

# School inspection report

18 to 20 June 2024

## **FIRSTEAD HOUSE SCHOOL**

Fordham Road

Newmarket

Suffolk

CB8 7AA

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

## Contents

<b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP .....	4
<b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE .....	6
<b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....	8
<b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....	10
<b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....	12
<b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	13
<b>THE QUALITY OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE IN THE REGISTERED EARLY YEARS PROVISION .....</b>	<b>14</b>
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS PROVISION .....	14
QUALITY OF EDUCATION .....	14
BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES.....	15
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	16
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT .....	16
SAFEGUARDING .....	17
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE .....	17
<b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>	<b>20</b>

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors have an informed oversight of the school. Together with leaders they have established effective processes and procedures which contribute to a positive and welcoming environment. Pupils feel happy and secure, displaying high levels of self-confidence. Governors promote the separate identity and ethos of Fairstead House, whilst its leaders benefit from sharing training and resources as a result of belonging to a larger foundation.
2. New processes such as learning walks and 'book looks' have been established to monitor the curriculum and ensure that leaders can evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. Leaders know where the areas of strengths lie and the areas for development. This knowledge is enhanced by the effective use of data to track pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, pupils achieve well, make good progress and are well prepared for life in British society and the next stage of their education.
3. A broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils of all ages to acquire suitable knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. In the early years setting and in many lessons throughout the rest of the school, teachers' planning ensures that pupils are engaged in their learning. Pupils generally undertake challenging activities in line with their ability and make good progress. On a few occasions, when teachers' planned tasks do not offer sufficient challenge, learning is less effective and progress is not as consistent.
4. Early years children make good progress in all their seven areas of learning. This is due to a well-planned and ambitious curriculum, effective managerial oversight, and high-quality staff who collaborate effectively in the best interests of the children. The staff are caring, dedicated, and provide high-quality interactions with children. Transitions between learning rooms are managed seamlessly, ensuring children are emotionally secure, well-supported, and can happily engage in age-appropriate activities that promote good progress.
5. The school values, of which respect is a key part, are well established and central to the school culture. Leaders create an environment where pupils share their ideas, and their opinions are heard. Pupils' behaviour is notably positive, and they show a clear respect for their peers' achievements. A positive, supportive environment is fostered across the school through the well planned personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme.
6. The physical and mental health of pupils is promoted well. Pupils' self-esteem, confidence and resilience are partly fostered by a 'can do' attitude that pupils are taught from an early age and through the effective support they can access in the wellbeing 'hive'. Self-esteem and confidence are further supported by extensive opportunities for music and drama performances. In addition, the carefully designed physical education (PE) programme promotes enthusiasm and confidence in sport and physical activities.
7. Leaders have developed an effective safeguarding culture throughout the school. Leaders are responsive to any concerns or potential issues regarding welfare or health and safety and take prompt action when these are identified. This approach, combined with robust policies and systematic recording, supports pupils' welfare effectively. The school grounds and indoor facilities are well maintained.

## 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 step

Leaders should:

