

# School inspection report

15 to 17 October 2024

## **Buckingham Preparatory School**

458 Rayners Lane

Pinner

Middlesex

HA5 5DT

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 have a comprehensive oversight of the school's work to ensure that the school's aims and ethos are promoted and work well in practice. Governors ensure that school leaders have the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities. Leaders actively promote a culture of aspiration and high achievement. They accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for development. They implement well-informed improvement plans. They are supported and challenged by both governors and external agencies. The school meets the requirements of the Standards consistently.
2. Leaders have developed a suitably broad curriculum, which is regularly reviewed. Lessons are carefully planned, and most teaching, guidance and feedback helps pupils to gain new knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, some teaching, guidance and feedback does not take prior attainment into account or support pupils to understand how they can improve their work.
3. Pupils behave well around the school. They are polite, considerate and respectful of other people. From a young age, pupils learn to understand and regulate their emotions. Leaders ensure that provision is in place for those who need additional emotional support and guidance. Through a range of guest speakers, trips and charitable initiatives, leaders ensure that pupils develop a broad social and economic education and understand the valuable contribution they can make to their local community and wider society.
4. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities for managing risk, for health and safety arrangements, and under the Equality Act 2010. They ensure that safety arrangements, including fire safety, are comprehensive and comply with current regulations and facilitate reasonable appropriate adjustments. Policies and procedures are aligned with the latest statutory guidance. Important information is readily accessible on the school's website.
5. Leaders have developed an effective safeguarding culture. Staff, including those with specific safeguarding responsibility, are appropriately trained and knowledgeable. Leaders make timely and appropriate referrals as necessary. Pupils feel safe and are confident that they can approach a trusted adult for guidance and support when required. Consequently, pupils feel safe, supported and valued.

## 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:

- teachers provide guidance and feedback in line with the school's policy, so that pupils learn more effectively and understand how they can improve their work
- teachers provide support that considers the needs and prior attainment of pupils, so that pupils can learn effectively.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

6. Governors and leaders work as a cohesive team to plan and deliver a strategy which actively promotes pupils' wellbeing. They use a variety of information, including assessment scores and pupil surveys, to develop a broad understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders ensure that the school's aims are understood by pupils, staff and parents. Pupils develop a love of learning and gain the confidence to work hard towards fulfilling their potential.
7. Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise to the role, such as in safeguarding and health and safety. They visit the school regularly and offer both support and challenge to school leaders by analysing termly leadership reports and collaborating over school improvement targets. Governors assure themselves that leaders have the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities, so that the Standards are met consistently.
8. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. External auditors support leaders in developing a clear and detailed accessibility plan which ensures that reasonable adjustments are made, as necessary. Leaders regularly review provision to ensure that it is inclusive.
9. Policies and procedures are aligned with the latest statutory guidance. Leaders regularly review how effectively and consistently policies are implemented and whether they are understood by staff and pupils.
10. The school provides parents with a wide range of useful information. Leaders regularly upload the latest versions of documents onto the school's website so that parents are kept up to date. Parents are well informed on their children's progress and attainment through a programme of regular and detailed academic reporting.
11. The school operates an effective complaints procedure. Parental concerns are taken seriously and dealt with in an open and timely manner in line with school policy. Governors and leaders regularly review the complaints log and any lessons are learned, recorded and acted upon.
12. Leaders understand and manage risk well. Suitably detailed risk assessments are in place, which are regularly reviewed, including in the early years. Environmental and maintenance safety checks and activity risk assessments are carried out conscientiously.
13. Early years leaders have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. The school is exempt from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) learning and development and assessment requirements. Leaders manage the learning, safeguarding and welfare of the youngest children, so that children are well prepared to move on to Year 1.

