

School inspection report

14 to 16 October 2025

Windrush Valley School

The Green
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Ascott-under-Wychwood
Chipping Norton
OX7 6AN

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 have a clear vision for the school. They aim to enable pupils to develop holistically, taking into account their individual needs and interests, so that they grow into well-rounded young people. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing and promote it successfully.
2. The proprietor works closely with school leaders, providing challenge and support. The proprietor and the chair of governors visit regularly to assure themselves that leaders are fulfilling their roles effectively. This helps them to ensure that the Standards are met consistently.
3. The school's curriculum is appropriate and meets pupils' needs, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum covers a suitable range of subjects and is generally planned well. Teachers are knowledgeable and deliver the curriculum effectively. Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
4. In a small number of subjects, planning for the progression of pupils' skills is not fully developed. Where this is the case, such as in economic education, the development of specific skills is not planned systematically, step by step, over time. Pupils' skills are less well developed in cases such as this.
5. The early years provision meets children's needs. The curriculum is carefully designed to cover a breadth of learning in ways that are interesting and engaging. Children learn to play co-operatively together, sharing toys and enjoying adults' attention. Children are well supervised and cared for, including when they are eating. They make good progress during the early years and are ready for Year 1.
6. The school's 'Windrush 360' programme has a positive impact on pupils' social and emotional development, as well as their learning. It encourages pupils to focus on and develop values that leaders have identified as being most important, specifically kindness, effort and respect. Pupils behave well, try hard and treat each other thoughtfully and respectfully.
7. Pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. Attendance is monitored closely, and appropriate action is taken, where necessary, when pupils are absent from school. At the beginning of the inspection, the school's admission register did not include all required information. This was rectified before the end of the on-site inspection.
8. The school has a robust safeguarding culture. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns about pupils in a timely fashion. These are acted upon promptly by the leaders responsible for safeguarding. Leaders prioritise ensuring that only suitable people are appointed to work in the school. Recruitment practices are robust and follow statutory guidance.

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:

- develop the curriculum so that the intended progression of pupils' skills is clear in all subjects
- develop strategies to ensure that the school's admission register routinely contains all required information about pupils.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders give a high priority to the promotion of pupils' wellbeing. They put what is best for pupils at the heart of the decisions they make. The school's 'Windrush 360' programme links directly to the school's aims and is widely known and understood by pupils, parents and staff. The programme is built on leaders' aim to develop 'the whole child', rather than focusing solely on academic achievement. Leaders do this well and, as a result, the school is a positive, happy place that pupils enjoy coming to.
10. Processes for evaluating the school's effectiveness work well. Leaders reflect on what is going well and what could be improved. They use this evaluation to identify priorities for the school's improvement, such as the continuing development of the curriculum. Leaders take appropriate actions to address the priorities that they identify.
11. The proprietor puts measures in place to check that leaders have the skills and knowledge they need and that they fulfil their roles effectively. For example, the proprietor has appointed a chair of governors who visits the school regularly and meets with the headteacher and other leaders. The proprietor also meets with leaders directly, either online or in person. This provides the proprietor with assurance that the Standards are met consistently.
12. The school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The school's accessibility plan focuses well on ensuring that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and to the site. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils about equality and the importance of treating people fairly.
13. Processes for managing risks, including those that are not immediately obvious, are robust. Leaders are knowledgeable and well trained. Risk assessments are suitably detailed and include appropriate measures to mitigate the risks identified. They cover a wide range of areas, including the school building, learning activities and educational visits. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
14. Leaders provide parents of current and prospective pupils with a range of information about the school, mainly via its website. Leaders and teachers make themselves readily available to parents. Annual reports to parents provide clear and useful information about pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders report to the local authority, as required, when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.
15. The school's policies are shared appropriately with pupils, staff and parents so that they are widely known and understood. They are implemented fairly and consistently. Leaders keep up to date with changes to statutory guidance and update policies accordingly. For example, leaders are fully aware of recent changes to early years requirements and ensure that policy and practice reflect them.
16. Measures are in place for parents to raise any concerns about the school, including informally in the first instance. When issues arise, leaders follow the complaints policy and record details of the concern, the outcome and any actions taken.
17. Leaders work with external agencies to promote pupils' wellbeing, such as charities which provide first aid training for pupils. Leaders establish and maintain relationships with the local authority and local safeguarding partners in order to remain up to date with matters relating to pupils' wellbeing.