- ensure that all teaching engages and challenges pupils so that they make consistently good progress.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders create an inclusive and harmonious environment for all members of the community. Together with governors, they are committed to fulfilling the school's aims, demonstrating a clear desire for continuous improvement. This can be seen in their recent work to review and update the curriculum. Senior leaders carry out their roles effectively, displaying suitable knowledge, skills and understanding, and prioritising the wellbeing of pupils.
9. The governing body maintains effective oversight of the school's policies and procedures. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's effectiveness, ascertained through regular visits and comprehensive reports from leaders. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders, asking probing questions, helping to ensure that pupils make good progress and promoting improvement. In turn, the leadership team promotes pupils' wellbeing, and enables them to attain places at their chosen senior schools.
10. Leaders have built secure relationships with a wide range of external agencies, such as those that provide support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or offer advice regarding safeguarding matters. These effective partnerships help to improve pupils' learning outcomes and promote pupils' safety and wellbeing.
11. Risk management is a key element in leaders' planning. An effective risk management policy is supported by suitable risk assessments. Governors regularly analyse the risk register to ensure that risks are identified and appropriately mitigated. Leaders prioritise regular staff training to help to manage risk. The assiduous and detailed approach taken by leaders ensures that risks to pupil welfare are at the centre of their decision-making.
12. A suitable complaints policy is successfully implemented. Parental concerns are responded to in a timely and effective manner. The recording of issues, however minor, is detailed and includes lessons learnt and any changes to procedures required.
13. Parents receive useful information about pupils' progress. This includes continual progress updates throughout the term for children in the early years. Other age groups receive twice yearly reports which indicate each pupil's levels of achievement, effort and next steps in learning. This enables pupils and parents to understand pupils' current level of attainment and areas for improvement. The information available on the school's informative website ensures that parents have access to the school's policies and know how to contact key staff and governors.
14. An appropriate accessibility plan is in place which considers the physical and curriculum needs of pupils. Recent adaptations have included improving access to all of the early years classrooms. Governors and leaders ensure that the school fulfils its obligations under equality legislation, in particular the Equality Act 2010.
15. Early years leadership is effective, demonstrating an ambitious vision with high expectations for what children can achieve. Leaders' thorough oversight and strategy of high-quality additional adult support ensure that children make good progress across all seven areas of learning. Leaders in the early years promote a welcoming and supportive environment, with committed and caring staff who understand the needs of individual children.

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

**16. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. They develop secure skills and understanding in their main subjects. The curriculum has recently been developed by leaders and includes a specific focus on technology and performing and creative arts. Pupils often develop advanced skills in textiles and design, reflecting thoughtfully on the strengths of their work. High-quality musical education and foreign language teaching begins in Nursery. Pupils learn Mandarin, French and Spanish at different stages. Work in school is supplemented with stimulating trips, such as to a tapas restaurant and a residential week in France. A high standard of musical performance is developed successfully with pupils taking delight in performing in musical theatre and concerts.
18. Well-structured teaching with effective questioning encourages pupils to think critically, which in turn develops their understanding. Pupils of all ages are effective communicators, able to employ vocabulary which engages the reader. In numeracy, pupils work confidently both independently and collaboratively and can explain their reasoning. Effective teaching in the early years has ambitious expectations for children and this is evident at times throughout the rest of the school. However, some teaching does not consistently challenge pupils in line with their ability or engage them which leads to less effective learning and less consistent progress.
19. Leaders have established an effective assessment framework which enables them to track pupil progress and ensure that lesson planning takes account of pupil needs. Standardised scores from standardised assessments in reading, spelling and mathematics show high levels of attainment and confirm that pupils are making good progress. Tracking to measure progress in other subjects, including data from end-of-unit tests and information gathered by leaders from lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, confirm that good progress is made in all subjects.
20. Teachers provide pupils with helpful verbal and written feedback on their work. This ensures that pupils know when they have grasped concepts and processes effectively, understand ways in which their work could be improved and provides helpful targets so that further progress might be attained.
21. Leaders have established a clear process for the identification and support of pupils who have SEND, who make good progress from their starting points as a result. This is due to effective liaison with external agencies, teachers specifically adapting work and skilled assistants providing effective individual support. Furthermore, the physical needs of pupils who have SEND are considered and supported through a programme which builds muscle strength and develops gross motor skills.
22. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are carefully assessed and receive appropriate support in class to develop their language fluency. As a result, pupils who speak EAL make good progress in their use of English and their grammar and vocabulary develop rapidly.
23. A range of clubs on offer across the school, including textiles, performing arts and puzzle club, provide opportunities for pupils of all ages to develop their skills outside of the formal curriculum. Pupils confidently articulate how the diverse opportunities expand their interests and develop qualities such as perseverance.
24. The early years curriculum is well planned enabling children to make good progress across all areas in relation to their starting points. Most children achieve a good level of development by the end of their Reception year. Staff have a secure understanding of children's development and use regular

observations to assess and track progress, informing their planning. High-quality interactions from attentive staff, support communication and language development. Staff take account of pupils' prior knowledge of language and extend it through carefully chosen books modelling language, vocabulary and grammar.

