

School inspection report

1 to 3 April 2025

Newcastle Preparatory School

6 Eslington Road

Jesmond

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Tyne and Wear

NE2 4RH

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'.

Contents

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS	3
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....	4
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS	4
SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....	5
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE	6
SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	7
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	8
SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	9
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	10
SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....	11
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY	12
SAFEGUARDING	13
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING	13
SCHOOL DETAILS	14
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....	15
INSPECTION DETAILS	16

Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors monitor the school effectively to ensure that leaders promote the academic, social and physical wellbeing of pupils effectively. They visit the school frequently to speak to staff and pupils and receive regular reports from leaders and annual audits from external consultants. This information enables them to work effectively with leaders to plan the development of the school in line with its aims and ethos.
2. Leaders maintain positive, productive relationships with parents, staff and pupils so as to create a happy, purposeful school community. Parents meet teachers frequently, both formally and informally, to receive information about school activities and their children's progress and development. Staff work purposefully with the pupils in the classroom and during a variety of interesting extra-curricular activities. They support pupils with appropriate levels of supervision and provide kind, thoughtful management of their behaviour.
3. Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum which enables them to develop their knowledge and skills successfully across a range of subjects. Typically effective teaching is adapted to pupils' needs and aptitudes and makes purposeful use of good-quality resources to extend pupils' learning.
4. Teachers employ an effective assessment framework to track the progress of individual pupils and particular groups of pupils. The information gathered is used to adapt the teaching in ways that take account of pupils' prior learning and needs. Teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback to support their progress.
5. Leaders support the emotional wellbeing of pupils. Through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, assemblies and form periods, leaders and staff teach pupils to respect others and take pride in their own achievements. Teachers offer encouragement and praise and model courteous conduct.
6. Pupils' physical wellbeing is promoted through rigorous management of the premises and pupils' activities. Leaders ensure robust procedures are in place to assess and mitigate risk effectively. Carefully planned activities for early years children and physical education (PE) lessons throughout the school support pupils to develop a range of physical skills. Appropriately trained staff provide effective support to pupils in need of medical care.
7. Leaders teach pupils how to distinguish right from wrong. In the early years, children learn the importance of sharing resources and taking turns. Older pupils learn that it is wrong to discriminate against people on the basis of characteristics such as religious belief or racial identity. Leaders' consistent support for tolerance creates a school community characterised by respect for others.
8. The school provides pupils with opportunities to learn about wider British society and participate in community life. Early years children and older pupils help and support people outside school and raise money for various charities. Pupils benefit from well-planned financial education. They are taught about careers that they might pursue as adults and develop an understanding of democracy. However, the development of pupils' understanding of how the law is made and applied is limited.
9. Leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding procedures are effective. Should any safeguarding concerns arise, leaders respond promptly and appropriately, in line with current statutory guidance.

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:

- strengthen pupils' understanding of how the law is made and applied.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors and leaders evaluate progress against the school development plan annually to identify targets that have been successfully attained and determine objectives for the next academic year. Governors visit the school regularly and use their skills and knowledge, together with information from external audits, to provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. This enables leaders to promote the academic, emotional and physical wellbeing of the pupils, in line with the school's aims and ethos.
11. Leaders' rigorous oversight of teaching and learning enables them to ensure that the school's values are embedded throughout the curriculum. As a result, confident pupils acquire new knowledge, strengthen their conceptual understanding and grow in self-confidence and self-esteem.
12. Leaders maintain effective communication with parents in order to promote mutual support for pupils' development. The school website provides required information about the school's policies and about the different activities that pupils experience. The website is supported by photographs and articles posted by the school on social media. Teachers write regular, informative reports which give parents information about their children's academic progress. These reports include guidance as to how pupils can take the next steps in their learning. Teachers and senior staff make themselves available at drop-off and collection times for informal discussion with parents and carers. The school provides the local authority with the required information relating to any funded pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
13. Leaders and staff risk assess activities at school, educational visits and the school premises and put in place appropriate mitigations. Areas of potential risk, such as the school boundary and road crossings, are risk assessed, and suitable procedures are implemented to manage pupils as they move between different school sites. Leaders train staff in how to carry out risk assessment and provide them with suitable support in writing specific risk assessments. Leaders also take account of contextual risks including the potential for radicalisation, particularly from far-right political opinions. Any accidents or near misses are carefully reviewed and leaders ensure that risk assessments are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective. Leaders' management of risk assessment is subject to regular oversight by governors who are provided with termly analysis of any relevant incidents or near-incidents.
14. An appropriate complaints policy is made available to parents on the school's website. Leaders take prompt and appropriate action in response to any complaints they receive. They maintain detailed records of all complaints, both formal and informal, and of any responses made to these.
15. Leaders maintain effective links with external agencies, such as speech and language therapists, the local authority and children's services. Leaders maintain an appropriate accessibility plan and consult parents about this plan. The plan is reviewed each year and updated as required. Leaders ensure the school does not discriminate against any pupils and that it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
16. Leaders ensure that the early years statutory requirements are met. They provide staff with effective training and coaching to support them in planning stimulating activities which enable the children to make good progress.

