

School inspection report

16 to 18 September 2025

Clevelands Preparatory School

425 Chorley New Road

Bolton

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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. Governors do not ensure that the school's health and safety arrangements are effective. Leaders do not ensure that all hazardous materials are stored safely or always restrict pupils' possible access to potentially dangerous areas across the school site. The suitability of water is not checked effectively, and maintenance procedures are not always effective.
2. Fire safety arrangements are not always effective. In particular, fire doors are not always kept closed as required.
3. Not all first aid arrangements are suitable. In particular, not all medication for pupils is securely stored.
4. Hot running water is not available in all pupils' washing facilities, which reduces their ability to wash their hands effectively.
5. Leaders do not identify and manage potential risks consistently well across all areas of the school. Procedures outlined in some risk assessments are not always fully implemented and some potential risks are not identified.
6. Leaders provide a nurturing environment which enables pupils' personal growth and academic development.
7. The well-structured curriculum is planned to develop pupils' acquisition of core skills in English and mathematics effectively and prepare them for the next stage of their education.
8. Teachers demonstrate in-depth subject knowledge and motivate pupils to extend their thinking. They plan lessons thoughtfully to take into account pupils' varying aptitudes and needs. Pupils increase their understanding and develop their knowledge as a result. Teaching motivates and focuses pupils and develops their ability to learn independently.
9. Early years leaders consider children's interests when planning activities to support children's academic, physical and personal development. Adults form purposeful relationships with children, enabling them to grow in confidence and develop their communication skills effectively.
10. Leaders utilise a comprehensive assessment framework to monitor pupils' progress and attainment over time. They use the information from regular subject reviews to plan thoughtfully to meet the differing needs of pupils of varying ages and aptitudes.
11. Leaders communicate and model clear behavioural expectations that encourage pupils to interact with consideration and respect, demonstrate courtesy and behave well. Staff maintain positive relationships with pupils that reassure them that any concerns raised will be quickly addressed. A comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum supports pupils' self-understanding through topics such as growing up and managing emotions.
12. The school prepares pupils well to be responsible citizens. They develop a sense of responsibility towards others and show sensitivity to their needs through various fundraising activities and the leadership roles available to them.

13. Leaders promote pupils' financial awareness through PSHE lessons and activities, including an enterprise project for older pupils. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop a fuller understanding of key financial concepts and basic economic terminology important for everyday life.
14. Leaders implement effective measures to safeguard pupils. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable in safeguarding procedures. When concerns arise, leaders seek advice promptly from safeguarding partners to inform their decision-making. All the required safer recruitment checks are carried out before adults begin working at the school.

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 persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:

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

so that:

- all health and safety arrangements are effective, particularly those relating to the storage of hazardous materials and the completion of necessary checks and maintenance
- fire doors are always kept closed as required
- all medication for pupils is securely stored
- effective action is taken to identify and reduce potential risks across all areas of the school
- the premises are maintained to a standard which ensures pupils' welfare, health and safety
- all washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot water.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- strengthen pupils' understanding of key financial concepts and basic economic terminology.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

15. Governors' oversight of the school does not ensure that leaders demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their responsibilities. As a result, leaders do not promote pupils' wellbeing effectively in all respects or ensure that the school meets all of the Standards.
16. Leaders do not identify or manage potential risks to pupils as effectively as possible across all areas of school life. The procedures set out in some risk assessments are not wholly implemented and oversight of risk assessments is not secure. Inconsistencies in identifying and managing potential risk, including those relating to the safe storage of medication, pupils' access to sections of the site which could pose potential dangers, an open fire door and the lack of hot water in some washing areas, increase the potential risk to pupils' welfare, health and safety.
17. Leaders communicate the school's aims and ethos to pupils effectively through a structured assembly programme, daily lessons and staff's own modelled behaviours. Leaders create a supportive environment where pupils feel valued and learn successfully.
18. Governors use their conversations with senior leaders and staff, learning walks and school visits to keep themselves updated on the work of the school. They regularly review policies and receive detailed reports from leaders spanning areas such as pupils' attendance and behaviour, complaints and outcomes of entrance examinations for selective schools.
19. Leaders have a clear and comprehensive vision for the next stage of the school's continuing development. Leaders work closely with governors to review development planning. Leaders regularly monitor lessons and talk to pupils about their work to assess the impact of recent initiatives on pupils' learning. They take action promptly when areas for further development are identified. For example, leaders have introduced new programmes of study in phonics, reading and, most recently, grammar, as a result of their evaluation of these areas. Opportunities in staff training, including a focus on neurodiversity, enhance teachers' specialist knowledge to help them meet pupils' learning and pastoral needs.
20. A suitable risk assessment policy is in place. Detailed risk assessments explain arrangements for such areas as off-site visits, specialist facilities, swimming and outdoor learning.
21. Leaders in the early years provide regular occasions for staff to reflect on their own practice and to receive age-specific training. Adults work closely with leaders to adapt planning, when necessary, so that children's ongoing learning and personal development needs are catered for well.
22. Parents have access to all required information about the school, including its contact details and policies, mainly through the school's website or on request. Leaders and teachers regularly share information with parents through meetings and written reports. These keep parents updated about their children's academic progress and personal development. The school informs the local authority appropriately about the use of funding for pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
23. Leaders form beneficial partnerships with a range of external agencies. They seek specialist advice, when required, to inform their ongoing practice in safeguarding pupils.

