

School inspection report

16 to 18 June 2026

Prince's Mead School

Worthy Park House

Kings Worthy

Winchester

SO21 1AN

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 make sure that leaders have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Governors provide effective oversight and hold leaders accountable for the school's work.
2. Leaders and governors work effectively together to promote and prioritise pupils' wellbeing in line with the school's 'crown values' of kindness, curiosity, respect, ambition and courage. Leaders regularly reflect on how they can affect improvements to the experience of pupils. They solicit the views of pupils, staff and parents when evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and to help inform school development plans. They ensure that the Standards are met consistently.
3. Pupils make good progress due to the coherence and quality of the curriculum and the expertise of well-trained teaching staff. Pupils experience teaching that deepens their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers' encouragement and positive relationships with pupils engender an enthusiasm to learn. However, teachers do not consistently apply strategies in lessons to support the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
4. Early Years leaders promote a welcoming learning environment in which children can develop and thrive. Staff know children well and tailor learning to the needs of individuals, providing opportunities to enhance learning with activities that reflect children's interests and encourage them to think for themselves. Children, in consequence, are well prepared to transition into Year 1.
5. Pupils' emotional and mental wellbeing, and physical health are well supported. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned and executed. It enables pupils to understand important topics, such as how to promote their own wellbeing and how to sustain healthy, respectful relationships. The premises include suitable facilities for pupils, including for medical care when required. First aid is administered promptly and effectively. Pupils are appropriately supervised both when on and off site. Appropriately trained staff typically implement the school's health, safety and fire arrangements rigorously. However, on occasions, established procedures are not implemented consistently by staff, resulting in minor lapses in practice.
6. Through the curriculum, pupils are taught about the diversity in British society and the importance of respect and understanding towards people from different backgrounds. Leaders successfully encourage pupils to contribute towards the lives of others, both within and beyond the school community. Pupils understand the importance of distinguishing right from wrong choices and taking responsibility for their actions.
7. Leaders ensure the school's safeguarding and associated policies are rigorously implemented. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained and ensure staff are kept up to date with current safeguarding requirements. Those with designated safeguarding responsibility access timely advice from relevant external agencies when required.

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 understand and implement the agreed classroom strategies for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that support is consistently matched to their individual needs in all lessons.
- ensure that staff implement the school's health and safety procedures consistently so that the school's risk management arrangements operate as effectively as intended.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Leaders promote a clear vision for the school that is underpinned by its crown values of courage, curiosity, ambition, kindness and respect. These values are embedded consistently in the school's culture and are reflected in leaders' decision-making, the curriculum and pupils' daily experiences. Leaders and staff model the behaviours and attitudes they expect of pupils, creating a caring and respectful community in which pupils' wellbeing is prioritised.
9. Effective self-evaluation is integral to leaders' approach to strategic development. Leaders seek the views of pupils, parents and staff through forums and surveys which are used to shape the development plan. Pupils' views are regularly solicited both through elected bodies, such as school council, the food committee and eco-council, and in other circumstances, such as when houses vote for which charities to support. As a result, development planning is well informed and responsive to the needs of the school community.
10. Governors and leaders ensure that the Standards are met consistently. Skilled and knowledgeable governors provide rigorous support and challenge to leaders. Leaders and staff regularly undergo professional development reviews to enable them to perform their duties effectively. Governors and leaders have managed the transition to the new proprietorship effectively, ensuring that the school's policies, procedures and governance arrangements continue to meet the Standards.
11. Leaders provide effective oversight of the early years provision. They ensure that suitably qualified staff are deployed effectively and receive appropriate induction, supervision and professional development to maintain consistently high-quality practice. Leaders organise the learning environment and resources thoughtfully to support children's learning and development.
12. Leaders have appropriate risk management arrangements in place to promote pupils' safety on and off site. Staff receive suitable training to identify and manage risks, including when planning educational visits and residential trips. Most staff implement the school's risk management procedures appropriately and effectively. However, on occasion, these procedures are not implemented consistently, resulting in minor lapses in practice.
13. Leaders provide parents and external agencies with the information required. Parents receive the required information through the school's website, regular communications and reports on their children's progress. Leaders provide the local authority with the required information for pupils with education, health and care plans (EHC plans), including information relating to their provision and associated funding, and notify the authority when pupils join or leave at non-standard transition points. Leaders maintain effective links with external agencies, such as safeguarding partners. They seek such agencies' advice to help support pupils' safety, welfare and educational progress.
14. The school has an effective complaints policy, which is implemented rigorously. Leaders monitor complaints and emerging concerns carefully and maintain thorough records, including the actions taken to resolve issues. Leaders' open and effective communication with parents enables many concerns to be addressed promptly before they become formal complaints. For example, staff in the early years use an online communication tool effectively to foster an open, constructive relationship with parents and carers. Leaders take account of parents' views and concerns through forums and questionnaires. They are readily available to parents at the beginning and end of the school day, fostering open and constructive relationships.

15. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders implement an effective accessibility plan to ensure access to the school's premises, curriculum and information for pupils and others. For example, access slopes and a lift enable pupils and visitors to access all areas of the school.

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. The school provides a suitable and coherent curriculum that includes all the required areas of learning. Detailed curriculum planning supports continuity and progression in pupils' learning and the development of linguistic, mathematical, scientific and technological knowledge, skills and understanding. Through its curriculum, leaders promote the development of pupils' skills in thinking and learning, independence, reviewing and improving, as well as their collaboration, communication and leadership skills. Schemes of work are detailed and routinely reviewed to ensure that learning provides appropriate support and challenge for pupils.
18. Teaching is effective in enabling pupils to learn well. Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and know them well, enabling them to provide appropriate support and challenge. Lessons are characterised by a range of effective teaching approaches that embed pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to think deeply, explain and justify their ideas, and apply intellectual, physical and creative effort.
19. Pupils make good progress across the curriculum. They develop secure knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. Pupils collaborate effectively when learning and articulate their thinking clearly to their peers and teachers. For example, in mathematics and science, pupils apply and extend their knowledge and understanding confidently when solving mathematical problems and undertaking scientific investigations. They explain and justify the strategies they use to solve mathematical problems and deepen their scientific understanding through regular practical experimentation.
20. Teaching in the early years is effective in promoting children's learning and development. Teachers plan learning that builds on children's interests through a well-planned balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning in classrooms, outdoor areas and during regular visits to the school's woodland. Staff make effective use of the learning environment and carefully chosen resources to develop children's understanding of key foundational knowledge. For example, they provide a language-rich environment, teach phonics systematically and create regular opportunities for children to apply their phonic knowledge in early reading and writing. Teachers ensure children's readiness to transition successfully into Year 1.
21. There are effective systems for identifying pupils who have SEND at an early stage and the appropriate support strategies and interventions provided by staff. Typically, these arrangements support pupils who have SEND to make good progress overall. However, teachers do not consistently implement the agreed strategies for supporting pupils who have SEND in all lessons.
22. The school identifies the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) effectively and provides appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum. For example, teachers use strategies such as pre-teaching, visual cues and key vocabulary lists to support pupils' understanding of concepts taught in lessons. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in acquiring important linguistic skills.
23. Teachers implement an effective assessment framework which enables pupils' progress to be accurately tracked and adaptations in teaching and learning to be identified. Staff provide pupils with helpful and regular guidance and feedback. Pupils are regularly required to reflect on the work they produce to identify what has gone well and what could be improved. Pupils typically make good

progress over time. This is reflected in the quality of pupils' work, their secure acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding, and the outcomes they achieve. Year 6 pupils are well ready to transition onto secondary school with many gaining places at senior schools with selective entry requirements and with scholarships.

24. The school's broad curriculum is complemented by an extensive programme of co-curricular and enrichment opportunities, such as a rich and varied performing and visual arts curriculum and high-quality physical education programme. For instance, over half the pupils in Year 2 and above learn musical instruments or take singing lessons. They perform regularly in a range of musical ensembles. Pupils participate in a wide variety of sports clubs and regularly have opportunities to represent the school in fixtures. Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide range of educational visits, residential field trips, guest speakers and special events.

