



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS

BERKHAMSTED PREP AND PRE-PREP SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep School			
DfE Number	919/6227			
EYFS Number	EY449876			
Registered charity number	310630			
Address	Berkhamsted Schools Group Overton House High Street Berkhamsted HP4 2DJ			
Telephone number	01442 358000			
Headteachers	Mr Jamie Hornshaw (Prep) Mrs Karen O'Connor (Pre-Prep)			
Chair of governors	Mr Gavin Laws			
Age range	5 months to 11 years			
Number of pupils on roll	583			
	Boys	294	Girls	289
	EYFS	104	Key Stage 1	110
	Prep	333		
Inspection dates	19 to 21 September 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep School and Day Nursery are part of the Berkhamsted Schools Group, providing education for boys and girls aged five months to eleven years. Berkhamsted School was established in 1541, and the Pre-Prep site was acquired in 2012, when the existing day nursery was incorporated into the group. New heads were appointed to the Prep and Pre-Prep schools in 2013 and 2015.
- 1.2 Berkhamsted Schools Group is a charity whose governors are the company directors and trustees, exercising control over all aspects of its work. The day nursery is a limited company, whose directors are senior members of staff and governors, including the Principal of the Group as chair.
- 1.3 The day nursery provides childcare for children aged 5 months to 3 years, the Pre-Prep educates those aged 3 to 7 years, and the Prep school caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 years.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The schools encourage their pupils to aim high with integrity, be adventurous and serve others. They aim to enable pupils to develop their skills, grow in moral purpose and character and explore life's opportunities whilst contributing to the lives of others and striving for the best achievements possible.

About the pupils

- 1.5 The majority of the pupils come from white British families in Berkhamsted and its surrounding villages. The diversity of pupils' backgrounds has increased in recent years as pupils have joined from further afield, including outer London. There are 32 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including dyslexia, dyspraxia and physical challenges, of whom 22 receive support in school. No pupil in the school has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language for 17 pupils, one of whom receives support in school.

2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key Findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 2.19 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.20 All children, including those who need extra help, make rapid progress in relation to their starting points, meeting or exceeding expectations for their age, because their needs are recognised when staff plan their learning. Children are extremely well cared for and receive an excellent preparation for the start of Nursery and for transition into the next stage of their learning. All children are treated equally, and benefit from the staff's detailed knowledge and understanding of their learning needs and individual support.
- 2.21 All children make excellent progress in their personal and emotional development within a safe environment where every child is valued as an individual. Quality time with adults ensures that they are extremely happy and secure from the moment they leave their main carer to the end of the day.
- 2.22 Leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities extremely well, ensuring that all health and safety requirements are met and that staff share and understand their responsibilities for keeping children safe. Rigorous self-evaluation and staff development, combined with a strong commitment to delivering the best possible care ensure the setting is constantly improving. Staff communicate enthusiasm for devising stimulating and enjoyable learning experiences, and excellent resources are skilfully used to enhance children's outcomes and improve their life chances.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- 2.23 The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.24 Staff share an ambitious vision, with high expectations for what all children can achieve and ensure that high standards of learning and care are delivered. A strong community atmosphere permeates Nursery, giving children an extremely positive sense of belonging. Directors understand the needs of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and are fully involved in the nursery's development.
- 2.25 Staff have excellent knowledge of the EYFS requirements. The well-planned curriculum meets all statutory requirements, focussing initially on the prime areas of learning. Staff promote British values and use positive language that reflects British society. Children share, take turns and learn how to compromise. They have many opportunities to make their own decisions and demonstrate that they know right from wrong. Highly effective planning responds to all children's interests and needs, providing a stimulating and relevant learning experience. Staff actively promote equality and diversity, encouraging all children to play together, to be inclusive and to respect each other. Festivals are celebrated across different faiths such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Christmas. Behaviour is excellent and is reinforced consistently throughout the setting. Staff reward good behaviour and children enjoy receiving stickers and praise for their achievements. Children are provided with an excellent start to their education and are prepared extremely well for each new stage in their learning.
- 2.26 Excellent professional development opportunities, supportive supervision meetings and effective performance management ensure staff develop a working knowledge of the journey of a child from birth to age three. Robust self-evaluation has identified specific areas for development, and these are included in the action plan, which includes clear targets. Parents' views are an important part of this process and have prompted changes to improve healthy eating. Since the previous inspection outdoor areas have been developed, providing excellent opportunities for imaginative play and enhancing outcomes for babies through designated outdoor resources which promote gross-motor development.
- 2.27 Arrangements to protect children meet all statutory requirements. Staff recruitment checks are made and recorded appropriately. Induction procedures and safeguarding training, including training to