24. An appropriate policy is in place to manage any parental complaints which arise. Leaders address and respond to concerns promptly and in accordance with the specified timeframes.
25. Leaders and governors fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The suitable accessibility plan is regularly reviewed and outlines the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils. Adaptations, including ramps and toilets for pupils who are disabled, enable all groups of pupils to access the curriculum, the school's physical environment and documentation. No pupils are discriminated against by the school.

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

26. Standards are not met consistently with respect to health and safety, fire, first aid, risk assessment, maintenance and water supply.
27. As a result, Standards relating to governance, leadership and management are not met.
- 28. 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

29. The well-planned curriculum enables pupils to acquire a broad range of skills and knowledge, including in creative, technological and scientific areas. Schemes of work are designed to develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills across different subject areas. In older years, lessons explaining common misconceptions support pupils' development of subject knowledge and problem-solving skills. Leaders' introduction of subject content which extends beyond age-related expectations challenges pupils' thinking.
30. Pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in mathematics. Leaders undertake regular subject reviews to ensure that pupils' subject knowledge is developed methodically. In mathematics, leaders have adjusted planning to reinforce fundamental number skills and link activities to real-life situations. Pupils' outcomes have improved as a result. Similarly, leaders' recent review of English has led to an increased focus on phonics and reading. Newly introduced programmes of study have increased consistency in pupils' development of skills in these areas across year groups. Recent initiatives, including a reading challenge and close monitoring of pupils' choices across fiction and non-fiction titles, are having an early positive impact on pupils' engagement. Heightened confidence in early reading skills is particularly evident as pupils move across early years classes and into Year 1.
31. Teachers' good subject knowledge, clear explanations and use of effective questioning allow pupils to increase their knowledge and deepen their understanding, such as about complex grammatical terms. Teachers plan lessons based on pupils' prior attainment and deploy additional staff effectively to support pupils' individual learning needs and enable pupils to be motivated, focused and resilient learners.
32. Leaders utilise a thorough assessment programme to monitor pupils' attainment over time. They conduct rigorous analysis of assessment data in English and mathematics to adjust planning to take account of pupils' individual needs and inform their preparation for future senior schools. In other subject areas, subject leaders use different methods to monitor pupils' progress in ways that suit the various individual subjects.
33. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well over time and develop heightened self-confidence. Leaders identify individual pupils' learning needs early and use specialist classroom resources to meet these needs. The effective in-class support fosters a sense of inclusion. Additional play therapy sessions, when required, enhance pupils' social and emotional skills. Leaders closely monitor the progress of pupils who have EHC plans to support their ongoing development.
34. Leaders organise suitable support to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), should this be required. They assess pupils' language fluency on entry. Teachers provide individual sessions to support pupils' acquisition of English vocabulary and assist pupils at social times when required. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress from their starting points.
35. Adults in the early years foster children's communication skills through effective teaching techniques, including, when appropriate, the purposeful use of sign language, actions, stories and repetition. Planning closely reflects children's interests, including with regard to family members and areas of interest articulated by children, such as collecting conkers. This boosts children's

confidence when expressing their ideas in conversations with their friends and adults. Children achieve well as a result.