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

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

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

26. The school's values of courage, curiosity, ambition, kindness and respect are embedded throughout school life. For example, leaders regularly promote the importance of kindness and respect which pupils typically model towards each other. This includes in the early years where kind and thoughtful attitudes consistently shown towards children by staff help create a calm and purposeful atmosphere. As a result, pupils develop high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence.
27. Pupils develop their spiritual understanding through opportunities to reflect on different beliefs, values and the natural world. For example, pupils learn about a range of world religions and different spiritual and moral perspectives and practices. Leaders encourage pupils' appreciation of the natural world through regular activities in local woodland and opportunities to promote positive environmental practices.
28. The school's PSHE curriculum is well planned and well delivered. PSHE lessons help pupils to gain a well-developed understanding of different facets of an individual's identity and guide them in valuing diversity. The PSHE curriculum engages pupils with a variety of appropriate themes, such as the impact of discrimination and the meaning of British values.
29. Leaders ensure that pupils access a relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Through this curriculum, pupils gain a well-developed understanding of the importance of respecting their own and others' boundaries and how to sustain positive friendships. Parents are consulted regularly about the RSE topics pupils are taught.
30. Leaders and staff implement effective behaviour management and anti-bullying strategies and policies. Staff model positive social behaviours which pupils seek to emulate. A suitable anti-bullying strategy is in place. Leaders' success in promoting positive relationships between pupils means that incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are rare. Staff respond promptly and effectively when incidents do occur. As a result, pupils are respectful, kind and conduct themselves well. For instance, children in the early years consistently demonstrate high levels of self-regulation when eating their lunch together.
31. Pupils' positive emotional wellbeing is promoted effectively across the school. This starts in the early years, where staff help children to recognise and manage their emotions, supporting them to develop increasing self-regulation and emotional resilience by providing a variety of supportive activities such as 'matey Mondays' and 'friendship Fridays'. When needed, leaders seek specialist external expertise to support pupils more complex needs. Staff respond to pupils' mental health needs promptly and effectively, which contributes towards pupils' high levels of emotional wellbeing.
32. The school's well-planned physical education curriculum supports pupils' physical development effectively. Pupils have opportunities to develop their physical skills and fitness. For example, pupils regularly participate in sporting activities in lessons and clubs such as dance, fencing and karate. Pupils are also taught the wider ways in which to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. For example, pupils are taught to understand the benefits of healthy food choices. Effective guidance is given to children in the early years about the importance of dental hygiene. Leaders regularly promote the benefits of quality sleep on pupils' physical and mental health.

33. Medical accommodation is appropriate and arrangements are effective. First aid is administered promptly by well-qualified staff. The health and safety policy, including fire safety, is effectively implemented. For instance, regular fire drills are undertaken, exit routes and fire safety equipment are appropriately signposted and fire safety equipment is well maintained. Typically, the school's premises are maintained to a high standard. Pupils are well supervised. However, on occasion, staff do not implement the school's health and safety procedures consistently as leaders intend. This leads to minor lapses in the implementation of the school's health and safety arrangements.
34. The school arrangements for attendance and admission registers are in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders effectively promote high levels of pupil attendance. Leaders inform the local authority of any pupils who leave or join the school at non-standard transition times.

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

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

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

36. Staff are effective in promoting British values such as democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty through the PSHE curriculum and assemblies programme. Pupils develop their understanding of these values in a range of practical ways. For example, pupils enact democratic processes when voting their peers onto pupil forums and when discussing and voting on initiatives in meetings. The curriculum introduces pupils to different political parties and a range of political viewpoints, which staff present in a balanced and impartial manner.
37. Well-managed debates on moral and ethical issues, such as whether families should buy petrol or electric cars and whether it is right to control another person's choices, help pupils develop critical thinking skills and make informed decisions. Pupils are taught the reasons why Britain has laws designed to govern and protect society. They also learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour and the consequences when laws are broken. Right and wrong choices are discussed when pupils formulate class positive behaviour charters.
38. Pupils develop an understanding of diversity and learn to respect people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs. For example, pupils learn to respect and appreciate those with different cultures. Pupils' understanding of different beliefs is deepened in lessons through studies of a range of religions and cultures and during visits to the school by representatives of several major world religions.
39. Pupils are well prepared for each stage of transition as they move through the school. For example, those new to the school settle quickly due to the care and attention they receive from school buddies. Children's transition from Reception into Year 1 is well supported through regular contact with Year 1 teachers during their Reception year. Older pupils in Year 6 are equally well supported in preparing for senior school through a structured transition programme that develops their confidence, independence and readiness for the next stage of their education.
40. Pupils develop their economic understanding through a range of well-planned lessons. For instance, children in the early years acquire an understanding of the place of money when purchasing items during role play. Pupils of all ages enhance this understanding through participation in special events. For example, pupils in Year 6 engage in enterprise activities where they prepare a budget and calculate profit and loss when selling products at the school's annual 'enterprise fayre'.
41. Pupils have a variety of opportunities to take on positions of responsibility and support others. Children in the early years are proud to take on the role of servers at lunch. All pupils in Year 6 undertake a range of positions of responsibility, including by supporting younger pupils as playground activity leaders (PALs).
42. Pupils develop their understanding of how they can contribute positively towards the lives of others in wider society. For example, younger children regularly maintain flower beds in a local church yard. Older pupils raise considerable sums of money in support of a range of charities and sing to residents in a local care home.
43. Children in the early years develop an appropriate understanding of people in the local community who have roles that support others, such as firemen and doctors. Older pupils learn about the

institutions and people who serve British communities, such as the air ambulance and paramedics. They also gain early insights into a range of different career options through visits by representatives of a range of different professions, including architects, dermatologists and entrepreneurs.

