ISI Independent Schools Inspectorate

School inspection report

3 to 5 December 2024

St Andrew's Prep

Meads

Eastbourne

East Sussex

BN20 7RP

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. Governors ensure that leaders promote the wellbeing of pupils. They offer leaders effective challenge and support and review policies and procedures regularly to ensure that leaders carry out their responsibilities and that the Standards are met.

2. Health and safety procedures and checks are thorough, and the premises are well maintained. Accommodation for boarders and day pupils is planned and resourced thoughtfully so that it is appropriate to pupils' needs and aptitudes. Fire safety checks are thorough, fire safety training is in place and fire drills carried out regularly. The medical centre is well equipped and staffed and first aid procedures and training are typically robust. However, while staff in the Reception year have previously received paediatric first aid training and have adequate knowledge of first aid, they did not hold a current paediatric first aid certificate when accompanying children on a trip. Leaders took appropriate measures to rectify this during the inspection.

3. Leaders are ambitious in the methods they use to promote the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of pupils. They ensure that these aspects are woven into the curriculum through an effective pastoral system and personal social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Age-appropriate methods for pupils to report any worries are thoughtfully planned so that even pupils who may be usually quiet, are heard. Leaders provide additional training for staff and support for parents and pupils so that they can promote and support pupils' mental health and emotional wellbeing very well. This support has a very positive impact on pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence in lessons and in other aspects of school life and is a significant strength of the school.

4. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is enhanced through a wide range of activities which enrich pupils' learning and personal development. Teaching across a broad range of subjects enables pupils to deepen their knowledge and develop skills for the future. The curriculum in Reception effectively enables children to be curious and find things out for themselves. In prep, pupils are routinely challenged to think and learn for themselves which prepares pupils well for their next steps in education. However, the curriculum in pre-prep is not always modified to match pupils' prior attainment in order to challenge them sufficiently to enable their consistently good progress.

5. Teachers plan lessons well using a range of resources and methods that engage pupils and enable them to make typically good progress and attain well. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and apply what they know to learn responsibly and independently. Pupils throughout the school are articulate, communicate their learning well and feel empowered to ask questions and engage in discussions. Pupils' attainment and progress is closely monitored and typically used to plan lessons to match their needs.

6. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have effective levels of care and support which enable them to make good progress from their starting points. The wellbeing of pupils who have SEND is monitored daily so that staff are aware of any needs and can support them appropriately.

7. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are provided with individually tailored support as necessary, to match their level of English. They make good progress in developing their linguistic skills in English.

8. Leaders foster a supportive boarding environment. Boarding staff provide engaging activities to support pupils' social development and provide a healthy balance to their academic commitments.

9. Pupils behave well as a result of the active promotion of the school's values throughout the school day. Bullying is rare but when it does occur, leaders respond appropriately, with care and in line with school policies.

10. Leaders ensure that the curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities prepare pupils for future skills and life in British society. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are particularly well prepared for the next steps in their education through the school's 'Bridge Curriculum' which is carefully planned together with leaders at Eastbourne College.

11. Safeguarding arrangements in the school are robust, effective and well known by staff. Leaders monitor these arrangements, seek advice from external agencies and take action to refine them in response to current risks and statutory guidance. Pupils are provided with a range of ways to report any concerns through a variety of age-appropriate means.

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 at least one person with a current paediatric first aid certificate is available to accompany children on trips in the Reception Year
- develop continuity across the curriculum so that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are sufficiently challenged in all subjects to make consistently good progress.

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Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

12. Governors monitor the school effectively to ensure that policies and procedures are in line with statutory guidance, and that leaders and managers have appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Governors challenge and support leaders effectively so that together they improve outcomes for pupils. As a result, the school meets the Standards.

13. Leaders are reflective and carry out detailed and effective self-evaluation so that they know what they do well and how they can improve outcomes for pupils. They ensure that roles and responsibilities are well planned and redistributed when necessary to ensure a positive impact on pupils. Leaders endeavour to deliver the school's aim of providing a well-rounded education for pupils. They do this by ensuring a balanced curriculum which enables pupils across the school to develop independence and skills for the future.

