

School inspection report

25 to 27 June 2024

Brighton College Prep Kensington

10 Prince's Gardens

London

SW7 1ND

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 put pupils and children first in their planning and in their self-evaluation of the school. Risks are thoroughly assessed in a manner which encourages teachers to take advantage of learning opportunities in the local area beyond the school. Leaders develop and monitor the curriculum closely and implement change where improvements make pupils' learning more effective.
2. Pupils experience a broad and suitable curriculum, with core subjects augmented by creative disciplines and modern foreign languages. Computing and chess lessons encourage pupils to develop their logic skills. Pupils make good progress because their teachers deliver effective teaching, making use of their skills and experience and providing valuable feedback that helps pupils to take the next steps in their learning.
3. In some lessons, teachers plan carefully to meet the individual needs of pupils, including those who need additional support and those whose prior attainment indicates that they need a higher level of challenge. In other lessons, planning is less specifically tailored to meeting individual needs which reduces pupils' opportunities to learn and make progress.
4. A varied and appropriate physical education curriculum takes advantage of nearby sporting facilities and ensures that pupils, including the youngest children in the early years, benefit from expert coaching. Pupils learn about important topics such as relationships and equality and demonstrate that they understand how this relates to their everyday lives.
5. Pupils demonstrate positive values and their behaviour around the school is appropriate. In most lessons pupils listen carefully and respond to their teachers' instructions. In some lessons, the behaviour of pupils does not always meet agreed expectations, either because the planned activity does not sufficiently motivate the pupils to learn, or because the teacher does not manage behaviour in a consistently clear manner.
6. Pupils learn about cultures other than their own in a respectful manner and develop an appreciation for British values and institutions. Pupils' economic education is developed effectively through the wider curriculum. Older pupils have some lessons about careers, however these lessons do not provide pupils with a sufficiently thorough understanding of the potential pathways to employment.
7. Leaders ensure that effective procedures are in place to report and monitor safeguarding concerns, and that staff are aware of their responsibilities. Any such concerns are recorded and acted upon appropriately, involving outside agencies where this is necessary.

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 teachers plan lessons to meet the individual needs of pupils so that they are well supported to make the progress of which they are capable
- ensure that pupils' behaviour is managed more consistently by teachers to improve the standards of behaviour demonstrated by a few pupils in lessons
- ensure that provision for careers education for older pupils is thoroughly planned so that they have a better understanding of the potential pathways to the world of work.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders engage in effective self-evaluation and listen to the views of parents, teachers and pupils. They consider these views when creating the next steps in the school's development. They ensure that they prioritise pupil wellbeing. For example, as the number of pupils in the school increases, the size of the pastoral team has expanded.
9. Leaders monitor, evaluate and adapt the curriculum effectively, for example by reviewing and adapting the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum to ensure that pupils develop a suitably thorough understanding of all topics.
10. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring that suitably qualified and experienced staff are employed to teach and supervise pupils effectively, including children in the early years. Leaders monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through observations and professional dialogue with teachers. Leaders ensure that practitioners in the early years have effective professional supervision meetings to support their development.
11. The proprietor body exercises appropriate oversight through its management structure. Many school policies originate from the proprietor before being amended to ensure suitability for the school. The proprietor also provides a range of professional services and training, for example related to first aid, safeguarding, and health and safety, to give effective support to leaders.
12. The school benefits from links with Brighton College, which provide opportunities for teachers to share effective practice and for pupils to attend events together with pupils from other schools within the Brighton College group. An advisory board with representatives from the proprietor body and Brighton College receives regular reports which are then discussed at meetings to provide effective support and challenge to leaders.
13. Leaders consider risk carefully, including contextual risks relevant to the school's pupils such as those posed by electronic devices and social media, and to the school's location. The school buildings and gardens are risk assessed. Leaders have risk-assessed an 'extended learning zone' for the immediate area beyond the school to encourage teachers to fully utilise exhibitions at the nearby museums in their lesson planning.
14. Leaders send parents regular written reports on their child's progress and share information such as school policies with them via the school website. There is an appropriate complaints policy in place. Formal complaints are rare but, when they do arise, leaders handle them appropriately and in a timely fashion, in line with school policy. Leaders maintain effective links with external agencies and share information as required, for example progress reports for pupils with an education, health and care plan.
15. Leaders are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and have a suitable plan to consider accessibility to the school and curriculum.

