

School inspection report

14 to 16 April 2026

Brick Lane School

Bacon Street

Tower Hamlets

London

E2 6DY

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 demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Their vision is clearly articulated through the 'five to thrive' improvement strategy that underpins the school's aims and ethos. This strategy is translated into purposeful and ambitious development planning that promotes high expectations for pupils' educational experiences through continuous professional development for teachers and teaching assistants.
2. Leaders are successful at promoting pupils' wellbeing through the school's values of independence, meaningful engagement and positive relationships. Leaders ensure that pupils' successes and achievements are regularly recognised and celebrated. As a result, pupils have a well-developed sense of belonging, alongside enhanced self-esteem and confidence.
3. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Leaders cater for the wide range of pupils' needs through three different educational pathways and by adapting lessons according to pupils' current targets. Teachers ensure that pupils' interests are built into lessons so that they are engaged in their learning and make good progress. Across subjects, teachers break down learning into small steps with frequent opportunities to revisit and practise skills. They set incremental targets for pupils, gradually reducing the level of support they provide as pupils' confidence and skills increase. This enables pupils to consolidate their knowledge and apply it more independently over time.
4. Leaders promote cohesive and effective collaboration between the clinical and education teams, supporting a shared understanding of pupils' needs. Regular communication and joint planning ensure that therapeutic insights inform educational practice, while educational priorities are reinforced consistently through clinical support. This integrated approach contributes positively to pupils' wellbeing, engagement and progress across the school. However, at times, some under-developed areas and resources for therapeutic support mean that the clinical and education teams cannot consistently provide such support as effectively as possible.
5. Leaders proactively enable pupils to be ready to learn. They employ, and regularly review, strategies that help pupils to regulate their emotions, and monitor individual pupils' engagement in the learning process. These strategies include having clear routines and well-structured transition times. As a result, pupils typically feel settled and are able to participate positively in their learning.
6. Governors and leaders have thorough systems in place for ensuring that health and safety across the school is well managed. Leaders provide effective training for staff and make use of external audits to ensure that the premises and equipment are regularly serviced and fit for purpose.
7. Pupils are supported effectively to develop social awareness and an understanding of the wider community. Through well-planned opportunities and positive modelling by leaders and staff, pupils learn to build respectful relationships. Pupils are well supported to understand options for life beyond school.
8. Governors and leaders maintain effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements, ensuring that suitable policies and procedures are fully embedded and consistently followed by staff. Staff demonstrate high levels of awareness and confidence in identifying and responding to concerns,

which are managed promptly and appropriately. Consequently, pupils' welfare is prioritised effectively, and a firm culture of care is evident across 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 areas and resources for therapeutic support are developed and utilised to meet pupils' therapeutic needs as effectively as possible.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing, including by placing pupils' views, individual needs and personal development at the centre of decision-making. Leaders actively seek pupils' opinions and ask about their experiences, recognising that they have much to say about their own learning and wellbeing. Leaders foster an inclusive culture in which pupils feel valued and have their achievements celebrated. Leaders provide opportunities that are tailored to pupils' individual needs, enabling personal growth, confidence and positive outcomes over time. Taken together, this approach ensures that pupils' wellbeing is at the forefront of leadership practice and school improvement planning.
10. Governance provides effective oversight of the school. Governors hold leaders to account appropriately and support strategic improvement. They ensure that leaders have suitable professional knowledge and a firm understanding of regulatory requirements, which enables them to meet the Standards consistently. Leaders' skills are evident in the effective development, communication and implementation of policies.
11. Leaders demonstrate clear strategic vision that is understood and implemented consistently by staff. The school's 'five to thrive' improvement plan is informed by regular review and reflection, enabling leaders to respond promptly and effectively to changing circumstances and pupils' emerging needs. This includes establishing three distinct educational pathways to meet pupils' different aptitudes and equipping staff through continual professional development. As a result, adjustments to provision are purposeful and well judged, supporting ongoing improvement and positive outcomes for pupils.
12. Governors and leaders have established thorough systems for the management of risk. Leaders identify risks through regular and systematic assessments, and review of appropriate control measures and any actions taken, to ensure that these remain effective. Leaders implement suitable risk assessments for individual pupils, when required. Staff are aware of procedures and their responsibilities for implementing and monitoring risk assessments.
13. Leaders ensure that all required information is provided and made available to parents. Policies and information, including those relating to safeguarding, the curriculum and complaints, are published in a clear and accessible format on the school's website and are provided on request. Leaders provide parents with regular reports about their child's progress, which are appropriately detailed and co-ordinated with the annual review of EHC plans.
14. Leaders have an accessibility plan in place that is reviewed regularly and informed by ongoing assessment of pupils' needs. The plan sets out actions and timescales to improve access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information. Recent actions include reviewing how technology can enhance access to the curriculum and ensuring that signage is accessible. As a result, the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.
15. Leaders work effectively with a wide range of external agencies to secure specialist advice and timely support for pupils. They communicate relevant information appropriately and use professional recommendations to inform EHC plan outcomes and annual reviews. They liaise proactively with the local authority about financing for EHC plans and about pupils' attendance. They