### **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. The emotional and mental wellbeing of pupils is a priority for leaders. They provide opportunities which enable pupils to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence, such as by attending the wellbeing 'hive' sessions and through a well-delivered PSHE curriculum. High-quality relationships between pupils and staff enable pupils to feel secure and listened to. These supportive relationships result in an environment where mutual respect is evident within a friendly, purposeful and unified community.
27. Leaders have introduced an extensive programme of PE and games, starting in Nursery, which helps pupils to demonstrate a secure understanding of how to stay healthy through exercise and diet. Pupils enjoy spending time outside which has a positive impact on both their physical and emotional wellbeing. Pupils value the opportunities they have to take part in matches with other schools. This helps build their self-confidence and provides further opportunities to learn more about themselves.
28. Through assemblies and religious education teaching, leaders ensure pupils' spirituality and moral understanding is developed well. Pupils are knowledgeable about world religions and enjoy their visits to places of worship. Pupils engage readily with assemblies where they are encouraged to reflect and think about moral issues and respond openly knowing their voice matters.
29. The comprehensive PSHE curriculum includes relationships education. The programmes are well planned and their consistent whole-school implementation ensures that pupils develop an understanding of critical issues they face every day such as friendships, growth and change. This helps pupils build resilience and develop strategies which promote their emotional wellbeing, such as learning to adopt a positive attitude, even when faced with challenges.
30. Leaders have established robust systems to monitor behaviour and combined with the school's house system of rewarding good behaviour and listening, result in extremely well-behaved pupils. They are polite, highly respectful and caring towards each other. Bullying incidents are rare, but when they occur, staff take swift and appropriate actions to support the pupils involved.
31. School buildings and areas are well maintained. Leaders, including governors, ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to monitor and record all health and safety checks, including regular monitoring of electrical and fire-fighting equipment. First aid procedures are dealt with effectively and any first aid or medication administered is recorded and reported accurately by appropriately trained staff in a manner that supports pupils' wellbeing.
32. Pupils are well supervised by caring staff who are appropriately deployed across the school day.
33. Admissions and attendance registers are suitably maintained, with unexplained absences followed up by relevant staff. The local authority is informed about pupil transfers as required.
34. Staff cultivate warm, caring relationships with the children in the early years who start their day with enthusiasm, looking forward to the range of activities that are carefully planned to develop their physical skills and build resilience. The well-organised, secure outdoor area encourages children to ride bicycles whilst negotiating obstacles, continually demonstrating consideration for themselves and others. Children display an age-appropriate understanding of their emotions, using sad and

happy faces when self-registering to express their feelings, which they can change throughout the day, allowing adults to provide support and leaders monitor.

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

**35. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

36. Pupils develop their economic understanding in a way that helps prepare them well for later life. Children in the early years learn about money through well-planned activities such as 'going shopping'. Older pupils complete work on how to manage money, which is brought to life for Year 5 through a project planning a trip to the zoo. School council members have the responsibility of managing a tuck shop, preparing income and expenditure accounts. Economic awareness is further developed through links with key members of the local community. Older pupils visit a local horse racing museum where they learn about financial aspects of the horse racing industry.
37. British values such as those of respect and tolerance are explicitly taught in PSHE lessons. During a talk given by an external speaker on dealing with disability, pupils showed their understanding as they asked pertinent questions. They are tolerant and respectful of each other's differences. Pupils have a firm sense of right and wrong, quick to accept responsibility for any poor choices and understand the importance of individual liberty. This is reflected in calm classrooms and a culture of kindness that permeates the school with pupils feeling valued for who they are. Pupils feel that their teachers are respectful, patient and cater well for individual differences.
38. Staff know pupils well and take an interest in them as unique individuals, creating a range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate and develop leadership skills. Children in Reception enjoy being the class 'busy bee' and supporting their friends by leading the line or helping the teacher. Year 6 pupils proudly explain the significance of their responsibility badges and display pride in how they enjoy positively influencing the development of their school community.
39. Teachers skilfully use curriculum opportunities for pupils to question, make connections and reflect upon social and cultural issues in a balanced way, which helps develop an awareness of differences between people. Year 4 research and present information comparing Haitian society and culture with England. Older pupils maturely challenge stereotypes, which not only helps them connect with others despite differences but also develops their critical thinking skills and empathy. Leaders have established a programme of celebrations of world cultural events such as International Day of Languages and these are carefully woven into school life.
40. Leaders enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding of different careers, starting with a 'people who help us' topic in the early years. One aspect of the PSHE programme focuses on 'dreams and goals' and this is supported by parents visiting to speak about their careers. Pupils have received interesting presentations from people drawn from several different professions including a mortgage advisor, stem scientist, builder and an eye surgeon.
41. Leaders successfully build a sense of 'active citizenry' amongst the pupils. Pupils take part in the local Armistice Day ceremony and the choir performs in the town at Christmas. The school has purposeful links with a local home for the elderly. Year 1 pupils worked with the residents to create junk models of famous buildings, including the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Building. The residents appreciate the pupils' company, and the pupils develop their understanding, patience and kindness.
42. Careful curriculum planning by leaders and delivery of enrichment activities by all staff helps pupils to appreciate the importance of democracy in our society and develop respect for institutions and

