

School inspection report

1 to 3 April 2025

Birkenhead School

The Lodge

58 Beresford Road

Oxton

Prenton

Merseyside

CH43 2JD

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. Leaders successfully promote the delivery of the aims of the school. The core values, which include respect, responsibility, resilience and inclusivity, help staff to create a positive environment where pupils value each other's differences. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and pupils are supported and well prepared for the next phase of their education and their future lives.
2. Leaders do not ensure that the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy. For instance, several site and access risks were identified by inspectors during the inspection that had not been identified by the school. Leaders do not ensure that staff are clear about which aspects of risk management and premises maintenance they are accountable for.
3. Pupils experience a broad and appropriate curriculum. They make good progress at all stages of the school. Results at GCSE and A level are typically above national averages. Teachers create positive learning environments and teach well-planned lessons.
4. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Staff implement learning plans using specialist resources and teaching assistants who are used effectively to support learning.
5. Leaders use an effective framework for assessment to monitor and track pupils' progress.
6. Leaders carry out systematic and appropriate checks on new staff before they start their employment at the school as part of the school's safer recruitment process. Safeguarding procedures are effective, and all staff receive comprehensive training. A designated governor has oversight of safeguarding and reports regularly to the main board.
7. Governors and leaders maintain oversight of policies. However, this is not robust enough in relation to ensuring that policies are in line with statutory guidance. For example, during the inspection, leaders updated the policy for attendance and admissions to reflect current statutory guidance.
8. The views of the school council are listened to and there is a pride from pupils who take part in this. Pupils in all sections of the school enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, including becoming prefects, and they flourish in terms of their self-esteem and self-confidence. The school council has assisted in many aspects of school life including developing a multi-faith prayer room.
9. The school provides a broad range of co-curricular activities and trips that help to enrich pupils' experience and support their physical and mental wellbeing. Pupils are successful in a range of sports and regularly compete in sporting fixtures with other schools. Creative activities, including drama productions, are well attended and have a positive impact on self-confidence for those taking part.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that:

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

so that:

- the school risk assessment policy and operational procedures relating to the school's premises are implemented consistently and effectively.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that the school attendance policy remains up to date and in line with required statutory guidance.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Governors provide oversight and act as a critical friend to school leaders. Governors regularly attend meetings with leaders, review policies and visit the school. However, governors' oversight is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that policies and procedures in relation to risk assessment and site management are implemented consistently and effectively across the school.
11. Leaders successfully promote the school's aims, ethos and core values. These are reflected across the school. The school provides a wide range of educational, physical and creative opportunities, which help to prepare pupils for the next stages of their education and for life. Leaders ensure that provision is appropriately planned across the three phases of the school.
12. Leaders have developed a broad and age-appropriate curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils. Tutors meet regularly with pupils creating a positive bond of trust. The staff know their pupils well and can respond to their needs. Pupils comment on the effective support they receive from their tutors. For example, tutors help to monitor homework, support with pastoral concerns and keep a watchful eye on pupils' academic development. Together, this helps to ensure that pupils make good progress.
13. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. A suitable three-year accessibility plan is in place, which is reviewed annually. School leaders make sure they deal with any discriminatory behaviour in an appropriate way.
14. Leaders ensure that appropriate provision is in place so that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. Leaders, including the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo), ensure that pupils have individual plans in place, which are regularly reviewed and shared with staff so that consistent support is provided for pupils who have SEND.
15. A suitable complaints policy has been implemented by leaders with most concerns resolved at an informal stage. Leaders maintain suitable records of complaints and actions taken to address them. Leaders and governors check for any trends in parental concerns and this informs future decision-making.
16. Leaders correctly inform the local authority if pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition times. They provide the local authority with the required information related to those pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
17. Parents have access to a range of helpful information, much of which is available via the school's website. Regular newsletters, an annual 'In Focus' magazine and website updates highlight school events and achievements. The newsletters have a focus on the different phases of the school, highlighting events in early years foundation stage (EYFS), prep and senior. Curricular and co-curricular information keeps parents informed about what is available for pupils in school.
18. Leaders maintain effective communication with external agencies, such as local safeguarding partners and specialists who provide advice and they follow their guidance carefully to support pupils when needed.

