



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS

FOREST PREPARATORY SCHOOL

MAY 2018



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Forest Preparatory School			
DfE number	358/6008			
Address	Moss Lane Timperley Altrincham Cheshire WA15 6LJ			
Telephone number	0161 9804075			
Email address	office@forestschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Rick Hyde			
Proprietor	Bellevue Education International Ltd			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	195			
	Boys	102	Girls	93
	EYFS	64	Lower School	46
	Upper School	85		
Inspection dates	1 to 3 May 2018			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Forest Preparatory School is a co-educational independent day school for children aged between two and eleven years. It was founded in 1924, moving soon afterwards to its current site close to the village of Timperley. The school consists of the Early Years for children aged between two and five years, the Lower School for pupils aged between five and seven years, and the Upper School for pupils aged between seven and eleven years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has been taken over by Bellevue Education whose directors act as the school's proprietors. Management and governance of the school are overseen by the group's education committee.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to encourage each child to reach their full potential and strive for excellence in all areas of school life. Pupils' self-esteem is developed to foster confidence and their ability to use their individual talents in developing as lifelong learners. Strong partnerships with families and the community are valued in a welcoming environment where success is celebrated.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of cultural backgrounds, mostly from professional or business families living in the Manchester area. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, both of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for thirty-five pupils, of whom two are supported in the classroom or in separate sessions. Pupils throughout the school are provided with opportunities for enrichment, extension and challenge academically, musically and in the sporting arena.

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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection 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. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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 the 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, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

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 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 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], 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.**

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

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **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

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing 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.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 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 well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Nursery	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Kindergarten	Nursery (3 to 4 years)

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils make excellent progress due to engaging lessons and consistently high expectations.
- Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are highly developed in all areas of learning and are applied effectively across all subjects.
- Pupils' communication skills are excellent. They speak articulately, listen attentively and their high-quality writing is evident throughout their work.
- Pupils display outstanding attitudes to their learning. They demonstrate initiative and independence, and are highly successful collaborative learners.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils develop a deep awareness of themselves. They are highly confident and self-disciplined, able to persevere through difficult times.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent throughout the school. Their ability to identify right and wrong is well-developed, and they display an absolute understanding of the school's rules.
- Pupils demonstrate a natural acceptance and tolerance of their peers from other cultural backgrounds.
- Pupils' ability to reflect and to understand the importance of the non-material in their lives is highly developed.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following:

- Ensure that feedback from teachers always enables younger pupils to know how to improve their work.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but evidence from the school's own assessment data including standardised testing, lesson observations and the pupils' work demonstrates attainment to be above national age-related expectations in all stages of the school. Pupils are highly successful in gaining places at local independent and state grammar schools, continuing to achieve at the highest levels in all curriculum areas whilst preparing for entrance examinations. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the vast majority of pupils and parents said that teaching enables the pupils to make good progress. Children of all abilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) make excellent progress, supported by the inclusion of targets on reports and the close involvement of parents in working towards these. Their levels of achievement are extended by the school's inclusion of EYFS children in its digital tracking system, which enables teachers to identify and address pupils' strengths and weaknesses on a day-to-day basis and offer appropriate support or challenge in lessons. Pupils throughout the school make progress because individuals and groups of children are identified as part of the appraisal process and in daily planning, ensuring that appropriate activities are provided at all levels of challenge. Pupils who are not making the expected progress receive targeted individual support so that they quickly catch up with their peers and are able to tackle challenging tasks in the classroom, due to the high-quality support offered by the learning support department.
- 3.6 Pupils develop excellent skills, knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning. Well-planned lessons use a wide variety of strategies to engage the pupils, who are inspired not only to work their hardest in school, but to carry out further work and investigations at home such as the building of an air raid shelter after a history lesson about the Blitz. Teachers have high expectations and the vast majority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that teachers are supportive and helpful if they have any problems with their work. A combination of challenge, support and a positive classroom culture, where small successes are recognised on a daily basis, equips pupils with confidence and determination and enables them to achieve their potential. Pupils readily accept the many opportunities offered by the curriculum to use their skills in different subjects and in real-life scenarios, such as when producing a geography report on where to site a new village. Speaking, listening and handwriting are particularly well used in all subject areas, and these high standards are encouraged consistently by class teachers. Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that school development planning is centred around the pupils' achievement and personal development. Pupils benefit from the school's recent focus on the use of criteria and targets, which enable them to identify ways to improve their work in specific lessons and to take the next steps in their learning. They are highly successful in acquiring new skills and know when they have made progress due to the school's focus on the individual ensuring that their learning needs are identified in regular testing and ongoing classroom assessments.
- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. They exude confidence when speaking to others and speak in class without inhibition. Pupils read with expression and fluency at levels which are well ahead of expectations for their age. The development of these skills is accelerated by a strong partnership with parents as well as by encouragement in school. Pupils, encouraged by their teachers, discuss their learning and listen to each other carefully before challenging each other's ideas. The reading friends scheme for pupils in Years 1 and 5 allows pupils to share a love of reading and to develop their communication skills in a productive and enjoyable way. Writing is of a particularly high standard and is adapted for purpose and audience throughout the curriculum. Reception pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the sounds that letters make, and children of all abilities were able to write instructions for how to bath a baby. Older pupils are accomplished in a range of genres, from factual writing about the Mayans to the creation of mini-books for younger pupils to read.

- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They display a love of learning, and high levels of participation are evident in lessons, where pupils engage actively and are praised for doing so. Teaching communicates enthusiasm and a spirit of fun which, combined with excellent classroom management, inspires pupils to tackle challenging tasks with vigour and determination. Pupils regularly work in pairs to great effect whilst striving to meet lesson objectives, and many voluntarily undertake additional research or extension work in their own time. From a young age, pupils work collaboratively and recognise the benefits of doing so. They demonstrate a willingness to persevere, knowing that support is ready to hand should they need it. Pupils take a part in planning their own learning by devising targets and success criteria and choosing topics for independent research. These opportunities are highly valued by the pupils, who spoke with passion and commitment about their desire to learn and achieve their educational goals.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly numerate. They enjoy their mathematics lessons, where high quality teaching ensures all pupils engage in the lesson and make progress. Teachers monitor their achievement carefully and continuously to ensure that appropriate levels of challenge and support are offered, enabling pupils to acquire and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding with confidence. Pupils' work indicates that they make good progress as they move up the school with most pupils working beyond expected levels by the time they reach Year 6 where, for example, pupils displayed high levels of confidence and competence when simplifying algebraic expressions and explaining why some statements could not be simplified. Pupils apply their skills effectively in other subject areas, such as when measuring forces in science and counting out change at the breaktime fruit stall.
- 3.10 Pupils have a good grasp of computing skills. Specialist teaching throughout the school and a broad information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum bring a focused approach to lessons, enabling pupils to develop their skills and understanding. Pupils make good use of their ICT in other subject areas and they are particularly adept at using the internet to conduct independent research, combining their ICT, reading and writing skills to great effect, such as when producing a visitors' guide to New York. They benefit from the school's provision of readily available resources, which enable such work to be undertaken regularly.
- 3.11 Pupils display excellent study skills from a young age. They enjoy challenges and problem solving, and can reason and apply their skills and knowledge to challenging topics and tasks across the curriculum. Pupils draw on different sources of information, analyse and hypothesise, and they are competent in their use of both electronic resources as well more traditional tools such as atlases. They are comfortable working alone or in groups to analyse problems and will readily use their analytical skills to solve a challenge. Pupils reflect on and assess their own and each other's work, enabling them to develop their skills to a high degree. The strategy of active listening, where pupils question their partner on the content of their stories, ensures high levels of concentration and analysis. A few pupils stated in the questionnaire responses that marking does not help them to improve their work, but pupil interviews and work scrutiny demonstrated that marking was well used by older pupils to assess their success against the learning objectives and personal targets. Feedback for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was less informative, both in books and in lessons.
- 3.12 Pupils are highly successful in sporting and performance activities, as well as those which challenge their academic abilities outside the classroom. Achievement is enhanced by the school's support of pupils' activities outside school. In their questionnaire responses, the vast majority of pupils and parents agreed that a good range of subjects and activities is provided. All pupils in Years 1 to 6 as well as the majority of those in Reception participate in these extra-curricular activities, responding to the encouragement of staff and the positive environment which allows them to engage confidently in new activities. Taking part in inter-school, local and national events, the pupils succeed at a high level in relation to the size of the school in sporting tournaments, drama and musical performances, and pupils attain at a particularly high level in swimming and drama, including winning gold medals at the 2016 Manchester games.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have a strong sense of self and of their own strengths as well as confidence in abundance. Personable and unfailingly polite, they embrace the school's ethos whereby everyone's contribution is valued and small successes are recognised. Pupils have a thorough understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and personal development, and they take a pride in their achievements, knowing that these are often hard won. They are aware that mistakes are stages on the road to success and recognise that they can recover from making a poor choice. Pupils take a lead in their learning by sharing responsibility for the targets used in the classroom. The school's robust transition process and close links with parents ensure that pupils are ready and confident for their transition into each new school year, and they are particularly well prepared for the move to senior schools, not only academically, but through the building of resilience and self-awareness. Older pupils understand that they may not always succeed immediately in their endeavours, and are coached effectively in how to handle disappointment if they do not pass an entrance examination.
- 3.15 Pupils' behaviour is excellent from the youngest age, and pupils throughout the school are engaging and welcoming. Their excellent behaviour appears to be natural and intrinsic, encouraged by the high expectations and effective routines set by staff. Leadership supports staff in building positive relationships with pupils and their parents, with the result that pupils feel confident to report any instances when expectations are not met. Pupils accept and value the rewards system, and understand that the school's positive behaviour strategies will help them to improve if they make a mistake. They readily accept responsibility for their actions, and their lessons help them to understand that they have both rights and responsibilities towards others. Staff act as excellent role models and are held in high esteem by their pupils. The school rules are few but simple and, whilst understated, are thoroughly understood and appreciated by the pupils, who only rarely need to be issued with sanctions.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate a natural acceptance and tolerance of their peers from other cultural backgrounds. They work and play collaboratively and mix readily with those from different backgrounds to their own, seeing no reason why this should not be the norm. This is actively promoted by the content of religious education and personal, social and health education lessons, and in assemblies. The well-integrated community feel of the school, where the contributions of all pupils, staff and parents are valued, ensures that pupils respect all those in the school community without question and enjoy learning about their own and each other's cultures and religions. Parents come into school to share and talk about their cultures and celebrations, and events such as Chinese week, visits to different places of worship and French lessons enable further appreciation of other cultures. Pupils can explain the features of other religions and countries such as when writing about life in the Masai Mara. They have a great awareness of British culture through learning about topics such as people who help us, elections and the royal family. Pupils understand the importance of democracy, rights and freedom, and take opportunities for debate and for voting within the school context very seriously. In their questionnaire responses almost all pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect other people.