services. Teachers introduce an understanding of public services from a young age, with Reception visiting a police station and the coastguard. The mayor gave a talk about her role in local government and a topic on parliament was discussed before pupils took part in elections to decide who should be house leaders.

43. Children in the early years are sociable and friendly and enjoy the opportunities and activities to collaborate in their play. For example, within the hairdresser role-play area they talk to their clients as they role-play cutting their hair. Children are encouraged to be independent through well-established routines. The youngest children know how to self-register, find their water bottle and put out their bedding. Staff use shared reading to support children's social development, as they listen to each other, wait for their turn and by Reception can confidently suggest solutions to conflicts and dilemmas.

### **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 promote an open, positive safeguarding culture, including in the early years setting. The safeguarding governor works effectively alongside the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) evaluating the robustness of the school's safeguarding arrangements. There are regular meetings, including a thorough annual audit where well-informed governor oversight offers effective challenge and helpful advice for the DSL.
46. Robust safeguarding procedures are well embedded. There are a variety of methods by which pupils can share any worries in confidence, such as using the classroom 'worry box'. Pupils know they can visit the wellbeing 'hive' if they have a problem and are confident that adults will respond appropriately.
47. The DSLs record and monitor safeguarding issues appropriately. Any concerns raised, including low-level concerns about staff, are dealt with in a timely manner and suitably logged. The safeguarding team track any recurring themes through maintaining a thorough oversight of records which include detailed noting of actions, decisions and outcomes.
48. Leaders consult with external agencies appropriately, understanding the importance of continually updating their knowledge to enhance pupils' safety. All staff receive regular training and annual updates, responding to statutory guidance and legislation. Comprehensive induction and ongoing training by the DSL team ensure that staff are aware of the difference between a concern and a child at immediate risk and the required actions in each case. Staff are alert to concerns such as child-on-child abuse and the risks of extremism.
49. Records relating to recruitment of staff are systematically maintained. An accurate single record of staff appointments is kept and effectively monitored by leaders and checked by the governor responsible for safeguarding.
50. Leaders ensure there is a well-planned approach to online safety that is reflected in policy and realised in action. Pupils receive guidance in both PSHE and computing lessons on staying safe, understanding what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety and cyberbullying. This helps pupils to use technology respectfully and responsibly and protects them, as far as possible, from the dangers of the internet. Suitable filtering and monitoring systems are in place, which the DSL and headteacher regularly check, following up on any inappropriate use.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

## The quality of the early years foundation stage in the registered early years provision

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

52. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
53. Managers provide a high-quality environment that supports children's developmental journey effectively and fosters positive behaviours, attitudes and personal growth. Engaging activities, supportive interactions and structured routines that staff provide, help children to thrive in all three of the prime areas of development.
54. Managers have a clear vision for the nursery and are dedicated to offering high-quality care and education for all children. They maintain highly positive relationships with parents and have well developed methods of communication. They ensure policies are thoroughly implemented through effective oversight of practice.
55. Managers have developed safeguarding procedures that are highly effective, making it a top priority to create a safe and nurturing environment. Staff commitment to safety and care is evident in every aspect of their work, ensuring the wellbeing of all children.
56. Managers implement an ambitious curriculum tailored to children's needs, covering all prime areas of learning effectively and laying firm foundations for specific areas. Through the curriculum, staff promote the early development of respectful, considerate individuals who are confident and happy. Children learn to communicate by using early language. This helps them to understand simple sentences and respond to questions. Children move confidently around the nursery, demonstrating age-appropriate gross and fine motor skills. They develop independence through choosing from a suitable range of activities.
57. Managers uphold high expectations for behaviour, ensuring staff consistently model and praise positive conduct. Emphasis is placed on respectful interactions, such as asking children's permission before assisting with nappy changes, going outside, or switching activities. This fosters positive and nurturing relationships between children and staff.

