

# School inspection report

11 to 13 June 2024

## **Leicester Preparatory School**

2 Albert Road,  
Stoneygate,  
Leicester,  
Leicestershire  
LE2 2AA

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

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders do not always demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skills and discharge their responsibilities effectively in order to promote the wellbeing of pupils. Difficulties in the procurement and, until very recently, installation of a system to filter and monitor internet access, have meant that this particular requirement of current statutory guidance related to safeguarding has not been met. In all other respects, suitable policies cover all areas of school operations and are implemented effectively.
2. Proprietorial oversight of policies and procedures is secure overall and supported by advice from external specialists. However, the internal oversight of aspects such as the effectiveness of teaching and its impact on the quality of pupils' work is not as rigorous as it could be to ensure that pupils are achieving as well as possible.
3. Leaders in the early years fully consider individual children's needs and interests. Staff plan carefully so that activities build on prior learning. This ensures children make good progress and are well supported to develop their social, creative, emotional, intellectual and physical skills.
4. The suitable curriculum enables pupils throughout the school to develop their skills and understanding across the required range of areas. Effective, well-planned teaching enables pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to make typically good progress. However, on occasion, teachers' planned tasks do not take into account prior learning and skills as effectively as possible, and therefore do not offer sufficient challenge to enable them to progress as well as possible. As a result, pupils' progress is not as consistent as it might be.
5. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum promotes mutual respect and cultural understanding. Pupils understand right from wrong and show respect for the law and other cultures. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme is appropriate and effective in helping pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships.
6. Teachers provide appropriate careers advice which prepares pupils effectively for the next stage in their education. The personalised approach supports individual pupils' overall personal development, as well as the next stage in their education.
7. Leaders and staff help pupils develop a sense of social responsibility. However, there are currently limited opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and apply these for the benefit of others.
8. Leaders ensure that health and safety and fire safety equipment are checked and maintained appropriately, including through the use of external consultants.
9. Leaders respond to any safeguarding concerns swiftly and effectively. Staff receive suitable safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities in this area.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not met consistently.
- 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 not met consistently.

### Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that:

- the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the other standards are consistently met and
- they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils

so that:

- the filtering and monitoring of internet access are implemented effectively in line with current statutory guidance.

### Recommended next steps

The proprietor should:

- strengthen the rigour of the oversight of practice and outcomes, such as the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of pupils' work, to ensure that pupils are achieving as well as they can
- ensure that all teaching takes pupils' prior learning and skills into account as effectively as possible in order to provide sufficient challenge to enable pupils to progress as well as possible
- strengthen pupils' development of leadership skills.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. The sole proprietor does not ensure that leaders consistently demonstrate good knowledge and skills or carry out their responsibilities effectively in all respects. While most policies and procedures are suitable and effective in promoting the wellbeing of pupils, the school does not meet all safeguarding requirements. In particular, leaders have not yet ensured the effective filtering and monitoring of internet usage in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders are aware of this and are actively engaged in the procurement and installation of a system to filter and monitor internet access, though this is not yet embedded into the school.
11. The proprietor maintains a sufficiently secure oversight of policies and procedures and seeks advice from external consultants to improve practice. However, the internal oversight of practice and outcomes, such as of the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of pupils' work, is not as rigorous as possible to ensure that pupils are achieving as well as they can.
12. Leaders conduct detailed self-evaluation, informed by regular consultation with parents. Leaders have ambitious and realistic plans for the school. For example, the proprietor and leaders have identified some potential risks related to the duality of the role of headteacher and proprietor, and the school is actively seeking to establish a governing body.
13. The school's aims and ethos are well established, made available in writing to parents and staff, and are known by pupils. Leaders and staff promote the aims of the school clearly and consistently.
14. Leaders provide appropriate information, including the required school policies, to parents through the school's website. Parents receive regular and detailed reports on their child's progress. Leaders and staff are visible and available to parents to discuss any aspect of their child's learning and progress.
15. Complaints are handled appropriately in line with the policy. Level one complaints, whilst being logged by individual teachers, are not held centrally, but are informally monitored and overseen. An appropriate record is kept of formal complaints and actions taken in response are appropriate. If a complaint is made, the complainant receives a clear and timely response.
16. Leaders work effectively with external agencies, and have taken steps to develop these further. For example, leaders have developed links with local designated safeguarding leaders in other schools to enable effective practice to be shared. The link with the group of local nursery schools, which is funded by the Department of Education (DfE) to provide support and mentoring for staff working with early years, has been used successfully to improve practice.
17. Leaders promote pupils' respect for people's diversity. They ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders implement a suitable accessibility plan.
18. Leaders effectively take a strategic, comprehensive and inclusive approach to identifying and managing risk. Appropriate risk management training has been undertaken and effectively implemented. Risk assessments are carried out for the school premises, including for fire safety, educational trips, recruitment procedures and staffing. These risk assessments are conducted systematically and identify clearly how the school mitigates the potential risks identified. There are daily risk assessments in classrooms and play areas, including those in the early years setting.