14. Leaders have effective links with Eastbourne College who share the same governing body and safeguarding policy and practice. Leaders develop close links with relevant local authorities to ensure their knowledge is up to date. Leaders also commission external audits to ensure health and safety procedures are robust. Links with mental health experts and talks from other visitors enrich the curriculum provision. Senior leaders know parents and pupils well and promote useful partnerships through formal and informal meetings with parents.

15. Leaders take a strategic approach to managing risks relevant to the school's context. Supported by relevant training, they identify potential risks with regard to potentially vulnerable pupils and put in place appropriate strategies to prevent or minimise these. Risk assessments for the school premises, activities such as swimming and sport, and educational trips and visits, are detailed and include suitable control measures to mitigate potential risks. Leaders monitor risk assessments regularly and, where necessary, adapt them appropriately.

16. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of how well pupils achieve in their subject and what they need to do to improve. Across the school, leaders are empowered to lead developments in their own departments, whilst being held to account through regular meetings. They, together with senior leaders, carry out learning walks to gain an understanding of how their subject is taught or area of expertise managed.

17. Relevant policies and other required information are shared with parents and prospective parents through the website and handbooks. Parents are informed regularly about their child's progress through various online methods and parent-teacher meetings, as well as a formal report in the summer term with detailed comments from teachers and next steps for pupils. Leaders provide the local authority with the required information relating to pupils, including any who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, whom they fund.

18. Leaders and boarding staff actively involve boarders in decision-making processes. They incorporate feedback from boarders into meal planning and activity scheduling which enhances their overall boarding experience.

19. The school has an appropriate complaints policy. Leaders record complaints systematically and implement the complaints policy effectively. Processes and timescales are followed in line with policy. They look for patterns and trends and take appropriate steps to address these.

20. Leaders fulfil their responsibility under the Equality Act (2010). They adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Sports provision ensures that male and female pupils have equal opportunities to represent the school in football, including in the first team. The schools' appropriate accessibility plan is reviewed regularly.

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

21. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

22. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and planned to deepen pupils' knowledge and broaden their skills beyond the age-related expectations of the national curriculum. Schemes of work develop learning points and subject knowledge methodically. In the Reception Year, children develop knowledge and skills in all the required areas of learning. The curriculum in the prep school is planned and reviewed effectively by subject specialists so that pupils develop their subject knowledge and skills well. In Years 7 and 8, the school's 'Bridge Curriculum' prepares pupils well for the next steps of their education. However, in Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is not always adapted to build on pupils' prior knowledge in all subjects and is, at times, insufficiently challenging to enable pupils to make the good progress otherwise typical in the school.

23. Children in Reception develop their linguistic skills through positive interactions with adults and when listening to stories. They develop their language by sharing their predictions and making links to their own experiences. Children express their feelings, writing full sentences, with modelling and guidance from staff to improve their use of grammar and punctuation.

24. A systematic programme about the sounds that letters make ensures children in pre-prep develop knowledge and skills to apply when they read and write. Pupils' linguistic skills are further developed through well-chosen texts in English. They use and apply their linguistic skills through skilfully planned cross-curricular lessons, such as those that link English with science and design and technology (DT). Pupils develop linguistic skills in French from Year 1 and older pupils learn Spanish and Latin which prepares them well for senior school.

25. Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed. A recent review of the mathematics curriculum from Nursery to Year 8 has had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes towards learning mathematics. In science, pupils utilise practical and investigative learning when appropriate to develop their knowledge and understanding well. Pupils develop skills in computing and information technology lessons which they use in other areas of their learning. The curriculum offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity in subjects such as art, music, drama, computing and design technology.

26. Teachers assess pupils' progress and attainment in a variety of ways. Leaders analyse assessment data and utilise it to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. However, this is less effective in Years 1 and 2 where planning does not always sufficiently take into account pupils' prior attainment. Teachers' give feedback to pupils to enable them to understand what they do well and how their work could improve.

