

# School inspection report

17 to 19 June 2025

## **Keble Preparatory School**

Wades Hill

Winchmore Hill

London

N21 1BG

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders and governors collaborate successfully to uphold the school's aims and values in line with its motto 'puritas, probitas, veritas', which emphasises consideration for others, integrity and hard work. Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and emotional wellbeing, and their decisions reflect their commitment to fostering a positive culture in which pupils feel valued, grow in confidence and show mutual respect.
2. Governors ensure that leaders have appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities consistently. They provide leaders with high-quality support, drawing on expertise both within the Mill Hill Education Group and beyond. Governors provide effective oversight of the school's operations, but some policies and procedures drafted by the Group are not fully aligned with practice at the school.
3. Leaders have developed a broad, structured curriculum that is aligned well to pupils' ages and aptitudes. Leaders judiciously choose high-quality and relevant texts for pupils to study through the curriculum. In the early years, leaders place emphasis on teaching the sounds that letters make so that children develop solid foundations in reading and writing skills.
4. Teachers plan and deliver lessons that ignite pupils' interest. Teaching is encouraging and the learning environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive effective support. Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and give clear feedback, but not all data relating to pupils' ability and achievement is evaluated consistently.
5. Pupils demonstrate high levels of motivation and enthusiasm across subjects and activities. They participate well in a wide range of clubs and outdoor learning, developing their skills and interests.
6. Pupils understand how to care for their mental health and access support from trusted adults when needed. Activities such as meditation, art therapy and time with the school dog help them manage emotions and build resilience.
7. Staff apply behaviour and anti-bullying policies fairly and consistently, helping pupils take responsibility and reflect on their actions. Leaders ensure that pupils feel safe and supported, with high standards of care, robust health and safety measures and activities that promote healthy choices, respectful relationships and emotional awareness.
8. Leaders prepare pupils well for life as responsible citizens and successfully foster respect for the ways in which people can be different. Through the curriculum, pupils develop a clear understanding of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. They gain insight into different beliefs and cultures, learn to value diversity and recognise their moral responsibility to contribute positively to society.
9. Safeguarding procedures are effective and reflect current statutory guidance. Pupils feel safe, know how to raise concerns and understand how to stay safe in and out of school and online. Health and safety procedures are robust, and the premises are secure and well maintained.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

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

## Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that all policies and documentation are suitably adapted so that they accurately reflect the context of the school
- ensure that data relating to pupils' ability and achievement is rigorously and consistently evaluated to ensure that pupils make good progress in all sections of the school.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors ensure that leaders at all levels have the skills and knowledge needed to meet the Standards consistently and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's operations. They regularly review the extent and quality of their own skills and expertise, as well as that of the executive board of the Mill Hill Education Group, which holds delegated governance authority. This enables governors to provide effective and timely support to school leaders, for instance in areas such as safeguarding and leaders' professional development.
11. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing and foster a positive school culture. They ensure staff know pupils well and promote their safety, health and personal growth. Leaders successfully foster an environment where pupils feel supported, respected and valued as individuals, and embed the values of honesty and integrity throughout the school, in line with the school's aims. Pupils consistently reflect these qualities in their daily interactions. Leaders encourage pupils to embrace diversity and show inclusive attitudes by promoting an effective understanding of people's differences and fundamental British values.
12. Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the contextual risks that could affect pupils' safety and welfare. They ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe and respond to potential threats of harm. When required, leaders liaise with relevant external agencies to promote pupils' welfare.
13. Leaders collaborate with governors to develop a strategy that drives improvements aligned with the school's aims and values. Leaders reflect on the impact of their decision-making and identify their priorities through rigorous self-evaluation. Governors engage constructively with external partners to evaluate and improve key areas of provision, such as support for pupils who have SEND.
14. Leaders and governors implement suitable policies and assess risk consistently and effectively. They ensure that risks are not only identified but are also regularly reviewed, both at school and Group level, to reflect changing circumstances. Policies are in line with the most recent statutory guidance. However, some policies and documents that are drafted by the Mill Hill Education Group are not adapted to fully reflect the school's specific practices or provide appropriate detail relevant to its context. This makes the school's procedures and actions less clear to readers of these policies.
15. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' progress. They provide effective support for staff to improve and develop their practice. This includes a structured appraisal process and development opportunities with professionals. Leaders carefully monitor teaching and learning using a variety of methods, including informal observations and regular discussions with staff.
16. Leadership of the early years in the school is effective and purposeful. Leaders set clear expectations and provide well-informed guidance, ensuring a nurturing and stimulating environment that meets children's individual needs. Their scrupulous oversight of teaching, learning and welfare promotes effective progress and wellbeing among the youngest children.
17. Leaders effectively apply a complaints procedure to respond to parental concerns. They monitor and record both informal and formal complaints. They ensure parents receive all necessary information, including regular written reports on pupils' progress. The school complies with the Equality Act 2010, and the accessibility plan outlines strategies to improve access to the curriculum, physical spaces and delivery of information. During the inspection process, leaders updated the plan to include clearer timescales for these actions. The school provides relevant local authorities with financial