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

16. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. Leaders organise a broad curriculum which effectively promotes the learning of pupils in the core areas of linguistic, mathematical and scientific understanding. This curriculum also, through a range of subjects, develops pupils' intellectual, aesthetic and technological skills. Pupils learn a range of modern foreign languages at various ages, and also have lessons in chess which, alongside computing studies, help the pupils to develop their understanding of logic.
18. Leaders arrange appropriate additional support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Training and guidance is provided to class and subject teachers, for example in how to provide and adapt appropriate resources to help pupils to access their learning. Additional support is provided through a team of specialist teachers and assistants who sometimes teach pupils directly. Leaders effectively monitor the progress of these pupils. They evaluate the effectiveness of the support given, and act to support pupils who need extra help.
19. Leaders evaluate the support required for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) when these pupils join the school. Lessons are arranged to support those pupils' access to the curriculum, adjusting their timetable where necessary. Teachers provide effective additional resources and support, for example vocabulary mats, which help pupils to acquire the confidence in English they need to make progress across the curriculum.
20. Most teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and have high expectations of pupils. High-quality planning is tailored to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers address any misconceptions and encourage pupils to be enthused to learn. For example, in learning about the stock market through a simulated purchase of shares, Year 7 pupils learn to develop spreadsheets which record and monitor the share price of their chosen companies. Many pupils apply this in more complex ways, exploring the historical value of the companies as well as the performance of competitor businesses. Teachers provide detailed feedback and guidance on pupils' work, often linked to clearly articulated success criteria.
21. However, some teachers do not plan their lessons sufficiently well to meet the needs of pupils. In some lessons the organisation and presentation of activities do not support pupils to engage in the learning. In others, teachers give insufficient consideration either to those pupils who would benefit from additional support or those for whom a greater level of challenge is required. Consequently, pupils' progress is more uneven in such lessons.
22. Teachers give children in the early years suitable foundations for their learning so that they are ready to move on to their next stages of learning. Adults use appropriate learning routines to support children's social development. They are skilled in developing the children's language, communication, early reading, and early writing. Children spend time in the school library where their teachers encourage them to enjoy exploring a range of books. They plan activities to help children to work with numbers, shape and space. They use a range of activities to support children's physical development, for example by encouraging appropriate pencil grips.
23. Leaders implement and monitor a suitable assessment framework which tracks the progress of each individual pupil as well as groups of pupils. Pupils and their families are supported by the school in their consideration of future schools, many of which have competitive entry procedures.

24. Pupils, including children in the early years, have a broad range of extra-curricular activities from which to choose. A variety of music ensembles rehearse during and after the school day, and many pupils have instrumental and singing lessons at school. Pupils develop skills in sports such as karate, fencing and netball through after-school clubs.