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

19. Standards are not met consistently with respect to safeguarding.
20. As a result, Standards relating to governance, leadership and management are not met.
- 21. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.**

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

22. The curriculum covers a suitable range of subjects that goes beyond that in the national curriculum. Schemes of work and plans for the different subject areas develop learning in these subjects systematically and are adapted to meet the needs of the particular pupils in each year group.
23. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified clearly and are supported through thorough individual plans and monitoring of their progress. In lessons, teachers use this information to give pupils work matched to their needs. Teachers assess their progress through formal tests and through daily informal observations. These pupils make good progress.
24. Teaching in the early years is effective. Each child's key person provides activities appropriate to the individual child's needs, which ensures good progress. Teaching methods enable individual children's needs to be addressed, including through focused support when required. For example, where it has been identified that any child needs additional support to engage and contribute to discussions, the key person adapts questions to encourage and help the children to do so. Staff's ongoing language-rich dialogue with children enables them to develop their communication skills successfully.
25. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught and, overall, use effective teaching methods appropriate to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make typically good progress. They want to learn. They listen well in lessons and answer questions enthusiastically. However, there are times when pupils' prior learning is not taken into account as effectively as they could be. This results in a lack of sufficient challenge to enable pupils to progress as well as possible.
26. Pupils' literacy skills are developed through the morning reading sessions. In lessons, pupils are encouraged and enabled to use the most correct language and vocabulary to speak confidently and clearly. In the early years, teachers focus on a series of books each half term, which allows children to learn the sequence of a story, relate to its characters and use them to discuss feelings and consequences. Teaching encourages imaginative descriptive language and extended vocabulary, and as a result, the quality of written work is of an age-appropriate standard.
27. In mathematics lessons, teaching enables pupils to apply their mental arithmetic skills and explain their logic in solving problems, such as when interpreting simple time/distance graphs and determining how to represent a break in a journey. The standard of pupils' artwork is advanced for their age and demonstrates a variety of skills and techniques. Teachers give clear instructions and encourage creativity. Opportunities to establish links between curriculum areas are pursued by the teaching staff. For example, geography lessons about Germany include reference to Einstein's contributions to science, and in English, technical vocabulary from different subjects is included in key word lists when related to the themes at hand. This develops pupils' understanding of the ways that things they learn about in different subjects are related to each other.
28. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and provide swift feedback about it, enabling pupils to self-correct and edit their work. Baseline assessment is completed at the start and end of each year using nationally standardised assessments. This assessment shows good progress and that generally pupils exceed age related expectations.

29. Recreational activities and clubs outside the school day offer opportunities for pupils to develop specific skills, such as in swimming, horse riding, chess, art and coding. Whilst playing games such as chess, pupils recognise that they are developing skills of logic and strategy, as well as enjoying the competitive nature of the game. The weekly celebration assemblies, allow pupils to share their extra-curricular achievements in support of each other and provide examples of what can be achieved.

