



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Fairfield PNEU School

November 2019



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School's Details

School	Fairfield PNEU School			
DfE number	802/6003			
Registered charity number	310215			
Address	Fairfield Way Farleigh Road Backwell Bristol BS48 3PD			
Telephone number	01275 462743			
Email address	headmistress@fairfieldschool.org.uk			
Headmistress	Mrs Lesley Barton			
Chair of governors	Mr Ryan Davies			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	114			
	EYFS	38	Juniors(Y3-6)	41
	Infants(Y1-2)	35		
Inspection dates	19 to 21 November 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Fairfield PNEU School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 2 and 11. It is a one-form entry school for pupils in Reception to Year 6. There are two nursery classes for children aged two to four years.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1935 by a local governess with the aim of enabling every child to reach his or her potential intellectually, socially and physically. It moved to its current site in 1947. The school is a registered charity and is governed by the governing board. There has been a change in chairman of governors since the previous inspection.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school no longer participates in national attainment tests (SATs) but has developed its own framework to produce data to allow analysis of progress and development of every individual pupil. Tablet computers have been introduced into the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT).

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school's aim is to provide an inclusive and nurturing community and educational experience where pupils develop self-belief, self-esteem, self-confidence, awareness of the needs and strengths of self and others, caring and sharing attitudes to others, full academic potential, personal strengths and desire for the pursuit of excellence.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, mostly from families living within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability profile of the school is above average. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has identified 18 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, 11 of whom receive additional specialist help. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The curriculum is modified for more able pupils and there is an extensive range of activities and competitions available to support their needs.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 report of which appears later in this document. The 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 regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; 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 full regulations 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 uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 **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

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **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

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously 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. This 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 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.

2.18 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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include 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 good.

- The pupils' attitudes to learning are strong; they engage well in lessons and complete the tasks they are set.
- The pupils demonstrate excellent communication and listening skills, are willing to contribute in lessons and work well together when opportunities arise.
- Pupils develop very strong numeracy skills which they are able to apply when undertaking both mental written calculations and problem solving.
- The pupils' higher order thinking skills are less developed for the more able, because the tasks they are set are not always consistently focused on their needs.

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

- The pupils mix extremely well across all the age groups and are hugely supportive of each other due to the strong community ethos within the school.
- The pupils have high levels of self-esteem and are extremely confident and articulate for their age.
- The pupils have an excellent moral understanding as shown by their exemplary behaviour, consideration and empathy for those less fortunate than themselves.
- The pupils demonstrate a natural acceptance and tolerance of others who represent different backgrounds, beliefs, cultures and lives.
- The pupils are socially mature and readily take on responsibilities.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Provide all the pupils, particularly the more able, with clear goals for improvement and sufficient challenge in all lessons to ensure their needs are consistently met.
- Share best practice in teaching across the school, with a focus on further developing opportunities for independent learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 The pupils actively engage in all their lessons and activities and their enjoyment and enthusiasm are apparent. They happily work collaboratively in groups. Pupils work confidently in small classes and are encouraged by their teachers, who know them individually very well.

3.6 The pupils display good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all of the key areas of learning. They make good progress through the school. Older pupils reach high levels of attainment which enable them to gain places at the senior school of their choice. A significant number are awarded scholarships and places at schools with demanding entry requirements.

3.7 Pupils achieve well in extracurricular activities, both at school and beyond, with pupils securing success in national sports competitions. A high proportion of the pupils represent their school in a wide range of areas achieving significant success in matches, mathematics competitions, music events and dramatic productions, especially given the small size of their school. Pupils are keen to undertake

activities in their spare time due to the support and encouragement of staff, and many achieve personal success in their chosen field as individuals.

