

School inspection report

24 to 26 March 2026

Long Close School

Upton Court Road

Upton

Slough

SL3 7LU

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'.

Contents

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS	3
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....	4
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS	4
SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....	5
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE	6
SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	7
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	8
SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	9
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	10
SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....	11
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY	12
SAFEGUARDING	13
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING	13
SCHOOL DETAILS	14
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....	15
INSPECTION DETAILS	16

Summary of inspection findings

1. The school's determination to realise its aims and prioritise the wellbeing of pupils is tangible. Leaders, staff and governors have created and embedded an ambitious vision for the achievement and development of pupils in their care. The school's 'Pegasus' philosophy promotes pupils' problem-solving, critical thinking and leadership skills. It underpins the school's culture, is mutually understood and is actively promoted. Collectively, governors, leaders and staff provide pupils with the skills, knowledge and resilience to be successful as citizens in British society.
2. Leaders and governors are experienced and skilled. The proprietor provides effective governance oversight. Governors ensure that leaders promote and prioritise pupils' wellbeing effectively and that leaders have the skills and knowledge necessary to fulfil their responsibilities. Collectively, they ensure that the requirements of the Standards are consistently met.
3. The curriculum reflects the school's aims. It provides opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and prepares them for future employment and life beyond school. The curriculum is enhanced by a weekly enrichment programme that focuses on critical thinking, problem-solving and leadership. Teachers create a positive learning environment. They are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. Their teaching keeps pupils focused and motivated. Some teachers do not provide pupils with precise guidance and feedback that supports them to know how to improve their understanding and learn as effectively as they could.
4. The early years is a happy and safe learning environment. Experienced, skilled and enthusiastic staff know the children well and adapt activities to suit their needs and interests. The curriculum balances structured learning with play-based activities, supporting children to develop essential early reading, writing and number skills, as well as to undergo vital emotional, social and physical development. The learning environment is well resourced and planned to support purposeful learning for the youngest children.
5. Kindness, respect and positive relationships are exhibited by staff and pupils. Pupils' views are heard and make a meaningful difference to how leaders make changes in the school. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculums are well planned, supporting pupils' understanding of themselves and others. Pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing is very well supported.
6. The school celebrates diversity and the importance of respect for those of different faiths, beliefs, lifestyles and cultures. Pupils develop financial literacy and skills in entrepreneurship, collaboration, negotiation and money management. These strengthen pupils' understanding of social and economic wellbeing, including while supporting a range of charitable causes. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to serve and contribute positively to the local community and wider society, through volunteering activities, charity work, supporting foodbanks and fundraising for global causes.
7. Safeguarding is effective and follows statutory guidance. Leaders and staff know pupils well. They have established a secure safeguarding culture that supports pupils' safety. Leaders implement appropriate training for staff which is updated regularly. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns promptly. Leaders keep suitable records of safeguarding concerns and take swift action as needed.

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 teachers consistently provide pupils with guidance and feedback that supports them to know how to improve their understanding and learn as effectively as possible.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders and governors prioritise the wellbeing of pupils in all decisions that they make. There has been significant change in leadership and governance since the previous inspection. Leaders and governors have managed this effectively. They have listened carefully to the views of a range of staff, pupils and parents before enacting change. They have embedded and modelled the principles of ambition, resilience and creativity in the development of all their changes to academic and wellbeing programmes.
9. Leaders are rigorous in their self-evaluation in relation to the school. Where the need for improvement is identified, leaders take appropriate action. They use the views of staff, pupils and parents to inform their self-evaluation. For example, in developing new approaches to behaviour, leaders have actively used the views of pupils, parents and staff to create a new behaviour, rewards and sanctions policy. Leaders monitor the impact of their changes appropriately. For example, they monitor pupils' progress rigorously, so that appropriate support is put in place, including for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
10. Governors know the school well and bring expertise and experience to their oversight of leaders' work. They undertake a range of activities to check on the effectiveness of the school, including frequent on-site visits. They work closely with leaders and provide appropriate support and challenge. Governors ensure that leaders have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to fulfil their responsibilities. A focus on pupils' wellbeing underpins all decision-making.
11. Teachers in the early years setting are suitably trained and effectively supported by skilled and enthusiastic leaders. Purposeful liaison between leaders, including governors with expertise, prioritises the learning and development of children and enables them to flourish. The well-planned curriculum and teaching, effective assessment, and carefully considered environment and wider opportunities for children prepare them well for the transition to Year 1.
12. Leaders safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils through effective management of risk. Staff are comprehensively trained to identify and manage risk on the school site, in the curriculum and during off-site activities. There is a broad and suitable range of risk assessments that are thorough and detailed. As a result, leaders take all reasonable action to keep pupils and staff safe.
13. Proprietors and leaders implement suitable policies and systems in line with the requirements of the Standards and statutory guidance. They ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met. There is an appropriate accessibility plan in place that is routinely reviewed. This ensures that all pupils can access the site and the curriculum. Leaders provide most of the required information using the school's website, and it is available to parents on request.
14. Leaders provide all required and appropriate information to parents and external agencies about individual pupils. For example, parents receive regular reports that detail information about their child's attainment and progress. Leaders inform the local authority if pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times. Leaders also provide the local authority with the required information about pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan), including that related to funding and finance.
15. The school process for responding to complaints is appropriate and in line with statutory requirements. Most complaints are resolved at an informal stage. Leaders maintain suitable records

