



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Hendon Preparatory School**

**January 2023**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Hendon Preparatory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	302/6002			
<b>Address</b>	Hendon Preparatory School 20 Tenterden Grove Hendon London NW4 1TD			
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8203 7727			
<b>Email address</b>	parents@hendonprep.co.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tushi Gorasia			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cognita Schools Ltd			
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	166			
	<b>EYFS</b>	49	<b>Pre-prep</b>	43
	<b>Prep</b>	74		
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24 to 26 January 2023			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Hendon Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school. It was founded in 1873 as a school for male pupils and moved to its present location in the 1950s. The school became co-educational in 2005, with female pupils up to Year 6 and male pupils up to Year 8. In 2020 the school fully transitioned as an 11+ co-ed prep school. The school has been owned and overseen by Cognita Schools Ltd since 2004. The school comprises three sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children in Preschool and Reception; Pre-prep, for pupils in Years 1 and 2; and Prep, for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- 1.2 The current headteacher took up her position in September 2020.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to stretch and challenge pupils to achieve the best they can as individual learners. It seeks to celebrate diversity in the community and encourage passion through the enhanced curriculum. The school endeavours to ensure a sense of wellbeing through belonging, representation and inclusion in a safe and happy learning environment.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils come from professional and business families living within a 10-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 10 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional support. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 41 pupils, of whom 19 receive additional support for their English. The school has identified 20 pupils as the most able in the school's population and the curriculum is modified for them.

## 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, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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 of all ages and abilities achieve well and make excellent progress from their varied starting points.
- Pupils demonstrate an excellent attitude to learning from an early age and throughout the school.
- Pupils have outstanding communication skills; they are able to articulate, challenge and discuss their ideas whether speaking to individuals or larger groups.
- Pupils are competent in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

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

- Pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are highly developed, and they are well prepared for senior schools.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of moral awareness and successfully meet the high behavioural expectations and standards set by their teachers and leaders.
- Pupils have a high level of awareness of their safety (including cyber safety) and of their own physical and mental health.
- Pupils' respect for each other's differences and deep appreciation of the school's cultural diversity is a strength of the school.

#### Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Strengthen pupils' development of ICT skills and application of these more widely across the curriculum.

#### 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 of all ages and abilities achieve well and make excellent progress from their varied starting points, often well above the national averages. This is seen in the school's own assessments, observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work. Individual pupil progress is monitored, and any strengths and weaknesses are identified so that pupils can learn how to improve. Pupils with SEND and EAL attain very well due to the high levels of additional support. Pupils achieve highly in their



entry examinations to their chosen senior schools and regularly win scholarships. In discussion with inspectors, Year 6 pupils identified where they felt they had made progress, where they still have challenges to face and what skills they need to be successful. Teachers know their pupils and use this knowledge to good effect to ensure pupils of all abilities achieve well. The school meets its aim to stretch and challenge pupils to achieve the best they can as individual learners.

- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of skill, knowledge and understanding beyond their chronological age. In geography for example, Year 2 pupils looked at original source material about the Great Barrier Reef and showed excellent creativity in making illustrative fact sheets which they are going to read to younger pupils. In Year 6, when discussing the spelling of Spanish words, pupils demonstrated strong understanding of the different spellings of feminine and masculine words while describing villages and towns. Pupils are successful in achieving the desired outcomes, such as in Year 1 when recognising a range of musical instruments by sound alone including piano, trumpet and cello. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to use the correct technical language, as seen when pupils were using musical words confidently and in context. The development of pupils' skills across the curriculum is supported by effective teaching and appropriate curriculum planning.
- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. Pupils are confident, articulate speakers who listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are adept in choosing appropriate language to express their ideas and can articulate concepts successfully across the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 used their persuasive writing skills to ask for a charity day at the school with good effect. The school's family atmosphere and its ethos of valuing what pupils have to say, promotes the open exchange of ideas across the school and provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills effectively. Pupils across the school relish the opportunity to take part in discussions and to share their work while enjoying the freedom to express themselves. This was witnessed in their written work, during lessons, in discussions with inspectors, and in the 'Hendon's got Talent' show'.
- 3.8 Achievement in numeracy is excellent. The work in pupils' books is of a remarkably high standard and shows clear progression. Wall displays and records of learning demonstrate pupils' understanding of number concepts. Children in the EYFS, count their peers as they register, make accurate observations of the size and shape of leaves in outdoor learning and develop their numerical understanding through nursery rhymes. Year 1 pupils used prior knowledge when working with partners to solve addition and subtraction problems with counting in tens. Pupils apply their mathematical skills confidently in other areas of the curriculum, presenting data with ease in science lessons. Additional challenges are provided for more able mathematicians, and many achieve success in the competitions.
- 3.9 Pupils are competent in their use of ICT throughout the Prep department with regular use of their own laptops and online platforms. In the weekly ICT lessons, pupils develop a range of skills such as word processing, creating presentations and coding. Pupils with SEND and EAL make extensive use of the accessibility features of devices. Many pupils are able to use the laptops to help them access the curriculum for homework and accessing practice 11+ papers. Older pupils confidently apply these skills across the curriculum when researching information. This was seen in pupils' enrichment club writing about US presidents, a pupils' newspaper, and by Year 5 pupils exploring information about the Silk Road. Prep pupils confidently used ICT to create videos and audio recordings of their practice interviews at home, which were submitted via an online sharing platform for review by their peers in the class. However, the Pre-prep and EYFS have little access to devices. As a result, limited application of pupils' ICT skills was observed in the younger years.
- 3.10 Pupils have well-developed study skills and demonstrate an ability to synthesise information. For example, pupils used knowledge from a trip to the Houses of Parliament to construct their own arguments in a debate about the importance of the right to protest. Stimulating and thought-provoking tasks, such as asking Year 3 pupils to recreate some fossils and to hypothesise on the permeability of rocks, enabled pupils to think both logically and creatively. Pupils show willingness to apply their learning skills when faced with new challenges. Work matched to pupils' needs and effective written guidance about how to improve work further, provide challenge, and encourages

pupils to think independently. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their child with the collaborative and research skills they need in later life.

- 3.11 Pupils' achievements in art, music, languages and sport are excellent both in and out of school. A few parents who responded to the questionnaire felt there should be a greater range and availability of after school clubs. However most of the clubs are well supported and pupils indicate their enjoyment of the opportunity to engage, and enjoy success in a wide range of activities including art, music, problem-solving, LAMDA and sport. Pupils told the inspectors of the successes in the Barnet Borough football, netball and cricket leagues, in national competitions such as the ISA 3D art, being a runner up and in the Royal Mint writing competition. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have achieved awards in the Primary Maths Challenge.
- 3.12 Pupils in all year groups demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning in response to teaching which encourages initiative and independence. Pupils work purposefully and with enthusiasm as seen when pre-school children were making their own playdough. In discussion, pupils recognise that making mistakes is part of the learning process and extol the virtues of doing your best and trying hard. This was evidenced in a Year 5 keyboard lesson creating music collaboratively to represent an Anglo-Saxon warrior.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 As they progress through the school pupils develop excellent self-understanding. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent. Individual feedback from their teachers in lessons and in books along with regular setting and reviewing of personal targets enables pupils to be reflective and see what they need to do to improve their work. This was seen in a Year 6 science lesson when pupils were faced with the task of making a classification key and working out the best questions to ask, constantly needing to improve the questions. Pupils were very keen to show pieces of work they are most proud of to the inspectors. They are confident learners and finish Year 6 well equipped for life at secondary school.
- 3.15 Pupils display a well-developed moral understanding and a sense of right and wrong. They understand the school's golden rules and show much initiative and confidence about making choices. For instance, children in the EYFS can make their own decisions about how to spend their time, choosing from a good range of resources and quickly settling to their chosen activity. Older pupils can choose from a variety of enrichment activities on a Wednesday afternoon and have the opportunity to suggest ideas themselves such as making a pupil newspaper. During discussions pupils told inspectors that they feel through the school council they can make a positive difference such as introducing recycling bins to help save the planet, and that leaders listen to them.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of non-material aspects of life and like the support and friendliness of the close school community. They are able to articulate the importance of valuing the cultural traditions different from their own such as seen in a personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lesson when deciding whether they would have wanted to travel to the Middle East or stay in London during the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Pupils develop a deep appreciation of a range of faiths and cultures, and a strong sense of community, as they celebrate a large range of religious festivals of their peers and participate in assemblies and discussions throughout the year. These attitudes are enhanced through pupils' times of reflection at the start of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons. Their aesthetic awareness of the non-material aspects of life is most evident in the extremely high standard of artwork displayed throughout the school.
- 3.17 Pupils throughout the school are extremely polite and courteous. They treat each other and their environment with respect. Pupils spoke positively about receiving house points and demonstrated understanding that there are consequences for poor behaviour. Pupils understand the need for rules