27. Teachers typically plan lessons well and use a range of teaching strategies and good quality resources to engage pupils. They have knowledge of individual pupils' needs and have positive relationships with them. As a result, pupils are motivated to achieve well, make typically good progress and attain well. Pupils are confident to ask questions and engage in meaningful discussions to deepen their learning.

28. The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND ensures that needs are identified and supported through effective strategies. Detailed information is provided to staff so that they can adapt teaching methods to meet pupils' needs in lessons. Pupils, including those with education, health

and care (EHC) plans, are well supported academically and emotionally by staff. As a result, they make good progress which is carefully monitored, alongside their emotional needs.

29. Those pupils who speak EAL and are not fluent in English are supported through useful resources such as word banks and dictionaries. Staff responsible for pupils who speak EAL give teachers detailed information about pupils' language needs and ways in which they can support them. They provide academic support through in-class support and one-to-one or small group sessions. This enables pupils to improve their linguistic skills in English and access the curriculum.

30. The school provides a broad range of recreational activities before and after school and during breaks. Pupils develop sporting and teamwork skills in physical activities such as tennis and football. They develop creative and aesthetic skills through art, dance and drama clubs. Pupils learn technical skills in shooting, martial arts and theatre skills clubs.

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

31. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

32. Leaders are proactive and aspirational in promoting pupils' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. They effectively share the school's values of kindness, honesty and excellence with pupils, parents and staff. Leaders provide a range of ways for pupils, including boarders, to voice any concerns, including through peer listeners. A number of staff are trained to offer mental health first aid. Highly effective resources are used with pupils, staff and parents to promote pupils' mental health, emotional wellbeing and self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils develop substantial confidence in sharing their feelings and ideas with staff.

33. The PSHE programme teaches pupils across the school about the importance of kindness and the need to be respectful to all. Older pupils are taught about protected characteristics such as disability, race, gender and beliefs. Teaching exposes pupils to sophisticated concepts such as 'pluralistic ignorance'.

34. Pupils develop their spiritual and moral understanding through weekly chapel services, themes in assemblies and religion, philosophy and world views lessons. They develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths, beliefs and philosophies.

35. Leaders ensure that staff implement the behaviour management policy consistently. Suitable rewards help promote positive behaviour effectively and any misbehaviour is sanctioned fairly. Pupils behave well as a result of effective implementation of the policy, care and support from staff, and the messages about positive and considerate behaviour delivered through the PSHE curriculum.

36. An effective anti-bullying strategy is in place. Pupils are taught how to recognise and respond to bullying. Where incidents do occur, staff take swift action with appropriate actions and equal support for all involved.

37. Pupils are appropriately supervised by staff, through well-organised rotas, at play times and during arrival and departure times. Appropriate staff ratios ensure pupils in Reception are well supervised.

38. A well-planned relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum teaches pupils how to regulate, acknowledge and respond to their emotions. Younger pupils learn how to form positive friendships and relationships. Pupils learn about puberty and the importance of consent in a healthy relationship. Staff use age-appropriate scenarios to develop pupils' understanding of how to recognise and respond to harmful behaviours such as micro-aggressions and untoward pressure.

39. The school's premises are secure, and buildings are well maintained. The accommodation meets the needs of the ages and needs of pupils. For instance, in Reception, indoor and outdoor spaces are well equipped so that children can develop age-appropriate skills. The learning support room is located at the centre of the school so pupils can check in or seek support when needed. Older pupils have a well-equipped common room space to promote independence.

40. The boarding house is comfortable and welcoming. Boarders' bedrooms, common rooms and washing facilities are clean, of good quality and are well maintained. Boarders have a safe space for their possessions, access to refreshments, appropriate study spaces and adequate free time. Food and drink provided meets the required standards and boarders make suggestions which are

followed through, to provide variety. Boarders have their own worry box and are aware of how they can raise a complaint or concern. They have access to an independent person as well as a number of staff within the boarding house who provide them with appropriate support. Their medical, social and emotional needs are catered for with care, with sufficient independence promoted.