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

25. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

26. Pupils experience an appropriate physical education curriculum which encompasses a range of athletic and sporting disciplines, using local facilities and recreational parks and grounds. Experienced and knowledgeable teachers provide detailed, encouraging and inclusive coaching to pupils of all ages including children in the early years. As a result, pupils enjoy taking physical exercise as well as engaging in competitive sport both against other schools and among the houses in the school. Pupils say that this has a positive impact on their sense of wellbeing.
27. Pupils value the positive relationships between themselves and their teachers. The high levels of pastoral care provided by teachers effectively supports pupils when they need additional help and guidance. Pupils also value the range of opportunities they receive to pursue their interests and enjoy the time and space for recreation. A very high proportion of pupils say that they feel happy and that their wellbeing is very well supported.
28. Leaders have curated and developed a suitable curriculum of social and relationships education, with the older pupils also learning about human reproduction. Pupils learn to appreciate how they, and everyone else, should be treated equally. For example, Year 4 pupils discuss differing views on gendered clothing and colours. During such debates pupils are respectful of differing opinions and listen to each other's point of view.
29. The personal, emotional and social development of children in the early years is encouraged by teachers who foster positive relationships and model supportive behaviour. Children learn to understand the feelings of others and to co-operate effectively, resolving any conflicts peaceably.
30. Leaders and teachers generally encourage pupils to behave appropriately both in and out of the classroom by setting clear expectations and by handling any incidents of poor behaviour appropriately. Pupils behave positively in their recreational periods, choosing whether to play energetically or to socialise in a more relaxed manner. However, in a small number of lessons, some pupils do not follow the 'ready to learn agreement', which establishes a set of classroom rules. This is either because the lesson activities have not been suitably planned to meet their needs, or because the teacher is not consistent in their expectations of the pupils.
31. Bullying incidents are rare but leaders act swiftly when they do occur. Any acts of unkindness which might lead to bullying are also managed appropriately. As a result, pupils feel safe at school and know that any concerns they share with adults will be taken seriously.
32. Pupils attend school regularly. Leaders monitor levels of attendance closely and follow up any absence swiftly. Records of attendance are appropriately kept alongside the register of admissions, and the local authority is suitably notified of any concerns or when pupils join or leave at non-standard transition points.
33. Leaders ensure that staff are deployed so that pupils are appropriately supervised during the school day. This includes periods of recreation in the 'secret garden' and when pupils leave the school site, whether on trips or for their regular sporting activities. Staff closely monitor the entrance to the school at the start and end of each day with clear procedures to ensure the safe transition of pupils to and from the care of trusted adults.

34. Leaders ensure that the school buildings and grounds are well maintained, and that facilities such as toilets and showers are in working order with appropriate testing and checking routines in place for water, electricity and gas safety, and related appliances. Relevant health and safety requirements are adhered to.
35. Fire risks are suitably monitored and regular fire drills are carried out to ensure pupils know how to respond in an emergency. Appropriate training is given to those adults with responsibilities as fire marshals or wardens. Externally commissioned fire risk assessments are carried out in line with statutory guidance and any recommendations acted upon, and fire safety systems and firefighting equipment are checked and maintained on a regular basis.
36. First Aid is administered by staff with appropriate training and experience and a qualified nurse provides further advice and support to staff on behalf of the proprietor. Any injuries are logged and reported appropriately, including for children in the early years, and any medication is administered in line with guidance. The accommodation is suitable for first aid and medical needs.

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

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

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

38. Pupils have a clear sense of right from wrong and learn about treating all people with respect. This is developed through curriculum activities, assemblies and also in the role modelling and encouragement from adults so that pupils take responsibility for their behaviour.
39. Pupils learn about British values and are taught about significant occasions such as the general election in an unbiased manner. Pupils see, visit and are taught about many of the institutions around London such as the Houses of Parliament and the Bank of England. Children in the early years and younger pupils are visited by emergency service workers and develop an understanding and respect for the work that they do. Pupils learn about historical subjects such as the suffragette movement and how these resonate with issues affecting the world today.
40. Pupils actively contribute to the life of the school and, as a result, they learn about how they will be able to take part in society in the future. For example, they have contributed to the 'ready to learn agreement', and elect members of the school council, which has successfully negotiated the installation of additional play equipment, led charitable initiatives and introduced new pupil-led clubs.
41. Leaders and school councillors survey the views of all pupils to ensure that all views are heard. All pupils vote for candidates for pupil leadership roles and directly choose the charities to be supported by the school community. Pupils value the opportunity to contribute in these ways and appreciate the opportunity to take part in meaningful democratic processes.
42. Pupils experience appropriate economic education at various age-appropriate levels. This includes understanding the value of coins and money for younger pupils, learning about how banks operate and, for the older pupils, learning about the stock market through a project in which they pretend to invest in companies and track their share price.
43. Children in the early years learn about making positive choices, understanding the feelings of others and resolving disagreements. Teachers encourage children to role play, and help children to explore how they interact with others. Children's social skills develop effectively during their time in Nursery and Reception classes.
44. Older pupils have lessons about careers and the pathways towards potential employment. Children in the early years simulate the activities of various professionals, for example veterinary surgeons. In addition, visiting speakers sometimes refer to their own career paths alongside a range of other topics. However, these lessons are not as well planned or as detailed as other areas of the curriculum and, subsequently, pupils' knowledge is less well developed than in other areas of their learning.
45. Older pupils learn about the school's locality, and the different opportunities experienced by those with different economic circumstances, through their humanities studies. Pupils respond to this learning sensitively. For example, they have chosen to raise funds for a homelessness charity following learning about the experiences of an unhoused person.