- 3.8 In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the majority of children meet or exceed the expected levels of development at the end of the Reception year. The school's data shows that their attainment is above the national for maintained schools. The children make excellent progress because their interests and aptitudes are identified and individual next steps are written into planning, resulting in a tailored programme of activities for them.
- 3.9 Since the school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests, their attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests. On the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils confirms this judgement.
- 3.10 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents felt that the school meets their child's needs effectively, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). All pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well and make good progress relative to their starting points. Pupils with SEND are supported to make this progress because their needs are identified at an early stage and they receive effective classroom and individualised support. Most pupils show good levels of skills and understanding for their age and abilities, with some excelling in sporting and aesthetic domains.
- 3.11 Pupils demonstrate excellent performance skills across several genres including singing, performing in the nativity and achieving success in speech and drama opportunities throughout the school. Annual school productions include every pupil, so they all learn to perform. For example, the youngest pupils begin to develop performance skills and the confidence to use them when 'standing like a choir' and singing solos or in small groups in 'Little Voices Choir'.
- 3.12 Pupils have excellent listening skills and become very articulate speakers using complex vocabulary. They love reading and develop very good writing skills. Their strong communication skills are evidenced from the good standard of responses to teachers' questioning, the confidence shown when speaking about their school, and the dramatic effects they project when performing in the after-school speech and drama activity. Year 4 pupils rehearsed an assembly presentation and delivered, without notes, a lengthy and complex script with clarity and confidence. Younger pupils accurately performed their nativity play with expression and to great effect. They talked confidently about their news in the speech and drama class. Pupils listen attentively and with interest to each other. Their listening skills were evident when acting on advice in hymn practice. Their improved performance showed perseverance and attention to the verbal feedback.
- 3.13 Literacy skills are used effectively by pupils across the school when tackling creative writing tasks. Links are made across the school and older pupils speak enthusiastically of the opportunities to share their learning with the younger children. This has been done particularly well with the current history topic on the Tudors. They also share their love of books and reading through the 'Reading Buddy' scheme where all younger pupils are paired with older ones. A significant number of children in EYFS show phonological awareness at a level above their chronological age and their progress in reading is rapid. Further progress is uneven for a few pupils as they move through the school. Older pupils read with confidence and expression, and thus convey meaning when reading aloud. They also produce high quality writing which is well crafted and enhanced by teacher's high expectations. The oldest pupils have an excellent grasp of language structure and technique. They distinguish the difference between similes and metaphors and can explain why writers might use these examples of figurative language.
- 3.14 Pupils develop considerable enthusiasm for and enjoyment of mathematics, which results in a ready facility with number. Many pupils said that 'Maths is my favourite subject'. Most pupils demonstrate very good progress in mathematics and diligently apply numeracy, measuring and problem-solving skills to a variety of situations. For example, they were very successful in measuring and cutting materials, and adjusting them to fit or changing the design to achieve a faithful model construction of

a Tudor house. Most children in EYFS count with confidence and demonstrate a reliable understanding of number value. Older pupils identified as able in mathematics demonstrated strong understanding as they explained long division in their extension session, using accurate mathematical vocabulary. Senior pupils showed excellent understanding of how to answer word problems and were enthusiastic about their weekly mathematics problem solving sessions. Their strong numeracy skills are seen both within mathematics lessons and in their application to complex calculations and problem solving. They displayed confidence and competence when adding fractions, finding common denominators, simplifying fractions and converting improper fractions to mixed numbers – all within the same calculation. Mental arithmetic skills are developed through effective use of online software where pupils are encouraged to practice and ‘over learn’ in order to refine skills and allow them to be applied effectively to number problems.

