



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Clevelands School**

**October 2022**

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## School's Details

|                                 |  |    |                |    |
|---------------------------------|--|----|----------------|----|
| <b>School</b>                   | Clevelands Preparatory School  |    |                |    |
| <b>DfE number</b>               | 350/6011   |    |                |    |
| <b>Address</b>                  | Clevelands Preparatory School<br>425 Chorley New Road<br>Bolton<br>BL1 5DH |    |                |    |
| <b>Telephone number</b>         | 01204 843898   |    |                |    |
| <b>Email address</b>            | office@clevelandsprepschool.co.uk  |    |                |    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>              | Mr Keith Cahillane   |    |                |    |
| <b>Proprietor</b>               | Mr Ali Khan  |    |                |    |
| <b>Age range</b>                | 2 to 11  |    |                |    |
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b> | 113  |    |                |    |
|                                 | <b>EYFS</b>  | 27 | <b>Infants</b> | 23 |
|                                 | <b>Juniors</b>   | 63 |                |    |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>         | 18 to 20 October 2022  |    |                |    |

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Clevelands Preparatory School is a co-educational day school. The school was founded in 1962 and moved to its present site in 2001. The school consists of three sections, the Early Years Foundation Stage for children under four years of age, the Infants section for Years 1 and 2, and the Juniors for years 3 to 6.
- 1.2 The school is owned by Alpha Schools Holdings Ltd. A board of three directors, including the sole proprietor, forms the governing body.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection a new headteacher was appointed in September 2019 and deputy head was appointed in September 2021.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.4 The school's aim is to enable every child to develop into positive individuals who achieve highly through determination, resilience, effort and mutual respect and kindness. The school strives to promote confidence, enthusiasm and happiness so that pupils can become productive and caring citizens.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.5 The school has a diverse population of pupils from a range of different cultures and nationalities reflecting the locality within which the school is situated. Standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average for those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified seven pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia, all of whom receive additional help. One pupil has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for six pupils, none of whom requires support. Data used by the school identify more able pupils and those with talents in sport and creative arts, for whom additional provision is made.

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards.** The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

### **PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

### **PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

### **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

**2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

**2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

**2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

### 3. Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

**The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.**

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

#### Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils of all ages display excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum and make excellent progress, achieving highly in both academic and other areas.
- Pupils are excellent communicators. They use mature vocabulary in their speaking and writing, read fluently and develop excellent listening skills from a very young age.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning, responding to challenges with enthusiasm and determination.
- Pupils' ICT skills are less well developed.

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

- Pupils throughout the school develop high levels of perseverance, resilience and self-confidence.
- Pupils' social development and collaboration skills are excellent. They take pride in contributing responsibly to the everyday life of the school and the community beyond.
- Pupils are very well behaved and are courteous and polite. They show great respect for all cultures.
- Pupils' spiritual understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life is highly developed. They appreciate art, music and value greatly their family and friends.

#### Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable pupils to take increased leadership of their learning through the use of more intellectually stimulating tasks.
- Enable pupils to apply their ICT skills more fully and consistently in their learning.

#### The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Throughout the school pupils make excellent progress over time and achieve highly in all areas, thus, fulfilling the school's aim of enabling each individual to fulfil their potential. Pupils' high levels of achievement are supported by the effective teaching they receive and through planning which builds on assessment data and enables targeted support when required. Evidence from lesson observations,



scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own assessment data show attainment to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), all children make rapid progress in relation to their starting points, so that most reach national age-related expectations by the end of Reception. Pupils have enjoyed considerable academic success in recent years, gaining places and scholarships at their first choice of senior school, many of which are academically selective. Pupils with SEND make equally good progress, and often out-perform expectations, thanks in part to the effective additional support they receive. Excellent progress was seen in most lessons. For example, junior pupils rapidly assimilated various spelling rules and could swiftly and accurately identify errors in written text. However, opportunities for more-able pupils, in particular to exercise control over their learning and develop their own ideas, is restricted by some teaching which is overly instructive and directive, thereby not providing sufficient stretch and challenge, particularly when worksheets are over-used. Most parents and all pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching enables pupils to learn and make progress.

