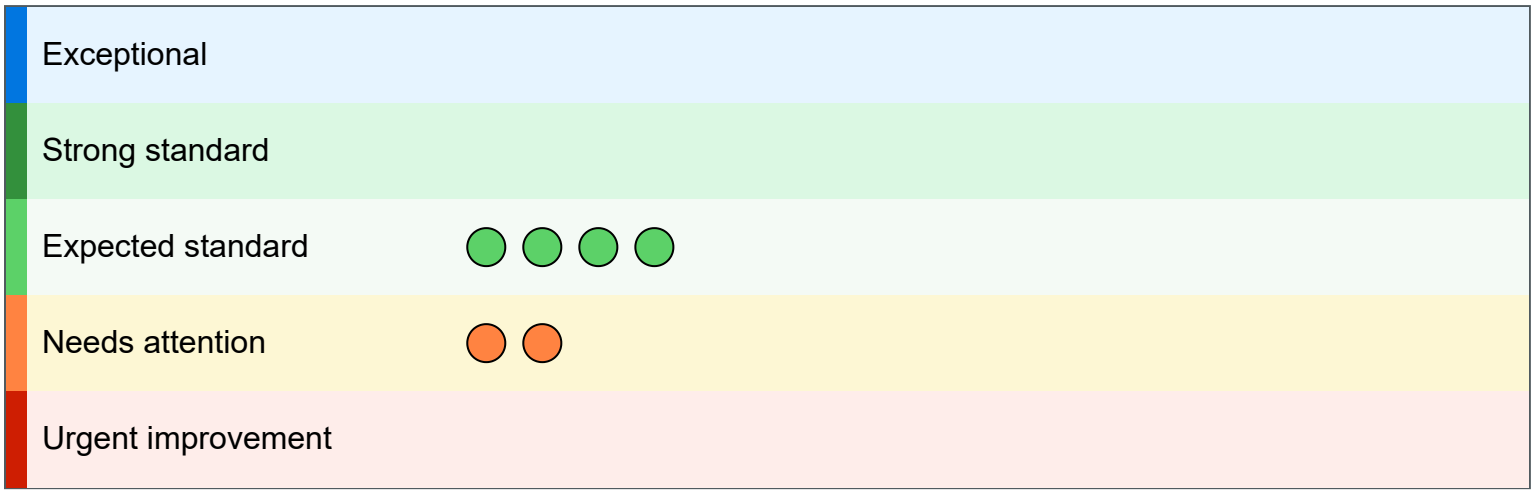
# London Vocational Ballet School

**Address:** 58 Bulwer Street, London, W12 8AP

**Unique reference number (URN):** 135729

# Inspection report: 16 June 2026




## Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

### How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- Insufficient evidence: Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

# Expected standard

## Achievement

**Expected standard**

Pupils develop fluent and secure knowledge of mathematics which they recall and apply with confidence. They read fluently across the curriculum. By the time pupils are in Years 10 and 11 they write with accuracy, although this aspect of foundational knowledge is typically less secure among younger pupils. Pupils generally develop detailed and secure knowledge across the curriculum. However, the quality of work they produce in some subjects is not as high as in others. Where this is the case, pupils do not develop their knowledge with the depth that leaders intend.

Pupils are extremely well prepared for their next steps in vocational training. They progress to prestigious destinations which very much reflect their ambitions and aptitudes. Their academic outcomes complement this well. The published outcomes in national examinations for pupils at the end of Year 11 are consistently high. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other potential barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.

## Attendance and behaviour

**Expected standard**

Leaders have recently introduced new systems to record pupils' attendance and support them in analysing it. They have begun to look at trends and patterns of lower attendance. This helps leaders to make changes which they hope will support pupils' attendance, for instance at times when there are greater demands on pupils' time due to rehearsals and performances. The school has established processes for reviewing individual pupils' attendance and reasons for absences are understood. The school supports pupils to increase attendance where needed. Pupils' attendance is in line with national averages.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are highly focused on their studies and training. Pupils treat others cordially. They understand the school's high expectations of them. On the rare occasion staff have to remind them of expectations, pupils respond promptly and respectfully. Leaders have recently strengthened reasonable adjustments for pupils who need support with their behaviour. These have a positive impact for some pupils.