of these concerns and the subsequent actions taken. Governors monitor this information to help inform any staff training or future decision-making.

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

16. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. Leaders have created a comprehensive curriculum that aligns with the school's ethos, provides academic rigour and prepares pupils for the modern world. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn over time, starting with the youngest children in the early years. They have planned schemes of work precisely, considering the order in which the content is taught over time, so that it helps pupils to gain the important knowledge and skills that they need to learn. The school's 'Pegasus' curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn in innovative ways and develop leadership skills. It promotes empathy for diverse cultures in the classroom and beyond. Pupils access a wide-ranging and ambitious curriculum, which emphasises the school's philosophy 'to inspire future leaders'.
18. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They use a range of strategies, such as questioning, to check on pupils' learning. They identify when some pupils are struggling and provide timely support to help them keep up with their peers. Teachers create a positive environment and provide appropriate encouragement. Teachers manage behaviour in lessons effectively through teaching that keeps pupils focused and motivated. As a result, pupils are focused on their work, try hard and behave well in lessons.
19. Owing to effective planning and skilled teaching, pupils learn the intended curriculum effectively. Younger pupils develop important foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 can work out totals and provide correct change when solving money problems during their entrepreneurial Easter sale. Older pupils develop precise understanding and knowledge of subject-specific content, which they apply with increasing complexity and independence.
20. Pupils across the school develop a thorough and safe understanding of the use of different forms of technology to enhance their learning. For example, pupils create and explore art through a range of digital media, build their own musical orchestrations using appropriate software and explore specific problems, creating their own online applications to find solutions.
21. Leaders have established an appropriate assessment framework. Leaders use a range of assessment information to identify when pupils need more help. They ensure that teachers are accurate and knowledgeable in their use of assessment, including examination requirements. As a result, most pupils learn and achieve well over time, including in their GCSE qualifications at the end of Year 11. They transition to highly appropriate post-16 further education and training.
22. Most teachers provide guidance and feedback to pupils about how to improve their understanding and their work. However, some teachers do not provide guidance and feedback that enhances pupils' learning. Where this occurs, pupils are not well supported to address misconceptions or apply their learning more effectively.
23. Early years staff implement a comprehensive and well-sequenced curriculum that balances a wide range of planned and play-based activities that capture and sustain children's interest. Children's early communication, language and mathematics skills are well supported through high-quality interactions with staff and adept phonics teaching. Children's learning and development throughout their time in the early years means that they are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.

24. Appropriately qualified and well-trained leaders precisely identify the needs of pupils who have SEND. Well-considered classroom strategies are outlined in the school's pupil passport documents and are shared with teachers. Teachers use these strategies in lessons and adapt lessons appropriately. Leaders use a range of information, including the views of parents, pupils and staff, to evaluate the impact of these strategies and where further support, including intervention, is needed. Leaders, teachers and staff ensure that pupils access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers and learn and achieve well.
25. There are a very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and who are in the early stages of learning English. Leaders and teachers support pupils well by identifying their linguistic needs and providing in-class and additional intervention to help them develop important reading, writing and speaking skills in English. Over time, these pupils develop essential language skills, allowing them to access the curriculum effectively.
26. Pupils have access to a range of co-curricular activities that have been planned as part of the skills-first philosophy of the school's 'Pegasus' curriculum. Pupils pursue interests and develop their knowledge and confidence in a wide variety of areas such as drama, music, creative skills, coding and sport. Leaders have created an enrichment curriculum that focuses on critical thinking, problem-solving and leadership. As a result, pupils direct their own learning, selecting from a range of activities including debating, Model United Nations and building a business.

