

Progress monitoring inspection report

6 November 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'.

Inspection outcome

The school meets all the relevant Standards that were considered during this inspection.

Inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a), 7(b), 16(a), 16(b); EYFS 3.91

1. The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy, which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and reflects statutory guidance.
2. Leaders ensure that members of the safeguarding team receive suitable training and have the knowledge to fulfil their roles effectively. Members of the safeguarding team, which includes a designated lead practitioner for the early years, have appropriate authority within the school to carry out their roles effectively.
3. Leaders promote a positive safeguarding culture. All staff and governors receive ongoing safeguarding training and relevant updates. Staff have a secure understanding of the importance of safeguarding. They know how to report any concerns they may have about pupils or about the conduct of staff. Staff understand their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty and are aware of contextual safeguarding risks. New members of staff receive comprehensive safeguarding training before they take up their role within the school.
4. The safeguarding team keeps detailed records of any concerns, and they record clearly the reasons for their decisions and the actions they take. Leaders liaise effectively with outside agencies to access additional support for pupils if required. Leaders also ensure that pupils can access support through the school's pastoral system.
5. Governors take part in regular safeguarding training. They understand their responsibilities in relation to the statutory requirements of Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025. The safeguarding governor visits the school regularly. The annual audit and reports to governors' meetings help provide governors with additional assurance that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
6. Pupils are taught about staying safe as part of the curriculum, including how to keep themselves and others safe when using the internet. Pupils are knowledgeable about the risks of sharing information and how to report inappropriate online behaviour. Appropriate systems are in place to filter and monitor the pupils' internet access while at school. These systems are tested on a regular basis.
7. Leaders have a suitable risk assessment policy in place which applies to all areas of school life, including academic, pastoral, site safety and educational visits. Training is provided to all staff with regard to identifying and mitigating risk. When risks are identified, staff plan and take suitable action to mitigate and manage them. Leaders have a strategic approach to assessing or managing the risk of harm to pupils' wellbeing and safeguarding.
8. Leaders have improved and extended the management of risk since the last inspection. Effective new mitigation strategies have been identified and implemented. Processes for the dropping off and collection of primary-aged children have been tightened, with increased supervision in place.
9. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly so that documentation for risk is fully up to date, with all risk assessments signed off by members of the leadership team. Training for staff to complete risk

assessments thoroughly has been increased. A system of daily risk checks is in place, including in the early years setting.

10. The school meets the Standards.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraph 25

11. Premises and the accommodation and facilities provided by the school are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of the pupils are ensured. Since the previous inspection, leaders have introduced further security measures for the site. This includes limiting the number of entry and exit points; upgrades to the closed-circuit television cameras; further provision of key-code entry systems on external doors; and reinforced security fences. Entry points are monitored closely. A walkway has been modified to ensure the separation of pupils from traffic entering and leaving the site.

12. Leaders ensure that premises are well maintained and comply with legislation. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted a more thorough and rigorous approach to maintenance and sought external advice to support improvements in effective practice.

13. The school meets the Standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

14. The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

15. The school meets the Standards.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

ISSR paragraphs 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c), 34(2)

16. Governors maintain suitable oversight of the school to assure themselves that the Standards are met. Governor committees meet with leaders to review policies and procedures to assure themselves that they are implemented in practice. They scrutinise reports that leaders provide and meet regularly with the leader responsible for safeguarding to assure themselves that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

17. Regulatory health and safety record-keeping is systematic and robust. Leaders ensure there is a thorough induction programme in place for new staff alongside regular update training for all staff.

18. Senior leaders and governors have effectively implemented a suitable action plan following the previous inspection. Resources have been allocated appropriately and external expert advice sought. Increased training for all staff has resulted in a more rigorous and robust approach to the identification and management of risk.

19. Leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school Standards are met consistently. They fulfil their responsibilities effectively and actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

20. The school meets the Standards.

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@birkenheadschoo.co.uk
Website	www.birkenheadschoo.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	888
Number of children in the early years	86
Date of previous inspection	1 April 2025

Information about the school

21. Birkenhead School is an independent co-educational school. The school has three sections: the Nursery and pre-prep, which take children from 3 months to 4 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.
22. The registered early years setting has 86 children.
23. 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 plan (EHC plan).
24. The school has identified a very small proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
25. The school states that 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.

Purpose of the progress monitoring inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. This inspection was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection which was carried out at the request of the Department for Education. The purpose of this inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the Independent School Standards, Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and any other requirements that the school was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

6 November 2025

26. One reporting inspector visited the school for one day.

27. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the school site to check measures taken by the school since the previous inspection
- discussions with the chair of governors
- discussions with school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

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

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

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