



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT**

**OAKFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**APRIL 2018**



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## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

<b>School</b>	Oakfield Preparatory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	208/6109			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	270901			
<b>Address</b>	125-128 Thurlow Park Road West Dulwich London SE21 8HP			
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8670 4206			
<b>Email address</b>	info@oakfield.dulwich.sch.uk			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Patrick Gush			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Education Development Trust			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	403			
	<b>Boys</b>	214	<b>Girls</b>	189
	<b>EYFS</b>	117	<b>Juniors</b>	286
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18 to 19 April 2018			

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 1.1 Oakfield Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between two and eleven years. The school was established in 1888 in four former Victorian town houses and is owned and governed by the Education Development Trust. The current headmaster joined the school in September 2017. The pre-preparatory department includes the Nursery, Lower Foundation, Upper Foundation (Reception) and Year 1 (ages 2 to 6 years). The preparatory department accommodates Years 2 to 6 (ages 6 to 11 years).

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.2 The school's motto is "Care, Challenge and Inspire". It seeks to embody these values in the everyday lives of the staff, the children and the school community in equal measure. The school aims to ensure each child develops to be the best they can be and learns to appreciate and value their own strengths. It seeks to challenge and nurture the courageous learner who is willing to take intellectual risks, make mistakes and learn from them. The school endeavours to educate the whole child with all their idiosyncrasies, finding their strength, developing their talents and personalities to equip them for their future lives and thereby building the right foundations for being the best they can be.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.3 Pupils come mainly from the local area, from a range of backgrounds and ethnicities. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 64 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include expressive and receptive language difficulties, articulation difficulties, attention deficit disorder, dyslexia, dyspraxia and visual impairment. Fifty-three of these pupils receive additional specialist help and one has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 70 pupils. The school plans specific extension opportunities for pupils identified as gifted or talented.

## 2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

### Preface

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets almost all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements. In order to meet all the standards, the school should take immediate action to remedy the deficiencies as detailed below.

### PART 1 – Quality of education provided

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

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

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

### PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to almost all aspects of current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 Whilst the school has ensured that appropriate safeguards, such as supervision, are implemented should an enhanced DBS check be delayed, it has not undertaken a separate barred list check. The school has not ensured that all staff who provide instruction to pupils have undergone a prohibition from teaching check. It acted promptly to rectify this omission during the inspection.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 6, 9-16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met but those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b) [safeguarding] are not met.**

#### Action point 1

- **the school must ensure that prior to commencement of employment, a separate barred list check is obtained when the DBS is delayed, and that all staff providing instruction to pupils have a prohibition from teaching check [paragraph 7(a) and (b)].**

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

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

## **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

2.12 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.

**2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

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

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

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

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

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

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. The proprietor does not ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities have the skills and knowledge to ensure that all the regulatory standards are consistently met.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in sub-paragraph 34(1)(c) [promotion of pupil well-being] is met, but those in sub-paragraphs 34(1)(a) and (b) [knowledge and skills and fulfilment of responsibilities] are not met.**

### **Action point 2**

- **the proprietor must ensure effective oversight of pre-employment checks so that the leadership and management develop the skills and knowledge they need to ensure that the regulatory standards are met consistently [paragraph 34(1)(a) and (b)].**

### **3. INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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

#### **Inspectors**

Mr Dougal Philps

Reporting inspector

Mrs Virginia Jackson

Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)