- 3.6 Pupils develop excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils create a productive learning environment which encourages pupils to take risks and so leads to rapid progress. For example, EYFS children swiftly learned the sound made by letters and pairs of letters and could identify rhyming words. In a junior music lesson, pupils quickly mastered a new song and in a netball activity they honed their dribbling and passing skills to a high standard. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that they feel that support and encouragement from their teachers help them to become better learners. They show a good understanding of their previous learning and are encouraged to apply this knowledge to new situations. For example, in a mathematics class, older pupils were able to apply their knowledge of rounding numbers up or down to increasingly complex questions. School leaders contribute to the success of the pupils by creating an ethos which supports and encourages pupils and staff in the pursuit of academic success. In the questionnaire, most parents agreed that the school benefits from strong governance, leadership and management.
- 3.7 Pupils are confident and expressive speakers. In interviews and informal discussions, they expressed their views with maturity and confidence. They enthusiastically embrace opportunities for public speaking, such as discussions in class and presenting reports in assemblies. They are fluent readers and enjoy reading aloud in lessons and broadening their understanding by engaging with both classroom texts and books from the school library. Reception children's writing and speaking skills develop rapidly as they grow in confidence and maturity. As pupils progress through the school, they write with increasing fluency and sophistication. For example, older pupils showed an excellent understanding of how to make their writing more interesting through the use of adjectives and adverbs. In English, pupils are given many opportunities for free writing. Their work demonstrates excellent imagination, a wide vocabulary and accurate use of grammar, as was seen in a lesson where pupils prepared a fictional newspaper article describing how a boy had fallen overboard from a yacht in the Atlantic Ocean. From an early age pupils learn to listen closely to their teachers, as was seen in an EYFS lesson where young children listened carefully and respectfully to each other when discussing different phonic sounds.
- 3.8 Pupils are very competent mathematicians, successfully using their excellent calculation skills across the curriculum. Children in the EYFS can count with confidence up to 10 and understand number bonds and place value. Older pupils demonstrate excellent mathematical reasoning, for example as they accurately solved complex multi-step problems using their established knowledge of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Pupils are comfortable using their skills across a wide range of other subjects such as when drawing and interpreting graphs in science and geography. More-able mathematicians compete successfully in national mathematical competitions.
- 3.9 Pupils of all ages competently use a broad range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills, as well as specific computing skills such as coding. The range and complexity of their skills increase as they move through the school. EYFS children were able use a drawing programme

effectively to produce a picture of their hands, while older pupils are adept at word processing and creating presentations on topics such as Henry VIII. However, the teaching of ICT and its use in other subjects is not consistent or regular and this results in uneven progress and a lack of familiarity with some applications.

- 3.10 Pupils have highly developed study skills and are able to make sensible hypotheses and successfully analyse data in all areas of the curriculum. In almost all lessons, well-chosen probing questions, all informed by strong subject knowledge, encourage pupils to think deeply about issues. Inspectors observed many opportunities for and examples of analytical thinking. This process begins in the EYFS where children engage in independent and collaborative learning, choosing from the many activities available. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their analytical skills. For example, when writing about influential women as part of International Women's Day, creative story boarding was used to great effect to describe events in the life of Elizabeth I. In art pupils are encouraged to explore a variety of drawing styles in studying different mediums. They gain inspiration, for example from using patterns found in nature to produce their own intricate spiral diagrams. Pupils develop competent research skills through a range of independent tasks with an element of choice. Senior pupils produce a substantial project based on individual research on a topic of their choice. Their work shows excellent research skills and the ability to synthesize data effectively.
- 3.11 Pupils are successful in an extensive range of creative and physical pursuits and are supported in their achievements by the wide-ranging extra-curricular programme. Pupils are successful in individual external music examinations. Drama is an important part of school life with many pupils enjoying success in speech and drama examinations and in school plays. School teams of all ages are successful in a variety of local and national competitions, and pupils represent regional teams in a range of sports, including netball and basketball.
- 3.12 Pupils are enthusiastic and ambitious learners, with a genuine desire to succeed. They enjoy learning new skills and are not afraid to take risks. Encouraged by the excellent relationship with their teachers, pupils recognise that making mistakes is part of the learning process. They are resilient and confident in the classroom, approaching every task willingly and with determination. Certificates for skills such as persevering are presented in the weekly awards assembly and this recognition of effort encourages all pupils to try hard. Mutual support between pupils is a strong feature of the school, as was seen in a junior maths lesson where pupils helped each other develop detailed number rules. Throughout the school pupils challenge each other's ideas in a constructive way whilst being supportive and respectful of each other's views. Pupils evidently take great pride in their work, ensuring that their workbooks are neat and well presented.

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

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have a well-developed sense of self-understanding. Pupils flourish and grow in self-confidence through the positive encouragement they receive from class teachers and other staff who provide individual support. They benefit from the warm and trusting relationships they have with their teachers who know their pupils well and encourage them to share any concerns they may have. Pupils appreciate the helpful oral and written feedback they receive from their teachers, and respond in green pen to suggestions as to how they can improve their work. Pupils develop resilience and perseverance from an early age. For example, pupils persevered when learning to conjugate the French irregular verb *aller*, a task that many initially found challenging.
- 3.15 Pupils practise and develop their decision-making skills from an early age. Reception children are able to select which activity they will do in lessons and at breaktime. Over time they become adept at making choices and are increasingly aware of the consequences of their decisions. They make sensible choices at playtime regarding relationships and activities. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes, knowing that they will be supported in their endeavours, regardless of outcome. They choose which

activities to join, whether to be members of the school council or which position of responsibility to apply for. Most lessons involve an element of choice and decision-making. For example, EYFS children selected their own Halloween pumpkin and drew their own design on it, while in nature club pupils made well-reasoned choices about which materials to use on their autumn wreaths.