41. Health and safety checks and maintenance are carried out appropriately and regularly. Fire safety training, checks on equipment and fire evacuation drills are regularly conducted. Medical and first aid facilities are appropriate for day pupils and boarders. Reception Year staff have suitable knowledge of first aid. However, at the time of the inspection, leaders had allowed paediatric first aid training to lapse for members of staff who accompanied Reception children on trips. Leaders rectified this during the inspection by enrolling staff on an appropriate course.

42. Leaders provide a range of sporting opportunities to promote enjoyment and match pupils' aptitudes and interests in physical education (PE) lessons, in breaks during the school day and in after-school activities. Pupils develop skills in traditional sports such as rugby and netball but also in table tennis, juggling and dance.

43. Staff ensure that children in Reception are offered age-appropriate activities to engage children as soon as they arrive at school. Staff in the early years form positive relationships with the children so that children are confident within their environment, build resilience to try new things and work collaboratively.

44. The school's admission and attendance registers are well maintained as required by current statutory guidance. Attendance is logged efficiently and leaders analyse it to look for patterns. The 'attendance champion' promotes attendance with pupils and parents so they understand how absence impacts learning. The local authority is informed when pupils leave or join at non-standard times.

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

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

46. Leaders promote positive values, such as those of tolerance and individual liberty, throughout the school. Pupils learn about the importance of mutual respect for those with different backgrounds, within the school and in the wider community. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong in circle time and PSHE lessons. Older pupils develop their understanding of the importance of the rule of law. Leaders develop links with the local police who give regular talks about how to keep safe in school, in the community and online, and the consequences of inappropriate language online and drug and alcohol misuse.

47. The school's curriculum plans a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. Children in Reception are encouraged to share resources amicably during their activities and imaginary play. Pupils across the school are encouraged and expected to work well in groups in lessons. They collaborate within a number of committees where they can share their views and ideas to improve the school. Through the school council, pupils share ideas for weekly themes, and annual pupil surveys ensure that pupils have a voice. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas about how they learn best so that teachers can adapt their teaching strategies.

48. Staff use the curriculum to enhance pupils' awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity, such as through a whole-school PSHE theme on 'celebrating difference'. Pupils learn about the effects of prejudice and discrimination and relate these to the school's values of kindness and mutual respect.

49. Pupils learn about democracy and how elections in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world work. They take part in mini elections to further understand the democratic process. Older pupils discuss current affairs in the United Kingdom and overseas. They debate different opinions about what is right and wrong in lessons across the curriculum. Staff ensure a fair representation of diverse viewpoints and balanced political perspectives during discussions. Leaders monitor lessons and talks from visitors to ensure that they do not undermine fundamental British values.

50. Children in the Reception class develop independence and responsibility, looking after their belongings and changing into outdoor footwear before they go out to play or to the woods. Older pupils take on roles such as prefects, pre-prep readers, play time leaders, boarding leaders, mathematics buddies and digital leaders. Boarders develop ideas that they share with the rest of the school to improve the experience of the whole school community.

51. The school develops pupils' sense of responsibility towards others well and provides them with opportunities to contribute to the community. Pre-prep pupils visit the woodland classroom each week, while pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit the beach for weekly lessons. There they develop knowledge and skills required to appreciate and help take care of the natural environment. Pupils take part in community-centred activities such as visits to local care homes. They raise money or collect gifts for charities they choose to contribute to through a democratic process. Older pupils discuss the effects of urbanisation and learn about issues such as sustainable development.

52. The school develops pupils' economic understanding effectively. Children in Reception learn about money through imaginary play and pre-prep children learn about money in mathematical activities. Older pupils are taught about how to save money and the role of banks. They learn about interest

rates and mortgages to prepare them for the future. Pupils take part in entrepreneurship programmes where they attempt to grow a given amount of money, following business plans.

53. Children in Reception talk about what they want to be when they grow up and take part in role play to develop their awareness of jobs people do. In PSHE lessons, pupils speak about the careers that interest them and learn about skills they are likely to need to achieve their chosen career. Pupils learn about presentation skills, writing an application form, digital skills and how these are useful in different careers. Older pupils research how mathematics is used in different professions from pilots, architects and engineers, in football, table tennis and technical aspects of theatre. Staff ensure that pupils are well prepared for entry examinations to senior schools. Pupils visit Eastbourne College and other schools of their choice to promote a smooth transition for the next steps of their education.