prevent radicalisation and extremism are thorough. Fire practices are held regularly. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid and all accidents and medicine given are carefully recorded. Procedures at the start and end of the day and daily risk assessments ensure that children are well safeguarded. Comprehensive policies inform staff of the procedures for keeping children safe. However, Nursery policies and other important information for parents are not always fully comprehensive or clearly linked to whole school policies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- 2.28 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- 2.29 Staff have consistently high expectations of what each child can achieve, including the most able and those who have SEND and EAL. They know all children in their care extremely well and understand each child's stage of development, providing diligently for them as individuals. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the children and know how to allow time for them to respond to questioning. Spoken language is modelled constantly and provides an excellent example for all children. Staff are fully aware of the requirement to celebrate diversity and ensure equality. Resources showing different ethnicities and abilities are part of the children's play activities, increasing their understanding of the world.
- 2.30 Appropriate training has ensured that staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with. Excellent knowledge of the EYFS curriculum and the needs of young children underpin all that they do. Highly supportive staff encourage the children to try new experiences, share their feelings and say what they enjoy, enabling them to develop their communication skills, understand more about the learning process and make good progress.
- 2.31 Excellent relationships between home and school help parents to engage with their child's learning and understand what their child needs to do to progress. Parents have found the staff to be very caring and thoughtful in termly review meetings, verbal feedback at the end of a session, the daily written planner, and informal discussions. Parents share important information at the start of Nursery and after a settling-in period a baseline assessment is undertaken. Daily observations record children's achievements against EYFS outcomes, and this information is used to identify each child's needs and next steps, building an excellent picture of each child. Assessment information is gathered through photographs and written observations and is carefully kept in each child's Learning Journey alongside contributions from home. Assessments enable staff to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies as well as additional support for those with particular needs and to share these findings with parents.
- 2.32 High quality teaching and support ensure all children acquire the necessary skills for future learning. They have excellent manners, co-operate extremely well and are carefully prepared for transition, ensuring they are ready to move to the next class.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- 2.33 The personal development behaviour and welfare of children are outstanding.
- 2.34 Staff are highly committed to every child, and support all children in their care. The stimulating environment is extremely well organised, happy and positive. Staff know each child extremely well and firm attachments are formed with key persons. Relationships are highly supportive, warm and caring and children express their needs and wants confidently. They are very secure emotionally and physically during sleeping times due to the clear routines in place. Prior to transition children spend time in their new learning environment with the staff who will care for them, ensuring that they are ready socially and emotionally for the next stage in their learning.
- 2.35 Children have regular access to child initiated learning activities and explore their surroundings with confidence. Achievement is valued and celebrated and children are praised when they have a go or succeed, raising their self-esteem. They are extremely friendly and sociable and confidently interact

with adults whilst expressing their feelings. Children display immense pride and enjoyment in their learning. They are extremely well supported in making choices and show independence when using spoons to eat their breakfast cereal. They take risks and are encouraged to persevere. Enjoyment in role play is evident when children demonstrate a strong sense of imagination, adventure and curiosity.

- 2.36 Children are taught to respect others and celebrate festivals from their own and different cultures. They raise money during special events, such as on Christmas jumper day and show great care for those in the wider community. Behaviour is excellent. Positive reinforcement of behaviour ensures that all children understand the agreed ways of working together. Expectations are shared with parents enabling strategies to be shared between home and school.
- 2.37 Children know about keeping themselves safe. High standards of care and hygiene support their personal care needs. They participate in handwashing routines and wash their face after meals. Nappy changing facilities are extremely safe and correctly resourced. Healthy choices are promoted through pictures displayed throughout the setting. Nutritious food including fresh fruit ensures that all children have an excellent diet. Mealtimes are happy, sociable occasions. Individual needs are noted and provided for. Excellent records of attendance are kept and parents are contacted if a child is absent.