### Quality of education

58. The quality of education is outstanding.
59. Staff meticulously plan a comprehensive, well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum with clear goals. They also ensure that there is a robust transition process. For instance, children visit their next room with their key person frequently until they become familiar with this new environment. This ensures continuity in emotional and developmental growth, catering to each child's needs.
60. Staff implement individualised planning that supports all children, including those who have SEND, to achieve their goals. They complete regular assessments to help inform planning and capture the new skills children have learned. Staff use focused observations to set targeted next steps, ensuring each child progresses towards their developmental goals.

61. Children make outstanding progress from their starting points, aided by the staff's thorough understanding of their development. For example, staff encourage children at the babbling stage to repeat words during story time and follow instructions, enhancing their communication and language skills.
62. Staff design activities to engage children and encourage collaboration, focusing on the prime areas of learning. Staff aim to boost children's confidence in their physical skills. They plan activities that give children opportunities to stand and engage at an appropriate height, such as when they explored water and ice, scooping, pouring and squeezing.
63. Staff develop communication skills through continual high-quality interactions with children. For example, they introduce sounds, such as 'splash, splash' and 'drip, drip' as children hold a block of ice in the water tray and incorporate songs such as 'Row, row, row the boat' to enrich the experience further.
64. Staff's detailed knowledge of each child's background, needs and prior learning helps them to build upon their experiences successfully. For instance, staff enrich the curriculum with a variety of outings, such as to the library and local park. These help to develop children's love of books and develop their confidence as they test out their physical skills in a new environment.

### **Behaviour and attitudes**

65. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
66. Staff's approach to fostering positive attitudes is highly effective. Children willingly join in and follow routines, encouraged by staff who promote good manners through signing 'please' and 'thank you'. Children listen attentively and respond well to adults, who guide them using spoken word, gesture, and sign language. Clear communication fosters effective interaction and boosts children's confidence in using their developing vocabulary.
67. Staff share an equally positive understanding of each child, providing tailored support for managing feelings and recognising children's individual needs, such as hunger and tiredness. They respond appropriately with cuddles, distraction, sleep or food. Staff maintain a calm and reassuring presence that helps children remain engaged in activities while managing their emotions. For instance, when a child taking part in the water tray activity became upset after being splashed, staff sat with them to reassure them and explained kindly to others that they did not like this.
68. Children are supported and motivated through positive reinforcement and encouragement. They learn to share with others. Children enjoy routines accompanied by songs, such as the tidy-up song, which help them understand and participate in daily activities. This helps to reinforce familiar routines and builds independence and a sense of responsibility from a young age.
69. Children engage eagerly in both indoor and outdoor activities, concentrating for extended periods and showing deep interest and enjoyment in relation to their age. They respond effectively to staff instructions and actively participate in activities, such as story time, identifying body parts and water play.

