



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
GREENBANK PREPARATORY SCHOOL

MAY 2017



School's details

School	Greenbank Preparatory School			
DfE Number	356/6005			
EYFS Number	EY287053			
Registered charity number	525930			
Address	Greenbank Preparatory School Heathbank Road Cheadle Hulme Cheadle Cheshire SK8 6HU			
Telephone number	0161 4853724			
Email address	info@greenbankschool.co.uk			
Headmistress	Mrs Janet Lowe			
Chair of governors	Mr Philip Enstone			
Age range	0 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	300			
	Boys	162	Girls	138
	EYFS	177	Infants	33
	Juniors	90		
Pupils' ability	Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average.			
Pupils' needs	The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 15. They require support with a range of educational needs including dyslexia. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has 6 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), 1 of whom receives specialist support.			
History of the school	The school was founded in 1951 by Mr and Mrs Osborn, and was owned by them until 1971 when it			

	became a charitable trust.
Ownership and governing structure	The school is owned by a charitable educational trust, overseen by a board. The members of the trust represent a variety of experience and expertise, and many are parents of either former or current pupils at the school.
School structure	The school consists of a Nursery and Preschool for children from 0 to 5, and Infant and junior departments for pupils aged 6 to 11 years. All sections of the school share the same site in a residential area of Cheadle Hulme.
Inspection dates	23 to 24 May 2017

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. 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 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. 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 be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

SUMMARY EVALUATION

The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, 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, instead of the national framework.

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.

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.

The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.

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

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

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

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.

The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] 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.

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

The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 well-being of the pupils.

The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] 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 outstanding.

The vast majority of children under two meet or exceed the level of development that is typical for their age, and are carefully prepared for the transition into the next stage of their learning. Each child's interests are taken into account when activities are planned and those who need extra help are carefully provided for.

All children in the Nursery are extremely well cared for, and staff who clearly understand their learning needs provide excellent support. Each child benefits from high-quality individual time with adults who ensure that they are happy, safe and secure.

All children make excellent progress in their personal and emotional development within a safe and happy environment where every child is valued as an individual.

The senior leadership team fulfils all its responsibilities extremely well and works together with staff to keep the children safe. All policies are implemented well and all necessary checks on staff have been undertaken. Self-evaluation is thorough and the setting's development plan highlights clear targets for continuous improvement.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.

The strong leadership team along with staff members demonstrate an ambitious vision with high expectations for what all children can achieve, and they work extremely well together to achieve this. A strong atmosphere of community and teamwork permeates the Nursery. Providing high standards of care is extremely important to staff and they value the partnership they have with parents in caring together for the children. Governors have a good awareness of the needs of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Staff are supported well through excellent systems for supervision and performance management which identify further training needs. Subsequent professional development enables staff to improve their skills and understanding, and has a positive impact on teaching and the outcomes for the children. A recent training course on baby signing helped staff to better support children who are not yet able to communicate verbally. Self-evaluation is strong and carried out by all staff. Specific areas for development have been identified by staff and are now part of the improvement plan which clearly notes targets and criteria for success. The views of parents are an important part of this process.

Staff have excellent knowledge of the EYFS requirements. The well-planned curriculum meets all statutory requirements, concentrating initially on the prime areas of learning. Highly effective planning takes into account the children's individual interests, enabling their particular needs to be met. Outdoor areas have been recently developed to provide exciting and interesting spaces for play, and a strong focus is currently placed on providing natural resources. The well-deployed staff implement comprehensive learning programmes which provide all children an excellent start to their education and enable them to be ready for each new stage in their learning.

Staff actively promote equality and diversity, and celebrate different cultures through activities such as commemorating Chinese New Year. Children celebrate Easter by painting eggs, cook pancakes to commemorate Shrove Tuesday and enjoy Christmas activities together. The children's behaviour is excellent and staff encourage good behaviour towards others, such as by asking children to say 'sorry' if they take one another's toys. Highly effective partnerships between home and school help all children achieve the very best outcomes. British values such as turn-taking and sharing are actively promoted at a level that is appropriate for the children, and children have many opportunities to make their own decisions and demonstrate that they know right from wrong.

Records of staff recruitment checks are made appropriately on the single central register, and induction procedures are comprehensive. All staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training, including training to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Comprehensive policies and daily risk assessments ensure that children are kept safe. Accidents and the issuing of medicine are carefully recorded, with parents informed on the same day. Fire practices are held regularly. Procedures at the start and end of the day ensure a safe environment for all children, and there is appropriate control of visitors to the setting.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.

Staff have high expectations of what each child can achieve, including the most able and those who have SEND or EAL. They know the needs of all children in their care and display detailed knowledge of each child's stage of development. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the children and know when to allow independent exploration and when to intervene. For example, children who are reluctant to feed themselves with a spoon are encouraged to play with wooden spoons to enable them to grow in confidence.