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

54. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

55. Leaders have a clear safeguarding policy which is reviewed and updated regularly to include updates to statutory guidance. Safeguarding arrangements in the school are robust. Records, including the single central register, are thorough.

56. Staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate and regular training. They work closely with the local authority to ensure their knowledge is current and that they are aware of any contextual risks. Leaders take steps to mitigate these risks through regular meetings to review and update their practices. Governors support those with safeguarding responsibilities and monitor safeguarding arrangements in the school effectively through regular reviews.

57. Staff are trained termly, and weekly updates keep them further informed. Safeguarding induction for new staff is thorough. Staff understand how to report any safeguarding concerns that might arise, including about another member of staff.

58. The safeguarding team responds effectively to any safeguarding concerns that are raised. Safeguarding logs are detailed with written rationale for actions taken. Actions include informing the relevant local authority without delay if a referral needs to be made. The school works closely with parents when incidents occur. Leaders review procedures and take appropriate actions, where necessary, to make systems more robust.

59. The school ensures that pupils, including boarders, are aware of whom they can go to if they need to report a concern in person and how they convey their concern online or anonymously. Safeguarding practices in the boarding house include access to staff at all hours and the ability to contact home daily.

60. Suitable filtering and monitoring of internet usage is in place. The safeguarding team responds swiftly to any alerts to look for patterns and take suitable action. Pupils are made aware of the potential risks that may occur when they are online and are taught how to mitigate these through PSHE lessons and talks from local authority personnel.

61. All required safer recruitment checks are completed in good time and recorded in a well-maintained single central record of appointments.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

62. All the relevant Standards are met.

The quality of the early years foundation stage in the registered early years provision

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

63. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.

64. Leaders demonstrate a clear vision for the setting and are committed to delivering quality care and education for the children. Strong relationships with parents are maintained through regular, effective communication, fostering trust and collaboration around the children's personal and developmental needs. Policies and procedures are well implemented under leaders' close supervision, ensuring high standards of practice throughout the setting.

65. Leaders provide a secure and inviting environment that promotes children's development across the prime and specific areas of learning. Staff plan activities that are engaging and their interactions with children are supportive and purposeful. Staff implement structured daily routine which further contributes to the children's sense of security, and enable them to engage confidently in their daily experiences in the environment.

66. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the children, encompassing the seven areas of learning and promoting development. However, some staff lack clarity regarding the progression of skills needed to prepare children for the next stage in some aspects of learning. Leaders are working to address this to ensure a more consistent approach to curriculum planning to enhance children's overall development.

67. Children are supported in developing independence through a range of carefully selected activities that encourage choice and self-management. Staff continually model effective communication, using questions to deepen children's understanding and language development. Children confidently navigate the environment, engaging in activities that build their independence and confidence.

68. Managers set high expectations for behaviour, ensuring that staff consistently model and reinforce positive behaviours with the children. Respectful interactions are consistent, with staff encouraging children's autonomy by seeking their consent before transitions from one activity to another or when supporting their personal needs. This approach nurtures strong, positive relationships between children and staff, creating a warm and supportive atmosphere, which helps children to feel valued and secure.

69. Effective safeguarding procedures are in place, with leaders and staff creating a safe and nurturing environment. Staff are diligent in maintaining a good standard of care and safety, evident in their daily practice and interactions. Leaders' oversight ensures that safeguarding remains a key focus.

Quality of education

70. The quality of education is good.

71. Staff plan activities around children's interests, incorporating all seven areas of learning with resources that are age-appropriate and accessible. Physical development opportunities are

embedded throughout, with activities to develop gross and fine motor skills both indoors and outdoors.