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 covers a suitable range of subjects including English, mathematics, science, design and technology (DT), geography, performing arts and physical education (PE). It promotes fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance, particularly through PSHE and religious education (RE). Leaders intend for pupils to develop a love of learning and an understanding of a breadth of subjects. They are successful in this aim. Pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time at the school. Results of the national curriculum assessments in Year 6 are typically above average.
20. The school uses a range of carefully selected commercial schemes of work in some subjects, and school-devised plans in others, to guide teaching. The plans clearly highlight the subject knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and remember, and how this develops over time. Teachers are knowledgeable and deliver the curriculum effectively.
21. In a few subjects, it is less clear how leaders intend pupils' key skills and understanding to develop over time. For example, it is not clear how pupils' understanding of chronology in history builds systematically as they move through the school. Where this is the case, pupils' skills in these areas are less developed than they could be.
22. The early years curriculum uses a topic-based approach. Topics are planned on a two-year cycle to avoid unwanted repetition. The curriculum fully covers both the prime and specific areas of learning. Children are provided with opportunities to explore learning through play. They also learn through well-planned activities led by adults. They make good progress during their time in the early years so that they are ready to move to Year 1 when the time comes.
23. Leaders have chosen an accredited systematic synthetic phonics programme, which is implemented well. Children in the early years get off to a good start with learning phonics and this continues as they move into Year 1 and beyond. Alongside learning to read books competently and confidently, pupils are taught comprehension skills so that they understand the texts that they read. Pupils make good progress and, typically, all pupils reach at least the expected level in the Year 6 national curriculum assessments in reading, with many reaching the higher standard.
24. Children start to learn the foundations of mathematics in the early years. For example, children learn to instantly recognise how many items there are in a small group of objects, without needing to count them. This is built upon as pupils move up through the school. Pupils are given resources to use during mathematics lessons that help them to understand concepts and to calculate accurately. Teachers give pupils plentiful opportunities to solve mathematical problems and develop their reasoning skills. Pupils make good progress in mathematics.
25. The school provides effective provision and support for pupils who have SEND. Leaders know pupils' needs well and put plans in place to address them. These are known and understood by staff, who implement them fully. Pupils are provided with the support they need in lessons, and learning is adapted to meet their needs. Pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.
26. Suitable provision is in place for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Leaders identify where pupils need additional support or adaptations to the curriculum and put these measures in place. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress.

27. Teachers have high expectations for pupils. They make sure that the school's rules are followed routinely so that classrooms are calm and orderly. This helps pupils to make good progress.
28. Teachers routinely check that pupils have understood and remember what they have been taught. In addition, more formal assessments provide teachers and leaders with information about how well pupils are doing individually and in comparison to other pupils nationally. Leaders and teachers use assessment information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, and provide the support needed to address them.
29. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are offered clubs relating to their interests, including computer programming, music and sport. The 'reach for the stars' club encourages pupils to think about their future lives and to be ambitious. Pupils go on a range of trips to places of interest and residential visits, including overseas. These opportunities help pupils to develop their interests and their social skills.