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

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Curriculum leaders have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They provide a well-planned curriculum which is appropriate to the ages of the pupils and matched to their individual needs. Leaders keep the curriculum under constant review and adapt schemes of work to provide pupils with appropriate support and challenge. The curriculum is effectively planned to promote the school's positive values and to extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills beyond the age-related expectations of the national curriculum.
19. In literacy, Nursery teachers focus on teaching children the sounds that letters make and extending their vocabulary. Children are taught a new word each day and there are regular assessments to check their progress. Children in Reception can plan their own stories using words such as 'scoundrel', 'cunning' and 'whisper'. Children develop their physical skills and numeracy through, for example, drawing ladybirds and then counting how many spots they put on their wings. Their numeracy skills are further embedded when counting money during role play in the shopping area. Staff use a variety of resources in the classroom and the outdoor play area. They ask challenging questions and model the use of appropriate subject-specific vocabulary. As a result, children acquire effective speaking and listening skills and their overall attainment by the end of Reception ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.
20. Teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of their subject matter and use a range of effective teaching methods and activities to ensure pupils are able to extend their knowledge and understanding, according to their age and needs. Teaching is typically very well planned by teachers who take account of pupils' prior learning and adapt tasks and questions so that all pupils are challenged. Teachers provide suitable support and encouragement for pupils when asking them to provide explanations for their answers, such as through the use of carefully structured questioning and an expectation that pupils will use appropriate, subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers make use of different strategies to engage and stimulate pupils' interest effectively, including by utilising the classroom setting itself to contribute to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are interested in their work and understand that learning is a continuous process which requires the application of thought and effort. They are confident, fluent speakers, able to explain their ideas and give their views using mature and relevant vocabulary. Pupils make good progress and achieve considerable success in scholarship assessments and entry examinations to selective secondary schools.
21. Leaders track pupils' progress using a suitable assessment framework which includes standardised assessments, teacher observations and the marking of pupils' work, alongside termly tests in English and mathematics. The information gathered about different individual pupils and groups of pupils is analysed carefully and used to inform future planning and curriculum development.
22. Teachers provide pupils with helpful verbal and written feedback which supports pupils to move to the next stage in their learning. Pupils respond to their teachers' observations by redrafting and adapting their work to improve. The support and guidance provided by teachers helps motivate pupils and support them to make good progress.
23. Leaders identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) based on information from their previous school or early assessment by their teachers. Leaders analyse assessment data for these pupils and use this information to develop individual action plans to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who have SEND benefit from specific support for mathematics, reading, writing

and spelling and speech and language development, as well as one-to-one and small-group teaching, which enables them to make good progress from their starting points.

24. Leaders track the progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), along with that of their peers. They receive individual support from teaching assistants and benefit from the provision of word banks to provide them with vocabulary specific to particular subjects. This support enables these pupils to make good progress in line with their classmates.
25. Leaders provide a broad range of extra-curricular activities which are available early in the morning, during lunchtime and after school, including, for example, sports, robotics and chess. Through enthusiastic participation in these activities, pupils acquire new interests and develop additional physical and intellectual skills in the areas in which they participate.