36. A suitable programme of extra-curricular activities complements pupils' classroom learning and introduces new skills. For example, pupils enhance their netball techniques, refine mathematical strategies in chess, and explore new hobbies such as archery and judo.

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

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

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

38. Leaders do not ensure that all aspects of school life consistently promote pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing effectively.
39. Leaders do not ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented effectively enough to provide a suitable and well-maintained physical environment for pupils. Some cupboards containing hazardous materials and potentially dangerous areas of the school were unsecured and accessible to pupils. Leaders do not ensure that the suitability of water is checked effectively.
40. Fire safety arrangements are not always effective. In particular, leaders do not ensure that all fire doors are kept closed when required.
41. Not all pupils' washing facilities have access to hot water, as required.
42. Leaders do not store all pupils' medication securely. Medicine cupboards are not always locked.
43. Pupils study the beliefs and values of different world religions during religious studies (RS) lessons. Leaders arrange visits, including to local churches and mosques, and themed events to celebrate festivals such as Yom Kippur, Eid and Diwali. These enable pupils to appreciate a range of traditions and to discuss cultural identity with peers and teachers.
44. Pupils enhance their physical fitness through physical education (PE), swimming and outdoor learning lessons. Leaders have recently adapted the PE scheme of work so that pupils' acquisition of key physical skills is promoted across a range of sports and other activities. Visits to a local tennis club enable pupils to apply and refine their ball skills in sports such as tennis, squash and pickleball.
45. Children in the early years increase their physical development through weekly PE lessons and 'wake and shake' sessions, which enable enjoyable movement. In PE lessons, effective modelling of body movements enables children to adapt their own. Staff make effective use of activities in woodland and playground areas to help children develop their co-ordination and agility.
46. The comprehensive PSHE programme caters for the needs of pupils at different stages of development. Pupils explore suitable topics, such as the importance of healthy eating, exercise and sleep. The programme provides pupils with strategies to manage their emotions and helps build their self-awareness.
47. The suitable relationships education programme teaches pupils to identify key factors of healthy relationships and successful friendships. For example, pupils in Year 6 practise active listening techniques as a tool for resolving conflict. Lessons about puberty help older pupils to manage their emotions and understand bodily changes. They grow in self-knowledge as a result.
48. Effective behaviour management ensures that pupils are well-behaved, courteous and respectful and have a clear understanding of consequences outlined in the behaviour policy. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to reflect positively on the impact of any sanctions and evaluate their decisions maturely. Pupils apply their understanding of the values of kindness, compassion and respect confidently in their conversations and actions. The school's clear communication about the

inappropriateness of bullying and the harm it can cause means that instances of bullying seldom occur.

49. Supervision is effective throughout the day. For instance, staff monitor break times closely and offer pupils support, when needed. In the early years, an appropriate ratio of adults to children is consistently maintained.
50. Fire evacuation procedures and signage are clearly displayed. Leaders and staff carry out regular fire drill practices so that pupils know what to do in case of emergency.
51. The medical accommodation contains appropriate facilities to cater for pupils' medical needs. Staff are suitably trained in first aid, and in paediatric first aid in the early years. They administer any required medication or first aid appropriately and notify parents promptly should any accidents occur.
52. The school maintains suitable admissions and attendance registers. Leaders promote the importance of attendance effectively. For example, a recent focus on punctuality has led to improvements in this regard. The school informs the local authority whenever pupils leave or join the school at non-standard transition points.
53. Adults in the early years form warm and caring relationships with children. They understand when to support children and when to encourage their independence so that children gain confidence in their own abilities. During story times, children learn how to express their emotions using words such as 'worried', 'sad' or 'proud'.

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

54. Standards are not met consistently with respect to health and safety, fire, first aid, maintenance and water supply.
55. As a result, Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are not met.
- 56. 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