Outcomes for children

- 2.38 Outcomes for children are outstanding.
- 2.39 Children make very good progress in relation to their starting points. Almost all meet their expected levels of development, with a few exceeding that which is typical for their age, thus enabling them to be ready for the next stage in their learning. All children show high levels of engagement in their learning. Babies communicate needs and feelings in a variety of ways and clearly enjoy the company of adults. They respond by laughing, babbling and gurgling and they copy animal sounds. They explore sounds with shakers, sticks and bells, and respond to electronic musical toys. They demonstrate excellent progress when rolling or throwing balls and explore the environment by crawling or rolling.
- 2.40 Older children point to pictures, name people and animals and speak in short phrases. They choose books, holding them and turning the pages with skill and care. They are highly responsive, sociable and confident. They develop fine motor skills through experimenting with messy play and concentrate extremely well whilst making marks with chalk. Their physical development is excellent, such as when climbing, balancing and using wheeled toys; they join in enthusiastically with singing, dancing and clapping. Older children competently balance bricks to make towers, and bounce or kick balls with increasing confidence and skill. They role-play imaginatively, making food and rolling pastry. They select, sort and organise toys and increase in confidence when counting and naming colours. A high level of curiosity is evident as they explore toy computers and electronic push button toys.

Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.41 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Ensure that Nursery policies and other information for parents are thorough, accurate and are clearly linked to whole school policies.

3. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Cottontails	Nursery (5 to 15 months)
Nutkins	Nursery (12 to 24 months)
Tiggywinkles	Nursery (18 to 30 months)
Puddleducks	Nursery (30 to 43 months)
Stepping Stones	Nursery (3 to 4 years)

Key Findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils demonstrate advanced skills, knowledge and understanding and make excellent progress.
- Pupils exhibit excellent communication skills. They are highly articulate and listen attentively.
- Pupils have highly developed study skills. They analyse data, hypothesise and draw appropriate conclusions.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work. They work collaboratively and independently, making informed decisions about their learning.
- Pupils demonstrate confidence and competence in information and communication technology (ICT). However, their application of these skills in other subjects is limited.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of self. Confident and self-disciplined, they persevere and understand how to improve their work.
- Pupils are extremely thoughtful and reflective decision-makers. They understand that their decisions can be instrumental in determining their own future and wellbeing.
- Pupils demonstrate a substantial sense of right and wrong, respecting rules and laws, and readily taking responsibility for their actions.
- Pupils show a mature social awareness, solving problems and supporting each other in the pursuit of common goals.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

- Enable pupils to extend their learning by applying ICT skills to other subjects.

THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress, including those with SEND, EAL and the most able. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence from standardised assessments, lesson observations and work scrutiny show attainment to be above in relation to national age-related expectations, including in English, mathematics, reading and spelling, and often well above in science. Children in the EYFS make excellent progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the EYFS children are working at the expected level for their age, and many children above. Since the last inspection, a rigorous programme of monitoring by subject coordinators has been implemented, and this has ensured good practice is shared, thereby contributing to pupils' achievements. Pupils can identify the progress they have made, and in pre-inspection questionnaires the vast majority of pupils and parents said that the school enables them to make good progress. Staff make effective use of assessment data to identify specific needs and plan pupils' next steps on an individual basis, enabling pupils of all abilities to make progress. Pupils are encouraged to set themselves ambitious targets, and they enjoy challenging opportunities to stretch themselves, some doing so independently whilst others receive varying levels of support. Some classes for older pupils are grouped by prior attainment, and this enables all pupils to make progress, because they are given the opportunity to learn new skills at a pace which is suited to their needs.