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

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



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

31. Leaders and teachers promote respect for others through assembly topics and the PSHE programme. Pupils are educated effectively about diversity and the value of respect for others who may have different backgrounds, beliefs and situations to their own. Teachers make effective use of clear visual resources to develop pupils' understanding of protected characteristics such as race, faith and sex, whilst younger pupils are encouraged to respect diversity through exploration of characters in books.
32. Assemblies, the PSHE programme and religious education (RE) lessons encourage spiritual understanding through teaching about different faiths and the cultural heritage of the local environment. This begins in the early years, where different religions, cultures and worldviews are discussed and celebrated, through to the older years where pupils share perspectives on their own diverse faiths in Britain.
33. Pupils follow an external scheme of work in PSHE, which includes suitable provision for RSE. The programme is designed to help pupils understand and be equipped to cope with issues like body image, cyber and homophobic bullying, and internet safety. The programme includes age-appropriate content on healthy relationships, covering for example, how to be a good friend and what consent means. Teachers ensure pupils' understanding through assessments and monitoring the pupils' learning journals. Parents have been informed about the programme and are invited to discuss any concerns they have on an annual basis.
34. Leaders promote the positive behaviour policy, which reinforces pupils taking responsibility for their own behaviour. There is a record of sanctions which enables leaders to identify trends. Any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are responded to quickly and effectively.
35. Pupils are well supervised at all times, including in the early years. Sufficient staff are deployed on duty outside of lesson times. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.
36. Physical health is promoted through the physical education (PE) lessons. Younger children use skittles and other age-appropriate toys to further develop their gross motor skills. Pupils are taught about healthy food choices and having a balanced diet, which encourages them to eat healthily. Adults working with them have a clear understanding of their needs and preferences. Dietary requirements and allergens are taken into account through thoughtful menu planning.
37. Pupils' mental and emotional health and wellbeing are supported through the school's curriculum. Leaders and staff promote pupils' self-confidence and wellbeing through practising 'mindfulness' techniques and educating pupils about strategies that can be used to strengthen resilience. Pupils are given the opportunity each morning to practise these skills and to reflect on their own mental health. Pupils of all ages respond well to adults' warm and nurturing attitude. Positive language is used constantly to support pupils' self-confidence and model ways of demonstrating respect. Staff in the early years help children settle in and learn routines through a well-established induction process, including home visits prior to children starting in the Nursery.
38. Health and safety arrangements are rigorous. Leaders arrange for health and safety checks on plant and equipment, such as gas and electrical appliances, water, asbestos and the school minibus, to be

carried out by appropriately qualified external consultants and logs are kept effectively. The premises and accommodation are maintained appropriately. There are up-to-date fire risk assessments, and fire equipment is checked appropriately. Termly fire evacuation practices enable pupils to know what to do in the event of fire.

39. Attendance and admission registers are accurately maintained and stored. The school informs the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school out of normal transition times.
40. Leaders provide suitable medical accommodation to care for pupils who become unwell. There are sufficient staff who are trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid, to accommodate the needs of the pupils. Procedures for first aid and the administration of medical procedures are carried out effectively.

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

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

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

42. Leaders provide a curriculum which enables pupils to learn about life in British society and the wider world. British values, such as tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, are woven into schemes of work in ways that encourage respect for other people. For example, older pupils investigate the journey of the Windrush immigrants. Leaders ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to explore the function of public services such as the police and fire service and how the National Health Service was established. The curriculum also helps develop pupils' economic awareness. For example, children learn how money is used in shops in role play in the early years. Older pupils study aspects of economics, such as relative price differences when buying in bulk compared to individual items, as part of the mathematics programme of study.
43. Children in the early years experience a programme of activities and guidance from staff to help their social development, such as learning to take turns, share play equipment and use it safely. As a result, children learn how to manage their own behaviour and develop sensitivity towards others' needs.
44. Education about diversity and the importance of inclusion is well established. Pupils are taught about ideas of rights, fairness and equality. Teachers promote the school's 'golden rules' and reinforce them with pupils on a regular basis. As a result, pupils develop a clear moral code. In PSHE, teachers educate pupils about achievements and figures from different backgrounds, such as Maggie Pockock and Ada Lovelace, as well as the concept of prejudice. Leaders encourage the culture of tolerance and respect through acting as role models.
45. Leaders' active promotion of the positive behaviour policy and self-regulation encourages reflection and ownership of behaviour. The PSHE programme includes a unit on crime and punishment, which develops pupils' appreciation of the need for rules and laws to help maintain a peaceful society. They learn about the role of civil and criminal law. In history, older pupils learn about laws in different countries, as well as in this country.
46. Leaders and staff develop pupils' understanding of the concept of democracy and engage pupils in the discussions about the electoral process. Older pupils are informed of names of the leaders of the larger political parties and demonstrate an understanding of voting. Any discussions which refer to political themes are conducted impartially.
47. Leaders successfully prepare pupils for the next stage in their education. On a weekly basis, in the summer term, pupils move between their current and next class and forthcoming new entrants also attend. The oldest pupils have individual action plans to allow them to experience and be prepared for secondary education, which includes visiting their next school and meeting their new form teacher. Leaders widen pupils' awareness of a broad range of careers options through external speakers. In the early years, children use props to enact different careers and role play to support their understanding.
48. Leaders help pupils to be aware of the need to think about society outside of their immediate vicinity and use national fundraising days on a termly basis to promote their understanding of the need to support others. For example, the school successfully raised money for Children in Need.