information relating to the funding of pupils who have education, health and care (EHC) plans annually, as required.

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

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

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

19. Leaders have established a broad and well-rounded curriculum that is aligned well to the ages and aptitudes of the pupils. Through judicious review, leaders have refashioned the early years curriculum so that it methodically sequences children's learning, provides appropriate challenge and includes an emphasis on developing proficiency in the sounds that letters make. This prepares children well for the skills of writing and reading. Across all phases of the curriculum, leaders make discerning choices about the books pupils read, prioritising high-quality, engaging texts to nurture a love of reading.
20. Teachers consistently check pupils' understanding during lessons and provide appropriate feedback so that pupils can make good progress. However, not all data relating to pupils' ability and achievement is consistently evaluated. Consequently, leaders do not always have well-considered evidence to identify trends precisely or plan effectively for pupils' next steps. Pupils review their work thoughtfully, for example by using multimedia journals including photographs, videos, audio recordings and drawings, or by recording verbal feedback on how to strengthen and improve their work.
21. Teachers consistently adopt a supportive and encouraging approach to engage pupils in their learning. They promote a purposeful, calm classroom environment that enables effective learning. Lessons are planned well and draw on a variety of resources to sustain pupils' interest and progress. Teachers in the early years use a range of techniques to embed learning, for example rehearsing techniques for extending sentences before children attempt to apply them independently. Leaders regularly monitor teaching and provide structured opportunities for professional reflection and development, such as through peer observation. Teaching consistently supports and promotes fundamental British values.
22. Pupils typically demonstrate high levels of effort, motivation and enthusiasm. They show interest in their work and eagerly participate in classroom activities. In science, pupils demonstrate high levels of knowledge of the biological, physical and chemical causes of weathering, effectively relating their learning to the built environment around them. Children in the early years confidently grasp concepts such as metamorphosis in a frog's life cycle. In music, pupils accurately use subject-specific terms such as *legato* and understand how the diaphragm supports singing. In the early years, children develop gross-motor skills through activities that build core stability and neck support or through activities such as cycling. These in turn support them in developing fine-motor skills, which they practise through activities such as woodwork in the outdoor learning areas.
23. Teachers effectively support pupils who have SEND, including those who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. They receive regular training to understand and address these varied needs, enabling them to adapt their methods and promote good progress. Teachers adjust activities for pupils who are sensitive to loud sounds or other aural stimuli. Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils who have EHC plans. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) typically receive targeted support, such as word maps and visual aids. Most pupils who speak EAL achieve or exceed age-related expectations.
24. Children in the early years develop communication and language skills effectively. They are articulate, eager to write, draw and talk, and use ambitious vocabulary with success. Teachers

provide effective support to help children build perseverance, with many tasks offering opportunities to re-try activities or find alternative strategies.

25. Leaders ensure that pupils engage purposefully in a wide range of recreational activities. Children in the early years develop a good understanding of the natural environment through undertaking activities in high-quality and well-resourced outdoor environments. Pupils participate actively in a broad range of sports and clubs, such as fishing, darts and coding, in which they can pursue their interests and develop their skills, physical aptitude and creativity.