72. Staff are effective communicators, using short instructions and modelling appropriate language to support children's learning and development. They employ appropriate questioning techniques to assess understanding, develop vocabulary and extend children's knowledge. Interactions between staff and children are positive, respectful, and language-rich, enabling children to converse with peers and adults with a growing confidence. Staff adapt their interactions to align with children's developmental stages, ensuring children are given time to respond and process information appropriately. Across the setting, children enjoy participating in songs, rhymes, and stories, which enhance their communication, language and literacy development.

73. Children who have special needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive targeted support, with staff implementing recommendations from specialists to meet their specific learning needs. Leaders and staff work collaboratively to ensure children, including those who have SEND, make good progress. Staff plan activities to address individual needs and interests, ensuring equal opportunities for growth and development.

74. Staff assess children's learning and development through regular observations. The weekly observations and assessments that they complete are shared with families via an online platform, which also offers suggestions for extending learning at home. Staff complete progress checks at age two and focus on the prime areas of learning, where they evaluate progress and share strategies for targeted support with parents.

75. Leaders and staff know children in their care well. While staff can describe individual next steps for children, they are less certain regarding the skills children need to learn at key transition points and they do not fully consider how to enhance the experiences offered to children in the curriculum.

Behaviour and attitudes

76. Behaviour and attitudes are good.

77. Staff maintain high expectations for children's behaviour. Children are encouraged to express their emotions and have opportunities to socialise with others and learn how to interact respectfully with kind hands and words. Children demonstrate increasing confidence in selecting activities and participate in both child-led and adult-led tasks, which gradually prepare them for the transition through the setting and into Reception.

78. Staff use clear and consistent instructions to support children to make good choices. For example, children willingly follow instructions, join in with activities, listen and respond well to staff who guide them in their learning. Children engage in respectful communication with one another, demonstrating emerging skills in turn-taking and conversation. They interact positively with staff, respond to questions about shared stories and engage in activities, such as exploring the water tray, the flour tray or discovering different textures, such as paint.

79. The relationships between staff and children are warm and caring. Staff understand the children's needs. For example, when they are tired, hungry or poorly, and they respond to them promptly. Staff model positive behaviour by seeking children's permission before engaging in tasks, such as changing nappies or participating in activities, encouraging children to develop respect for one

another. Children feel safe and demonstrate trust as they explore their surroundings while maintaining a sense of security from familiar adults nearby.

80. Children display positive attitudes to learning, engaging attentively with tasks and demonstrating an age-appropriate level of concentration and application. They eagerly share their creations with pride and listen attentively to staff during activities, such as story time or exploratory play. This focus and curiosity reflect their growing independence and enthusiasm for learning.

Personal development

81. The personal development of children is good.

82. Leaders have established a highly effective key-person system, ensuring that children form strong, trusting bonds with their designated adults. Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of the children's individual needs, interests and developmental stages. This system is instrumental in supporting children's emotional wellbeing.

83. Staff encourage children to develop independence in managing their personal needs as they progress through the setting, preparing them well for their transition into Reception. Children confidently complete age-appropriate tasks, such as collecting their beakers for drinks, using tissues to wipe their faces and taking themselves to the toilet independently as they become toilet trained. Staff provide sensitive support where needed, ensuring children feel capable and self-assured in their abilities.

84. Staff prioritise children's physical development and aim to promote healthy lifestyles. They provide a range of activities to help children to develop their balance and co-ordination. For instance, children learn to navigate equipment safely, such as climbing frames and slides. Staff talk to children about healthy choices in an age-appropriate way, helping them understand the importance of physical activity and a healthy diet. For example, children engage in growing vegetables and using them in activities, such as cooking or baking. Mealtimes are well-organised. Staff follow procedures to ensure that they meet children's dietary needs, and they supervise children closely to support their use of utensils.

85. Children are supported in learning to navigate their environment safely, with staff teaching them to take appropriate risks under close supervision. Whether climbing stairs, using slides, or navigating steps, children are guided to approach these tasks with care and confidence. Staff provide clear instructions and encouragement, fostering a sense of independence while ensuring safety measures are in place. These practices ensure children develop confidence in their physical abilities and an understanding of how to manage risks effectively.

