

# School inspection report

8 to 10 May 2024

## **The Belvedere Preparatory School**

23 Belvidere Road

Princes Park

Aigburth

Liverpool

L8 3TF

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 use their professional skills and knowledge to support pupils' wellbeing well. They understand pupils' needs and create a warm, caring environment. Pupils and staff feel valued and appreciated. The proprietor's oversight during frequent visits to the school contributes positively to the maintenance of this culture.
2. Well-qualified staff successfully implement policies so that pupils benefit from a broad, balanced curriculum and understand the importance of positive behaviour. Carefully planned teaching and well-structured sports and extra-curricular programmes enable pupils to develop their knowledge and skills effectively and acquire new interests.
3. Staff use assessment data effectively to provide pupils with appropriate challenge, including those with higher prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils make good progress in all subjects.
4. Pupils' emotional wellbeing is prioritised. Appropriate supervision ensures that trusted adults are always available to the pupils. Staff listen and respond supportively when pupils raise concerns. Leaders enhance pupils' confidence and self-esteem through effective pastoral care, including the support provided by form teachers and through extra-curricular activities, including the wellbeing and mindfulness clubs.
5. Effective, carefully assessed personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education promotes the moral, physical and emotional wellbeing of the pupils. Thoughtful behaviour management based on consistency and fairness in the application of rules promotes positive behaviour effectively.
6. Leaders ensure that pupils develop understanding of democratic values and financial matters, thereby preparing them for active participation in wider British society. Involvement in charity fund-raising gives them experience of project management and heightens awareness of the needs of others. However, opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for aspects of school life and develop and strengthen their leadership skills are limited.
7. Leaders promote pupil safeguarding effectively. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities and staff are suitably trained. Leaders work closely with the relevant external agencies and staff understand how to address safeguarding concerns. The rigorous recruitment process checks the suitability of staff effectively.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

## Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- strengthen pupils' leadership skills to help prepare them for life in British society.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders successfully create an environment in which pupils are encouraged to strive for the highest possible achievements and display positive behaviour and attitudes at all times. Leaders model respect, courtesy and tolerance, values which contribute highly to the warm, open culture prevailing in the school.
9. Leadership and management possess the skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles and fulfil their responsibilities proficiently. They understand the school and know the pupils well. Leaders and the proprietor systematically monitor policies and procedures to ensure their suitability.
10. Leaders ensure that the school's curriculum policy and schemes of work are implemented successfully so as to develop pupils' social and cultural knowledge and understanding. They keep all aspects of the curriculum under constant review so that pupils' academic needs are met and they can learn and make progress.
11. Thorough assessment of children in the early years enables the well-qualified staff to track their achievements successfully. Leaders ensure that teachers plan the next steps in the children's learning carefully so that they make good progress. The provision of specialist teaching in music and physical education contributes positively to their growth and development. Children typically achieve the early learning goals and leaders report the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results to the local authority.
12. Safeguarding arrangements are prioritised. Designated safeguarding leaders are suitably trained and liaise appropriately with relevant local agencies. They ensure that staff have the training necessary to identify and report any potential safeguarding concerns and provide them with regular updates to ensure that appropriate measures remain in place to safeguard pupils.
13. Leaders implement a rigorous recruitment procedure. Required checks are completed before successful applicants take up their appointment so that only suitable adults work at the school. The proprietor checks the single central record and personnel files to provide appropriate oversight of recruitment practices.
14. Leaders ensure that pastoral arrangements for supporting pupils are comprehensive and effective in promoting pupil health and mental wellbeing. Suitable training, recording and oversight procedures ensure staff manage pupil behaviour effectively.
15. Those with responsibility for health and safety take appropriate and effective action. They ensure school facilities are suitably maintained and there is a systematic review of risks. They provide risk assessment training for staff so that detailed risk assessments are drawn up covering school premises, activities, residential trips and specific individual needs. These risk assessments identify suitable measures to minimise or remove the potential risks that have been identified. Senior leaders regularly review risk assessments and revise them when required to ensure their continued effectiveness.
16. Leaders provide parents with regular updates on their children's progress. Parents access key information about the school through the school website. Leaders ensure the complaints policy is implemented effectively throughout the school. Any complaints are managed promptly in

accordance with the policy published on the school's website. Leaders engage with complainants in order to better understand their concerns.