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

19. Standards are not met with respect to school site security and the implementation of risk assessments.
20. As a result, standards related to governance, leadership and management are not met. Consequently, those related to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are also unmet.
- 21. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

22. Pupils pursue a suitable range of academic, creative, artistic, linguistic and scientific subjects in lessons and through an extensive co-curricular programme. Leaders plan subjects effectively and regularly review the curriculum to develop pupils' subject knowledge and skills.
23. Pupils are self-motivated and make good progress. Teachers plan lessons that help pupils extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding across the full range of subjects that they study. Teachers ensure that the core values of the school are embedded in lessons and assemblies across the school, which helps to develop pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.
24. In the prep school, pupils benefit from a varied curriculum. Science lessons provide opportunities for pupils to independently explore and investigate, enabling them to expand their scientific knowledge. Music is accessible to all pupils during timetabled lessons provided by a subject specialist.
25. Teachers create a positive learning environment and demonstrate suitable subject knowledge. Teachers are familiar with the examination requirements and are aware of their pupils' needs. They adjust their teaching to reflect both. Teachers make effective use of teaching methods which foster pupils' interest in their work and help them to make good progress.
26. Teaching enables pupils to develop a range of subject-specific skills. Well-planned lessons utilise a range of strategies effectively to develop pupils' ability to think for themselves. Teachers manage behaviour in lessons effectively through teaching that keeps pupils motivated and focused. Pupils engage positively in their learning. Teachers make effective use of questioning and feedback that helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.
27. In mathematics, targeting teaching on particular topics, such as trigonometry and square roots has enabled pupils to grasp challenging content with greater confidence. Opportunities to reflect on pupils' learning and to recap on subject content enables pupils to clarify their thinking and deepen their understanding.
28. The rapport between teachers and pupils and the levels of engagement indicate an effective sense of mutual respect. Pupils talk with pride about their work and confidently about the progress they make. Leaders analyse pupils' progress, which is effective for individual pupils, particularly in the prep school. Results at GCSE and A level are typically above national averages.
29. Leaders use effective methods to identify the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND provides teachers with sufficient information and strategies to use to meet pupils' different needs. Specialist teachers provide individual support, such as revision approaches and study skills. Pupils who have SEND in the prep school benefit from nurture groups, one-to-one sessions and wellbeing support. Termly meetings take place between teachers and leaders to review the progress pupils are making.
30. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are assessed and supported to ensure that they develop language skills effectively. In-class and tutor support ensure that pupils make good progress in developing the fluency and proficiency in English and across the curriculum.
31. Leaders ensure that the early years communication and language curriculum meets children's needs. Teachers have a clear focus on developing children's love of books by regularly reading stories to

them. Teachers share information with parents about the progress that children make on a regular basis.

32. Pupils have access to a wide range of co-curricular activities. The range on offer allows pupils to follow their interests and develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in areas such as sport, music, drama, chess, photography, yoga and rocket club. Senior pupils are encouraged to suggest and organise their own activities. In the prep school, children enjoy activities such as rugby, science club, nature club, football and 'Eureka' challenges. Participation rates are high in all phases of the school.

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

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

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

34. Leaders promote pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence well. School assemblies and special events are used to publicly celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. Assemblies are used to successfully develop the school values of respect, responsibility, resilience, inclusivity, compassion, courage, humility and integrity.
35. Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of operational procedures relating to the school premises. Leaders do not identify where the procedures relating to the school site are not consistently implemented.
36. In the prep school, teachers create a safe and supportive learning environment where pupils can make mistakes and learn from them. In some lessons, including in the Reception Year, pupils are empowered to take ownership of their learning by self-selecting activities to provide consolidation or challenge. This also helps develop children's independence.
37. The good relationships that are fostered between pupils and their teachers and the inclusive curriculum helps to promote pupils' respect for others. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme is comprehensive and is appropriate to pupils' age and stage. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting each other's differences. Pupils participate well in lessons. Staff are well trained to teach PSHE.
38. Pupils practise skills that help them manage their emotions in the early years and the prep school through nurture groups and mindfulness activities. There is an appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE) programme in place and pupils' knowledge is checked at the end of each unit. The curriculum provides flexibility, ensuring individual teachers, year groups and the wider school can respond to emerging themes, such as consent and different relationships. Pupils of all ages benefit from an understanding of the changes they go through and the choices they have at different stages in their growth.
39. Leaders have developed a range of physical education (PE) activities. In the prep school, pupils engage in a wide range of sporting activities, developing hand-eye co-ordination skills and teamwork. Lunchtime team sports offer an active, inclusive and friendly environment for pupils. Pupils are aware of the positive impact that sport and physical activity has on their wellbeing. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of team sports and competitions, including lacrosse. Pupils have immense pride when representing the school and participation is high. In the early years, there is an appropriate range of activities to support children's physical development.
40. The school has a clear behaviour policy with appropriate rules and sanctions. Behaviour in school is positive and staff provide support for pupils to manage their behaviour appropriately and consistently. Pupils understand the behaviour expectations and the consequences of their actions. They are supportive of one another and demonstrate respect through their words and actions.
41. Leaders and staff implement an effective anti-bullying strategy. Proportionate sanctions are applied and discussions in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education are used to educate pupils about bullying. This helps them to understand the damage that bullying can do and why all forms of bullying are unacceptable. Bullying is rare and if it does occur it is quickly and effectively addressed.

