liaise appropriately to support pupils and their families. As a result, most pupils attend school well or improve their attendance quickly.
29. The proprietor ensures that pupils have access to suitable accommodation to support their medical needs. Staff who are qualified in first aid provide appropriate medical care to any pupils who are injured or unwell. Staff ensure the safe storage of medicines and maintain accurate records of the administration of first aid and medication.
30. Leaders' effective management of health and safety ensures that the premises are suitably maintained and support pupils' wellbeing. Leaders implement regular checks and maintenance, including of fire safety equipment, electrical and water systems. For example, leaders instigate regular fire evacuation drills so that pupils and staff know how to respond in the event of an emergency. External specialists and professionals undertake additional quality assurance checks, such as fire and legionella risk assessments.

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

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

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

32. Leaders create a culture characterised by mutual respect and tolerance of others. Through frequent PSHE lessons, pupils learn in age-appropriate ways about how they are similar to and different from each other, such as in height and the colour of their hair and eyes. Staff teach pupils to value those with different beliefs, identities and cultures. Pupils learn about the features of the world's major faiths and important religious celebrations such as Easter and Eid. Pupils celebrate different cultures. As a result, pupils take pride in themselves and their own cultures and show respect for the cultures and beliefs of others.
33. Pupils develop an understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy. They learn about this through PSHE lessons and practical opportunities. For example, pupils vote on which story should be read, which film they should see or which activity they should undertake. Leaders provide pupils with stories about different roles and occupations in society and give them related role-play experiences, including wearing appropriate clothes. In these ways, they enable pupils to learn, for example, about the work of farmers, police, doctors and vets. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils develop a sufficiently detailed understanding of some of the key services and institutions that play an important role in British society. As a result, pupils' knowledge of the purpose and function of institutions such as hospitals and courts is less well developed.
34. Staff support pupils to develop their social awareness and to learn about the differences between right and wrong. For instance, staff involve the pupils in determining class rules. Pupils understand that they should be kind to their peers, and follow directions given by their trusted adults. Staff teach pupils to value each other's possessions and the different resources in school. Pupils learn how to make friends, work constructively with each other, take turns and share toys and equipment. Staff celebrate pupils' positive conduct and the headteacher provides public awards. As a result, pupils learn about the value of positive behaviour and how to take responsibility for their actions.
35. Leaders ensure that pupils develop an early economic understanding. For example, pupils learn about money and how it is used. Staff provide pupils with coins and a menu for their morning snacks. The pupils make choices and pay staff the correct amount for each item. Staff successfully familiarise pupils with the concept of monetary exchange and practical opportunities to learn about how and when money is used.
36. Leaders support pupils' preparation for their next steps. Leaders work collaboratively with pupils, parents and the local authority to ensure that transition arrangements are tailored to pupils' individual needs. They support pupils in developing an understanding of their future school, provide opportunities to visit new settings and work with receiving schools to promote a smooth and successful transition to secondary education.
37. Pupils learn about the importance of contribution and taking responsibility. For example, pupils help clear up at the end of lessons and in the dining hall when they have finished lunch. Older pupils take responsibility for laying the table for meals. Pupils begin to learn about the wider community and how they can interact with it, such as when learning about road safety, using public transport safely and using local public facilities, such as for swimming lessons. This supports pupils to develop an understanding of their role within the local community and how to participate in it safely and successfully.

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

38. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

39. The proprietor ensures that leaders implement effectively the safeguarding policy. The policy meets statutory requirements and is available to parents on the school website. Appropriately trained leaders with responsibility for safeguarding provide comprehensive training for staff, including through induction and regular updates and discussion at staff meetings. This ensures that staff are vigilant, respond promptly and report appropriately if they have any concerns, including low-level concerns about adults working with pupils.
40. The safeguarding team liaises effectively with external agencies, including the local authority, children's services and the police. Safeguarding leaders make any required referrals to these agencies promptly so that pupils receive the support they need. Safeguarding leaders maintain detailed records, which they store securely. Leaders use these records effectively to identify any patterns, inform decision-making and monitor experiences for pupils.
41. The proprietor body maintains effective oversight of safeguarding. Members of the proprietor body visit the school frequently and undertake an array of monitoring activity, such as meeting staff, parents and pupils, and observing lessons. They complete termly reviews of safeguarding and annual audits. They review a wide range of documentation and reports from leaders with responsibility for safeguarding. They review the safeguarding policy each year to ensure that it is updated in line with statutory requirements.
42. Pupils learn how to share any concerns with trusted adults. When needed, they are supported to use a range of different communication aids and devices to support their communication, such as core vocabulary communication boards. Staff provide pupils with lessons in how to stay safe, such as when crossing the road or when online. Leaders implement appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet. They review the effectiveness of these systems regularly and respond promptly in the event of any potentially inappropriate use.
43. Suitably trained leaders implement safer recruitment procedures effectively. No adult begins work with pupils until the required pre-employment checks have been completed. Thorough proprietorial oversight includes checks on the single central record (SCR) and personnel files to ensure these are maintained properly.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Buxlow School
Department for Education number	304/6051
Address	Buxlow School 5/6 Castleton Gardens Wembley HA9 7QJ
Phone number	020 8904 3615
Email address	centreadmin@buxlowschool.org.uk
Website	www.buxlowschool.org.uk
Proprietor	Inspired Learning Group (UK) Limited
Chair	Mr Amit Mehta
Headteacher	Ms Ciarren Littler
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	18
Date of previous inspection	28 to 29 June 2023

Information about the school

45. Buxlow School is a co-educational day school located in the London Borough of Brent. Since the previous inspection, the school has changed its focus and now describes itself as an independent school providing specialist provision for autistic pupils. It remains registered with the DfE as an independent school rather than an independent special school. It is owned and managed by Inspired Learning Group (UK) Limited who are the proprietor body. There is an advisory board which provides guidance to the proprietor body. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2025. There were no children on roll in the early years foundation stage at the time of the inspection.
46. The school has 18 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Each pupil has an education, health and care plan.
47. The school has identified English as an additional language for 15 pupils.
48. The school states its aims are to promote inclusion and celebrate neurodiversity, focus on pupils' individual learning priorities and work closely with families to guide each pupil's journey.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

9 to 11 June 2026

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

50. 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.

51. The inspection team considered the views of 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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