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

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

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

18. The well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum maximises the opportunities and experiences available to pupils. It is planned effectively to provide pupils with skills and knowledge in language, numeracy, science, the humanities and technical and creative subjects. Detailed schemes of work specify the aspects to be covered in each subject and teachers make effective use of themes, such as the Olympic Games, to plan links across the curriculum successfully.
19. In numeracy, children in the early years learn how to carry out simple subtractions. Well-structured teaching about the sounds that letters make using word games successfully builds children's reading skills. In mathematics, older pupils confidently explore the properties of shapes and calculate their area and volume. Year 1 pupils use advanced vocabulary, such as when describing the negative feelings of a character in a story. They use such words as 'anxious', 'struggled', 'worried', 'devastated', 'hopeless' and 'rejected' with understanding. Year 5 pupils show secure understanding of both sentence structure and use of personification in reviewing creative writing. In science, older pupils use chemical and electrical symbols accurately.
20. Enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in the humanities. For example, teaching enables pupils to conduct independent research on characters from Tudor history and give interesting, well-informed presentations to their peers. Similarly, the teaching of geography develops pupils' understanding of aspects such as tropical rainforests.
21. Well-planned and knowledgeable music teaching develops pupils' musical understanding and skills well. For example, pupils learn about varying tempo, high and low volume and varied dynamics to create the right atmosphere when composing. Teachers of the expressive arts encourage creativity and guide pupils with precision about how to develop specific skills in fine art, graphics and pottery.
22. The extra-curricular enrichment programme enables pupils to further develop their knowledge and skills. They make progress in developing their singing abilities, learn skills in art and craft and improve a range of sporting skills. As a result of this programme, pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are boosted.
23. Subject leaders ensure that academic provision is appropriate to the needs, aptitude and prior attainment of pupils. Teachers provide clear and knowledgeable explanations so that pupils develop their understanding and skills. Well-planned, suitably paced and interesting lessons which include a range of varied, interesting and challenging activities ensure pupils make good progress. Paired work, group discussions, games and independent research, for example, are used when they would be most effective to hold pupils' attention and support their learning.
24. Teachers consistently provide pupils with clear and effective written and verbal feedback, which helps pupils make progress by affirming their understanding, clarifying when work could develop and giving targets for future work.
25. Leaders use baseline testing and nationally standardised tests to assess pupil performance rigorously and provide specific additional support for pupils not making sufficient progress or who have been identified in having gaps in their learning. They set targets for all pupils based on these assessments and review how well teaching enables these targets to be met.

26. Termly assessment enables leaders to work closely with external specialists, such as educational psychologists, to identify pupils who have SEND. The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND provides education plans for these pupils so that teachers are aware of their needs and understand how to provide appropriate support in class. Assessment data shows that these targeted activities enable pupils who have SEND to make good progress.
27. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive appropriate support for their English when required. Teachers and teaching assistants successfully build their skills in spoken and written English so that they can take part confidently in activities with their peers.

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

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



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

29. The PSHE education programme is implemented effectively. This programme engages pupils with themes such as the importance of personal fitness and strategies that can be used to support their own mental health and emotional wellbeing. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to consider their emotions, making effective use of devices such as an 'emotions thermometer' and a 'colour monster' to help pupils express their feelings in ways appropriate to their age.
30. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme contains content in line with statutory guidance and suitable for the pupils' age. It develops pupils' understanding of different types of healthy relationships and what behaviours could signal an unhealthy relationship. Pupils learn about respecting privacy and consent and the importance of raising concerns if they feel worried or unsafe.
31. Pupils learn to consider spiritual and moral matters through thought-provoking assemblies, addressing issues such as sexism, gender stereotyping and Black history. Planned discussions in PSHE education help pupils understand different relationships and values such as tolerance and the rule of law. Their religious studies lessons enable them to learn about and appreciate the major faiths.
32. The physical development of children in the early years is developed through timetabled physical education lessons with a specialist teacher. Structured indoor and outdoor play improves their fine and gross motor skills and their general co-ordination. Specialist teaching enables pupils to develop their sporting abilities. Older pupils show well-developed abilities in a variety of sports, for example, swimming, netball, lacrosse and football. Leaders support pupils in performing successfully in local and regional competitions.
33. Leaders and staff communicate high expectations of pupils' conduct both in and outside the classroom and, as a result, pupils are well behaved and kind. Occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour, racism and gender discrimination are dealt with appropriately and effectively. Leaders monitor records closely to identify any trends in pupil behaviour and take action to address these. The school's approach to behaviour management encourages pupils to reflect on any inappropriate or unkind behaviour, apologise and move on positively. Leaders respond to the rare instances of bullying promptly, providing support for the victim and guidance to the perpetrator which focuses on the consequences of their conduct. As a result, sanctions are rarely needed.
34. Supervision arrangements are effective. Staff in the early years are deployed so that required staff-to-child ratios are always adhered to. Throughout the school, staff are always present before, during and after the school day, including in break times and after-school activities so that pupils receive appropriate and prompt support if they raise concerns.
35. Leaders ensure the health and safety policy is implemented effectively. All required checks and maintenance checks are conducted properly so that the premises and accommodation are well maintained. Appropriate action is taken to mitigate fire risks, including regular fire evacuation drills and a suitable fire risk assessment. Appropriately trained staff to provide suitable care and administer first aid appropriately when required for those who are ill, injured or have specific medical needs.

36. Admissions and attendance registers are suitably maintained. Leaders promote high attendance successfully and inform the local authority promptly when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times.