in order to have a safe and comfortable environment for all, and behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Prefects and house captains are extremely supportive and good role models and deserve the respect they receive from younger pupils. In the questionnaire, all pupils agree with the way the school expects them to behave. Without exception they were well discipline in the corridors and held doors open for adults and each other. Leaders and staff model collaborative behaviour well.

- 3.18 Pupils' social awareness is noticeably strong. They form positive relationships both within and outside year groups. Relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, are warm and supportive. School values are reinforced through assemblies and in displays throughout the school. Pupils are quick to recognise each other's successes and offer help and encouragement when needed as seen in Year 3 English when pupils were sharing ideas about themes in a novel. Pupils' ability to work together effectively leads to much success in a range of challenges and activities, such as participation in regional competitions and inter house events. Reception children spoke encouragingly to each other when sharing words while creating their writing following the winter walk.
- 3.19 There is a strong focus on community at the school. Pupils are aware of the impact they have had on the local community and talked confidently over lunch about the fact that they enjoy opportunities to contribute to their school community. Pupils take part in a range of activities with both national and local institutions including singing in a local nursing home and taking food to a homeless centre. Their care of others was evident in discussion, as pupils expressed their appreciation of the school council obtaining more equipment for the playground and their willingness to befriend anyone in need of a playmate.
- 3.20 Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. The school has provided a strong framework of internet safety education for all pupils, including cyber safety, and this is consistently and regularly revisited and reinforced. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and the need to stay both physically and mentally healthy. For example, in discussion, pupils spoke knowledgeably about the relationship between a good diet, exercise and maintaining a healthy body. In the pupil questionnaire, almost all pupils feel the school encourages them to be healthy. Displays throughout the school and instruction given in lessons and assemblies, provide pupils with guidance on measures they should take to ensure their safety. Pupils in Year 3 knew that they needed to have a mixture of letters and numbers in their online passwords. They also discussed sensibly and with confidence why passwords should not be shared with others.
- 3.21 Pupils enjoy and benefit from the diversity of the backgrounds, cultures and faiths found within the school. An overwhelming majority of parents and nearly all pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance. The leadership and management have embedded equality, diversity and inclusion into the school's ethos which is why they won the ISA Innovation and Excellence in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion award. The pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they appreciated being accepted and welcomed into the Hendon Prep Family. They said that they appreciated opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions such as when a chief from the Guna tribe in Panama shared information about his culture and the importance of art via an internet connection.

## 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 representative of the proprietary group, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. 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 Daphne Cawthorne	Reporting inspector
Mr Oliver Chambers	Compliance team inspector (Assistant head, HMC school)
Mr Guy Barrett	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)