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

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

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

27. Leaders successfully maintain a nurturing environment and ensure that the school's core values are embedded in the activities that take place, both inside and outside the classroom. These values underpin pupils' conduct and contribute to the warm, welcoming environment at the school. Pupils respect each other and there is mutual respect between adults and pupils. Pupils are taught that they have rights and responsibilities. Through discussion and debate, pupils learn that respect for important values such as tolerance and individual liberty is essential in school and wider society.
28. Adults consistently and successfully act to build pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence and support their emotional wellbeing in a variety of different ways. Leaders provide a noticeboard in reception which celebrates successes that pupils have achieved outside school in activities such as music, sport and drama. Pupils conduct research on topics of special interest to them and give talks about their findings to their peers. In assemblies, leaders praise pupils for sharing their views and present awards to pupils who have been especially successful in manifesting the school's core values. When pupils have any concerns or worries, they receive prompt and effective support from trusted adults in the school, including a trained counsellor.
29. Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' conduct, and their consistent application of the school rules results in pupils exhibiting typically courteous behaviour. Pupils learn to move calmly around the school and when walking between the different sites. Leaders take account of the needs of pupils who have SEND when supporting those involved in behavioural incidents and collaborate with parents to draw up individual behaviour plans when required. Staff help pupils to reflect on their behaviour, apologise to anyone they have upset and understand how to avoid such conduct in future.
30. Leaders deploy staff effectively to ensure pupils are appropriately supervised. They maintain the required adult-to-child ratios in early years. Adults provide suitable support for pupils as they move between classrooms and the school's different sites. Appropriate numbers of staff are present to help pupils during play times, sports and extra-curricular activities.
31. Leaders enable pupils to develop an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils benefit from reflection time in assemblies, appreciation of art, music and literature, and extra-curricular yoga and tai chi. They learn about the major belief systems through religious studies lessons and visit different places of worship in the locality. Spiritual knowledge and understanding are further developed by visits from local religious leaders who talk to the pupils about their philosophies and answer their questions.
32. Leaders provide appropriate training to enable staff to teach a well-planned relationships and sex education (RSE) programme successfully. This programme meets the requirements of current statutory guidance and covers key topics, such as consent, physical changes and respect for others, which pupils learn about in an age-appropriate way. Leaders consult parents about the programme so that they can ask questions and share any perspectives that they might have.
33. An effective PSHE education syllabus taught by suitably trained teachers enables pupils to learn how to manage their emotions, build friendships and develop resilience. Pupils learn how to work collaboratively with others and develop greater self-awareness and self-confidence. Adults support

pupils in understanding the importance of healthy eating, rest and exercise in maintaining their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

34. Children in the early years develop their physical skills effectively through participation in effectively planned activities. Creative activities involving writing and painting, playing with wheelbarrows and lessons in the forest area develop children's co-ordination and physical strength and enhance teamwork. In physical education (PE) lessons, children practice running and jumping, and staff teach them ball-handling skills. Children learn about oral health and staff teach them how to brush their teeth correctly.
35. Older pupils successfully develop their co-ordination, athletic, dance and gymnastic skills and their sports abilities through PE and games lessons. They learn the key elements of rugby, football, hockey and cricket, and effective teaching ensures their understanding of relevant tactics and teamwork.
36. Leaders maintain admission and attendance registers in line with current statutory guidance. The school attendance champion monitors and evaluates attendance data and takes appropriate action in response to any sustained or otherwise troubling absenteeism. Leaders provide the local authority with timely information regarding pupils who join or leave the school outside normal transition points.
37. Leaders ensure there is suitable accommodation to provide for pupils' medical needs. Any medicines are stored securely and qualified staff trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid, support pupils who are injured or unwell. Comprehensive accident records are maintained and leaders identify and monitor any trends and take appropriate action.
38. Leaders ensure that the physical wellbeing of pupils is promoted through effective management of health and safety and fire safety, supported by external audits. Regular fire evacuation drills ensure that pupils know how to respond appropriately to an emergency. Leaders implement regular checks and maintenance to ensure the premises and accommodation are suitable for pupils' use and that all regulatory requirements relating to health and safety and fire safety are met.

