



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

BARNARDISTON HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
FOR SCHOOLS WITH RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

21 TO 22 JUNE 2016



About the Inspection

Full Name of School	Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School
DfE Number	935/6023
EYFS Number	EY356342
Address	Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School Barnardiston Hall Barnardiston Haverhill Suffolk CB9 7TG
Telephone Number	01440 786316
Email Address	admin@barnardiston.com
Headmaster	Tim Dodgson
Proprietor and Principal	Keith Boulter
Age Range	6 months to 13 years
Total Number of Pupils	230
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (120 boys; 110 girls)
Number of day pupils	Total: 194
Number of boarders	Total: 36
	Full: 28
Early Years Foundation Stage	52
Pupils' Ability	Standardised tests indicate that the ability of the pupils is above the national average.
Pupils' Needs	The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is thirty-nine. One has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. These pupils require support with literacy and numeracy. Fifteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and all receive support.
History of the School	The school was founded in 1959, and in 1970 moved to its current 30-acre rural Suffolk site. The current proprietor acquired the school in 1990.

About the Inspection

Ownership and Governing Structure	The school is owned and governed by the proprietor, who is also currently the principal.
School Structure	The school operates as a single school on a single site and comprises three departments. The Early Years department caters for children aged six months to five years, the pre-prep educates pupils aged five to seven and the prep accommodates pupils aged seven to thirteen.
Inspection Dates	21 to 22 June 2016
Other Useful Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) The school offers specialist learning support for pupils with SEND in accommodation known as 'The Bridge'.(ii) Boarding is offered to pupils from age five, with accommodation in two separate houses which are separated by gender.(iii) Since the previous inspection, the school has extended its age range downwards to babies six months and over.

About the Inspection

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

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (“boarding NMS”). It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

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

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school’s compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

The inspection does not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as:

- (i) the school’s aims;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) compliance with data protection requirements
- (iv) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (v) contractual arrangements with parents
- (vi) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups. Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Independent School Standards Regulations](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

SUMMARY EVALUATION

The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1

Quality of education provided

The school uses its own framework to determine attainment.

The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupil performance is in place.

The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1 - 4] are met.

PART 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.

The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.

PART 3

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and a strategic approach to risk assessment is in place. A disability access plan is in place. Boarders do not experience discrimination, and their care is sensitive to different needs.

An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.

The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6 - 16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2 - 4, 6 - 12, 15 and 16 are met.

PART 4

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.

The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17 - 21] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 5

Premises of and accommodation at schools

Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22 - 31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6

Provision of information

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

The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are met.

PART 7

Manner in which complaints are handled

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

The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [Paragraph 34] and NMS 13 is met.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.

Since the previous inspection there has been a considerable expansion of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); the school now caters for children from 6 months old for 51 weeks of the year. Children generally make good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points; the needs of the range of children who attend are largely met and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This includes those with EAL or SEND, and the more able. Children's personal and emotional development is outstanding. They love their school, teachers and carers, and feel safe, secure and happy. Leadership and management are effective at evaluating practice and securing continuous improvement that enhances children's life chances. They have ensured that the recommendation of the previous inspection, to write the next steps in learning for individual children into daily planning, is more consistently met. Staff are fully aware of and meet all of their responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good.

Those with leadership responsibilities have a thoughtful and relevant vision for improvement and development, demonstrated in the introduction of provision for babies and toddlers since the previous inspection. Their most prominent success is in children's personal development; they strive, with increasing fruition, to ensure that all children make sufficient progress to reach the appropriate educational standards by the time they reach the end of their time in the EYFS. The proprietor takes an effective interest in the EYFS. Staff with responsibility for welfare and safeguarding ensure that their knowledge and training is up to date, and they maintain strong links with the external agencies. They are conscientious in ensuring that staff are fully conversant with all safeguarding requirements. All staff are required to undertake regular training in safeguarding children, including training designed to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Other training is encouraged and several practitioners are pursuing further qualifications. A formal appraisal system, together with frequent supervision meetings, enable all staff to evaluate their practice for the benefit of the children. Leaders are increasingly aware of how to manage risk as children move around the site. Regular meetings are held to consider and evaluate policies and practice, discuss the progress of every child and plan improvements. The parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very pleased with the progress that their children are making, how their children are looked after and the way the school responds to any concerns.

The curriculum has breadth and depth, and meets relevant statutory requirements for the EYFS. When planning the educational programmes, staff respond to the children's interests such as the African topic for the older children. Younger children begin to acquire a sense of their own worth through, for example, having their choices recognised when suggesting songs. Staff actively promote equality and diversity. Wall displays celebrate differing cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year, encouraging respect for those with other beliefs. Discussions about helping to tidy up or choosing their activity encourage children to be responsible and understand the rule of law, democracy and freedom. Management of behaviour is excellent and reflects a commitment to promote kindness, tolerance and consideration towards others. The children are well prepared for transition to the next stage of their education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.