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

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

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

38. Leaders create an environment which promotes respect for others and prepares pupils effectively to make a purposeful contribution in British society. The broad academic curriculum, together with the wide range of topics covered within the PSHE programme, develops pupils' awareness of wider human, social and economic matters. For example, pupils learn about the potential impact of problems with debt on mental health.
39. PSHE education, assemblies, extra-curricular activities and teaching across a range of subjects inform pupils effectively about democracy and the rule of law. For example, democracy is considered when electing the school council, and when studying classical Greece and the campaigns of the suffragettes. Pupils engage in discussions about current affairs, such as environmental issues. They explore the relationship between rules and laws and how the justice system works, learning why it is important to follow laws and the consequences of not doing so. Discussions on such themes are conducted impartially and without any political bias.
40. Pupils learn about the concept of rights and how these are upheld in British society. They learn about diverse faiths in religious studies lessons and develop their understanding of the importance of respecting others. Pupils listen to one another and are respectful of people's cultural backgrounds and identities.
41. The curriculum is designed effectively to help pupils to develop their understanding of financial and economic matters. The use of money is introduced to children in the early years and pupils in Year 1 visit supermarkets to buy goods. PSHE education for older pupils focuses on issues of want and need when discussing money. For example, pupils explore how to budget, whilst charity projects enable pupils to decide how best to use money in order to raise funds. Older pupils on school trips are encouraged to plan how to spend money carefully.
42. Pupils throughout the school take part in activities which enable them to develop an understanding of the world beyond school. Through presentations and workshops, they are introduced to the work of different professions, such as dentists and medical practitioners, and the role of essential services, such as the provision of water, funded through taxation. Links with groups in the local community enable them to appreciate the needs of others. Pupils sing at a local residential home and talk to the residents on their organised visits to the school.
43. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to experience wider British society. For example, history trips to Chester and York, science trips, sports fixtures and residential visits help them to socialise with different people and learn about a variety of different activities and places of interest. Involvement in a local social action project enables older pupils to take responsibility for fund-raising, campaigning, peer-mentoring and event management to benefit their chosen national charity.
44. Leaders encourage the oldest pupils to take on the responsibility of being role models to the younger pupils. However, there are currently limited opportunities for them, and others in younger year groups, to develop and strengthen their leadership skills, such as by taking on more formal leadership positions with specific areas of responsibility.

45. Year 6 pupils typically secure places at academically selective independent schools. Leaders prepare them effectively for the transition to secondary education by providing guidance on safe travelling around the city and how to stay safe online.

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

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

## Safeguarding

47. The proprietor has an effective understanding of his safeguarding role. He undertakes regular training and ensures that the school implements a suitable safeguarding policy, which takes account of statutory updates. Safeguarding is an agenda item for the half-termly meetings of the advisory board. The proprietor and advisory board review and approve the safeguarding policy each year and conduct an annual review of safeguarding procedures to ensure their suitability.
48. The safeguarding team receive appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities. They work closely with school staff and external agencies, consulting with children's services and the local authority designated officer (LADO) in a timely manner and referring safeguarding concerns to them when appropriate.
49. Leaders ensure staff receive regular and effective safeguarding training, including at induction. As a result, staff understand how to respond to a pupil concern and any allegations against or low-level concerns about adults working in the school. Staff share any concerns promptly. Safeguarding is an agenda item for the weekly staff meetings. Leaders maintain suitable safeguarding records.
50. Leaders ensure that PSHE education and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to stay safe online. Pupils are taught about the importance of sharing any concerns that they might have and are confident that staff would respond quickly to any that they did raise. Suitable filtering and monitoring systems are in place to support safe use of school technology.
51. The recruitment process checks the suitability of adults that are appointed to work with the pupils effectively. All the necessary safer recruitment checks are carried out before staff commence working at the school. A suitable single central record of appointments is accurately maintained.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	The Belvedere Preparatory School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	341/6039
<b>Address</b>	The Belvedere Preparatory School 23 Belvidere Road Princes Park Aigburth Liverpool Merseyside L8 3TF
<b>Phone number</b>	01514 711137
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@belvedereprep.com
<b>Website</b>	www.belvedereprep.com
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr William Currie
<b>Chair</b>	Mr William Currie
<b>Headmistress</b>	Miss Clare Burnham
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	170
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 October 2019

## Information about the school

53. The Belvedere Preparatory School is a co-educational day school. It is located in the Princes Park area of Liverpool. Since 2010 the school has been owned by Mr William Currie and Mrs Catherine Currie. The school is overseen by the sole proprietor, supported by an advisory board of governors.
54. There are 34 pupils in the early years, comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
55. The school has identified five pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
56. English is an additional language for a very small number of pupils.
57. The school states its aims are to provide a creative, vibrant and academic education, encouraging children to be thinkers, calculated risk takers, creators and self-directed learners who display positive behaviours and are respectful of others.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

8 to 10 May 2024

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

59. 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 proprietors
- 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.

60. 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)**.

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