

School inspection report

13 to 15 January 2026

Hendon Preparatory School

20 Tenterden Grove

Hendon

London

NW4 1TD

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 maintain effective oversight of the school's provision through a schedule of annual audits and regular meetings. Leaders actively promote the school's aims and are committed to self-evaluation. They collaborate with pupils, parents and staff to inform decision-making effectively. As a result, the school meets the Standards consistently.
2. Leaders provide parents with detailed and useful information through the school's website. This information includes a range of policies, including a suitable complaints procedure. However, leaders do not maintain records of complaints that consistently demonstrate adherence to the stated timeframes.
3. Leaders implement a comprehensive curriculum that enables pupils to acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. A thorough focus on literacy and numeracy supports pupils to apply these skills effectively across other subjects.
4. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use appropriate resources to meet pupils' needs. Staff use a range of assessments effectively to track progress and their feedback helps pupils to understand how to make further progress in their work. In the early years, staff use children's interests to support learning across prime and specific areas, ensuring children progress well in communication, language and physical development.
5. Leaders identify and support the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) carefully so that they make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive support that helps them to make rapid improvement in their use of English.
6. Leaders actively promote pupils' wellbeing and create an environment where pupils feel secure and able to share their feelings. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is thorough and tailored to pupils' needs. This programme reinforces the importance of kindness and healthy relationships consistently.
7. The school's health and safety arrangements are structured and effective. Leaders undertake regular maintenance checks so that the premises and accommodation remain secure and suitable. Pupils are supervised appropriately throughout the school.
8. The school prepares pupils for life in British society effectively. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to learn about democracy, the rule of law and different cultures. Pupils develop a clear grasp of economic concepts, including budgeting and profit margins. Pupils contribute to the local community positively.
9. Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders ensure that staff training includes the latest updates to the 'Prevent' duty. Pupils know how to report any concerns they may have. Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are completed for all adults. However, checks on short-term supply staff were not initially recorded on the single central record (SCR) of appointments. This oversight was rectified during the inspection.

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 they consistently record recruitment checks for supply staff on the single central record of appointments
- strengthen and refine records relating to any complaints so that the timescales followed are included.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors ensure that leaders have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They undertake annual audits of safeguarding, and health and safety. Leaders provide regular feedback at governance meetings that enable a thorough understanding of the school's provision and the opportunity to support and challenge. The school's policies are detailed and clearly written. Leaders deliver training for staff to implement these policies effectively. As a result, the Standards are met consistently.
11. Leaders actively promote the school's aims and values. They evaluate and reflect regularly on the effectiveness of the school's provision such as by analysing and monitoring pupils' academic outcomes and reviewing educational visits to inform future curriculum planning. Leaders seek the views of pupils, parents and staff through surveys and discussions and analyse these carefully. The active promotion of wellbeing is central to the ethos of the school, and leaders ensure all staff understand the role they play in supporting pupils' welfare consistently well.
12. Leaders promote an inclusive environment within the school. They implement a suitable accessibility plan which is regularly reviewed. Leaders consider the needs of those with disabilities when planning school provision. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders maintain close links with local agencies and other education and health partners. They share required financial information with local authorities regarding the annual reviews for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
13. Leaders understand the potential risks for pupils at the school and take effective actions to mitigate them. Staff undertake training to ensure that the school's approach to managing any potential risks is consistent and suitable. An annually updated whole-school 'wellness' risk assessment considers hazards and control measures to support pupils, staff and parents. Leaders consult constructively with external agencies so that school policies and procedures continue to be suitable. For example, an external health and safety consultant provides leaders with expertise and oversight. The school notifies the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.
14. Leaders in the early years provide a stimulating and nurturing environment which supports the individual needs of children. They plan an appropriate curriculum which provides an effective balance of lessons and activities. Teachers consult regularly with parents about their child's pastoral wellbeing and academic progress. Staff have appropriate knowledge and skills which they use to teach effectively. Children make good progress and are prepared well for Year 1.
15. Leaders provide a range of useful information to parents of current and prospective pupils, mainly through the school's website. Parents receive regular written reports and attend parents' evenings so that they are informed about their child's academic progress and pastoral wellbeing.
16. Leaders provide parents with a suitable complaints policy that outlines a clear procedure for them to raise any concerns. Leaders respond promptly to any concerns and take effective actions, when necessary. Leaders keep records of meetings held and actions taken relating to complaints. However, these records do not consistently identify that the published timescales for managing complaints are followed.