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

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

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

28. The school helps pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, involving them in their own learning. Pupils' wellbeing is well supported through effective pastoral care. When needed, leaders work with external agencies, such as mental health teams, to gain more specialist support for pupils. Positive relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils feel heard and that their views matter. For example, regular school council meetings and prefect mentorship meetings with the headteacher enable pupils to ask questions about the school and facilitate change. This has led to changes such as adjustments to the food menu, and changes to rotas to enable greater access to sports facilities.
29. Leaders support pupils to reflect and develop spiritual awareness in a range of ways. For example, the youngest children are taught to enjoy learning in nature and the outdoor environment. Pupils are routinely asked through their lessons and assemblies to take time to reflect on the non-material aspects of their lives. Pupils are invited to celebrate their own faith and culture with their peers through school assemblies and the school's culture day.
30. In the early years, children's physical and emotional wellbeing is well developed. Children are taught to recognise their feelings and think about the feelings of others. Staff model the interactions that they want children to emulate. Warm interactions between children and staff help children to settle quickly and to be confident and safe in developing increasing independence in managing daily tasks. The curriculum supports children to develop fine- and gross-motor skills, giving them plenty of opportunities to throw, catch, balance, stretch and run. As a result, children are happy, respectful towards one another, learn to regulate their emotions and develop well emotionally and physically.
31. The PSHE and RSE programmes are appropriate and carefully planned to help pupils develop an understanding of themselves and others in an age-appropriate way. Effective teaching helps pupils to develop their understanding of matters such as healthy relationships and physical and mental health. Leaders collaborate with families to ensure that they are aware of the content and requirements of the RSE programme. Leaders routinely review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the contextual needs of pupils.
32. The physical education (PE) curriculum is appropriate and designed to meet the needs of pupils. It is underpinned by a robust system of assessment and feedback. A broad range of sports, fitness opportunities and competitive fixtures are offered. Leaders look for ways in which they can continue to make the programme wider and more inclusive, adding sports such as boccia and new-age curling. Many pupils enjoy participating in local inter-school competitions. The curriculum, alongside PSHE, teaches pupils about the importance of exercise and other aspects of healthy lifestyles, such as sleep.
33. Leaders have established effective approaches to managing pupils' behaviour. These approaches are underpinned by the behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy. Good behaviour is promoted through a range of methods including celebration assemblies, student shout-outs and the 'Pegasus' awards, which recognise pupils who embody the school's values. Pupils and staff understand leaders' expectations, including the importance of rules and learning from mistakes. Leaders deal quickly and effectively with any incidents of misbehaviour. Incidents of bullying are rare in the school and managed effectively when they do occur. Leaders maintain detailed records of incidents

so that they can identify trends that need further investigation. As a result, pupils behave well and are kind to one another.

34. Leaders ensure that they meet the requirements for health and safety, including fire risk. The school site and buildings are routinely checked, cleaned and well maintained. Leaders are quick to take action, when needed, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. There is appropriate accommodation for medical treatment, with well-trained staff administering first aid, including paediatric first aid, appropriately and in line with the school's policy and procedures. Staff in the early years are knowledgeable and manage the additional vulnerabilities of caring for younger children, for example when eating. Supervision levels throughout the school are appropriate, and include suitably qualified staff in the early years setting.
35. The admission and attendance registers are suitably kept in line with statutory guidance. Leaders work with families and external agencies, when needed, to support the attendance of any pupils about whom there are concerns. Staff inform the local authority when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard transition times.