- 3.15 Pupils’ information, communication and technological skills (ICT) are secure. All pupils from nursery onwards develop and demonstrate well-honed skills. This owes much to the resources, both hardware and software, available in the school. As a result, pupils engage in creative projects across the curriculum, such as the pupil leavers’ publication and coding activities using the new suite of tablet computers. The oldest pupils use ICT routinely for researching topics. Older pupils spoke of the new online system to support improvement in their accuracy in their times tables and enjoy playing number games. They engage in regular practice to improve skills which are celebrated through a ‘leader board’ each Friday.
- 3.16 Governors support the teaching and learning by careful oversight, consideration and planning. They appreciate the need for particular resources and liaise with parents and teachers to ensure their provision, a recent example being the suite of tablet computers and associated software.
- 3.17 The pupils develop strong basic study skills, but their higher order skills are limited in some areas. They willingly tackle and complete tasks set but few show initiative or take control of their own learning. The tasks are often limited and the range and frequency of opportunities for independent learning are not consistent across the school. Except for the oldest pupils, more able pupils are not consistently challenged to meet their potential. Pupils show limited independence in their learning or development of their own lines of enquiry through open-ended tasks. Learning objectives sometimes do not target the intended learning outcomes. In many lessons, all pupils were set the same task and so challenge was lacking particularly for the more able. Whilst teachers support the pupils well, there were occasions when the pupils were not challenged sufficiently to persevere and think for themselves. Pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve. In the better lessons which were observed, pupils of all abilities made good progress as teaching allowed them to draw on their previous learning and use it in current work.
- 3.18 Pupils show a secure or high level of basic skills in all areas of learning. Most pupils produce high quality work with careful attention to detail. They like being at school and find learning fun. In conversation, pupils said that they enjoyed lessons as much as playtime. They participate well in lessons and engage in the learning process, responding to the energy and enthusiasm of their teachers. They demonstrate effective team working skills when opportunities arise, for example the Year 1 children showed excellent team spirit and willingness to listen to each other when they quickly organised and sorted different animals into groups. Positive relationships and good work habits have been established throughout the school which contribute to the school wide enthusiasm for learning.

The quality of the pupils’ personal development

- 3.19 The quality of the pupils’ personal development is excellent.
- 3.20 The pupils are very articulate and possess high levels of confidence and self-esteem for their age. All pupils are friendly, and they are happy to engage appropriately with staff, peers and visitors alike. They conduct themselves well, both in lessons and social situations. Visitors are greeted with courtesy and politeness and pupils confidently share their pride in their school and their work.

- 3.21 The strong development of pupils' self-worth owes much to the highly effective use of praise and encouragement and the high-quality pastoral care which is tailored to their individual needs. The size of the school means that the staff not only know their pupils themselves very well, but also their circumstances and strengths. Pupils know they can freely approach members of staff for help and advice, and they do so with confidence. Pupils adapt well to new situations and face personal challenges confident in the support of their teachers and acceptance of their peers. Opportunities arise for such challenges in a variety of activities such as speaking at speech day, coping with homesickness on residential trips or crawling through mud at a World War 1 activity centre.
- 3.22 The pupils understand that there are consequences to their decisions and discuss the impact those decisions have both on themselves and on others. Pupils develop an excellent knowledge of themselves, their place in the school and the wider world. They understand the need to build relationships with each other and the role they each play in this. Pupils take responsibility for the decisions they make about how they behave and work together to maintain extremely positive relationships throughout the school. Pupils try to resolve any disagreements between themselves and older pupils help younger ones manage this. Understanding the implications for their future success and wellbeing, older pupils describe significant decisions they have made recently. They also talk about debating issues and reaching an agreement and were appreciative of the need to listen to others' opinions in order to support their decision making.
- 3.23 Pupils exhibit a strong sense of spirituality and make good use of opportunities to reflect on their own faith and spirituality through discussions in assemblies and prayer. They understand well the stories which are shared in the school assembly and what the morals are behind such stories. Older pupils spoke of the need to pray to thank God for all we have and showed an appreciation for the world around them. They experience the wonders of nature and appreciate that people matter more than material things. The pupils place great value on kindness, honesty and respect. They appreciate the difference between an easy course of action and the right thing to do.
- 3.24 Pupils are very socially aware. They seek opportunities to take on responsibilities and contribute positively to the well-being of the school and wider community through the broad range of opportunities which are provided, some of which are their own suggestions. Pupils act with maturity, energy and pride in the positions of responsibility they hold. They willingly accept the expectations on them that this brings. For example, in the dining room, senior pupils help serve, clear tables and encourage younger pupils to eat their food, as they appreciate the value of eating well. Pupils elected to the school council enjoy seeking the views of their peers and gain a sense of ownership of decisions made as a result of their ideas. For example, the raising of the school fence was generally felt to be a good idea as it now resolves the problem of balls being thrown over so frequently. This also demonstrates a positive attitude to solving a problem which affects them at play times.
- 3.25 Pupils have a strong sense of right, wrong and fairness. Their moral understanding and behaviour are excellent. Pupils negotiate their class rules at the beginning of the school year and set high standards of expectation which are underpinned by the strong values promoted within the school. They understand why the school needs rules to keep them safe and, when interviewed, were able to link this to the need to respect the laws of the country. Pupils exhibit outstanding behaviour across all age and ability groups. In interviews pupils said that they naturally look out for each other regardless of their age, background or religion. They develop a strong sense of empathy and compassion with each other due to the opportunities provided to build on friendships and discuss issues in PSHCE.
- 3.26 Pupils appreciate the needs and strengths of others. They are friendly and caring and willingly work with others towards a common goal. They celebrate the successes of others, confident that everyone is valued. Pupils of all ages sit and play together at breaks. They mix extremely well across all age groups and are supportive of each other, due to the strong sense of community that has been established. This is supported and enhanced by the example set by the staff, governors and parents.