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

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

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

27. Leaders prioritise the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of pupils. Through maintaining a positive school culture, leaders ensure that pupils develop self-confidence and self-esteem and feel valued as members of the school community. The values of respect and mutual trust are reflected in pupils' daily conduct, and pupils support their peers through positions such as that of 'kindness ambassador'.
28. Pupils understand the importance of managing their mental health. They know how to seek timely support from adults, including form teachers, safeguarding leaders and the head of wellbeing. Staff are easily accessible, which positively supports pupils' emotional wellbeing. Pupils develop emotional resilience through activities such as meditation with chimes in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, art therapy, time with the school dog and listening to calming music before examinations.
29. The school provides a well-structured, age-appropriate programme of relationships and sex education (RSE). Alongside the PSHE curriculum, it gives pupils meaningful opportunities to explore topics such as healthy relationships, consent, inclusion and discrimination. In RSE lessons, pupils deepen their understanding by discussing which additional aspects of identity or difference they believe should be recognised and respected, and why. They regularly assess their own progress through quizzes and reflective discussion. Leaders seek feedback on the RSE curriculum from pupils and parents, for example through surveys. They consider the responses carefully and adjust the curriculum where required.
30. Staff apply a clear behaviour policy that sets out expectations, rewards and sanctions. They use it fairly and consistently. Pupils take responsibility for their behaviour. They understand the consequences of their actions, and leaders create opportunities for them to reflect on any inappropriate behaviour.
31. Staff address any instances of bullying promptly and in line with the school's anti-bullying policy. On the rare occasions that it occurs, staff support pupils effectively and take appropriate steps to resolve the issue.
32. Staff in the early years meet their responsibilities consistently, ensuring children feel safe and well cared for. Children play calmly and co-operatively in well-equipped classrooms and secure outdoor areas. They show consideration for one another, respecting each other's space during activities. Teachers use routines such as circle time effectively to help children begin to understand and appreciate their own feelings and those of others.
33. The school upholds high standards of health and safety through comprehensive risk assessments and regular checks, which are suitably recorded. Leaders regularly programme fire-evacuation drills and assess and mitigate fire risks. Staff know how to report health and safety concerns, which leaders address swiftly. Staff are well trained in evaluating risk. An appropriate number of staff are trained in administering first aid, including paediatric first aid in the early years. Pupils know how to access first aid if needed and have received training in techniques such as the recovery position and resuscitation. Staff supervise pupils diligently at breaktimes, before and after school, ensuring their safety and wellbeing. The physical environment is safe, secure and well maintained.

34. The school maintains accurate attendance and admission registers in line with current statutory guidance. Staff implement the attendance policy effectively. Safeguarding leaders monitor pupils' attendance and take appropriate action to address any instances of poor attendance. Leaders ensure that pupils are appropriately registered before leaving the site for sporting or other activities. The school ensures that the local authority is promptly informed when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times.
35. Leaders ensure that the physical education (PE) programme includes all pupils and provides a wide range of sports, activities and exercise to promote pupils' physical health. For instance, pupils learn how to execute a shot-put throw effectively. Pupils learn the importance of keeping fit and choosing healthy foods, avoiding processed items or additives. Younger pupils are encouraged to try new vegetables and earn reward stickers as positive reinforcement.

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

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

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

37. Pupils develop a broad understanding of different religions, cultures and beliefs through the curriculum and visiting speakers. They gain valuable cultural perspectives through drama, literature and music, including performances in assemblies. Regular trips enrich pupils' cultural understanding, such as a visit to the Royal Academy to enable pupils to engage directly with the artworks they study. Pupils also share their own cultural backgrounds, discussing food and musical traditions with insight and knowledge.
38. Teachers clearly link current affairs to fundamental British values. Pupils develop a firm grasp of democracy by studying and summarising political manifestos, taking part in mock elections and voting for pupil representatives. In the early years, children vote for the week's reading book, learning that every vote counts, even if the outcome differs from their choice. They participate in a project about London, which introduces them to institutions such as Parliament. Pupils understand the United Kingdom's constitutional monarchy and system of government, supported by discussions about the meaning and significance of the national anthem.
39. Pupils exhibit a clear understanding of the ways in which people are different from each other, for instance with regard to race, gender, disability and neurodiversity, and they discuss these differences with maturity and insight. They recognise that upholding these principles reflects a broader sense of moral responsibility. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and demonstrate this in their everyday behaviour, reflecting the school's ethos and values. The PSHE curriculum offers meaningful opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding, for example by considering the purpose of school rules. As they progress through the school, pupils develop a secure grasp of the justice system and how the law is applied.
40. The school provides varied opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills, contribute to wider school life and take initiative. Roles such as house captain, head pupil and school council representative allow pupils to influence and support the school community. Pupils also support others by helping to lead activities, such as running club or darts club, supporting their peers to build skills and confidence.
41. In the early years, teachers encourage children's social development by promoting a warm, structured environment where children learn to take turns, share and play co-operatively. Daily routines, including circle time and small-group activities, help children build confidence in expressing themselves and listening to others. Staff model respectful behaviour and gently guide children in resolving minor conflicts, fostering empathy and helping them understand how to interact positively within society.
42. Pupils receive a broad economic education that promotes an understanding of personal finance, including budgeting, taxation, investment and managing money. In the early years, children learn that money is used to make purchases and that not all transactions involve cash. The curriculum also provides scope for pupils to develop their entrepreneurial thinking, such as by designing and running small businesses at the school fair.
43. The school ensures that pupils encounter a wide range of professions. Parents and other visitors share their career journeys and offer insight into different roles and pathways. For example, pupils