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. Leaders implement a comprehensive and well-structured curriculum throughout the school. The curriculum enables pupils to acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught a broad range of subjects, often by specialist teachers. This ensures that lessons are challenging and prepare them well for their chosen senior schools. Leaders monitor and evaluate the curriculum so that it continues to develop pupils' skills such as working collaboratively and using digital technology effectively.
19. Leaders provide pupils with well-planned opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils use these skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 apply their knowledge of phonics to spell words accurately when writing sentences comparing the city and the countryside in humanities lessons. Leaders with responsibility for English provide pupils with a wide range of stimulating literature that explores themes such as inclusion and cultural diversity. Pupils engage well with the books they read and develop a secure understanding of tolerance and respect. Staff teach lessons which build on pupils' prior learning and provide them with appropriate levels of challenge. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, use prior learning and thinking in mathematics when they determine how to solve two-step word problems. Older pupils with higher prior attainment receive extension work that enhances their understanding of how to calculate the area of specific shapes.
20. Leaders in the early years plan lessons that consider children's individual interests to support their learning. Leaders ensure a structured, effective and analysed assessment schedule identifies any gaps in children's understanding. Staff adapt their teaching carefully to help children to consolidate and build on their understanding. Children develop their communication and language skills through teacher-led discussions, such as when they discuss a polar bear's camouflaged fur and the wintry habitats of animals. Children in Nursery enhance their fine motor skills by using toy cars to trace the shapes of letters. In Reception, children develop their understanding of phonics and word building. For instance, they write adjectives to describe the mood of a story character. Staff introduce children to a range of numeracy skills, including through counting and sequencing games. As a result of such measures, children learn to communicate well and use language and numbers confidently.
21. Teachers plan lessons which reflect the school's aims and objectives. They demonstrate good subject knowledge and select resources to ensure pupils' needs are supported. For example, teachers use questioning strategies that deepen pupils' responses in lessons to prepare them well for senior school entrance examinations. Lessons are paced appropriately so that pupils build on prior knowledge and develop their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 2 developed their aesthetic and creative skills when creating abstract art in the style of a particular artist. Pupils respond positively to the collaborative learning environment, apply intellectual effort consistently and make good progress in their work. Pupils in Year 6 often achieve scholarships and typically gain places to their chosen senior schools.
22. Leaders identify the needs of pupils who have SEND through early assessment and regular academic and pastoral reviews. Pupils who have SEND have a full experience of the curriculum and make typically good progress over time. Progress is tracked carefully to inform adjustments to pupils' individual learning plans, when required. Teachers have a secure knowledge of each pupil so that their needs are supported individually and effectively. For example, pupils in science are encouraged

to provide detailed verbal explanations about the suitability of materials for specific functions instead of providing a written response.

23. Pupils who speak EAL are assessed carefully when they join the school. Their needs are identified and met well through the implementation of a comprehensive strategic support plan. Specific and regular literacy support is provided by staff in the school. Leaders keep attainment records that track the progress of pupils who speak EAL to evaluate the effectiveness of the support plan. These pupils make rapid and consistent progress and learn to use English competently.
24. Leaders implement an appropriate assessment framework to track and monitor pupils' progress and attainment. Assessment outcomes are analysed and discussed by staff and leaders so that pupils continue to receive effective support. Teachers use informal and formal assessments to support pupils' understanding. For example, pupils receive constructive feedback and guidance to inform them about the work they do well and the steps they need to take to make further progress. Teachers provide pupils with checklists to help them to monitor their own progress and take responsibility for completing their work.
25. Leaders implement an appropriate programme of extra-curricular activities so that pupils develop new knowledge and interests. In coding club, for example, pupils change the appearance of objects and learn programming skills to make them move on the screen. Pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in a range of academic, sporting and musical clubs. Leaders provide suitable recreational spaces and resources for pupils to use during breaktimes.