- 3.17 Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent. They appreciate the non-material aspects of life, guided to do so by the robust pastoral programme and the school's promotion of kindness, hard work and honesty. Pupils understand and value the school's ethos and identify kindness as one of the most important attributes of their teachers. They respond with maturity to the many opportunities they are provided to reflect at different times of the day, such as when considering their favourite places and why they are special. Pupils recite the school prayer to give thanks for their environment with genuine feeling and are uplifted by the power of music. They appreciate their mindfulness classes and the efforts that are made to ensure they do not come under pressure when they are taking examinations. Pupils empathise with the plight of those in challenging circumstances, such as when writing about Scott in the Antarctic. Pupils value friendship, happiness and freedom, and aspire to be happy in their future careers, knowing that an education will help them to achieve this.
- 3.18 Pupils make choices from an early age and even the youngest children will readily opt for new and challenging activities as well as for those they know they will enjoy. On entry to the Nursery, children are gently and individually guided to broaden their range of choices, with staff making good use of children's interests to do so. Older pupils enjoy the opportunity to select challenging tasks in lessons, and they are helped by their teachers to make good decisions about their targets and class rules. Pupils are confident when making decisions due to the encouragement, support and expectations of the staff, and older pupils understand that a decision not to strive to meet their targets may lead to a lack of progress.
- 3.19 Pupils work collectively and successfully for the common good. They form productive relationships with each other and have been successful in working together for an environmental schools award and in raising money for local, national and international charities. The school house system, sporting and charity events and the inter-year buddy system allow pupils to work with those in different year groups, which they do with enjoyment and purpose. Collaboration is promoted in the classroom, and pupils respond very well to well-established routines whereby they work together to carry out their daily responsibilities. These strong relationships permeate all school activities, such as when Year 5 pupils designed and constructed a cardboard castle for their buddies in Year 1, and at the regular charity stall where home-made items are sold to younger pupils.
- 3.20 Pupils make a significant contribution to their school and the wider community, and take a pride in doing so. Older pupils relish the opportunity to take on different responsibilities, especially those which involve them in working with younger pupils. Those in the friendship patrol and on the school council have a particular role to play in ensuring that pupils display kindness and consideration towards each other, and they are diligent in monitoring the friendship bench for those who may need support. Pupils act with maturity and energy as head girl and boy, house and sports captains, and subject monitors. They run a breaktime fruit stall and a regular stall for charity. Leadership skills have been developed through a national sports award, and the school council regularly runs events to help improve the school, such as a recent competition to design a new garden area. Pupils support a local care home and contribute to local music festivals and they support a range of community, national and international charities, taking an especial pride in helping those which benefit children who are less fortunate than themselves.

3.21 Pupils are aware of the need to keep themselves safe and adapt their behaviour to do so. The vast majority agreed in their questionnaire responses that they feel safe in school. Lessons in a range of subjects including PSHE, ICT, science and physical education inform pupils about the importance of staying safe and healthy, and pupils demonstrate a lively understanding of how to do so. Even the youngest pupils understand the need to eat healthily and that exercise is important for their well-being. They commented positively on the healthy options offered at lunchtime, and the school is conscientious in ensuring that such options are also available at breaktimes and outside school hours. Pupils value the opportunity to take part in sports as part of a healthy lifestyle, whilst older pupils understand the importance of nurturing their own mental health and are provided guidance on how to do so through mindfulness sessions and discussions in class. Older pupils have a highly developed understanding of how to stay safe in and outside school, and when using the internet. Pupils recognise why rules are in place and that these play a role in keeping themselves safe and well in school. They hold the bannisters when on the stairs and use boxes in their classrooms to lodge their worries, confident that they will be swiftly addressed.

4. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended assemblies. 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

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Ms Emma Crawford-Nash	Compliance team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Clare Bruce	Team inspector (Head, IAPS Infant and junior school)
Mr Robert Lilley	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)