also inform the local authority whenever pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times of transition.

16. The school's complaints procedure is clear, accessible and published on the school's website. Concerns are handled promptly and in line with the stated stages and timescales, with outcomes communicated appropriately. Leaders and governors maintain suitable oversight of complaints, using any themes arising to inform improvement and to help ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly and consistently.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum designed to enable pupils to develop as successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It is suitably adapted to meet the differing and often substantial needs of pupils. The curriculum is relevant and engaging, comprising three different educational pathways to suit pupils' needs and to provide high expectations for their learning. The curriculum is carefully designed to develop pupils' communication skills, with teachers ensuring that they skilfully enable pupils to use different forms of language to communicate and learn. Teachers meet pupils' wide range of communication needs, from providing pictures and signing to support pupils who are non-verbal to using high-quality texts to enable verbal pupils to extend their vocabulary and comprehension.
19. The curriculum is underpinned by the measures taken to enable pupils to be ready to learn and to engage with learning opportunities. Leaders ensure that staff receive effective training that enables them to successfully use strategies based on established research about how emotional regulation helps pupils to be ready to learn. These include strategies such as 'sensory circuits', which involves a series of physical activities to promote a sense of calm. Staff carefully monitor how pupils are engaging with learning and systematically record 'lost learning' times for each pupil. This enables them to review individual pupils and consider whether strategies for regulation are effective. As a result, staff respond promptly and adapt their teaching and support strategies as necessary. Leaders analyse 'lost learning' data to inform targets for pupils and to guide further training for staff.
20. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress over time. Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching methods to engage pupils, while also following pupils' interests to make learning enjoyable. Teachers use a 'blended' approach in their teaching, combining traditional educational activities with specialised support, to ensure that learning is inclusive and effective. For example, when engaging pupils in question-and-answer sessions, teachers use signing and visual communication devices so that pupils with different needs can access the activity. Teaching assistants work collaboratively with teachers throughout the teaching process, contributing positively and extremely effectively to pupils' learning and engagement. Teaching staff are skilled in offering precise and purposeful praise, clearly identifying the specific skills pupils have demonstrated, which supports pupils in recognising their own capabilities.
21. Leaders implement a highly personalised and rigorous assessment framework. They collate and analyse a wide range of data to monitor progress, including daily review of individual education plans (IEPs), information from externally moderated qualifications, evidence from clinical sessions, emotional regulation information and 'lost learning' records. Together, this data provides a comprehensive picture of each pupil's academic, communication, social and emotional development. Leaders make use of this data to continually adapt teaching, therapeutic input and support strategies. Leaders ensure that progress is recorded through structured tracking systems, learning journeys and visual evidence, enabling pupils, parents and professionals to engage meaningfully in the assessment process. This robust approach ensures that learning remains responsive to pupils' emerging needs.
22. Leaders promote effective liaison between the clinical and education teams to ensure that therapeutic support and teaching is seamlessly aligned to pupils' EHC plans. Learning outcomes from EHC plans are translated into achievable targets through individual IEPs. The clinical and education teams foster pupils' progress by setting incremental targets, gradually reducing the level of support

as pupils' skills increase, and amending IEPs accordingly. This co-ordinated approach ensures that pupils make progress in their learning as a result of the experienced support they receive in relation to their therapeutic and educational needs. However, some of the school's internal and external areas and resources for therapeutic support are under-developed, which makes it more difficult, at times, to provide support for pupils that is as effective as possible, particularly for those who have the most complex needs.