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 actively promote pupils' wellbeing. Staff know pupils well and create an environment that supports their positive mental health and emotional resilience. Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence by achieving success in their learning outcomes and through their active participation in lessons, discussions, clubs and activities. For example, pupils in religious education (RE) lessons explore the meaning of unconditional love and discuss spiritual and personal perspectives within a respectful learning environment. As a result, pupils are confident to express their feelings and viewpoints.
28. The PSHE curriculum is taught effectively and helps pupils to understand the importance of taking responsible decisions. Pupils are taught about healthy eating and how to keep themselves physically well. Leaders plan related events such as workshops with the catering team and invite athletes to visit the school to talk to pupils about training goals. The PSHE curriculum reflects the school's ethos and helps pupils to develop self-confidence and prepares them well for future experiences.
29. Leaders implement a well-planned relationships and sex education (RSE) programme that is age-appropriate and in accordance with the latest statutory guidance. The school provides regular and detailed information about the RSE curriculum to parents. Older pupils are taught topics including body image, assertiveness and consent. The RSE curriculum helps pupils to understand the importance of respectful, kind behaviour.
30. Leaders implement a detailed behaviour policy. Staff set high expectations regarding pupils' behaviour throughout the school. Pupils behave well at school. The school uses reward systems to reinforce positive and respectful behaviour. For example, pupils' responsible behaviour is recognised through verbal praise, the award of house points, achievement assemblies and an invitation to attend 'headteacher's hot chocolate'. Staff ensure that pupils spend time reflecting on any misbehaviour and adopt a restorative approach, when required, so that pupils learn from their mistakes. Leaders meet with staff regularly to monitor pupils' behaviour and check that the policy is implemented consistently.
31. An effective anti-bullying strategy actively aims to prevent and minimise bullying at the school. Staff educate pupils about the damaging consequences of any unkind behaviour through PSHE lessons, assemblies and a programme of activities during an annual anti-bullying week. Leaders keep records of bullying incidents to monitor patterns. Incidents of bullying are rare within the school and, when they arise, pupils are confident that they are dealt with effectively.
32. Teachers in the early years consistently promote the physical development of children. They provide well-considered opportunities for children to use the outdoor learning environment. For example, children explore and climb, use stepping stones to develop their balance and play ball games. A specialist sports coach works with the children in the early years to develop their gross motor skills and play active games. Teachers use circle time to focus on friendships during personal, social and emotional development. Children develop self-esteem and approach their education with confidence.
33. Leaders plan a suitable physical education (PE) curriculum throughout the school. Children in the early years participate in a yoga session each week which supports their physical development and

mindfulness. Leaders arrange swimming lessons for pupils so that they learn to swim confidently. Older pupils compete successfully in football, netball and cricket fixtures. Teachers develop pupils' sporting skills through a weekly games lesson for Years 3 to 6. Pupils improve collaboration skills and learn to play sport in a supportive and inclusive manner.

34. Leaders promote the physical and mental wellbeing of pupils through a thorough and systematic approach to health and safety. A comprehensive policy underpins daily practices. Staff receive appropriate health and safety training, undertake regular checks of their teaching areas and record accidents and near misses appropriately. Leaders carry out required checks, including weekly inspections of the school's fire safety equipment. Leaders implement a suitable fire risk assessment policy effectively. The health and safety committee conduct termly reviews so that the premises and accommodation remain suitable for pupils.
35. Leaders provide suitable first aid and medical provision across the school. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid training for those who work in the early years. The school's first aid procedures are administered, recorded and managed competently.
36. The school's admission and attendance registers are suitable and reflect current statutory guidance. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance regularly. Staff follow up and record any unexplained absences in a thorough manner. The senior attendance champion communicates with families and implements appropriate support plans when attendance falls below the school's expectations.
37. Leaders and staff supervise pupils effectively. Children in the early years are supervised by an appropriate number of staff. Staff are alert and approachable during breaktimes so that pupils can seek support, if required.

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

38. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

39. The PSHE, enrichment and mathematics curriculums support pupils' economic knowledge. Younger pupils begin to learn about the value of coins and bank notes. Leaders provide appropriate opportunities for older pupils to learn about financial responsibility when they create their own businesses, design a product and consider cost control and profit margins. Activities such as these develop pupils' economic understanding and prepare them to take responsible financial decisions.
40. Leaders implement a well-planned curriculum that supports pupils' wider understanding of society and prepares them well for life in British and global society. In geography, for instance, pupils are taught about different aspects of the global economy and the relationship between industries. In PSHE lessons, pupils explore and learn about a range of future career pathways. In enrichment lessons, pupils use well-developed digital skills to research and write presentations about entrepreneurs who support equality and the rights of all children to receive an effective education. The school invites religious leaders and parents to attend assemblies to inform pupils about different cultures and religious traditions. As a result of such measures, pupils develop a secure understanding of cultural diversity, equality and the importance of respecting others.
41. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to prepare for the next stage of their education effectively. Children in Reception are supported well so that they move to Year 1 confidently. Pupils in Year 6 are given support and guidance which helps them to approach interviews and entrance examinations for selective schools confidently.
42. Teachers in the early years support the social development of children by acting as positive role models and demonstrating kindness, tolerance and support towards others. Staff help children to understand that they should be careful with their hands and feet when sitting on the floor in collaborative activities so that they show consideration towards, and awareness of, others. Leaders provide opportunities for children to develop courtesy and patience, such as when they take turns to sing different sections of a song.
43. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn about democracy and to understand and respect different viewpoints. Pupils vote for others to assume leadership roles within the school. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to represent the views of others through their participation in the school council and respond positively to their requests. For example, they have provided a tent to offer younger pupils a quiet area to enjoy reading books. Pupils are introduced to British politics appropriately and impartially. For instance, pupils visit the Houses of Parliament to learn about the role of government and explore how laws are debated and passed.
44. Pupils are entrusted to take responsibility. Sports captains support staff, provide help at school events such as sports day and ensure play equipment is available for pupils at breaktimes. Digital prefects help younger pupils as they prepare to use digital platforms independently. Pupils learn that it is kind and supportive to provide help and service to others. For example, pupils visit a local retirement home where they sing, read poems and spend time chatting to the residents about what it was like when they were children. Leaders develop links with local charities, and pupils learn the importance of donating food and toiletry items at Harvest.