44. Children in the early years are well supported to develop appropriate social skills. Staff support children in developing positive social skills through clear expectations, sensitive guidance and well-planned opportunities to play and learn together. As a result, children co-operate well, take turns, share resources and build positive relationships with adults and their peers.

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

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

Safeguarding

46. Leaders put in place suitable safeguarding policies and procedures in line with current statutory requirements. They foster an effective culture within the school where everyone recognises their responsibility towards the safeguarding of pupils. Leaders and governors are proactive and rigorous in their monitoring of safeguarding. They check on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in a range of ways, including through regular audits.
47. Safeguarding leaders are appropriately trained. The safeguarding team provides suitable training and regular updates for all staff, including in the dangers of radicalisation or extremism. Staff new to the school receive rigorous and appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction. As a result, staff are vigilant to signs of concern. They record and report their concerns appropriately, including low-level concerns about adults working with pupils. They have a thorough understanding of whistleblowing procedures.
48. The safeguarding team maintains effective working partnerships with external agencies including safeguarding partners and the local authority. Leaders ensure that records are kept stored securely and appropriately. They are rigorous in ensuring that any safeguarding information is shared appropriately with relevant agencies when needed, including pupils' next schools.
49. Pupils understand how to share any concerns they might have about their wellbeing, or that of other pupils. Pupils trust staff to help them and are confident in the action that staff take to keep them safe. In PSHE lessons, assemblies and special events, the school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders and staff address emerging safeguarding issues and topics that are relevant to pupils' needs.
50. Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to prevent pupils from accessing harmful or inappropriate online or digital content. These systems are regularly tested by safeguarding leaders. Any concerns are promptly investigated and dealt with effectively. Incidents are well recorded, including details of any actions taken.
51. The single central record of appointments (SCR) contains accurate details of all necessary recruitment checks carried out before staff, volunteers or governors join the school. The SCR is regularly reviewed by leaders to ensure its accuracy and to ensure that all required pre-employment checks are undertaken on staff before they join the school. Leaders undertake suitable safer recruitment training.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Prince's Mead School
Department for Education number	850/6002
Registered charity number	1088030
Address	Prince's Mead School Worthy Park House Kings Worthy Winchester Hampshire SO21 1AN
Phone number	01962 888000
Email address	info@princesmeadschool.org.uk
Website	www.princesmeadschool.org.uk
Proprietor	King Edward VI School Southampton
Chair	Mr Geraint Davies
Headteacher	Mr Adam King
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	233
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 May 2023

Information about the school

53. Prince's Mead is an independent, co-educational day school located on the edge of Winchester. The school is a registered charity where trustees take on roles on the board of governors. At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor of the school was Prince's Mead School Trust. On 1 September 2025 the King Edward VI School, Southampton became the proprietor body of the school. As a result, the chair of the proprietor body of King Edward VI School Southampton assumed responsibility for governing Prince's Mead School. The school comprises two departments: pre-prep, for pupils aged three to seven years old; and prep, for pupils aged seven to eleven years old.
54. The school applied to the DfE to make a material change to the school's registration to increase the numbers of pupils on the school roll, from 300 to 330 pupils. Inspectors conducted an inspection at the request of the DfE in March 2024. Inspectors recommended that the material change be approved.
55. There are 40 children in the early years comprising one Nursery class and two Reception classes.
56. The school has identified 52 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
57. Eighteen pupils in the school speak English as an additional language.
58. The school states its aims are to prepare pupils academically, socially, physically, digitally and emotionally for their future lives. It seeks to enable every child to flourish in a stimulating and nurturing environment that encourages a life-long love of learning, intellectual curiosity, ambition and courage. The school further aims to create responsible citizens who value mutual respect and embrace life with happiness, confidence and resilience.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

16 to 18 June 2026

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

60. 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.

61. 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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