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

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

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

31. An atmosphere of mutual respect permeates the school. Staff routinely model respectful behaviour in their interactions with pupils and with each other. This helps pupils to understand what is expected of them and how they should behave towards other people. Pupils learn about the differences between people, such as race and disability, through the PSHE curriculum and assemblies. They learn that all people should be treated respectfully, regardless of their personal characteristics.
32. Pupils learn about the world's major religions through assemblies, RE and special events. They learn about people's different beliefs and celebrations. Pupils visit the local church for assemblies and to mark major events in the Christian calendar, such as Easter and Christmas. Younger pupils experience the awe and wonder of the natural world during their weekly trips to local forests.
33. The PSHE curriculum includes relationships education and is based on a commercially produced scheme of work. Parents are consulted about the programme each year and leaders take their views and suggestions into account. The PSHE curriculum is taught well and includes learning about wellbeing, health, diversity and safety. For example, as part of their learning about health, pupils are taught about hygiene, healthy lifestyles and how people change as they grow. Older pupils learn about the changes that happen during puberty. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding steadily as they move through the school.
34. The PE curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about and practise a range of sports including tag rugby, hockey, yoga and dance. Pupils regularly play fixtures against pupils from other schools. From Year 1 onwards, pupils have weekly swimming lessons. The PE curriculum is delivered by specialist staff. As a result, pupils make good progress in developing their physical skills and have positive attitudes to fitness.
35. In the early years, effective provision is in place for children's personal, emotional and physical development. Staff plan appropriate activities that help children to learn to share and co-operate with others. Children learn to manage their own emotions and cope with frustrations and disappointments. Children are given lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills, such as running, jumping and balancing, in the outdoor areas. They have a weekly lesson with the school's PE coach.
36. The school's attendance register is maintained properly, in line with current guidance. Pupils attend regularly and on time. Leaders follow up on absence rigorously, including in the early years. At the beginning of the inspection, the admission register did not contain all required information. Some pupils' previous schools had not been transferred across from the hard-copy register when the school moved to an electronic system. The date that some pupils joined the school was also not transferred accurately in some cases. These errors were corrected before the end of the on-site inspection.
37. The behaviour policy is applied fairly and consistently. The 'Windrush 360' programme motivates pupils to do their best and behave well. Pupils follow the rules throughout the school, both in lessons and during less structured parts of the day. Pupils are friendly and welcoming, routinely displaying good manners in their interactions with others.

38. Pupils learn about bullying, and the forms it can take, through the PSHE curriculum and assemblies. They are taught what they should do if they ever experience bullying themselves or witness it happening to others. Bullying incidents happen rarely. When they do, they are dealt with quickly and effectively by leaders.
39. Suitable arrangements are in place for first aid and the administration of medicines. All staff receive specialist paediatric first aid training, covering key areas such as choking. Leaders have put stringent arrangements in place to ensure safe eating practices in the early years.
40. The school is clean and well maintained. Health and safety processes are robust, including for fire safety. The school uses external contractors to regularly check that, for example, the fire alarm and fire extinguishers are working properly. Pupils take part in termly fire drills so that they know what to do if an emergency should arise.
41. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day. There are always plenty of staff available, including during break- and lunchtimes. This helps pupils to feel safe and cared for as there are always trusted adults available to help and support them, when needed. The ratios of staff to children in the early years meet statutory requirements.

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

42. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

43. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and individual liberty, through PSHE, assemblies and other aspects of the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils in Year 6 learn about the role of manifestos in the democratic process. Pupils are given opportunities to experience the democratic process through, for example, voting for the school council.
44. Pupils learn that people have different views, beliefs and ways of life. They are taught about the importance of being fair and not judging other people. For example, in the early years, books are carefully chosen to challenge stereotypes and help children understand respectful behaviour. Pupils learn the importance of respecting other people's views and celebrating the diversity in society. This helps to prepare them for life in British society.
45. The school's 'Windrush 360' programme focuses on the core values of effort, kindness and respect within the academic, personal and social areas of pupils' lives. Pupils receive points in their 'journal of achievement' for demonstrating the core values in each area. These build up to sought-after rewards. Pupils value the 'Windrush 360' programme. It is successful in encouraging them to try hard, alongside being sociable, responsible and respectful citizens.
46. Pupils take part in house events and support each other in competitions. Leaders encourage pupils to think about how they can make a difference in the school, their community and the wider world. For example, pupils undertake litter-picking sessions in the area around the school. Pupils are involved in a project that helps them learn about and promote sustainability within the school. Each house chooses a charity to support each term. These activities help pupils to develop an understanding of the importance of making positive contributions to society.
47. Pupils are taught about their rights and how these are balanced with responsibilities. Children begin to learn about the school's rules as soon as they join the early years and this continues as they move through the school. This helps pupils to learn about the difference between right and wrong and to develop a moral code. Pupils learn about the country's laws, their importance in society and the consequences of breaking them.
48. Social development is a key aspect of the early years curriculum. Leaders provide an environment where children are encouraged to play with others and to learn to share. Children learn to co-operate with each other through, for example, activities in the weekly forest session.
49. Pupils learn about public institutions and services through the curriculum, assemblies and school visits. This begins in the early years where children learn about 'people who help us', such as the police, paramedics and the fire service. Older pupils learn about the parliamentary system and the role of members of parliament.
50. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and to help others. They work together co-operatively in their classes and as part of the house system. Pupils are given opportunities to take on specific responsibilities such as becoming a member of the school or eco-council or head of their house.
51. Economic education is taught through the mathematics curriculum and through PSHE. However, the progression of skills in this area is not fully established. That is, it is not completely clear how leaders