57. Leaders introduce pupils to financial literacy through PSHE lessons and other activities. For example, older pupils participate in an enterprise project to run their own fair stall. Children in the early years practise financial transactions when using a contactless payment machine during role play. However, wider opportunities for pupils to secure an understanding of basic financial terms and concepts, such as savings accounts and budgeting, are less well developed.
58. Leaders engage pupils with themes that explore issues of diversity and equality so that pupils appreciate the importance of respect and learn to challenge stereotypes. Assemblies celebrating kind and generous acts help pupils to value their differing backgrounds and individuality. Leaders select texts thoughtfully to include different family structures and use displays to develop pupils' awareness of people representing diverse backgrounds and cultures who have achieved highly and helped shape society, such as notable scientists and inspirational female role models. Pupils demonstrate consideration and sensitivity to others in their interactions.
59. Effective transition arrangements allow children to progress from the school's registered early years setting and, later, to proceed smoothly into Year 1. At the start of each year, pupils create class codes of conduct to encourage teamwork and help them adjust to new year groups. The school prepares older pupils well for their next schools. Focused preparation for entrance examinations for selective senior schools and targeted discussions with pupils increase pupils' familiarity with the typical nature of senior school expectations and routines.
60. Pupils confidently distinguish between right and wrong. During assemblies and PSHE lessons, leaders encourage pupils to reflect on ethical questions such as whether priority should lie with saving the rainforests or the oceans. Adults in the early years choose texts carefully to introduce children to moral principles.
61. Pupils develop greater empathy and wider understanding of their social responsibilities through fulfilling leadership roles, including as prefects, sports captains and school councillors. Pupils in Year 6 act as positive role models as lunchtime play leaders for younger pupils.
62. Leaders arrange opportunities for pupils to engage purposefully with their community to help enrich the lives of others. For example, pupils in Year 6 perform songs at a residential care home. Pupils take part in hikes, runs and cake sales to fundraise for children's charities and a local hospice. As part of a school-wide road safety campaign, school councillors have raised sponsorship from local businesses for signage promoting considerate parking. Pupils learn about issues affecting the local community. For example, town hall discussions have provided them with a fuller understanding of initiatives such as traffic calming measures. Leaders also arrange regular visits from the police, fire and rescue services so that pupils recognise how these institutions can support them in an emergency.
63. Pupils are taught how fair processes and systems of rules create a law-abiding society. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the importance of drivers adhering to the Highway Code. Pupils present speeches and vote during the democratic election of school councillors. School councillors value shared decision-making when proposing suggestions for menus and playground equipment.

64. Adults in the early years promote children's social development by modelling turn-taking, the use of 'kind hands' and the importance of listening carefully. This helps children learn how to form successful friendships. During imaginary play, children practise different family roles and relationships to help them understand routines and expectations for their later lives. They role play making arrangements by mobile phone, preparing food for a birthday party and bedtime routines.

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

65. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

66. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements, including of those for children in the early years. They use their attendance at regular meetings, learning walks and frequent conversations with senior leaders and staff to ensure that suitable measures are in place to safeguard pupils. Governors utilise an annual review of the safeguarding policy to verify that it reflects the current statutory guidance.
67. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are suitably trained to carry out their roles. They seek advice from specialist agencies, when required, including from early help practitioners and children's services. Leaders follow up quickly when situations arise so that any concerns are addressed.
68. Effective training ensures that staff are knowledgeable about the school's safeguarding procedures and recognise their responsibilities in protecting pupils from harm. They understand how to report a concern, including the importance of sharing low-level concerns about the conduct of staff. Staff use their regular training and in-depth knowledge of the pupils to remain alert to any changes in pupils' behaviour. An appropriate induction programme informs new staff about the school's safeguarding protocols, expectations of staff behaviour and online safety measures.
69. Trusting relationships between pupils and staff enable pupils' concerns to be heard and addressed. Pupils' access to worry boxes and 'let's talk' cards provides different ways in which they can voice any concerns.
70. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online at home and in school. They speak confidently about the dangers of sharing personal information, using password protection and being alert to scams and misinformation.
71. A range of measures are in place to limit pupils' access to inappropriate websites. Leaders implement a comprehensive internet filtering and monitoring system and review any breaches thoroughly. Leaders in the early years are vigilant about the appropriate use and storage of electronic devices.
72. Leaders undertake the required safer recruitment checks before adults start working at the school and record these in a suitable single central record of appointments.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 73. 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
ISSR ¹ 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.
ISSR 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 ² 3.91	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 on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will 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 3, paragraph 11	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is

¹ The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('ISSR')

² Early years foundation stage statutory framework ('EYFS')

	administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.
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 are ensured.
ISSR Part 5, paragraph 28(1)	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –
28(1)(b)	toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.
EYFS 3.27	Staff members must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If a practitioner is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they should seek medical advice. Practitioners must only work directly with children if the medical advice received confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that person's ability to look after children properly. All medication on the premises must be stored securely, and out of reach of children, at all times.
EYFS 3.79	Providers must ensure that their premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. Providers must comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.
EYFS 3.80	Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff, and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency. Providers must have: • An emergency evacuation procedure. • Appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example, fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire blankets and/or fire extinguishers) which is in working order. Fire exits must be clearly identifiable, and fire doors free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside.