- 3.6 Pupils develop excellent skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects, benefiting from highly skilled teaching and a diverse curriculum. In the EYFS, children achieve excellent outcomes in all areas of learning, and older pupils achieve in numerous ways, whether academically, culturally or on the sports field. Pupils utilise their study skills in their learning, and the success of leadership in ensuring all staff are well trained in the means of promoting these has had a significant impact on pupils' achievements in all aspects of school life. For example, pupils have extremely well-developed scientific skills, evidenced in investigations of the properties of materials and of electricity. They display detailed knowledge of different countries, such as the polar regions and Australia, and can compare aspects of life in Ancient Greece and Victorian times with current conditions. Achievement in sport is high across the school. Children in the EYFS display confidence in outdoor play and older pupils take pride in their abilities in a wide range of sports, benefiting from a generous time allocation for physical education. Pupils display strong skills in French, a secure sense of rhythm in music, and art work of high quality is on display around the school. In fulfilment of a recommendation from the previous inspection report, all pupils are challenged in the classroom, this being complemented by the school's consistent reinforcement of the importance of perseverance. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors exhibited a belief that anything can be accomplished through determination and effort, and value the learning process as much as their achievements.
- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are excellent, and are widely and effectively employed. Children in the EYFS communicate extremely well. They listen carefully, communicate their needs efficiently, question with confidence and respond to complex instructions. Opportunities for role play and continuous interactions with staff enable children to build an impressive command of language from an early age. The development of communication skills is paramount in Pre-Prep, and pupils articulate their points of view confidently, whilst reading and writing beyond age expectations. Pupils in the Prep school produce written work to an advanced standard and develop a love of reading which is furthered by ready and frequent access to the school library. Pupils develop and hone their presentation skills through class presentations, assemblies and drama lessons, speaking with confidence and fluency whether in the classroom or in front of a large audience. Teachers' high expectations, well-paced lessons and effective questioning help pupils to become attentive listeners, and they value this attribute highly as part of the school's focus on learning skills.
- 3.8 Pupils' study skills are developed to a notably high level. They have a mature awareness of the importance of thinking for themselves, prompted by the school's focus on developing learning strategies and their modelling by staff. This initiative, implemented in collaboration with other schools in the group, has been supported by high quality staff training and appraisal throughout the school, ensuring that every pupil is able to use these skills to further their learning across the curriculum. The ability to persevere is acquired at an early age, when children in the EYFS concentrate for prolonged periods of time on an activity, make decisions, select resources and investigate with enthusiasm. The ability to use higher-order skills is a great strength of pupils in the Pre-Prep school. They are inquisitive learners, who are taught not to be afraid to verbalise their thoughts and ideas. Older pupils analyse data effectively, suggest hypotheses for investigation and make considered responses based on the evidence presented to them, such as when discussing a character's motivation in an English lesson. A range of teaching styles, challenging activities and careful questioning provide a catalyst for enthusiastic learning, fostering pupils' thirst for knowledge.
- 3.9 Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning from the earliest age. Children in the EYFS are eager to learn, and enjoy every aspect of their time in school, where carefully selected resources encourage open-ended activities and collaborative learning. They use their initiative and work independently, listening to each other and responding appropriately. They take considered risks and are not afraid of making mistakes. Pupils in the Pre-Prep school have a passion for learning that is apparent in their enthusiasm and engagement during their lessons and play, for example when finding missing numbers and explaining them to their peers in a mathematics lesson. They develop skills of independence and resilience in response to the schools' promotion of these attributes, and show great initiative whilst solving problems together in dedicated lessons and cross-curricular activities. Older pupils are highly

engaged in their lessons. They are critical thinkers, able to make informed decisions and navigate their own learning journeys. In response to the wide-ranging opportunities, high expectations and reinforcement of learning attributes, they demonstrate maturity in undertaking independent work as well as to learn in collaboration with others. They are appreciative of the opportunities they are given to talk about their work and to help each other to solve problems.