42. Leaders ensure that registration and monitoring of pupil attendance is carried out effectively. Attendance and admissions registers are well maintained. The school informs the local authority promptly of any pupils joining or leaving the school at non-standard times. At the time of the inspection, the school attendance policy had not been updated to reflect statutory requirements. This was rectified during the inspection.
43. The school has effective medical and first aid procedures in place, including suitable arrangements for paediatric first aid provision in the early years. Fire safety measures are in place and regularly reviewed. Leaders ensure that routine emergency evacuation drills take place so that staff and pupils are confident about the school's procedures in the event of fire or other emergency.
44. Effective prefect systems are in place across the school. Pupils are encouraged to take part in public speaking. Older pupils play an active role in mentoring younger pupils and acting as role models for children in the early years. Younger pupils speak positively of their aspirations to take on roles of responsibility.
45. Pupils are well supervised during the school day, including in the early years.

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

46. Standards are not met consistently in regard to the security of the school site.
- 47. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

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

48. The school effectively helps pupils to develop an understanding and appreciation of social responsibility. For example, by promoting leadership roles, organising charity events and participating in events, such as school scouts and as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.
49. Leaders promote the school's core values including respect, compassion, responsibility and inclusivity. Pupils in the prep school have taken part in a 'British values day' to further their understanding of fundamental British values. They have an awareness that everyone is unique and that this is something to celebrate.
50. Pupils have respect for different cultures and faith. The school ensures that diversity is promoted in the curriculum. For example, pupils discuss the Equality Act in religious studies, and they learn about events in the calendar year, such as Black History Month, International Women's Day, Eid and Lunar New Year.
51. Pupils are helped to have a secure understanding of right and wrong through planned activities in the curriculum, particularly in PSHE. Pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of equality and why it is important to respect protected characteristics, such as race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.
52. In Reception, the school value of respect is seen in action through the interactions of pupils with both their peers and their teachers. Pupils work and play collaboratively, taking turns and communicating effectively with each other. Many lessons in the prep school are planned to provide opportunities for collaborative working, further encouraging respect and strengthening relationships.
53. A wide range of opportunities are provided for pupils to take on roles and responsibilities through leadership and mentorship pathways. For example, pupils in the prep and senior school participate in the school council and are house captains. Pupils are also digital leaders and music prefects. Pupils speak with pride about the roles they perform.
54. Leaders ensure that there is a well-developed careers programme throughout the school which enables pupils to be well prepared for life beyond Birkenhead. Pupils have access to a comprehensive programme in the senior school beginning in Year 7 with a focus on PSHE and 'Beyond the Curriculum' lessons. Pupils access careers guidance software and meet with tutors about subject choices. Support continues into the sixth form with a focus on university and college applications, including a developing focus on apprenticeships, as well as guidance on career choices.
55. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives through opportunities to develop an understanding of economic wellbeing. The curriculum covers many themes, including student loans, budgeting and social responsibility. In design and technology, pupils consider the potential profits that they can make from creating their products. In mathematics, pupils consider compound interest, the merits of various interest accounts and managing credit card bills.
56. Leaders ensure balanced perspectives are presented on political issues. Pupils develop their understanding through debating and the European Youth Parliament. There is democratic

engagement with the school council where pupils' ideas for school development are discussed with school leaders. For example, leaders approved the creation of a multi faith prayer room following the school council making this suggestion.

57. Leaders encourage pupils to show initiative and contribute positively to the local and wider community. Pupils support a children's aid charity and take part in volunteer work when on sports tours. In the prep school, the pupils write cards for local care homes and hold fund-raising events, such as bake sales to raise money for charity.