23. Leaders support pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) through their individualised approach to developing pupils' language and communication skills. By using strategies such as focusing on actions, objects and pictures that represent words, teachers enable pupils who speak EAL to develop their understanding and use of English. Leaders review assessment data to ensure that pupils who speak EAL make good progress.
24. Clubs and recreational activities make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and wellbeing. Leaders plan opportunities carefully to reflect pupils' individual needs and interests. Clubs and activities take place flexibly throughout the school day, including on arrival during 'morning rota' time, at breaktime and lunchtimes and during Friday afternoon 'my time', when pupils choose from activities such as football and tabletop role-playing games. Activities support pupils' social interaction, communication, physical development and emotional regulation, enabling them to learn to engage with peers and adults in a structured environment.

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

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

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

26. Leaders promote the school's value of building positive relationships to ensure that the promotion of respect for others is a consistent strand running through daily school life. During 'morning rota' time, staff model greeting others respectfully and encourage pupils to do the same. Teachers help pupils to develop key skills that underpin respect, such as turn-taking, listening to others and realising that it is acceptable to hold different views and have different interests to others. Teaching approaches emphasise the importance of listening to pupils' opinions and choices, creating an environment in which pupils learn to respect both themselves and others.
27. Leaders support pupils' spiritual development through opportunities that encourage an awareness of the wider world. The daily 'morning rota' provides structured time for pupils to engage with age-appropriate news and current events, helping them to recognise what is happening beyond their immediate environment and to begin to understand the idea of global community. This is reinforced through shared experiences, including assemblies, that explore themes such as 'Earth Day', which encourages pupils to consider how to care for the world and their role within it.
28. Leaders ensure that pupils develop growing confidence and self-esteem through a culture in which their views are actively sought and valued. Staff acknowledge and celebrate pupils' achievements regularly such as, for example, by presenting certificates during assemblies. These experiences collectively support pupils in developing positive self-belief, pride in their achievements and increasing self-awareness.
29. Leaders ensure that personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is thoughtfully planned. The curriculum is effective at enabling pupils to identify and manage their emotions and to learn about promoting their health. Throughout PSHE lessons, the use of carefully adapted 'social stories' that provide visual information about topics such as meeting new people and being safe online enables staff to meet a wide range of needs and developmental stages in a supportive and accessible way. PSHE themes, such as supporting positive mental health, are reinforced through a structured programme of assemblies, which explore various aspects of wellbeing, such as different ways to maintain a healthy mind.
30. Leaders promote pupils' physical health through an inclusive programme that supports both fitness and wellbeing. Pupils take part in weekly physical education (PE) lessons to promote consistent engagement in exercise. This is supplemented by swimming sessions at points throughout the year and structured football sessions at a nearby sports centre. Lessons in PSHE enable pupils to learn about self-care, including dental and personal hygiene, with provision aligned to individual EHC plans and supported by occupational therapy. Leaders provide a variety of nutritious snacks and lunches, alongside food technology lessons, to encourage pupils to explore new foods.
31. Leaders carefully tailor relationships and sex education (RSE) to meet the developmental and personal needs of pupils. Teaching enables pupils to recognise signs of appropriate and problematic relationships, using visual approaches to support understanding. Learning focuses on friendships and personal boundaries, with concepts such as consent introduced in clear and well-structured ways. As pupils mature, teaching builds gradually to include preparation for puberty, with sensitive topics approached through consistent routines and individualised support. Sex education is provided for secondary-aged pupils who are developmentally ready, with staff ensuring content is matched

carefully to their level of understanding. Support from the clinical team enhances teaching in RSE, particularly in developing pupils' friendship and social interaction skills.