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

Clevelands Nursery

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

74. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
75. Leaders design an ambitious and inspiring curriculum focusing on the core principles of attachment, curiosity and experience. Highly-qualified staff energetically implement these elements across all areas of the setting. These principles have a positive and long-lasting impact on the children's development and wellbeing. Children are fully ready for the next stage in their education, including their transition to school. Staff meticulously plan learning opportunities that increase the children's knowledge, skills and understanding.
76. Staff promote a warm and welcoming ethos with an embedded culture of respect and inclusivity. Staff greet children with a smile and the reassurance of an exciting day ahead. Staff are highly skilled at meeting the needs of the children. Individual targets for learning and development help ensure children make exceptional progress.
77. Staff ensure outstanding care practices and exceptional relationships promote the children's personal and social development. Children settle quickly. They are emotionally secure with high levels of confidence and motivation. Babies assertively explore the outdoor area and experience everything on offer.
78. Leaders have a clear vision for the setting and fully understand their role. They effectively monitor and evaluate practice to ensure that children achieve the best possible outcomes. Leaders share their passion for continuous improvement with staff. Staff are valued for the contribution they make to continuously developing the provision. Partnerships with parents are highly positive.
79. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are fully met. There is a shared understanding and responsibility for protecting all children. Leaders effectively implement robust policies and procedures to ensure children's safety and welfare.

Quality of education

80. The quality of education is outstanding.
81. Staff plan exciting activities which motivate and interest the children. At the start of the session, children are eager to see what is on offer and quickly settle into an activity, for example exploring the playdough. Children demonstrate deep levels of engagement. They sustain concentration in the activities they are doing, such as when babies use a roller to paint.
82. Staff interactions are of an exceptional quality and have a highly positive impact on the children's learning. Staff successfully sustain the children's involvement in activities and extend their knowledge and skills, for instance modelling how to push a digger through the sand. Staff show patience, care and understanding in their interactions. They adapt their teaching well to the needs

of the children. Children are extremely motivated and show pleasure in their learning, for example when singing and dancing with coloured scarves.

83. Leaders place a significant focus on developing the children's communication skills. Children have an advanced understanding of language for their age. Staff expertly model language. For example, during a nature walk, staff provide opportunities to develop mathematical concepts and vocabulary by looking at the shape and colour of leaves, counting leaves and comparing tall and small trees.
84. Children speak with increasing assurance and fluency. They can confidently hold conversations in an age-appropriate way. Staff have high expectations of the children, for example to respond when saying good afternoon to each other.
85. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. Staff have an excellent understanding of their individual needs and adapt the activities appropriately, such as by using a favourite story character to encourage children to join in the session. Staff form strong bonds with children who have SEND and are quiet and responsive in their interactions. If children feel overwhelmed, staff provide time and a calming space for children to settle and relax.

Behaviour and attitudes

86. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
87. Staff have extremely high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct, which they apply consistently and fairly across the setting. Staff expect children to listen carefully to instructions and respond promptly. When staff ask children to tidy up, they do so quickly and without fuss. Staff promote a respectful culture. For example, young toddlers work co-operatively to build a train track and demonstrate understanding of the importance of waiting for their turn.
88. As children progress through the nursery, staff successfully teach them how to identify and manage their own feelings and think about how they impact on others. Children demonstrate a remarkable level of emotional intelligence for their age, for example when a toddler willingly shares resources to make their friend happy. Older children confidently name and effectively communicate their feelings.
89. Staff are extremely successful in their interactions to support the children's learning. Children explore activities with high levels of curiosity, for instance experimenting with the sound dry rice makes when poured on different surfaces.
90. Children demonstrate exceptional levels of perseverance and resilience, for example, as they learn to put their shoes on independently. They respond positively to the expectation to try, and do not immediately seek adult support. Staff are highly adept at allowing children time to attempt challenges for themselves. Staff demonstrate expertise in creating an appropriate balance between encouraging independence and fostering perseverance while being there to provide support and reassurance when children need it. Children take pride in their achievements, such as shouting, 'I did it!' when achieving success.