intend pupils' economic knowledge and skills to develop over time. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress in their economic education as they could do.

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

52. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

53. Leaders give safeguarding a high priority. There is a robust safeguarding culture throughout the school. As a result, staff understand the importance of vigilance and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive training when they join the school, as part of their induction, as well as through regular ongoing training sessions, including about the 'Prevent' duty.
54. Suitable processes are in place for staff to report any allegations about adults, including leaders. Staff know how to report low-level concerns, including making self-referrals, and do so appropriately. Leaders take necessary action in response to any concerns that are raised.
55. Leaders responsible for safeguarding are knowledgeable and well trained. They attend local safeguarding forums and conferences, which helps them to remain informed about changes to local and national practice. Leaders provide staff with weekly updates about different aspects of safeguarding. These give staff useful reminders and help them to remain up to date regarding changes to statutory guidance.
56. Staff are alert to possible indications of abuse or neglect. They report any concerns promptly using the school's agreed systems. Leaders respond appropriately to concerns, taking timely action to protect pupils, where necessary. They work with local agencies, such as the police and children's social care, in pupils' best interests.
57. Safer recruitment processes are rigorous. All required checks are carried out before anyone is allowed to start work at the school. The single central record (SCR) of pre-appointment checks meets requirements.
58. Pupils learn about safety through PSHE, assemblies and other aspects of the curriculum. For example, children in the early years receive regular reminders about the safety rules during their weekly visits to a local forest area. Pupils learn about road safety when they walk to places in the village, such as the sports field. Pupils are taught about online safety through the PSHE and computing curriculums. They learn about the risks around sharing information with people they do not know and how to seek help if they are concerned.
59. The school has suitable processes in place for filtering and monitoring the internet. The school uses external companies to restrict what pupils are able to see and to monitor their use of the internet. Leaders receive alerts to notify them of any potential issues with internet use. They respond to these promptly and appropriately.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Windrush Valley School
Department for Education number	931/6105
Address	Windrush Valley School The Green 2 London Lane Ascott-under-Wychwood Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 6AN
Phone number	01993 831793
Email address	info@windrushvalleyschool.co.uk
Website	www.windrushvalleyschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Ingenio Education Ltd
Chair	Ms Fung King Jacqueline Chung
Headteacher	Mrs Amanda Douglas
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	105
Date of previous inspection	5 to 8 July 2022

Information about the school

61. Windrush Valley is a co-educational day school in Ascott-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire. The school is owned by a limited company. It is governed by the proprietor and a small advisory board. The school operates on a single site.
62. There are 20 children in the early years, comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
63. The school has identified 17 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). There are currently no pupils at the school in receipt of full or partial funding from the local authority.
64. The school has identified five pupils as speaking English as an additional language (EAL).
65. The school states its aims are to encourage and motivate every child to achieve their full potential by inspiring excellence, building character and being united in purpose. This is supported by the school's core values of effort, kindness and responsibility, to encourage and support a holistic approach to every child's development. The school aims to provide a community that fosters holistic development and growth, where all members feel safe, happy and respected, and to nurture confident, responsible individuals who are ready to make a positive impact on society.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

14 to 16 October 2025

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

67. Inspection activities included:

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

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

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

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

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