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

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

Safeguarding

- 59. The school implements robust safeguarding procedures in line with current statutory guidance.
- 60. The safeguarding team, leaders, governors and staff are all appropriately trained. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the team manage concerns appropriately when they arise. New staff receive comprehensive induction training and all staff receive regular professional development to help them understand their safeguarding duties and know how to escalate concerns if they need to.
- 61. Governors maintain effective oversight of safeguarding. A designated safeguarding governor meets regularly with safeguarding leaders to monitor the effective implementation of the school's safeguarding policy.
- 62. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including online. Through PSHE lessons, they learn about navigating the internet safely and protecting their personal security.
- 63. The school has an effective filtering and monitoring system operating effectively alongside the school's bring your own device (BYOD) policy. Leaders ensure that pupils are aware of safety protocols and the support that is available from staff if needed.
- 64. A robust reporting system ensures that all incidents and low-level concerns are reported and monitored appropriately. Leaders take suitable and prompt action in response to concerns and ensure that all concerns are followed up appropriately.
- 65. Safeguarding leaders maintain effective relationships with external professional bodies. The school has clear thresholds in place for making referrals to external agencies. Leaders work with local agencies to provide support to pupils.
- 66. Thorough safer recruitment checks are completed that are accurately recorded in a single central record of appointments (SCR). Necessary checks are in place before staff, volunteers and governors join the school. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's recruitment procedures. Relevant staff are thoroughly trained in safer recruitment practices.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
Part 3, paragraph 16	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that -
16(a)	the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
16(b)	appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
EYFS 3.76	Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.

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

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils is maintained.

The quality of the early years foundation stage in the registered early years provision

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

68. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
69. Leaders have a strong knowledge and understanding of child development and use this effectively to support and coach staff. Leaders in each room can explain what it is that they want children to achieve before they move on to the next room. For example, in the baby room, staff aim for children to be able to use single words and then start to link two words together. However, on occasion, the focus on the intent for learning for each child is less clear.
70. Leaders and staff have effective arrangements in place to support children's emotional security when they start attending, when they move rooms and on transition to school. Overall, parent partnership working is successful. Staff speak to parents to find out about children's interests and care routines at home. Children then spend time in their new room and with their key person to help them become familiar with the environment. This helps them to settle in well.
71. The learning environment that staff create is well organised and staff make decisions on what resources to provide based on children's interests and experiences. For example, children in all rooms have opportunities to make links with their own experiences through imaginary play, such as in the doctor's surgery and home corner. Staff help younger babies play musical instruments as they sing along to songs they have chosen. Staff recognise that older children have an interest in dinosaurs. They weave this theme into learning to support children's play.

Quality of education

72. The quality of education is good.
73. Staff plan opportunities for children to gain their physical skills. For example, there is a clear focus on helping the babies to build their gross motor skills. Staff have secure subject knowledge and provide opportunities for children to jump, crawl and stretch. Older children refine their fine motor skills, such as when they learn to use scissors and tweezers. For instance, they carefully extract plastic bugs from mud using tweezers.
74. Staff regularly observe children's learning and assess the progress that they make. Leaders monitor children's progress over time. However, on occasion, information gathered is not used fully effectively by staff at the planning stage to ensure that there is a clear intent for the planning of each child's learning. This means that children's learning is not always fully extended to help them to make the best progress.
75. Staff provide children with regular opportunities to develop a love of reading. They use props with toddlers to help them to connect with the animal characters in the book and engage them in the story. Older children select books and eagerly explore these independently. They show an awareness of the meaning of the print and recall events in stories. Children regularly join in with action songs and rhymes that support their learning in different areas, such as mathematics, and their understanding of the natural world.

Behaviour and attitudes

76. Behaviour and attitudes are good.
77. Overall, children are well behaved and show respect for the rules. Toddlers understand the expectations of mealtimes and learn good manners. Staff have some effective strategies to help children to manage their feelings, such as linking them to colours and developing breathing techniques. However, staff provide some inconsistent messages for children's behaviour. At times, they do not explain to children why some behaviours are undesirable, and they do not consistently manage behaviour in a timely way.
78. Staff help children to make choices from an early age and explore their play preferences. Staff explain to three-year-old children about the play experiences available for them to freely choose from, both indoors and outdoors. Children decide to take the toy dinosaurs outdoors to play with them in the sand pit. Children are motivated to play, learn and make new discoveries from the resources available to them. Older children collaborate when tidying away and then decide to use the resources for a new purpose. For example, they turn the blanket they are folding into a parachute. Children develop their listening and attention skills and can concentrate for extended periods of time, such as when they listen to a story or class discussions. They have a can-do attitude when completing tasks and are keen to complete everyday routines without support.
79. Staff provide opportunities for younger children to play alongside their friends and develop their relationships with others. Older children develop their own games with their friends. Toddlers show an awareness and respect for each other, showing affection through hugs. Staff sensitively support babies as they begin to show an interest in the environment and resources, such as when they explore musical instruments and sand.