enjoy discussing careers in law with a defence lawyer, deepening their understanding of the broader challenges and rewards of the legal profession and routes to progression. The curriculum offers pupils further opportunities to explore career options. For example, in art, pupils learn about jobs in graphic and fashion design. Where pertinent, pupils are also encouraged to recognise and challenge gender stereotypes in careers and understand the concept of unconscious bias.

44. Pupils understand their broader social responsibility. They invite and welcome local care home residents to school productions and support a church-run charity that helps those in need in north London. Through these experiences, they develop a good understanding of how to improve the lives of others, not only materially but also emotionally and spiritually.

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

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

## Safeguarding

46. Leaders have successfully established a culture in which the wellbeing and safety of pupils are paramount. Staff are vigilant about pupils' welfare and alert to any changes in behaviour that might signal a concern. They report concerns promptly in line with the school's safeguarding policy.
47. Safeguarding leaders are suitably trained for their roles. They respond nimbly to changes in national guidance and emerging local issues, sharing these with staff as needed. Staff and governors, including their delegated representatives, receive regular, appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities. Leaders and governors periodically review the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
48. Leaders address safeguarding concerns promptly. They devise and implement effective plans for pupils who need support. Leaders maintain comprehensive records of safeguarding concerns and the reasoning behind their decisions. Safeguarding leaders refer concerns when required to external partners, such as children's services and the police.
49. Staff know how to report low-level concerns about the behaviour of adults to senior leaders. Leaders respond appropriately and maintain records to monitor patterns and trends.
50. Pupils feel safe at school and know how to report any concern. They can use 'worry boxes' located around the school or complete an online form to refer a concern directly to a senior leader, anonymously if they wish. Pupils are also confident in seeking support from any adult when needed.
51. Leaders maintain suitable online filtering and monitoring systems. They regularly review these and adjust them as required. Pupils learn how to stay safe while using the internet. As a result, they have a well-developed understanding of the risks of online activity and how to manage them.
52. Leaders ensure that relevant recruitment checks on adults employed by the school are undertaken diligently and that new staff receive suitable induction, so that they understand the school's safeguarding procedures. The single central record of appointments (SCR) is maintained well and is methodically checked by the governors' delegated representatives.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Keble Preparatory School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	308/6000
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1064758
<b>Address</b>	Keble Preparatory School Wades Hill Winchmore Hill London N21 1BG
<b>Phone number</b>	020 8360 3359
<b>Email address</b>	office@kebleprep.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.kebleprep.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Mill Hill School Foundation
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Elliot Lipton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Perran Gill
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 13
<b>Number of pupils</b>	193
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 January to 4 February 2022

## Information about the school

54. Keble Preparatory School is a co-educational independent day school in north London. It was established as a school for male pupils in Hoppers Road, Winchmore Hill in 1929 and relocated to its present site in 1930.
55. The school merged with The Mill Hill School Foundation (trading as the Mill Hill Educational Group) in March 2022. The governors of the Foundation hold ultimate responsibility for the governance of the school, with day-to-day oversight delegated to its executive board. Since September 2022 the school has included female pupils and has established a nursery.
56. There are 40 children in the early years, comprising one nursery and two reception classes.
57. The school has identified 37 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Four pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
58. The school has identified English as an additional language for 22 pupils.
59. The school states its aims are to support its pupils to uphold the values of 'puritas, veritas, probitas' (consideration for others, integrity and hard work), and to develop a courageous, ambitious and inquisitive attitude to their learning and personal development.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

17 to 19 June 2025

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

61. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the governors' delegated representatives
- discussions with the deputy headteacher (in the headteacher's absence), school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

62. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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