46. Pupils develop their understanding and appreciation of other cultures through the curriculum and other experiences which leaders and teachers organise throughout the year. For example, teachers organise visits to a Sikh Gurdwara and pupils participate in the charitable sharing of food in the langar. Pupils learn about Islamic art, and teachers encourage pupils to explore the historical connections between European nations and the African continent in an appropriate manner. Pupils also learn about cultural traditions and day-to-day life in different countries when they learn modern foreign languages.

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

47. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

48. Leaders understand their responsibilities in regard to safeguarding. They have established a school culture which promotes the wellbeing of pupils. Leaders have a robust understanding of local risks for pupils in their care. They effectively implement the school's safeguarding policy which conforms to current statutory guidance. Safeguarding requirements specific to the early years, such as restricting the use of certain electronic devices within the setting, are understood and adhered to by staff and visitors.
49. New members of staff experience a thorough induction process when they join the school. This makes clear the expectations of the school that all adults actively contribute to the wellbeing of pupils through vigilance and adherence to the staff code of conduct. All staff receive regular training so that they learn about updates to guidance as well as current trends and concerns. Staff know how to spot signs that a pupil's safety might be compromised, including the signs for child-on-child abuse, and report all of their concerns appropriately. Staff also share any concerns they might have about other adults and to self-refer any situation in which their own actions might be called into question.
50. Those with safeguarding responsibilities are trained to an appropriate level and undertake additional training, for example related to the 'Prevent' duty following changes to statutory guidance in December 2023. Leaders log any concerns in an appropriate and timely manner, using an electronic system which allows them to monitor the progress of individual incidents and pupils as well as looking for any patterns or trends. Leaders communicate appropriately with parents and engage effectively with external agencies when this is necessary to support pupils and their families.
51. Pupils share their concerns by speaking to adults or through worry boxes, which can be used anonymously. Pupils express that they are confident to do so, and to share if they are concerned about the wellbeing of their friends.
52. Leaders ensure that appropriate recruitment checks are undertaken at the appropriate time and recorded in a single central register of appointments. Representatives of the proprietor body with responsibility for this area review the register alongside the effectiveness of the school's wider safeguarding provision. The safeguarding team also participate in training and sharing of effective practice with those with equivalent roles in other schools within the Brighton College group.
53. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. The school uses suitable internet filtering and monitoring software. Alerts or concerns are reviewed by members of the safeguarding team, who then take any appropriate action needed.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Brighton College Prep Kensington
Department for Education number	213/6390
Address	Brighton College Prep Kensington 10–13 Prince’s Gardens London SW7 1ND
Phone number	020 7591 4622
Email address	info@brightoncollegeprepkensington.co.uk
Website	www.brightoncollegeprepkensington.co.uk
Chair of proprietors	Mr James Carroll
Proprietor	Cognita Schools Ltd
Headteacher	Mrs Lois Gaffney
Age range	2 to 13
Number of pupils	284
Date of previous inspection	22 to 23 January 2020

Information about the school

55. Brighton College Prep Kensington is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 2 and 13 years. Formerly known as Prince's Gardens Preparatory School, it was renamed in September 2023. The school is located in the Westminster area of London. The school is part of the Cognita Schools Group; oversight is provided through a team appointed by the proprietor body. There is also an advisory board consisting of members of the proprietor body and the Brighton College. Since the last inspection a new headteacher was appointed in 2022.
56. There are 70 children in the early years, which consists of two Nursery classes and two Reception classes.
57. The school has identified 21 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
58. English is an additional language for 177 pupils.
59. The school states its aims are to provide an environment of kindness and inclusivity in which pupils can grow as curious, confident and kind human beings, developing a love of learning as well as developing the skills and knowledge they will need in the future together with an understanding that they can make a difference, locally and globally.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

25 to 27 June 2024

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 chair of proprietors
- 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
- 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**.

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