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 promote a robust and effective safeguarding culture throughout the school. The safeguarding policy is clearly written, regularly reviewed and reflects current statutory guidance. Governors analyse and discuss an annual safeguarding audit as part of their thorough oversight of the school's safeguarding procedures.
47. Leaders provide staff with thorough safeguarding training, including at induction. Training includes how to respond to low-level concerns relating to adults who work at the school. Leaders invite external safeguarding partners to provide some aspects of safeguarding training, such as the latest updates to the 'Prevent' duty so that staff remain alert to the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. Staff demonstrate a confident understanding of how to report any safeguarding concerns, including any incidents of child-on-child abuse.
48. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are trained appropriately for the role. They refer any safeguarding concerns to local safeguarding partners, when required. The safeguarding team meets regularly so that the decisions they take are carefully considered. Leaders provide vulnerable pupils with wellbeing risk assessments so that their needs are supported effectively and consistently.
49. Leaders implement a range of appropriate measures so that pupils can seek help and support, if required. For example, leaders ensure that pupils are clearly and regularly informed in assemblies and PSHE lessons about the range of adults who are available to them. Leaders provide pupils who would prefer to record their concern in writing with a communication box and an email address, which direct messages to senior leaders.
50. Pupils are taught how to use the internet securely and responsibly. The information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum teaches them about online safety, including the potential risks associated with artificial intelligence. Leaders implement a robust internet filtering and monitoring system. Alerts are quickly investigated by the safeguarding team, who take appropriate actions in response. Leaders complete an annual audit of the school's filtering and monitoring systems to assure themselves that they remain suitable.
51. Senior leaders ensure that all required checks are completed on adults before they start working at the school. These checks are recorded on a suitable SCR. However, at the start of the inspection the checks on short-term supply staff were not correctly recorded on the SCR. This oversight was rectified during the inspection.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

52. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Hendon Preparatory School
Department for Education number	302/6002
Address	Hendon Preparatory School 20 Tenterden Grove Hendon London NW4 1TD
Phone number	020 8203 7727
Email address	parents@hendonprep.co.uk
Website	www.hendonprep.co.uk
Proprietor	Blenheim Schools Group Limited
Chair	Mr Richard Power
Headteacher	Mr Matthew Foley
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	104
Date of previous inspection	24 to 26 January 2023

Information about the school

53. Hendon Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school situated in London. The school joined Blenheim Schools Group Limited in January 2026 and they provide governance and oversight. The school comprises three sections: the early years, for children in Nursery and Reception; pre-prep, for pupils in Years 1 and 2; and prep, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher in September 2024 and a new chair of governors in January 2026.
54. There are 23 children in the early years who are taught in one Nursery class and one Reception class.
55. The school has identified ten pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
56. The school has identified that 18 pupils speak English as an additional language.
57. The school states its aims are to empower personal growth, inspire through innovation and include every voice. The school aims to ignite personalised learning journeys, enabling every child to turn their strengths into excellence, their passions into achievement and their potential into success. The school endeavours to inspire learners to make outstanding progress through expert teaching and innovative digital tools so that they are prepared confidently for tomorrow's world. The school aims to celebrate diversity and nurture an inclusive school environment where every child feels secure, valued, heard and happy.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

13 to 15 January 2026

58. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The on-site inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

59. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussion with the chair of governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

60. 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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