- 3.16 Pupils exhibit a strong spiritual awareness. They develop a good understanding of the world's major religions through effective religious education (RE), personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programmes and regular assemblies. Many faiths are represented within the school community, with the principles of kindness and respect emphasised by both teachers and pupils. Pupils have a strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of school life, as seen in an RE lesson where younger pupils considered what items contributed to a sense of belonging and how displaced persons might feel, using words such as *bewildered*, and *overwhelmed*. In discussion they agreed that the things which mattered most in life were friends and family. Pupils of all ages enjoy the woodland learning environment which increases their appreciation of nature. EYFS children increase their understanding of where food comes from by enjoying growing vegetables in the school garden.
- 3.17 Pupils' personal development is characterised by excellent standards of behaviour and respect, both towards each other and staff. In discussions, pupils reported that there was hardly any bullying and that the school's effective pastoral care systems help them to resolve any relationship issues which arise. Pupils develop warm relationships with each other and are supported in this by the ethos of the school which encourages pupils to be mindful of the well-being of others. In discussions pupils articulated a clear understanding of right and wrong. All parents and pupils agreed that the school actively promotes and expects good behaviour. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They support and understand the school rules and each class draws up its own mutually agreed classroom code of conduct. The development of their moral values begins in the EYFS where children learn to share, take turns and be polite to staff and each other.
- 3.18 Pupils' social awareness is extremely well developed. This is supported by the school culture which encourages relaxed relationships and social confidence and helps to create an extremely harmonious community. It reflects the commitment of the governors and leadership to the school's ethos which recognises the individuality of every child. EYFS children were observed socialising happily together, working well with others in lessons and sharing toys at break times. Pupils collaborate well in every aspect of school life, both in lessons and elsewhere. For example, younger pupils discussed in a very mature manner what items to propose for discussion at the next school council meeting. Pupils of all ages come to understand their own and others' emotions and how this can influence their actions and impact on those around them. This was seen in a senior PSHE lesson where pupils, using a hypothetical situation, made thoughtful and mature observations about how someone's emotional state may cause them to behave in an inappropriate manner. Pupils spoke very positively about working together as a team in sports competitions and on residential trips. In the questionnaire most parents agreed that the school equips their child with the team-working and social skills they need in later life and most pupils said that the school helps them build positive relationships.
- 3.19 Pupils enjoy making a positive and meaningful contribution to the school community through roles such as sports leaders, prefects and librarians. In their roles as prefects, senior pupils welcome younger pupils and visitors into the school and assist young EYFS children with their reading every morning. They take immense pride in these tasks and discharge them responsibly and with maturity. The active school council puts forward ideas for improvements in the school community, such as suggestions for changes to the school food and how the school can help the environment by measures such as saving water and reducing waste. Pupils are quick to stop and talk to anyone who is on their own and may be feeling lonely. They show a mature understanding of how they can help those less fortunate than themselves, for example by raising funds and providing practical support for a range of local, national and international charities. The choir sings carols at Christmas for residents of a nearby retirement home. Pupils recently invited the school crossing lady into school to show their appreciation by presenting her with cards of thanks.

- 3.20 Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and stay safe. In the questionnaire most parents and pupils agreed that the school encourages pupils to learn about and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are aided in making healthy eating choices by the provision of fresh fruit and vegetables at mealtimes. They discuss health issues in PSHE lessons and understand how to care for their teeth. Pupils acquire skills to manage stress and maintain positive mental health through various relaxation sessions, including mindfulness periods and yoga. In discussions, all could name someone they could talk to should they have any worries or concerns. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school teaches them about safety, including how to stay safe online, something which is regularly reinforced in ICT and PSHE lessons. Pupils appreciate the importance of exercise and enjoy both the formal sports programme and informal activities.
- 3.21 Pupils show great respect for others and strongly support the school's ethos and expectations of tolerance and kindness to all. They are supported in developing these traits through a comprehensive PSHE programme. They show excellent appreciation of the cultural diversity both within school and their local community. Pupils' understanding is engendered by the strong school culture embodied by school leaders and governors and through PSHE and RE lessons which teach about different faiths and cultures. All parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school encourages an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. In discussions, pupils showed an excellent understanding of what diversity, inclusion, and empathy mean in practice. They value not only themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals but others as well.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Mr William Ibbetson-Price | Reporting inspector                              |
| Mr Jeremy Phelan          | Compliance team inspector (Head, IAPS school)    |
| Mr Paul Barlow            | Team inspector (Senior deputy head, IAPS school) |