Leadership and management

86. Leadership and management are good.

87. Governors with oversight of the early years are actively involved in the setting, regularly attending events and engaging with staff, parents, and children. They provide strategic oversight, reporting to the full board on areas for development and supporting the setting's long-term progress.

88. Leaders provide robust support for staff through regular supervisions, ongoing training and daily support and coaching. Training needs are identified and addressed to enhance the quality of provision, while staff wellbeing is prioritised to alleviate unnecessary pressures. This supportive approach helps maintain a motivated and effective workforce, which positively impacts the care and education provided to the children.

89. Leaders ensure that documentation meets the requirements of early years regulations, with policies and procedures implemented consistently across the setting. Safer recruitment practices are followed. Staff are well trained and appropriately deployed, with specific training provided for those looking after the babies. This training is effectively shared with other staff across the setting to further support the needs of the children. The setting operates efficiently, creating a safe, homely environment for the children.

90. Leaders maintain a thorough understanding of the day-to-day operations within the setting, ensuring a high level of supervision to support quality interactions and emotional care for the children. Systems are in place for effective reporting to Ofsted on welfare matters and any concerns or complaints raised within the setting are dealt with promptly and to the satisfaction of all parties. Leaders' visibility within the setting and their daily engagement with parents and children fosters trust and open communication.

Safeguarding

91. Safeguarding is effective.

92. Leaders prioritise children's welfare, creating a secure, well-maintained environment with appropriate furniture, staffing and resources. Staff complete daily risk assessments and termly fire drills to ensure facilities are safe and evacuation routes are clear. Leaders maintain thorough oversight of safeguarding, promptly addressing concerns to sustain a vigilant and responsive culture.

93. Safeguarding practices are robust, with staff well trained in all areas, including recognising and reporting different types of concerns and knowledge of the 'Prevent' duty. Training is updated regularly to reflect statutory changes and staff complete safeguarding training before beginning work with the children. Safer recruitment procedures ensure all staff are appropriately vetted.

94. Leaders work collaboratively with local services to support children and ensure staff understand reporting processes, enhancing the setting's ability to meet the diverse needs of the children promptly and effectively.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- support staff to identify and implement a precise progression of skills in the curriculum as children progress through the setting in order to build more effectively on their prior knowledge and experiences.

The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage

95. The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

School details

School	St Andrew's Prep
Department for Education number	845/6016
Registered early years number	2598928
Registered charity number	307071
Address	St Andrew's Prep Meads Eastbourne East Sussex BN20 7RP
Phone number	01323 733203
Email address	info@standrewsprep.co.uk
Website	http://www.standrewsprep.co.uk
Proprietor	Eastbourne College Incorporated
Chair	Mrs Nicky Eckert
Headteacher	Mr Tom Gregory
Age range	0 to 13
Number of pupils	318
Number of boarding pupils	16
Number of children in the early years registered setting	64
Date of previous inspection	8 to 11 June 2021

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Information about the school

96. St Andrew's Prep is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from nine months to thirteen years. It was founded in 1877 as a boarding school for male pupils. Since 2010, the school has been part of Eastbourne College Incorporated which comprises Eastbourne College and St Andrew's Prep. The school retains close links with Eastbourne College and both schools are overseen by the same governing body. The school has three classes in the Nursery which is a registered setting. The pre-prep includes the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 and the prep school provides education for pupils from Years 3 to 8.

97. The registered early years setting caters for 64 children in the Nursery, aged from nine months to four years.

98. Boarders are accommodated in a co-educational boarding house located on the main school site. The school offers flexi-boarding accommodation for pupils from the age of 7.

99. The school has identified 55 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Very few pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

100. English is an additional language for 33 pupils.

101. The school states its aims are to provide a holistic education that balances academic rigour with the development of character in order to ensure that pupils grow into well-rounded individuals who are ready for the next stage of their educational journey but also ready to contribute positively to their community and the world outside the school walls.

Inspection details

Inspection dates	3 to 5 December 2024

102. A team of six inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

103. 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 chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

104. 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**.

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For more information, please visit isi.net

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