All staff have a secure understanding of how children learn and have high expectations of them. Well-focused activities, such as threading cotton reels to make caterpillars after listening to Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, enables even the younger children to sustain attention and receive praise for their achievements. The older children are encouraged to be considerate and kind to others. Well-qualified staff devise enjoyable, interesting and age-appropriate activities that enthuse the children, such as the older children drawing maps of the school. Work in mathematical development is not as successful although some tasks engender much enthusiasm among the children, such as verbal calculations based on the landscaping work taking place behind the school. Attractive and stimulating wall displays demonstrate that the achievements of the children are valued; even the youngest are able to contribute to a display about summer. Those with EAL are well supported and some displays are captioned in the child's home language.

All the adults are constantly observing and reflecting on children's progress. These observations enable detailed assessment of children's progress which is then used to plan next steps. This addresses the recommendation of the previous inspection.

Parents are welcomed into the school, and reports and parents' evenings allow them to understand their children's progress and how they can help. For the younger children, booklets completed by parents enable the school to understand the child's likes and dislikes. Also a daily contact book provides a good summary of their day at Nursery, including meals and activities. Parents are encouraged to respond to these. These are only available to parents of children under the age of two, limiting the strength of communication and the extent to which parents of older Nursery children can be involved in their children's work and progress. The required progress check for two year olds is carefully completed and the results are discussed with parents.

Equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity are promoted through stories, displays and resources. Teaching for all children is supportive; it is based on their own interests and enables them to acquire effective learning skills. It provides a rich programme to extend children's learning, particularly in the areas of language acquisition and personal and social development. In the baby room, children are encouraged to develop understanding of shapes as they play with shape sorters. Two-year-old children are taught action songs. Older Nursery children learn to identify colours, while the three to five year olds learn to draw maps and enjoy identifying bugs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The quality of personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding.

Personal development and learning is thoughtfully promoted throughout the EYFS. Children are consistently encouraged to think for themselves, and they become increasingly confident and successful. From the two year olds upwards, children are able to take part in performances. All are well prepared for transition as a result of their familiarity with older children; middle Nursery children visit the baby room, and the older children join the pre-prep in assembly.

The children develop excellent confidence in adults; their relationships with their key people are particularly warm and positive. Older children are helped to develop independence; they are encouraged to put on their own shoes and hats as they prepare to go outside, and are supported sensitively when managing their personal hygiene needs.

Staff continually develop effective and consistent strategies to promote desirable behaviour. Children are kind to each other and learn about sharing and taking turns. They are extremely well prepared to respect others and to contribute to wider society and life in Britain.

Children learn about healthy eating through the provision of nutritious meals and snacks. They are encouraged to wash their hands after playing outside or before eating. Children frequently make use of the outdoor areas such as when going on bug hunts, watching the digger, or looking at the tadpoles. Such experiences enable them to explore and use their imagination. The youngest from the baby room are taken for walks, or rides in the pushchairs. Specialist teaching in French, music and physical education, including swimming, supports the physical and creative elements of children's personal development.

Regular attendance is encouraged, and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

Outcomes for children

Outcomes for children are good.

Most of the children make good progress in all areas of the EYFS from their wide range of starting points, including the more able and those with EAL or SEND. The older EYFS children are increasingly assured and equipped with the necessary skills to be confident in a wide array of social situations, such as in the dance show that took place during the inspection. They are receptive to learning and are equipped with language that enables them to explore, construct, and reflect on their activities.

The children exhibit high levels of curiosity and interest. Supported by the adults who care for them, the youngest in the baby room are able to explore colour, sound and shape through the provision of stimulating sensory resources. The extensive grounds provide interesting experiences, such as visiting the chickens or watching the progress of the landscape works. The two year olds develop their fine-motor skills when threading or drawing. Three year olds are beginning to recognise some letters and many can repeat the sound the letters represent. The Reception children learn to write independently. Most of the older children have made a good start at learning to read, and can recognise the sounds represented by letters in words. Some are able to recognise frequent irregular words. Older children enjoy taking their reading books home to share with parents. Outcomes are improving and children currently in the EYFS are generally reaching the standards expected for their age. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that communication with parents about their children's work and progress is as good for older Nursery children as it is for younger ones.
- Ensure that mathematics teaching is as successful across the EYFS as teaching in other aspects of learning.

About the inspection

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff and with the proprietor. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Gregg Davies	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Tania Botting	Compliance Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Dr Robin Harskin	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years
Mrs Rosamund Walwyn	Team Inspector for Early Years (Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)