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

#### 14. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

15. Leaders plan a curriculum that provides pupils with a wide and varied programme of lessons and activities appropriate to their ages and aptitudes. Specialist teaching and suitable resourcing including in areas such as French, physical education and art encourages pupils' interest and self-motivation. The curriculum is enhanced through additional activities such as educational visits, themed days and visiting speakers.
16. Teachers use a range of effective teaching methods so that most pupils acquire new knowledge and learn effectively. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils, built on respect and listening to each other, result in pupils willing to share their thoughts and engage in dialogue so they develop a deeper understanding of their work. Pupils are generally confident, courteous and articulate speakers and consistently demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning.
17. Pupils enjoy success across the curriculum and make good progress, including in relation to their literacy and numeracy skills. The majority of pupils successfully secure a place at their first-choice senior school, most of which have selective admissions criteria. Recent cohorts have been granted multiple admission offers, with a number of pupils receiving academic scholarships.
18. Most teachers provide pupils with effective guidance. This helps pupils to learn from their mistakes and apply their learning in more complex ways. However, some teachers do not provide guidance to pupils that helps them to learn as well, including through marking and feedback.
19. Leaders provide detailed guidance regarding support mechanisms for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who have SEND are consequently well known to teaching staff and reasonable adjustments are made in most lessons to account for their needs. In some lessons, however, this is not as evident, and teachers do not consider the needs and prior attainment of pupils. These pupils find the lesson content difficult to access.
20. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are monitored from the point of admission. Leaders use assessment data to closely track the progress of pupils who speak EAL in language, reading and spelling, and additional support is put in place wherever necessary. Over time, pupils learn to communicate effectively and make comparable progress to their peers in the wider curriculum.
21. Teachers are well trained to support the development of the youngest children. They provide a range of activities and opportunities for children to learn in a well-resourced indoor and outdoor environment. Teachers prioritise pupils' language, communication, literacy and numeracy skills in their interactions. Teachers use ongoing assessment to identify where children need additional support. As a result, children learn well and most are well ready to move on to Year 1.
22. Extra-curricular provision is broad and caters for a full range of interests, from craft to choir. The pupils academic progress is enhanced via additional clubs including exam skills, logic and debate.

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

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

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

24. The curriculum and wide range of physical activities and sports enables pupils to be active, develop a healthy lifestyle and broaden their interests. For example, through judo club, swimming or the recently extended weekly games lesson. Pupils explore and develop their physical abilities and self-awareness in a range of outdoor environments, not least during their annual residential trips which begin in Year 3.
25. Pupils, including the youngest children, recognise themselves as valued members of a supportive school community. They are deeply respectful toward one another and openly care about each other's well-being. Pupils socialise at breaktimes and happily and considerately play across the age groups. Leaders have sought to enhance this culture with certain initiatives such as pupil nominations for the weekly kindness cup, and allowing pupils to wear their own clothes on their birthday, often prompting community singing at the school gate in the morning. Leaders constantly seek to promote the pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence.
26. Pupils and staff share warm, respectful relationships. Pupils move around their school in a calm and considerate manner. Bullying is not tolerated. In the rare instances when it occurs, it is dealt with promptly with careful consideration given to all involved.
27. Teachers support the youngest children's personal, emotional and physical development. Children learn to understand their own feelings and the feelings of others. They learn to co-operate effectively, take turns, listen to others and behave kindly and considerately. Teachers provide children with a range of opportunities that develop their fine and gross motor skills and opportunities to be active and healthy.
28. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme ensures pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of the features of a respectful relationship. Parents are consulted and kept informed regarding any curriculum updates. The curriculum is well delivered across the age groups. There is particular recognition for the single-sex nature of the cohort. For example, leaders ensure that female development is given equal coverage in the curriculum so that the pupils gain the necessary breadth of knowledge and understanding.
29. The school site is maintained to a high standard, with appropriate health and safety procedures in place. There are regular fire evacuation drills. Training for staff, including in fire safety, is thorough, up to date and suitably recorded. Pupils are well supervised by appropriate adults at all times, including during off site activities.
30. There are appropriate procedures, and suitable accommodation is in place, to care for pupils who are injured or become unwell. First aid is provided by suitably trained staff. Pupils with specific medical needs are well known to staff and receive suitable care. Any medicine is appropriately administered and stored securely.
31. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and regularly reviewed to monitor patterns of absence. Staff are vigilant and follow up on unexplained absences promptly. Staff understand local reporting procedures in relation to children missing education. They report pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition times to the local authority, as required.