Leaders promote an environment of mutual respect and tolerance. Discrimination, harassment and abuse are not tolerated here. Such instances are rare. Pupils report any concerns readily, including about bullying. Leaders take swift, sensitive and decisive action to ensure that issues do not recur or persist.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Expected standard**

Leaders ensure a broad and ambitious academic curriculum which complements the vocational programme well. They have put in place a range of high-quality courses which enable pupils to gain a suite of academic qualifications. The curriculum is well sequenced to develop pupils' knowledge logically and in an age-appropriate manner. On the whole it is taught well.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They clearly explain new concepts and vocabulary. Teachers repeat and revisit key curriculum content to make it manageable for pupils, which benefits those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Typically, they make helpful adaptations to support pupils with SEND.

Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' mathematical understanding and supporting them to make accurate calculations across the curriculum, such as in chemistry and physics. They provide opportunities for pupils to practise reading and writing to support their accuracy.

In some instances, minor inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum mean that pupils are not supported to learn all that leaders intend. In places, pupils have more limited opportunities to apply what they know in sustained independent work. In some instances, teachers do not check pupils' understanding of more-complex ideas, relying on their recall of facts to judge how well they know the curriculum content. These inconsistencies reduce opportunities for teachers to revisit, extend and deepen pupils' thinking.

## Personal development and wellbeing

**Expected standard** 

Pupils' personal development is carefully considered by the school. Staff are acutely aware of the demands of pupils' training and the industry they aspire to join in future. They provide carefully tailored support so that pupils understand how to take care of their physical and mental health well. This is complemented by physiotherapy support and expert guidance about injury prevention and rehabilitation. The school provides highly attentive pastoral care. Staff encourage pupils to rest properly and to resist comparing themselves with unrealistic ideals. They educate pupils about the role of artificial intelligence, deepfakes and unhealthy practices in creating online content. This helps pupils to understand how to reach their potential as dancers while maintaining their wellbeing.

Leaders have designed a programme which ensures that pupils are taught comprehensively about matters such as how to maintain healthy relationships and how to stay safe in a range of circumstances, including online. Pupils learn about different backgrounds, cultures, identities and religions. This helps them to understand the harm caused by prejudice and discrimination and why some personal characteristics, such as race and sexual orientation, are protected in law. The school teaches pupils extensively about consent in a range of contexts. Teachers consistently model the importance of consent and safe touch in dance training, including physical correction.

Leaders provide a generally well-structured careers programme. Pupils receive intensive support with preparation for auditions and to become ready for their next steps in ballet training. They engage with a range of employers and learn about different pathways, including apprenticeships and academic pathways. Pupils receive independent careers advice. This enables them to make an informed choice about their next steps. Some opportunities for work experience exist, but these are not routinely taken up.

# Needs attention

## Inclusion

**Needs attention**

Leaders' systems to support and provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not fully effective. Leaders and staff have limited knowledge and expertise about pupils' special educational needs. The school has engaged with specialists and external professionals to receive information about the provision pupils should receive to support their learning and personal development. The school has not put in place all of the support identified by professionals. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not receive the help to which they are entitled.

Leaders have not provided staff with the support they need to develop a secure understanding of their pupils' needs and how to reduce any barriers they may face to their learning or wellbeing. Leaders do not routinely check the quality of any adaptations and reasonable adjustments which staff make. As a result, there is too much inconsistency in the quality and extent of support that pupils with SEND receive.

Leaders do have some processes in place to identify pupils' needs and share basic information about these with staff. In some instances, they have provided training to staff about how to support pupils with some kinds of SEND.

## Leadership and governance

**Needs attention**

The proprietor has not ensured that all of the independent school standards have been consistently met. Leaders have not ensured that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive all of the support they require. Despite being made aware of recommendations by external specialists for provision to which pupils with SEND are entitled, leaders have not provided it reliably. This limits the opportunities for pupils with SEND to learn and progress. Leaders do not routinely review provision for pupils with SEND to ensure that it is in place and effective.

Leaders' approach to developing staff expertise lacks rigour and does not guarantee that any weaknesses will be addressed. Staff generally have the subject knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum well. However, the professional learning programme is not closely linked with leaders' evaluations about ongoing teaching practice. Staff access training materials on a largely voluntary basis. This means that key improvement priorities are not prioritised in staff training. Staff do not benefit consistently well from planned opportunities to apply and embed practice. As a result, some inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum persist.