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

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

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

37. Through the religious studies (RS) and PSHE curriculum and other activities, the school vigorously encourages mutual respect. Pupils are taught about the protections afforded to people based on their protected characteristics and why this is important. An array of activities, such as form times dedicated to topics on race, religion and disability, working with local charities, themed lunches, celebration of International Women's Day and events that recognise different religious festivals, help pupils to appreciate the different experiences of people in society. The curriculum is enhanced by a structured programme of assemblies focusing on different cultural events such as Bandi Chor Diwas, Lunar New Year and VE Day. As a result, pupils treat one another with mutual respect and celebrate the diversity of the school community.
38. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of important fundamental British values and enables their personal development. For example, pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong, and the importance of taking responsibility for their actions. They are taught about the rule of law and about public institutions such as the police and courts. They learn about values and concepts, such as democracy, through the curriculum and in practical ways. For example, the school council is an active and respected democratic body whose views are valued by both pupils and leaders. Pupils also express their views through regular formal surveys and via a concern box. As a result, pupils are listened to, and their views are considered when school policy is decided.
39. Pupils develop an understanding of economic wellbeing and entrepreneurial enterprise through the school's 'Pegasus' and PSHE curriculums. From an early age, the youngest children learn about the role of money in purchasing things. As they get older, pupils learn about concepts such as profit, loss, the appropriate use of money and financial literacy. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities beyond the taught curriculum to develop their economic understanding. For example, pupils organise bake sales and Christmas fairs to raise funds to support local and international charities.
40. In the early years, children develop social and collaborative skills, verbalising their thoughts with their peers and adults about how they can solve problems. The curriculum includes an appropriate programme of activities that promote social development, such as sharing toys, turn-taking, and collaborative tasks. As a result, the youngest children respond quickly and appropriately to instructions, share kindly with other children, listen carefully and wait patiently for their turn.
41. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and contribute positively to the school and local community. Pupils take on roles and responsibilities in the school, such as on the school council or in raising funds for charity. Older pupils take on roles mentoring and supporting younger pupils, including through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE). Many pupils undertake activities to support local foodbanks and other community initiatives. Other pupils raise money to support hygiene and health initiatives for people in parts of Uganda.
42. Leaders have created a comprehensive career guidance programme that is effectively delivered. The programme is ambitious for students and mindful of their personal interests. The school delivers bespoke, impartial guidance, ensuring that each pupil receives tailored advice. This includes school assemblies and presentations by local employers and visits from leaders of sixth-form colleges. Pupils attend careers talks by visiting speakers that are specific to their year group. Older pupils

receive individual guidance from teachers through a mentorship programme. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

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

43. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

44. Leaders have created a safeguarding culture that prioritises pupils' safety and wellbeing. Leaders' systems are underpinned by effective safeguarding policies and procedures that are aligned with statutory guidance. The policies are available on the school's website.
45. Safeguarding leaders are well trained. They act swiftly and appropriately when concerns are raised. Leaders respond to pupils' safeguarding needs appropriately, including by supporting their mental health and wellbeing through in-school support. When required, leaders work effectively with external agencies, such as children's services, the local authority and police. Suitable records are kept securely.
46. Staff receive regular training about their safeguarding responsibilities and informal updates, including in relation to the management of low-level concerns about adults working with pupils. New staff receive comprehensive induction training. Staff are vigilant to signs of concern and make timely referrals to safeguarding leaders.
47. Governors are appropriately trained and fully understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding pupils. The designated safeguarding governor meets regularly with the safeguarding team, visits the school, reviews documentation and speaks to pupils and staff. The wider governing body receives regular updates and reports about safeguarding issues. Governors use a range of information to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' work and ensure the effective implementation of the school's safeguarding policy.
48. Pupils are provided with a variety of ways in which to report their concerns, including through approaching trusted adults. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online, through the curriculum and a comprehensive programme of assemblies. The school has an effective internet filtering and monitoring system. Leaders act quickly and appropriately when there are any concerns about how the internet or online devices are being used.
49. Leaders undertake all required pre-employment checks on adults before they work with pupils. A record of these checks is kept on the single central record (SCR), which is maintained appropriately and accurately. Staff involved in recruitment are thoroughly trained in safer recruitment practices.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

50. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Long Close School
Department for Education number	871/6001
Address	Long Close School Upton Court Road Upton Slough Berkshire SL3 7LU
Phone number	01753 520095
Email address	info@longcloseschool.co.uk
Website	www.longcloseschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Redshift Education Ltd
Chair	Mr Timothy Fisher
Headteacher	Dr Richard Robson
Age range	2 to 16
Number of pupils	188
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 February 2023

Information about the school

51. Long Close is an independent co-educational day school in Slough, Berkshire. At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor of the school was Cognita Schools Ltd. Redshift Education Ltd took ownership of the school in 2025, and the company's directors provide governance. The chair took on the role in 2025. A new headteacher joined in 2024.
52. The school has three sections: a nursery and pre-school, for children aged 2 to 4 years; a prep school, for pupils aged 5 to 11 years; and a senior school, for pupils aged 11 to 16 years.
53. There are 39 children in the early years setting, comprising three Nursery classes and one Reception class.
54. The school has identified 32 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
55. The school has identified English as an additional language for a small number of pupils.
56. The school states its aims are to inspire future leaders, preparing pupils for future academic success and life beyond the classroom.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

24 to 26 March

57. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The on-site inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

58. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of co-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the proprietor and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the facilities for the youngest pupils
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

59. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit www.isi.net.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net