



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Prince's Mead School

May 2023

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School's Details

School	Prince's Mead School			
DfE number	850/6002			
Registered charity number	288675			
Address	Prince's Mead School Worthy Park House Kings Worthy Winchester Hampshire SO21 1AN			
Telephone number	01962 888000			
Email address	info@princesmeadschool.org.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Adam King			
Chair of governors	Mrs Mel Renwick			
Proprietor	Prince's Mead School Trust			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	296			
	EYFS	62	Juniors	234
Inspection dates	10 to 12 May 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Prince's Mead School is a co-educational independent day school on the edge of Winchester. The school is a charitable trust under the direction of a board of governors. The school comprises two departments: pre-prep, for pupils aged 3 to 7 years and prep, for those aged 8 to 11. From Year 2, pupils are housed in a Georgian house set within its own grounds. A converted coach house accommodates pupils in Reception, Year 1 and the Nursery, which was established in 2020. The current headmaster was appointed in September 2022.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims 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.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds and most live within a 15-mile radius of the school. Data from tests indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared to pupils taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 65 pupils as having special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including dyslexia and dyspraxia. Of these pupils, 35 receive additional specialist help. Three pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school provides differentiated challenges for the more able pupils within lessons.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils are highly effective and eloquent speakers; they demonstrate outstanding communication skills.
- Pupils confidently analyse, hypothesise and synthesise information, demonstrating an excellent range of study skills for their age.
- Pupils attain high standards in mathematics and English and hence are successful in their applications to senior schools.
- Pupils are highly motivated and show excellent attitudes; but opportunities to apply their learning independently can be limited by over-directed teaching.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Throughout the school, pupils' moral and social development are excellent; they are mutually supportive of each other.
- Pupils develop mature levels of spiritual understanding with strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
- Pupils are proactive in making excellent contributions to their own school community and wider society.
- Pupils are highly aware of how to keep fit, healthy and safe, including when online.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Widen pupils' opportunities to develop independence and leadership in their learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils acquire excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. This is strongly supported by the school's aim for pupils to foster an intellectual curiosity and a lifelong love of learning. In the EYFS, pupils establish firm foundations in learning and quickly master early literacy and numeracy skills through effective multisensory teaching. Pupils become competent linguists. Pupils in Year 6 capably used a wide range of French vocabulary and ensured that both masculine and

feminine nouns, along with plurals, were supported by appropriate adjectives. Scientific skills evolve quickly as pupils successfully plan tests and carefully consider the results. Pupils appreciate the styles of different artists' work and develop a wide range of creative skills. For example, Pupils in Year 2 understood how to create the illusion of depth in pictures of a tree-lined path while exploring Van Gogh's use of one point perspective. Pupils' performance skills are outstanding, as evidenced in the Year 6 production of *Shrek, the Musical* and in the dynamic instrumental playing in assembly. In their questionnaire responses all pupils said that their teachers are supportive and know how to help them learn. Pupils feel encouraged to achieve their best while enjoying their school days.

- 3.6 Pupils of all abilities make fast progress from their individual starting points and achieve high academic standards. Children in the EYFS make rapid progress as a result of a happy learning environment that both inspires and recognises individual needs and potential. Most meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. In standardised tests for English and mathematics, most pupils attain above the national average for pupils taking similar assessments. The strengths and weaknesses of pupils are identified through systematic and effective analysis of assessments by senior leaders. This enables those who are having academic difficulties to be suitably supported and those who are more able to be challenged further. In response to the questionnaire, a very large majority of parents stated that their child's educational needs are met effectively. Pupils are highly successful in entrance assessments to senior schools with competitive entrance criteria. A significant number gain scholarships for their academic ability or talents in the arts or sport. School leaders and governors contribute strongly to the success of pupils by supporting an ethos that promotes academic and personal development by encouraging enjoyment and a love of learning.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate outstanding communication skills, which they confidently apply in their learning. From the EYFS, pupils listen carefully to each other and take turns to speak and listen. The youngest pupils demonstrated mature vocabulary and syntax as they excitedly discussed which woodland sticks and leaves would make the best minibeasts. They progress quickly in acquiring phonics skills and apply them to writing simple sentences. Pupils rapidly become confident readers and writers. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically discussed their ideas for stories employing interesting adjectives, adverbs and alliteration in response to a picture book. Pupils demonstrate excellent comprehension of a range of texts. For example, pupils in Year 6 read between the lines to understand the feelings of characters in *Oranges In No Man's Land* by Elizabeth Laird. They successfully identified the overarching concepts of change and acceptance in *Goodnight Mr Tom*. Notes displayed in the library reflect pupils' passion for reading. Pupils write successfully for a range of purposes in a fluent, cursive script using an increasing range of literary devices. Pupils in Year 3 employed mouth-watering persuasive phrases to advertise a Wonka chocolate bar. In their Ships' Log diary entries pupils in Year 4 included imaginative adjectives such as, 'The glittering, gleaming moon hangs in the dazzling night sky.' Pupils are extremely articulate orally, benefitting from numerous opportunities to speak in public.
- 3.8 Pupils are competent in using and applying information and communication technology (ICT) for design, research, informative presentations and film-making. They employ a variety of programs to enhance the learning of core skills and as a learning tool in some curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 1 used four styles of graphs to accurately record temperatures following a series of weather observations. Pupils in Year 2 understood that a QR code enables them to access information as they researched the habitat of a leafcutter ant. Older pupils use digital devices to effectively evaluate performance in sports and create effective spreadsheets.
- 3.9 Pupils' numeracy skills are extremely strong and successfully applied to other areas of learning. Pupils spoke of how they confidently use mathematical skills in geography when undertaking surveys and in science for reading scales. Older pupils studying *A Midsummers Night's Dream* confidently employed a Venn diagram to identify different traits of three characters. From the earliest years, pupils develop confident arithmetical fluency and secure knowledge and skills through engaging activities. Pupils make excellent progress as a result of well-planned lessons, with effective support and challenge. They are self-assured when explaining their mathematical thinking and enjoy problem-solving. Pupils in