Personal development

91. The personal development of children is outstanding.
92. Staff provide a rich set of experiences for the children. They plan activities that consider the children's talents and interests and inspire them to develop their curiosity. For example, babies are given the opportunity to explore water play by stamping in puddles and splashing in the water tray. These experiences develop the children's unique character as they discover the things they enjoy.
93. Staff provide highly effective support to promote children's independence, resilience and curiosity. Staff extend children's interest in the natural world through older toddlers collecting leaves or younger toddlers watching rain drops run down a window. Staff effectively use praise to motivate and reward children, such as by offering 'high fives' and applause when children are successful in a task.
94. Staff successfully challenge children in their learning. Children show high levels of confidence to take risks and be independent. For example, when developing their gross motor skills on a nature walk, they learn to negotiate slopes, steps and narrow paths. Staff teach children to be respectful. They enhance children's understanding and appreciation of diversity. For instance, staff encourage children to develop their patience with others when waiting for their friends before starting an activity.
95. Staff develop the unique character of each child by establishing strong relationships with the children. Children demonstrate an exceptional level of emotional security. Staff have a deep understanding of how to care for children and respond to their needs. For instance, when a child is upset, staff are calm, patient and caring, offering support and reassurance.
96. Staff implement comprehensive hygiene practices to meet the personal needs of the children. Staff successfully teach the children to become increasingly independent in managing their needs. Routines are extremely effective and well understood, for example children know they need to wash their hands before eating.

Leadership and management

97. Leadership and management are outstanding.
98. Leaders are extremely successful in sharing their ambitious vision for providing high-quality inclusive care and education. Staff are well qualified and have a deep understanding of the needs of the children they are working with. Staff use their extensive pedagogical knowledge to ensure that children, particularly those who have SEND, have full access to early education.
99. Leaders ensure that staff receive focused and highly effective professional development which consistently translates into improvements in teaching the curriculum. For instance, the children use 'colour monsters' to help develop their emotional literacy and to communicate their feelings.
100. Leaders ensure that effective systems are in place for the supervision and support of staff. Leaders positively engage with staff and understand the pressures of their roles. Leaders effectively engage parents and promote positive parent partnerships.

Safeguarding

101. Safeguarding is effective.

102. Leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities and fulfil their statutory duties to promote children's safety and welfare. Leaders instil a deep culture of safeguarding. It is a top priority for staff.

103. Leaders ensure staff are fully trained and are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues. Staff consistently implement the comprehensive policies and procedures. For example, privacy curtains are in place when staff change children.

104. Leaders continually monitor and check staff safeguarding knowledge and practice. Staff report any concerns they may have promptly. Staff understand whistleblowing procedures and what to do if they are concerned about a member of staff.

Recommended next steps

- There are no recommended next steps.

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

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

School details

School	Clevelands Preparatory School
Department for Education number	350/6011
Registered early years number	2767189
Address	Clevelands Preparatory School 425 Chorley New Road Bolton BL1 5DH
Phone number	01204 843898
Email address	office@clevelandsprepschool.co.uk
Website	www.clevelandsprepschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Alpha Schools (Holdings) Ltd
Chair	Mr Ali Khan
Headteacher	Miss Zoe Speck
Age range	0 to 11
Number of pupils	199
Number of children in the early years registered setting	72
Date of previous inspection	18 to 20 October 2022

Information about the school

106. Clevelands Preparatory School is an independent day co-educational school located in Greater Manchester. The school is a limited company governed by a board of directors. The current headteacher took up her role in April 2025.
107. There are 28 children in the early years, comprising one Nursery and one Reception class. There is also a separate early years setting, which is registered with Ofsted and which provides for children aged six months to three years.
108. The school has identified ten pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
109. The school has not identified any pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
110. The school states its aims are for pupils to enjoy learning by developing natural curiosity, reasoning skills, positive attitudes, perseverance, imagination and creativity. It intends to promote a caring, secure environment where pupils work well with others, develop their potential and make informed choices for the next step in their education. The school seeks to provide a health-conscious environment with positive relationships and high-quality experiences so that pupils acquire concepts and skills that will help them to understand themselves and the world around them.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

16 to 18 September 2025

111. A team of four inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

112. 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
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- discussions with learning support staff and visits to facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

113. 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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