Staff have undertaken appropriate training and have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with. Excellent knowledge of the EYFS requirements and the needs of young children underpins all that they do. Assessment information about each child is gathered through photographs and written observations, and is kept carefully in his or her electronic learning journal. Assessment is used to identify each child's needs and appropriate next steps are shared with parents. Before beginning at Nursery, parents are able to share information about their children which strengthens the assessment process. Excellent communication between home and school ensures that parents understand what their children need to do to progress. Planning identifies the areas of learning to be worked on and the individual needs of each child. Careful assessment of the outcomes for each child is used to identify their progress and development. Additional support for those with particular needs is carefully planned for. Staff are very encouraging and speak respectfully to each child. Parents commented that each child is made to feel special. This enables children to understand more about the learning process, develop their communication skills and make good progress.

A comprehensive parent handbook provides clear information about the Nursery, and key milestones are detailed on the parents' board. Parents' evenings, verbal feedback at the end of a session, a daily written home-school book and with informal discussions all help parents to understand and engage with their children's learning in relation to their age.

Staff recognise diversity. Toys showing different ethnic groups are used as part of the children's play activities, increasing their understanding of the world. High-quality teaching and support ensure that all children acquire the necessary skills for future learning. Children are carefully prepared for transition, ensuring that they are ready to move to the next class.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

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

Staff demonstrate an extremely high level of commitment to all children, showing them both kindness and care. The environment is extremely well organised, with a positive culture which is underpinned by strong British values. Children are very eager to join in activities; they explore their surroundings and independently select resources. Limited storage for resources in the dedicated outdoor area for children under two restricts opportunities for them to select activities for themselves. Children are happy to take risks to succeed when mastering new skills, such as using their spoons at breakfast time. Achievement is valued and celebrated and children are praised when they have a go or succeed, raising their confidence. They smile and clap when praised for success, for example in using increased manipulative skills in rolling balls, and display immense pride and enjoyment in awareness of their learning.

Opportunities for independence are provided. Children enjoy free exploration of a variety of activities, such as discovering the qualities of different textures and carefully putting blocks into a bucket one at a time. Children have good opportunities to enjoy the fresh air when they access a variety of activities in the outdoor area, although access to the outdoor area outside the baby room is limited during very hot weather. Staff know each child extremely well and ensure that they are ready for the next stage in their learning. Parents are fully involved in the transition process and feel that their children have made the move happily. The strong key person system, linked to clear routines such as at sleep time for the youngest, enables children to feel secure emotionally and physically. Firm attachments are formed between adults and children.

Accurate records of attendance are kept. Excellent behaviour is encouraged by vigilant staff who are fully engaged with the children. Children are reminded about having good manners and displaying kindness to each other. They enjoy playing together with toy laptops, keyboards, cameras and telephones. Children know about keeping themselves safe. Nutritious food including fresh fruit ensures that all children have a balanced and healthy diet; they thoroughly enjoy their meals.

High standards of care and hygiene practice support the children's personal care needs. Songs remind them about handwashing. Children are taught to respect others and contribute to the wider life of the school and society in Britain. They raise money on Pyjama Day and Silly Socks Day for charities, displaying care for those less fortunate than themselves.

Outcomes for children

The outcomes for children are outstanding.

Children make very good progress in relation to their starting points. Almost all meet their expected levels of development with a few exceeding that which is typical for their age, thus enabling them to be ready for the next stage in their learning.

Children demonstrate excellent progress when climbing the stairs and confidently negotiate large soft blocks, turning around skilfully to get down; they balance with increasing confidence. They enjoy making marks, show good control when building with bricks, and persist with activities such as using spoons to empty and fill cups. Outdoor lessons improve children's physical skills when walking, running and climbing. Children love to play alongside others, and use a familiar adult as a secure base to grow in independence. They enjoy their learning, and their growing concentration spans demonstrate enjoyment and perseverance. Children explore a variety of objects in a treasure basket and understand the world around them by using their senses to explore bubbles, glitter and other materials.

The youngest children enjoy babbling and those who are older use simple descriptive words when rolling, squashing and cutting malleable materials. When reading books with their key person, children enjoy looking at pictures and their concentration increases as they point at objects in response to the questions they are asked. They enjoy repeating words and phrases in the story, and understand simple instructions. With support, children count how many bricks are in their tower and they enjoy counting games in the outdoor environment. They sort and organise different objects during play.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendation for further improvement

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

- Increase ease of access for the youngest children to their outdoor play area and opportunities for children under two to select activities for themselves, to enhance children's independence.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff and with the chair of governors. 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 William Ibbetson-Price	Reporting inspector
Mrs Anne Headley	Compliance team inspector (Director of finance and operations, GSA school)
Mrs Angela Russell	Co-ordinating inspector for early years
Mrs Angela Beck	Team inspector for early years (Head, Society of Heads school)