- 3.27 Pupils show an awareness of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves and from different backgrounds and cultures. They are also aware of the needs of others in the local community and wider world, and readily contribute positively to support them. The pupils are enthusiastic fundraisers. They suggest and engage in debate and discussion to choose charities to support and raise funds in imaginative and innovative ways like the heart of coins, dress-up day, fun run and teddy bears' picnic which they organise and run.
- 3.28 Within the diverse school community, pupils demonstrate respect for all. They are friendly and welcoming, accepting visitors and new classmates readily. They appreciate difference in cultures and backgrounds and are eager to learn about them with interest and respect. Pupils talk openly about their own faith, whatever it might be, appreciating and respecting difference. All pupils and parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school encourages respect and tolerance of others, which reflects the inclusive ethos which has been promoted and established through the leadership and governance in the school.
- 3.29 Pupils understand how to stay safe online. The school provides clear guidance to pupils about the risks and has established procedures to protect them when online. In interviews, pupils were confident that they would report anything unusual or that they did not like which they saw when online to their teacher or parents. The pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live healthy lives, informally assessing physical and emotional risk and approaching everyday decisions in a balanced way. Well-presented activities, which are part of the comprehensive personal, social, health and cultural education (PSHCE) programme across the school, support this. Year 6 pupils look forward to the life skills programme in which the school engages every year. Pupils justify their attitudes and values, and demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions, such as about whether they would smoke or the dangers of drugs. They show a good understanding of how to stay safe and how their actions could affect the safety of others. Pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding. They explain the principles of a balanced diet and lifestyle and enjoy keeping active. The school custom of running a mile on the days when there is no PE lesson on the timetable is not welcomed by all pupils but is valued by them as they understand its benefits. They are understanding of the needs of others at lunch time and are supportive of those with dietary requirements or allergies. Pupils also appreciate the need to relax and manage stress and to be able to talk about their worries or concerns openly.
- 3.30 An overwhelming majority of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire responses positively appreciated the high standard of pastoral care for their children. Pupils develop confidence and compassion and demonstrate care for each other. They have a strong sense of social awareness and contribute to the sense of enjoyment throughout. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mrs Linda Smallwood	Reporting inspector
Ms Sarah Hollis	Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Claire Robinson	Team inspector (Head Teacher, ISA/IAPS school)