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

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

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

40. Through assemblies, form periods and PSHE education lessons, staff teach pupils to understand and respect others and value their particular attributes, backgrounds and characteristics. They learn about human rights and the key values upon which democracy is founded. Staff support pupils in understanding why it is important to reject prejudice and discrimination. Adults consistently model tolerant, respectful behaviour.
41. Pupils learn about democracy and the role of Parliament in PSHE education lessons. They learn to take part in the democratic process in school by electing those who represent their forms on the school council and share with teachers in the election of the head male and female pupils. Through these roles, pupils also gain valuable leadership experience.
42. The values of fairness and tolerance are inculcated so that pupils are prepared effectively to play positive roles in British society. In PSHE education lessons, assemblies and form periods, pupils deepen their understanding of right and wrong and debate issues of crime and punishment. However, their understanding of how the law is made and applied is not so well developed.
43. Early years staff speak clearly and calmly to children and listen intently, thereby modelling key social skills which children learn successfully. As a result, children interact with each other and with adults confidently, co-operate effectively to complete tasks in class and play enthusiastically during breaktimes. Through consistent behaviour management, staff support children effectively in learning to share and resolve their differences and develop their understanding of right and wrong.
44. Pupils learn how they can contribute to the local community. Early years children sing regularly at the local care home and the school choir performs at different venues throughout the year. Older pupils share craft activities at residential care homes and Year 6 community champions organise activities to raise funds to provide Christmas gifts for a local authority charity. Pupils also take part in litter picking in the local park and streets. Pupils learn about key public services such as the police and national health service.
45. Leaders provide pupils with a comprehensive programme of financial and economic education. Children in the early years learn how to use coins in the role-play fruit and vegetable shop. Staff teach pupils how to use model credit cards and give them experience of 'tap and go' with toy mobile phones. Money is introduced as an element of the mathematics curriculum and pupils learn about tax, pay slips and saving in PSHE education lessons. Older pupils take part in an enterprise project in which they are each given a small sum of money and work in groups on charitable fundraising projects with guidance from members of the local business community.
46. Pupils learn about the different careers that they might pursue in adult society. Staff provide effective careers education through the PSHE education programme, which is supplemented by a careers fair for Year 6 pupils. This focuses on science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers, and pupils benefit from presentations given by professionals such as deep-sea engineers and robotics specialists. Leaders also provide pupils with opportunities to explore careers in other areas such as journalism and medicine.

47. Leaders ensure pupils are well supported in preparing for the next stage in their education. Younger pupils have a moving-up day towards the end of the academic year, during which they visit their classroom for the following year and meet their new form teacher. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from specific preparation for their examinations for senior school entry.

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

48. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

49. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is managed effectively. The safeguarding policy meets current statutory requirements and is available to parents on the school's website. Safeguarding leaders are appropriately trained for their role and ensure that all adults working at the school receive suitable safeguarding training, including at induction. Staff receive regular training updates and briefings about any concerns so that they have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding matters. As a result, staff are confident in their management of any safeguarding concerns.
50. The safeguarding team maintains effective links with a range of external agencies, including children's services and the local authority. Any required referrals are made to these agencies in a timely manner. Leaders keep detailed and appropriate records of any referrals and of any safeguarding concerns and the school's responses to these.
51. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to stay safe online. They learn about online safety in computing lessons and their wellbeing is supported by effective filtering and monitoring of the school's internet. Leaders respond promptly to any potentially inappropriate use of the internet. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to stay safe when using the roads as pedestrians and when travelling on public transport.
52. Appropriately trained leaders implement safer recruitment procedures effectively. They ensure that all mandatory pre-employment checks are completed satisfactorily before any adult begins working at the school. Leaders maintain a suitable single central record of appointments (SCR), which accurately records the checks that have been carried out.
53. Governors undertake annual safeguarding training which supports them in maintaining effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. The governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding visits regularly to check that adults working at the school have appropriate knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They also interview pupils and staff and ensure that all documentation, including the SCR and staff personnel files, is properly maintained. Leaders provide the governing body with termly safeguarding reports. Governors conduct an annual review of safeguarding arrangements, including an online safety audit. Leaders revise the safeguarding policy each year in accordance with statutory guidance, and this is formally approved by the governing body.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Newcastle Preparatory School
Department for Education number	391/6003
Registered charity number	528152
Address	Newcastle Preparatory School 6 Eslington Road Jesmond Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tyne and Wear NE2 4RH
Phone number	01912 811769
Email address	office@newcastleprep.co.uk
Website	http://www.newcastleprepschool.org.uk
Proprietor	Newcastle Preparatory School Trust
Chair	Mrs Susan Blair
Headteacher	Miss Gemma Strong
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	267
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2022

Information about the school

55. Newcastle Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school located in the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The school is overseen by a board of governors.
56. There are 78 children in the early years comprising one Nursery and three Reception classes.
57. The school has identified 34 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
58. The school has identified English as an additional language (EAL) for 24 pupils.
59. The school states its aim is to provide an inspiring environment in which pupils can grow in confidence and self-esteem and experience success. It intends for pupils to experience a broad curriculum and relish a challenge.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

1 to 3 April 2025

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

61. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with governors
- discussions with the headteacher, 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net