32. Leaders promote positive behaviour by enabling pupils to understand the school's expectations. Staff implement effective strategies to help pupils to regulate their emotions. This results in pupils typically being calm and ready to learn. Leaders keep comprehensive behavioural records, which they monitor and analyse to identify patterns and inform ongoing support. Bullying incidents are rare and, when they occur, are managed effectively, contributing to a supportive environment for pupils.
33. Leaders have established effective systems to manage health and safety, and ensure that the premises and accommodation are suitably maintained through clear policies and procedures. These are well understood by staff as a result of appropriate training and guidance. Leaders commission external audits of premises and equipment, taking appropriate action when required. This includes regular fire risk assessments, with timely responses to actions raised. Leaders ensure that fire equipment is regularly tested and serviced. Fire drills take place termly so that staff and pupils understand what to do in the event of a fire.
34. Leaders' well-planned arrangements ensure that pupils are supervised consistently effectively throughout the day. Staff maintain a visible and attentive presence during lessons, transitions and unstructured times, adjusting supervision levels appropriately to meet pupils' individual needs.
35. Leaders maintain admission and attendance registers in line with statutory requirements. Attendance is promoted and monitored effectively. Staff follow up swiftly and sensitively when pupils are absent, working appropriately with parents and external agencies when required.
36. The school has a suitable medical room that is appropriately equipped. A sufficient number of staff are trained in first aid, ensuring appropriate cover throughout the school day and during educational visits. Leaders ensure that pupils' individual healthcare needs are understood by staff and that medicines are stored and administered safely.

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

37. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

38. The school supports pupils' understanding of life in British society through carefully adapted experiences that reflect pupils' individual developmental stages and learning needs. British values are introduced in practical, accessible ways, such as through school council elections that use anonymous voting, enabling pupils to engage with democratic processes at a level they can understand. Opportunities to exercise individual liberty are embedded within daily routines, allowing choices during the school day. Understanding of rules and the rule of law is taught through meaningful examples, such as the reasons for following classroom rules and using agreed protocols to cross the road safely. Pupils' awareness of authority and governance is developed through age-appropriate discussion of current events and national institutions, supported by visual and local references, such as images of Buckingham Palace, to aid understanding. Staff ensure that any discussion of political themes is conducted in an unbiased manner.
39. Leaders and staff enable pupils to develop their awareness of cultural diversity through a range of planned experiences that reflect the diverse and inclusive nature of the school and the wider community. Celebrations such as Eid, Diwali and Easter are explored within the curriculum, providing pupils with opportunities to learn about different traditions, beliefs and practices in ways that are accessible and relevant to them. Whole-school events further enrich this understanding, such as activities for Black History Month, such as drumming workshops, which allow pupils to experience cultures through music and shared participation.
40. Leaders help pupils to engage positively with their local community and develop an understanding of charitable action. Pupils are supported to interact meaningfully with local businesses, for example by visiting shops and cafés to request donations for school events, which helps them practise their communication skills and develop confidence in familiar community settings. Staff take pupils to visit local parks so that they can explore their community in a supported and purposeful way. Pupils are given opportunities to develop empathy through charitable activities, including volunteering at a local foodbank and participating in whole-school fundraising events, such as Red Nose Day.
41. Leaders ensure that the development of pupils' social skills is a clear priority. Staff model positive social behaviour, helping pupils to practise appropriate ways of engaging with others in a supportive environment. Staff reinforce pupils' social understanding through consistent routines and adult guidance, enabling them to learn how to take turns, respond to others and recognise and adhere to social expectations. Where pupils require additional support, targeted sessions are provided to develop their social skills and further their ability to take responsibility for their actions.
42. Leaders ensure that pupils develop their understanding of the world of work and the skills needed for future independence and employment. For example, pupils can apply to undertake roles at school, such as helping with administrative tasks in the office and delivering items to classes, so that they develop their employability skills and understanding of the workplace. Pupils benefit from a structured programme of career-focused activities, including the annual careers fair, encounters with employers, skills-based workshops and opportunities to explore a range of post-16 pathways. Staff provide personalised guidance that helps pupils to take increasing ownership of their aspirations and next steps. As a result, pupils are well supported to make informed, realistic decisions about their future destinations.