Year 3 enthusiastically built towers of cubes and quickly worked out the fraction of each one taken up by different colours, accurately using mathematical language such as numerator and denominator. To investigate the relationship between area and perimeter of shapes, Year 5 pupils expertly used visual clues, times tables knowledge and explored finding a formula to negate the need for counting squares.

- 3.10 Pupils develop an excellent level and range of study skills. This reflects the commitment of staff, school leaders and governors to developing the skills of independence, collaboration, leadership, reviewing, improving and communication. Pupils confidently analyse and hypothesise in many lessons. Pupils in Year 1 worked systematically to solve grouping and sharing problems, using a number between 20 and 30. Pupils in Year 5 understood which areas of the UK have most rainfall and which offer the best conditions for crops and farm animals by comparing a relief map of the UK with a rainfall map. Pupils show initiative and take leadership in their learning guided by open-ended questions from their teachers. In studying the effect of mass industrialisation in Victorian times, Year 5 pupils considered several sources of information, concluding that dependence on coal, through use of electricity, still affects the planet today. While investigating how the distance and angle of a light source from an object affects the size of a shadow, pupils in Year 6 considered and tested their hypothesis in different ways.
- 3.11 Pupils are successful in a wide range of activities, supported by the school's encouragement for everyone to take part. Teams are highly successful in their fixtures against other schools in a range of sports including rugby, football, netball and cricket. Several teams celebrate unbeaten seasons. High levels of success are also achieved in regional and national tournaments. Pupils have been selected for county and national squads. A large number of pupils enter LAMDA examinations with the majority achieving distinctions. Those who work towards graded music examinations are also successful. The Chamber Choir reached the semi-final of the BBC *Songs of Praise Competition*.
- 3.12 From their first days in the school pupils show excellent attitudes towards their studies and high levels of motivation in all areas. Children in the EYFS show early independence and initiative as they select and explore the many resources and activities available to them. They thrive on working independently as well as collaboratively on their journey of discovery, inspired by engaging tasks and ambience of their surroundings. Pupils quickly settle down to tasks, encouraged by the positive relationships with their teachers who understand their individual needs well. In the many lessons where teaching encourages pupils to explore for themselves, pose questions and persevere, independence of thought and leadership in their learning progresses at a fast pace. When there is over-direction, such progress is slower. Older pupils use a range of resources to inform and enhance their learning and employ their mature communication skills to discuss and explain their thinking and reasoning. Pupils know that mistakes provide opportunities to improve and are confident in being able to fix errors and to learn from them.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils of all ages show high levels of self-knowledge, self-confidence, determination and resilience for their age. In discussions, pupils expressed confidence in their own abilities and talents, feeling happy to be themselves and confident with others within the family ethos of the school. School leaders are strongly committed to enabling pupils to embrace life with happiness, confidence and resilience. Pupils expressed their confidence to take risks in their learning and play, understanding that by being prepared to have a go they enhance their independence. Pupils are confident to perform or speak to an audience, as seen in an assured performance about the Viking invasion of Lindisfarne presented by Year 4 pupils in assembly. Governors have supported the school in successfully implementing a PSHE and RSE programme that enhances the all-round development of pupils throughout the school. Pupils are self-reflective, have an objective awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and look forward