Personal development

80. The personal development of children is good.
81. Staff implement good hygiene routines and help children to understand about keeping themselves healthy and minimising the spread of germs. Children access handwashing facilities independently, which helps them to practise the skills that staff teach them. Younger children have plenty of opportunities to be physically active outdoors. Children benefit from healthy and nutritiously balanced food and drinks. Staff are aware of children's food allergies and follow procedures to ensure that children's dietary needs are met. Older children enjoy their lunches in the school dining hall as part their preparation and transition to the school.
82. Staff support children's independence from an early age. Babies learn to feed themselves using cutlery and toddlers gain the skills to drink from an open cup. Staff ensure that children follow their home routines, such as sleep and toileting. Children learn a special technique to put on their own coat and staff teach children how to manage buttons and zips. Children are keen to attempt everyday tasks independently.
83. Leaders and staff implement effective arrangements for managing any potential accident and administer first aid. There are appropriate numbers of staff with first aid qualifications.

Leadership and management

84. Leadership and management are good.
85. Staff receive regular supervision, coaching and training to improve their personal effectiveness. There has been a recent focus on training staff to further support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified areas of practice they wish to develop. This includes supporting children's self-regulation and outdoor learning.
86. Leaders have effective arrangements to identify children who are not meeting their development milestones and to liaise with outside agencies so they can receive the support they need. When children receive any additional funding, leaders use this to support children's individual needs. For example, to buy resources that enable children to access the curriculum and provide additional adults in the room.
87. Leaders routinely monitor staff practice. However, this has not been fully effective in identifying all areas for development. Overall, parent partnership working is effective. Parents of younger children share how they receive detailed information about their child's day and care needs. However, staff do not provide all parents with consistent communication about their child's education and experiences at the setting.

Safeguarding

88. Safeguarding is effective.
89. Staff at all levels have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe. They understand the setting's policies and procedures and know how to report any potential concern. Staff are experienced and knowledgeable about issues that affect families and how these may impact children.
90. Staff complete daily risk assessments so children can play safely. This includes completing regular headcounts and having appropriate arrangements in place for managing accidents and sleep. There are suitable arrangements to ensure that buildings forming part of the registered setting are secure.
91. Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe. For example, when children learn to climb up and down the stairs. This also includes working with parents in relation to screen time. Thorough vetting procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- use the monitoring of staff practice more effectively so that staff have a clear intent for each child's learning and the experiences they plan in each room
- provide children with clear and consistent messages and responses relating to expectations for their behaviour
- extend the links with parents of older children to provide them with all the necessary information they need to fully support their child's learning at home.

The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage

92. The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

School details

School	Birkenhead School
Department for Education number	344/6023
Registered early years number	EY320318
Registered charity number	1093419
Address	Birkenhead School The Lodge 58 Beresford Road Oxton Prenton Merseyside CH43 2JD
Phone number	0151 652 4014
Email address	enquire@birkenheadschool.co.uk
Website	www.birkenheadschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Governors of Birkenhead School
Chair	Mr Mark R Cashin
Headteacher	Mr Paul Vicars
Age range	3 months to 18 years
Number of pupils	983
Number of children in the early years registered setting	125
Date of previous inspection	30 November to 3 December 2021

Information about the school

93. Birkenhead School is an independent co-educational school. The school has three sections: the Nursery and pre-prep, which takes children from three months to four years; the prep which includes the Reception class and Year 1 to Year 6; and seniors for Year 7 to Year 13. The school is a charitable company limited by guarantee and overseen by a board of governors.
94. The registered early years setting has 125 children.
95. The school has identified 161 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Twelve pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
96. The school has identified a very small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
97. The school states its priority is to understand each student as an individual, fostering their core values while providing a rich array of academic and co-curricular opportunities. The aim is to nurture resilient, ambitious and responsible young adults, ready to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

1 to 3 April 2025

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

99. 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 the chair and other 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.

100. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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