43. Leaders support pupils' economic wellbeing through curriculum experiences that develop an early understanding of money and economic responsibility. Pupils participate in practical activities such as school fairs, when their class is given an initial budget to plan, create and sell items. This enables them to experience earning and managing funds and to make collective decisions about how this money is used for trips or shared rewards. Pupils often use public transport when going on school trips, learning how to pay for these journeys. This work is closely linked to mathematics, where pupils explore what money looks like and how it is used, which supports their financial understanding through practical contexts. Teachers provide further opportunities through food technology lessons, where pupils budget for and purchase ingredients in a local supermarket. PSHE lessons extend this learning by introducing age-appropriate concepts relating to adult life, including bank accounts and taxation, ensuring that pupils begin to develop awareness of financial systems and their real-life applications.

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

44. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

45. Leaders implement a robust safeguarding culture. They ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures fulfil statutory requirements and that they are comprehensive, kept under regular review and implemented consistently across the school.
46. Leaders ensure that safeguarding training has a positive impact on safeguarding practice across the school. All staff, including those new to their posts, receive timely and relevant training that equips them with the knowledge and confidence to identify, record and report safeguarding concerns appropriately. Regular updates, informed by audits of safeguarding records, changes to statutory guidance and emerging themes, ensure that training remains suitable and relevant. Staff understand the importance of reporting any concerns affecting pupils or about adults to the safeguarding team, reflecting a culture of openness and vigilance.
47. Members of the safeguarding team receive appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively. They act promptly in response to concerns, maintaining accurate and detailed records that are reviewed frequently to ensure actions are effective. Regular internal and external audits of safeguarding records enable them to identify emerging patterns and trends, informing timely actions and clearly documented decision-making. The safeguarding team works proactively with families and a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils receive appropriate support both in school and beyond. It implements risk assessments for individual vulnerable pupils, with careful consideration given to their specific circumstances.
48. Leaders ensure that all required pre-employment checks are completed in line with statutory requirements and recorded on the single central record of appointments (SCR). Staff involved in recruitment demonstrate a secure understanding of safer recruitment principles. As a result, effective measures are in place to ensure that adults working with pupils are appropriately checked for their suitability before they commence working at the school.
49. Leaders manage online safety carefully through a combination of teaching pupils about online safety and using a robust internet filtering and monitoring system to ensure that online activity is overseen appropriately and that any safeguarding concerns relating to it are identified promptly. There are clear expectations for pupils' use of devices at school. Pupils do not bring personal devices into school and mobile phones are routinely handed in at the start of the day. Staff address real-life issues as they arise and reinforce pupils' understanding of safe online behaviour and what to do if they are concerned.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Brick Lane School
Department for Education number	211/6011
Address	Brick Lane School Bacon Street Tower Hamlets London E2 6DY
Phone number	020 7186 0156
Email address	bricklaneoffice@bricklaneschool.co.uk
Website	www.bricklaneschool.co.uk
Proprietor	P Bloom Ltd
Chair	Mr Richard Power
Headteacher	Ms Joedy Franssen
Age range	5 to 18
Number of pupils	74
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 July 2023

Information about the school

51. Brick Lane School is an independent co-educational special day school located in Tower Hamlets, London. The school caters for pupils who have Autism and associated conditions. The school is operated by P Bloom Ltd, and governance is undertaken by the directors. Since the previous inspection, the current headteacher took up her role in November 2024. The previous inspection of the school was by Ofsted. This is the first inspection of the school by ISI.
52. The school has identified all pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
53. The school has identified English as an additional language for 17 pupils.
54. The school states its aims are to deliver a pupil-centred education in a safe, friendly place, where all young people love to learn.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

14 to 16 April 2026

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

56. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods
- discussions with governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

57. 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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