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

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



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

33. Pupils develop a tolerance and respect for diversity through their study of different people, faiths, lifestyles and beliefs. For example, pupils study different people's experiences through learning about world religions. Their learning is enhanced by visits to local places of worship. Leaders take opportunities to celebrate the range of beliefs and cultures within the school community. Leaders regularly reflect on the inclusivity of their environment. For example, by recently providing opportunities for a secular reflection so that all faiths feel included. The school's ethos and culture of mutual respect is seen in the consideration, manners and caring nature towards others seen throughout the school.
34. Leaders promote respect for British society, institutions and values. Recognition of national events and visits to places of interest, such as the National Poetry Library, underpins pupils' understanding of British values and history. This understanding is enhanced by a programme of guest speakers, including authors, local religious leaders and the local MP. By engaging with both national and local issues, pupils develop a respect for public services and the rule of law.
35. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities. From an early age, pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to lead and support their school community, be it as lower school mentors or community champions. Year 6 pupils are taught how to formally apply for positions of responsibility and members vote for their house captain each year. Pupils steadily grow a fundamental respect for the democratic process.
36. Leaders ensure that pupils increasingly develop a commitment to charity and service. The school's community champions lead charitable initiatives across the year and have recently engaged with charitable projects to support people in Kenya and India.
37. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of financial management. This starts with the youngest children in the early years who learn about shopping, paying for goods, and receiving change. As they get older, pupils experience the PSHE curriculum that includes a broad range of economic education, including understanding money, salaries, loans and interest rates.
38. As pupils get older, they are well supported to get ready for senior school. For example, pupils attend a transition day which includes talks from local public services such as Transport for London. Every summer, Year 6 pupils design their own PSHE scheme around the things they would like to learn before they leave the school, covering additional topics such as basic first aid.
39. In the early years, teachers support children's social interaction by modelling language and behaviour and discussing with them how to regulate their emotions and responses. Children develop a keen understanding of how their actions have an impact on others. They learn to raise their hands to answer questions and show respect by listening attentively to others' responses. Children are encouraged to take responsibility by working together to tidy up and clear away after activities. Children develop good social skills, are kind and considerate of each other and collaborate effectively together.

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

**All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

40. There is an effective safeguarding culture throughout the school. Governors undertake a formal annual review of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures. Governors also provide regular oversight and challenge. Governors have a comprehensive understanding of the school's safeguarding arrangements and any specific risks. They check on the effectiveness of leaders to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
41. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance and is a central feature of staff induction. Staff receive regular training, both in-person and online, organised by a suitably qualified and experienced safeguarding team. As a result, staff have a robust understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures as well as the staff code of conduct and whistleblowing policy.
42. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) maintains suitable records of safeguarding concerns and actions taken in response to these. Pupils deemed to be at risk, or with an identified need, are closely monitored. Appropriate arrangements for the management of allegations or low-level concerns are in place.
43. Safeguarding leaders have a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures and report concerns appropriately, including referrals relating to staff conduct, early help assessment, children missing education and extremism. Whenever necessary, referrals to children's services, the police or other agencies are made in a timely manner.
44. Pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe, including online. The online safety curriculum includes password protection and appropriate online behaviour. Arrangements for the monitoring and filtering of online technology are effective and leaders respond to alerts promptly. Pupils feel safe at school and understand how to report concerns to trusted adults.
45. Governors and leaders ensure there are recruitment procedures in place that reflect the latest statutory requirements. Checks are recorded fully and accurately on the single central record of appointments. Staff involved in interviewing candidates are trained in safer recruitment.

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

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

## School details

<b>School</b>	Buckingham Preparatory School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	310/6079
<b>Registered charity number</b>	293623
<b>Address</b>	Buckingham Preparatory School 458 Rayners Lane Pinner Middlesex HA5 5DT
<b>Phone number</b>	0208 866 2737
<b>Email address</b>	office@buckprep.org
<b>Website</b>	www.buckprep.org
<b>Proprietor</b>	E. Ivor Hughes Educational Foundation
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lynn Grimes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Doyle
<b>Age range</b>	2 - 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	106
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 to 12 November 2021

## Information about the school

47. Buckingham Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys, situated in Pinner. The school is run by a charitable foundation company, overseen by a board of governors. The school comprises two sections: the pre-school, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2; and the prep school, for Years 3 to 6. A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
48. There are 27 children currently in the early years which is comprised of one Nursery class and one Reception class.
49. The school has identified three pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
50. English is an additional language for 31 pupils.
51. The school states its aims are: to fulfil pupils' academic and social potential; to develop confident pupils by offering recognition and praise for effort and success; to enable pupils to develop the skills necessary for the next stage of their lives through the delivery of a planned, broad and balanced curriculum that meets and exceeds statutory requirements, ensures progress and continuity, and addresses the needs of all pupils; to develop pupils with self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience, including an understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance; to maximise outcomes for pupils by developing positive home-school links, keeping parents informed about the life and activities of the school and encouraging them to participate fully in their child's learning; for commitment and enthusiasm from the whole school community, providing a positive and supportive learning environment in order to develop adaptability, self-discipline and perseverance in pupils; to develop pupils' abilities to distinguish right from wrong and a belief in individual freedom, tolerance of others, personal and social responsibility and upholding the rule of law and to develop an understanding of cultural diversity and the meaning of community in school, at home, locally, nationally and globally.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

15 to 17 October 2024

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

53. 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
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

54. 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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