## Personal development

70. The personal development of children is outstanding.
71. Managers have implemented a highly effective and well-established key-person system, providing strong emotional security for children. This approach ensures that children receive comfort and support when needed, fostering secure attachments and strong bonds with their key person and other staff members. Staff have a deep understanding of each child's needs and interests, offering personalised activities that promote emotional wellbeing and educational development.
72. Staff support personal development by encouraging independence, social skills and helping children to feel secure. Children are prompted to make choices, such as selecting the colour of their bib or the songs they sing, fostering decision-making and autonomy. Personal hygiene practices that staff promote, such as washing hands and faces with a flannel before eating, helps to teach children self-care skills.
73. Staff ensure that the relationships between themselves and the children are nurturing. Children respond well to staff guidance, readily complying with gentle and respectful instructions. This positive interaction highlights the effective care practices in place, ensuring that children's needs are met. Managers engage extremely effectively with parents, who find their support invaluable.
74. Staff meticulously address allergies and dietary requirements, ensuring all children feel included and cared for. Mealtimes are carefully designed to promote social interaction, with children sitting together, choosing their food, and confidently using utensils. They are offered a healthy diet appropriate to their developmental stage, with food cut up in advance to ensure comfortable eating.
75. Staff provide a rich set of experiences celebrating different cultures within the nursery. This is done at an age-appropriate level and through resources that promote an inclusive environment. For instance, staff teach children to respect other communities beyond their own. They do this by exploring through play, reading books, discussing of displays, and completing puzzles.

## Leadership and management

76. Leadership and management are outstanding.
77. Managers conduct thorough employment checks. They provide regular medical training to all staff so that children receive the best possible care. They offer comprehensive induction and professional development opportunities. Staff share best practice and receive regular safeguarding updates, including training in the risks of extremism.
78. Staff describe the support they receive from managers as notably helpful. For instance, managers check-in on their wellbeing regularly and they promote an open-door policy. Managers ensure staff supervisions are supportive and that staff receive targeted training. Staff wellbeing and workload are managed effectively.
79. Governors are supportive and well informed. They regularly visit the nursery and review progress against the development plan. Concerns and complaints from parents are promptly and effectively addressed.



80. Through monitoring and oversight, managers ensure that the nursery is extremely well led. Children receive excellent care and make outstanding progress with the curriculum that managers have developed.
81. Managers ensure that policies and procedures are implemented with great care, adhering strictly to the early years statutory framework, including safeguarding policies on mobile phone use and the administration of medicines.

## **Safeguarding**

82. Safeguarding is effective.
83. Managers ensure that safeguarding reporting procedures are clear, with regular monitoring processes to support children. These well-defined protocols ensure any issues are promptly identified and addressed, maintaining a vigilant and responsive environment.
84. Children's welfare is a top priority, with their needs being met promptly and effectively. Staff respond quickly to children's needs, ensuring a safe and happy environment. This commitment creates a secure and nurturing atmosphere where children can thrive. Managers are proactive, consistently updating training when new legislation is introduced or when staff need refreshers. Managers regularly test staff knowledge on how to respond to any potential safeguarding concern, which enhances their understanding and preparedness. This comprehensive approach ensures all staff are equipped with the latest information and best practices.
85. Children's medical needs are met with robust first-aid procedures. Staff complete termly fire drills and daily risk assessments which ensure areas are clear for evacuation.

## **The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage**

86. The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Fairstead House School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	935/6018
<b>Registered early years number</b>	EY543855
<b>Registered charity number</b>	802427
<b>Address</b>	Fairstead House School Fordham Road Newmarket Suffolk CB8 7AA
<b>Phone number</b>	01638 662318
<b>Email address</b>	registrar@fairsteadhouse.org
<b>Website</b>	www.fairsteadhouse.org
<b>Proprietor</b>	The King's School Ely
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Day
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Radford
<b>Age range</b>	1 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	218
<b>Number of children in the early years registered setting</b>	21
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 February 2020

## Information about the school

87. Fairstead House School is a co-educational day school. Founded in 1950, the school is situated in the centre of Newmarket. Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in May 2022 having been acting head since April 2021. In August 2022, the school changed ownership and is now part of King's Ely group of schools.
88. The early years section of the school comprises of 122 children in four Nursery classes and a Reception class. The early years registered setting is for children aged from 1 to 2 years.
89. The school has identified 17 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
90. English is an additional language for 25 pupils.
91. The school states its aims are to provide an environment of enthusiasm, challenge and encouragement in which pupils will learn to understand and respect the world whilst developing confidence and a love of learning. It seeks to nurture and celebrate each pupil's talents, develop their emotional and social wellbeing and encourage their leadership and collaboration skills.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

18 to 20 June 2024

92. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

93. Inspection activities included:

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

94. 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](http://www.isi.net)**.

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**

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

For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)