However, there are currently few opportunities for pupils' leadership skills to be fostered or for pupils to apply these to benefit others.

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

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

## Safeguarding

50. Most safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders train staff appropriately and there is a culture of openness regarding an understanding that 'it could happen here'. Leaders provide regular updates and weekly briefings to staff to ensure knowledge is embedded. Leaders also share guidance with parents through the weekly newsletter.
51. The school has very recently secured a commercial filtering and monitoring system. Leaders and managers had a risk assessment in place to support the safety of pupils and access to the internet by adults whilst the system was being purchased. Actions to mitigate the risks were thorough and staff were aware of the need to closely monitor pupils' access to the internet. However, the school's current filtering and monitoring of internet usage does not yet meet the requirements of current statutory guidance. The new system is still to be embedded and processes to pro-actively limit potential access to prohibited sites for pupils and adults are still being established. Children in the early years do not have access to the internet at the present time.
52. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of the safeguarding policy and procedures. This oversight recognises the requirement for effective filtering and monitoring of internet usage and has informed the steps being taken designed to bring this about.
53. Leaders with safeguarding responsibilities respond promptly and appropriately whenever safeguarding concerns arise. Leaders work effectively with local safeguarding partners and refer concerns to them when appropriate.
54. Leaders ensure that all staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training when they join the school, and this is updated at regular intervals. Staff training includes consideration of aspects such as female genital mutilation, the prevention of extremism, the potential vulnerability of pupils who have SEND and procedures to report any concerns or allegations against adults working with pupils. Those with designated safeguarding lead responsibilities receive appropriate training for their role.
55. Leaders inform pupils of the identity of the safeguarding leads in the school and encourage them to speak to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable should they have any concerns. Pupils are given opportunities to share concerns confidentially and leaders take appropriate action to address any worries that pupils communicate to them.
56. The school teaches pupils how to stay safe when they are online and how to alert a member of staff if they have any concerns about online material.
57. All required pre-employment checks are carried out before staff commence working at the school and recorded accurately in a single central register of appointments. Evidence of the checks which have been carried out is included in staff files appropriately. Leaders have put in place suitable risk assessments should the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates be delayed.

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

58. Standards are not met consistently with regard to safeguarding arrangements.
- 59. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.**

## Schedule of unmet Standards

### Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 8, 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 –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

### Safeguarding

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –
7(a)	arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
7(b)	such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Leicester Preparatory School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	856/6003
<b>Address</b>	Leicester Preparatory School 2 Albert Road Stoneygate Leicester Leicestershire LE2 2AA
<b>Phone number</b>	01162707414
<b>Email address</b>	office@leicesterprep.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	leicesterprepschool.co.uk/
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Francis Fernandes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Francis Fernandes
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	57
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 to 27 February 2020

## Information about the school

60. Leicester Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school situated in Leicester. The school was originally founded in 1878 and re-opened in 2014 under the proprietorship of a group of parents and since June 2023, a sole proprietor. The proprietor has acted as the headteacher since January 2024.
61. There are 17 children in the early years, which comprises two Nursery classes and one Reception class.
62. The school has identified two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
63. No pupils have been identified as speaking English as an additional language.
64. The school states its aims are to celebrate every individual, and that every child is valued and feels success, through inspirational teaching, curriculum and school experience so that they become inspired to research, learn and challenge, and grow in ambition to realise there is no ceiling to what they can achieve.



## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

11 to 13 June 2024

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

66. Inspection activities included:

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

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

68. The previous inspection was by Ofsted. This is the first inspection of the school by ISI.

**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)**.

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