- 3.10 Pupils are highly numerate, demonstrating expertise and enjoyment in their mathematics lessons. Children in the EYFS apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics with confidence and independence in a variety of practical ways when exploring the outdoors and during imaginative play. Pupils in the Pre-Prep school show a secure knowledge of number both in mathematics lessons and other curriculum areas, benefitting from excellent teaching, the use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary and a stimulating learning environment. The introduction of challenging mathematical concepts from an early age allows pupils to demonstrate a firm understanding of these in both work and play, and older pupils' high levels of confidence and ability are evident in the 'can do' attitude which they bring to their lessons. Pupils of all abilities tackle difficult problems with enjoyment and confidence, such as when solving quick-fire mental arithmetic problems. In interview, pupils often identified mathematics as a subject in which they had made notable progress since joining the school, appreciating the range of activities, opportunities to work at their own pace in different groups and constructive marking provided by the school.
- 3.11 Pupils develop their ICT skills well. Children in the EYFS use technological toys imaginatively, beginning to understand the world around them. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching and facilities, and opportunities to use their technological skills in lessons, such as when presenting to the class or producing projects in modern foreign languages, enable pupils to develop these and to further their knowledge through research. These opportunities, as recognised by the school's leadership, are not yet widely embedded across the curriculum, with the result that learning is not fully extended in all subjects.
- 3.12 Pupils' achievements are excellent, both academic and otherwise, due to the school ensuring that there are opportunities for pupils of all abilities to participate, and for the most able to excel. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of pupils and parents said that the school, in fulfilment of its aims, provides a good range of activities, and the rich and varied curriculum and activities programme contribute to pupils' confidence in their abilities, allowing them to achieve beyond expectations. For example, younger pupils successfully participate in extra-curricular activities such as judo and drama, achieving well in competitions in these fields. Older pupils are highly successful in gaining scholarships in sport, music, drama and academics. Pupils have experienced success in music examinations and local festivals, and exceptional results have been achieved in drama examinations. Pupils have been placed in high positions in national competitions in modern foreign languages and mathematics, and they are highly successful in sport, competing and winning at local, county and national levels in sports as diverse as netball, swimming, judo, equestrianism and 'Eton fives'.

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and resilience to a mature level, encouraged by the school's focus on perseverance. Children in the EYFS demonstrate self-awareness from an early age, showing a growing confidence within the security of the setting. Throughout the school, high expectations, excellent relationships between staff and pupils and encouraging responses to pupils' answers and comments ensure that pupils of all ages have a secure confidence in their potential to do well. Pupils demonstrate considerable insight into their own strengths, together with the ability to reflect. They recognise aspects of their school life in which they need to develop or improve, and they are not afraid to take risks or to make mistakes. In the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said

that they did not know how they were doing in their subjects or how to improve their work, based on the marking. Inspectors found that marking was clear in explaining how pupils had met the objectives of the lesson and in identifying the next steps in their learning, and this was confirmed by pupils in interviews. Teaching encourages pupils to think for themselves, as evidenced in the pupils' enthusiasm for the '5 Bs', which reminds them to use their brains, classroom resources and to consult with their peers before asking their teachers for help. Pupils' resilience is built through opportunities to challenge themselves, such as when undertaking a high ropes course on a residential trip. Pupils say they trust their teachers to push them just the right amount, and value the regular verbal feedback they receive in and outside the classroom as to how to improve. By the time they are ready to move on to the next stage in the education, whether it be their senior schools or within the Prep and Pre-Prep schools, pupils of every age are well-prepared for the challenges ahead.

- 3.15 Pupils are extremely thoughtful and reflective decision-makers. This is because they are encouraged to begin the process of critical thinking from an early age. Pupils apply their reasoning skills with confidence and integrity as they move through the school, in fulfilment of the school's aims for them to become wise and to develop the skills and ambition for lifelong success. Pupils can weigh up the benefits of different options, take calculated risks and work together to find solutions. When constructing houses and vehicles, children in the EYFS can explain why something will not work, and understand that the decisions they make when discussing how to solve a problem will have a direct impact on the outcome. Pupils in both the Pre-Prep and Prep schools understand the importance of making considered decisions about their actions, behaviour and work. They can explain the impact these decisions make on their lives, and hone their decision-making skills through the many opportunities given to them to apply these abilities in lessons and activities, such as when choosing which level of difficulty to work at or which clubs to attend. They readily accept feedback, both verbal and written, and show a willingness to assimilate this advice to inform their future decision making. They appreciate the guidance they receive from their teachers and the confidence placed in them to make sensible choices and to decide when to push themselves.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate an excellent sense of right and wrong. This is because the importance of the rule of law and of personal responsibility are communicated at an age-appropriate level to all members of the school community. Pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour. For example, children in the EYFS respect class rules and want to do well, accepting responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils of all ages appreciate the support of the school in ensuring everyone behaves well, responding positively to staff as role models and acting as role models themselves. They fully support the school code of conduct, including sanctions, and older pupils have a good awareness of the laws which govern our wider society. The school's high expectations are clearly reinforced throughout the school day, from assemblies to lessons, break times and clubs, and a focus on improving rather than condemning poor behaviour results in pupils' ability and readiness to admit to their mistakes.
- 3.17 Pupils' social skills are highly developed. Collaboration is an attribute which is actively and successfully developed by the school, and leaders have worked with staff to ensure that this is promoted outside the classroom, as well as in lessons, thus strengthening pupils' awareness and appreciation of the importance of working together to solve problems and achieve common goals. Pupils work extremely well together in a wide range of contexts, and take a great pride in the fruits of their endeavours. Children in the EYFS work very well together when playing, making and learning. They solve problems together and are always keen to help each other. Pupils of every age relish opportunities to work together to achieve common goals, from the Pre-Prep school council, who have selected equipment for their play area after careful consultation with their peers, to older pupils who have initiated and organised fund-raising events for charities of their own choosing. The school has an open-door policy for pupils' ideas and actively seeks to inspire them to initiate their own events, thereby giving them the confidence to do so. Collaboration is at the heart of the learning programme in sport, lessons, house meetings and clubs, and pupils' success in these situations is underpinned by their productive relationships with their peers and staff, and the 'can do' attitude encouraged and exhibited throughout the school.

- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate high levels of spiritual understanding through their insightful and articulately-expressed appreciation of non-material aspects of life. In the EYFS, children grasp every opportunity they are offered, showing amazement when engaging in imaginative and new experiences. They value the natural world and their friends. Older pupils ask thought-provoking questions in their religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, where 'big thinking' is encouraged. They value opportunities to be quiet and reflect, such as in assemblies and mindfulness lessons. Pupils value friendship, learning, happiness, love and the opportunities they are given in life. When choosing famous people who have inspired them as the subjects of individual research projects, pupils identified figures such as Ghandi and the Queen, appreciating the contributions that they have made to our world.
- 3.19 Pupils value highly the many opportunities they are offered to contribute to the lives of others, whether in the school community or further afield, in fulfilment of the school aim for pupils to serve others. Children in the EYFS show that they are responsible, caring for their pets, families and friends and those in the school community. They take responsibility when tidying up their classrooms and raise money for local charities. Pupils take on responsibilities in the Pre-Prep school as school councillors, house captains, and helpers in many aspects of school life. Older pupils act as house captains, librarians, sports captains, playground pals, eco captains, digital leaders and buddies for new pupils. Those who hold positions of responsibility take these very seriously and demonstrate a real commitment to serving others, in line with the school's core values. Pupils perform at a nearby hospice and support local charities. They are active in supporting national and international charities, regularly instigate these events themselves and appreciate the opportunity to help those less fortunate than themselves.
- 3.20 Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Inspection evidence agrees. Pupils have an excellent understanding of different faiths and cultures, and appreciate the diversity of their school community, as seen in lessons, clubs, house meetings and around the school. Younger children are very respectful of others. Although they understand that people are very different, they do not see differences in a negative light. Pupils of all ages appreciate opportunities to learn about diverse cultures and faiths and the different backgrounds of their peers. Visitors to the school, assemblies, visits to places of worship and the school's emphasis on tolerance all support pupils in their development, enabling them to show compassion and empathy for others.
- 3.21 Pupils' awareness of how to stay safe and healthy is excellent. They understand from a very early age how to be physically healthy in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. Children in the EYFS show a strong awareness of how to stay safe whilst engaging in physical activities and outdoor play. They eat well, making suitably healthy choices at mealtimes. The school provides clear guidance for pupils through PSHE and ICT lessons as to how to stay safe outside school, on the road and online, fostering an excellent understanding of these matters. A generous allocation of time to physical activities and a positive approach to participation, alongside the promotion of healthy meal choices ensures pupils have a commitment to eating healthily and taking regular exercise. They understand how to maintain a balanced lifestyle and appreciate the opportunities offered by the school for them to maintain one.

4. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended house meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Assistant reporting inspector
Mr Peter Farrelly	Compliance team inspector (Bursar, IAPS school)
Mr Nathan Close	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Michael Connolly	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Loren Macallister	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Angela Russell	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)
Mrs Moyra Thompson	Team inspector for EYFS (Head of Pre-Prep, ISA school)