Many members of the proprietor body have more recently taken up post and there has been a more rigorous approach to governance in some areas. For instance, members of the proprietor body are knowledgeable about their statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and oversee this aspect of the school's work in a methodical way. However, the proprietor body does not have a sufficiently developed understanding of other areas, such as the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.

Leaders role model professionalism and high expectations with staff, pupils and parents and carers. They have established a positive, harmonious community. Leaders prioritise the best interests of pupils in terms of their wellbeing, safety and care. Staff have high expectations for pupils' achievement.

Leaders support staff with their workload and are considerate of their wellbeing. Staff feel valued and included in the life of the school.

## What it's like to be a pupil at this school

The London Vocational Ballet School is an ambitious and nurturing environment where pupils excel in their vocational studies. Pupils strive to achieve their very best in both their ballet training and their academic studies. They are extremely committed and demonstrate resilience and determination in their work. Staff understand this well. They are keen for pupils to achieve high standards and progress to ambitious destinations to further their education and training, which pupils typically do.

However, the proprietor has not ensured that leaders and staff have the support and development opportunities they need to provide consistently high-quality support to pupils. The proprietor does not have sufficient expertise and oversight to ensure that the school delivers all of its obligations to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This means that some pupils miss out on entitlements designed to support their progress, including those recommended by external professionals.

Pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff are attentive to pupils' welfare. They notice subtle differences in pupils' presentation and check on their wellbeing. This promotes trusting relationships between staff and pupils and ensures that pupils receive the pastoral support they need. Pupils appreciate the 'family feel' of the school.

Pupils behave with courtesy and respect for others. They are focused during lessons and socialise happily together during break times. Bullying and discrimination are extremely rare, and leaders treat any such concerns seriously.

Pupils have extensive opportunities to deepen their expertise in ballet and to participate in high-quality performance. They broaden their repertoire to include aspects of contemporary dance and complementary study of art and music. Pupils enjoy wider experiences too, including visits to museums, galleries and places of historical importance. Pupils willingly take on responsibility, for instance older pupils act as 'buddies' to pupils in Years 6 and 7 to help them settle in at the school.

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## Next steps

- The proprietor body should ensure that the school meets its duties to provide adjustments and additional support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proprietor body should ensure that its members, school leaders and staff have a well-developed understanding of how to make effective provision for pupils with SEND and

make routine checks on the quality of additional support to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils with SEND.

- Leaders should provide focused training and development to enable staff to apply and embed learning within their practice, and to address any inconsistencies and weaknesses in the school's provision.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils have consistent and sustained opportunities to apply new knowledge with independence across the curriculum. Teachers should check systematically that pupils understand more-complex concepts securely and take steps to deepen pupils' knowledge where needed.

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## About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the academic director, artistic director and other senior school leaders during the inspection, including the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors spoke with the chair of the proprietor body and representatives of the board of trustees. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils during the inspection.

The name of the proprietor is London Vocational Ballet School Limited. The chair of the proprietor body is Giada Vercelli.

The fees currently charged are £15,750.

The email address of the school is hello@londonvocationalballetschool.com

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a vocational ballet school for 10- to 16-year-olds.

The school is registered to admit 65 pupils. There were 53 registered pupils at the time of the inspection.

Academic Director: Kate Blakeburn

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## Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

**1. Quality of education provided** Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 2(1)

The standard in this paragraph is met if–

**(b)** the written policy, plans and schemes of work–

**(i)** take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and

Paragraph 2(2)

For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–

**(h)** that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and

Paragraph 3

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–

**(d)** shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

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**2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils** Standards met

All standards have been met.

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**3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils** Standards met

All standards have been met.

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**4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors** Standards met

All standards have been met.

**5. Premises of and accommodation at schools** Standards met

All standards have been met.

**6. Provision of information** Standards met

All standards have been met.

**7. Manner in which complaints are handled** Standards met

All standards have been met.

**8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools** Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 34(1)

The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–

**(a)** demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;

**(b)** fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and

**(c)** actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

**Lead inspector:**
Rebecca Iles-Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspector:**
Alison Moore, Ofsted Inspector

# Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

This data is from 16 June 2026

**Total pupils**

# 53

**School capacity**

# 65

**Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

# 1

**Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

# 19

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## Our grades explained

**Exceptional**

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

**Strong standard**

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

**Expected standard**

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

**Needs attention**

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

**Urgent improvement**

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

**Insufficient evidence**

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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Piccadilly Gate
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