to the future. In their questionnaire responses pupils and parents strongly stated that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- 3.15 Pupils are confident decision-makers. They understand that by deciding to persevere they will achieve their best and by behaving well they will enjoy school. Pupils make informed and well-considered decisions. Children in the Nursery make independent choices from the wide range of accessible resources available to them. Pupils in Reception expressed delight in deciding to try something new in a phonics task. Pupils choose to explore new hobbies through extra-curricular clubs, as well as to pursue those they already enjoy. Pupils with roles of responsibility are highly effective in making decisions about which projects to take on and how to manage them. Pupils understand that decisions they make, both personal and work related, can be instrumental in determining their own future success and wellbeing.
- 3.16 Pupils develop outstanding levels of spiritual understanding. They have a strong belief that non-material aspects of life are things that make you feel happy but are free. They spoke of not having to be religious to be spiritual; it can also be looking outside and thinking 'Wow!' Pupils relish the outdoors and speak of looking up and feeling calm. At play times, they excitedly run outside into the openness of the field and woodland and greatly appreciate the ambience and beauty of the natural environment. In discussions, pupils shared the joy of growing vegetables and the sight of bees and butterflies. Consideration of different religions in religious education (RE) and listening thoughtfully to the variety of prayers said during assembly and at lunch showed pupils' strong sense of spirituality in the context of formal religion. Pupils are reflective and show great appreciation for how life can be enriched by following creative pursuits, having good self-understanding and strong friendships.
- 3.17 Pupils show a mature level of moral understanding. They confidently distinguish between right and wrong and understand that rules are there to help. Pupils know how to behave well and do so instinctively. They are confident and polite and show excellent manners. Pupils appreciate the high expectation of behaviour and respect within the school. They feel encouraged by the clear range of rewards and sanctions. Pupils consider they are usually able to navigate occasional friendship issues themselves and are confident to seek help when it is needed. Scrutiny of records showed that any issues are fairly and sensitively managed. In their responses, all parents said that the school actively promotes good behaviour and almost all pupils agreed that pupils are kind and respect each other. Pupils described the pupil body as being friendly, kind and supportive, reflecting the school aim to create responsible citizens who understand the value of mutual respect.
- 3.18 Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school, local and wider communities. They appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves and are active in supporting them. Pupils look forward to and enjoy the opportunities to help the local community, including taking lunch to an elderly neighbour and supporting families who have fled war. Pupils select a local charity to support each year and run additional fundraising initiatives for local and national charities. Pupils take roles of responsibility seriously as dedicated and effective members of the school council, eco committee, food committee, play leaders, prefects and librarians. Members of the eco-committee show a deep understanding of the role they play in making a difference to the school environment. They have driven a reduction in food waste and undertake litter picking. The school council carefully considers suggestions from pupils. They responsibly and successfully plan action, supported by senior leaders. Older pupils demonstrate a mature sense of responsibility and initiative and act as positive role models for others.
- 3.19 Pupils accept others for who they are and show great respect for everyone in the school. They are fully accepting of each other. Pupils develop a strong understanding of different cultures, beliefs and traditions through comprehensive RE, relationship education (RSE) and PSHE curricula, assemblies and by celebrating key religious events. Pupils in Year 2 recognised diversity of leadership when discussing the backgrounds of local and national leaders, understanding that anyone can do anything. The friendly ethos of the school and positive relationships between everyone supports this. Pupils speak passionately of why it is important to be tolerant of others who are different to them, whatever those

differences may be. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.

- 3.20 From the earliest years, pupils are very aware of how to keep healthy and safe, both physically and mentally, including when online. All pupils who responded stated that the school is a safe place to be and that it teaches them about safety. All parents agreed that the school encourages pupils to be healthy. In discussions, pupils confirmed their secure knowledge of how to eat healthily and their aim to have a rainbow-coloured plate of food for lunch. Pupils recognise the value of a balanced lifestyle in order to feel happy. They understand the need to be physically active and expressed their enjoyment of the sports available to them and daily opportunities to run and play in the school grounds. Pupils realise the benefits of talking if they have concerns or anxieties and appreciate the effective pastoral care available to them. Young pupils show in their woodland learning how they successfully and positively manage risks and use tools safely. Pupils are self-disciplined and informally assess risk in their play at break time, including how high to go on the 'big swing'.
- 3.21 Pupils' social skills are highly developed, actively encouraged by the leaders' encouragement of collaboration and communication and underpinned by the school values of kindness and respect. Strong friendships, teamwork and a sense of unity are evident across the school and the way in which pupils support each other is excellent. They are empathetic, as seen when pupils made positive and encouraging comments if someone felt disappointed at the quality of their work. Pupils work positively together in lessons, in teams and on school trips appreciating the benefits of collaboration to enhance their learning and experiences. Older pupils give effective support and friendship to younger members of the school. For example, Year 6 pupils take responsibility for looking after the outdoor play equipment and take turns to play with Nursery children. Pupils demonstrate mature levels of emotional literacy for their age. They appreciate and celebrate the success and contribution of those who achieve at high levels and spontaneously celebrate other pupils' performances by applauding and giving praise.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Penelope Austin	Reporting inspector
Mrs Amanda Kirby	Compliance team inspector (Former head, ISA school)
Mr Huw May	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)