

School inspection report

25 to 27 June 2024

Fairfield PNEU School

Fairfield Way

Farleigh Road

Backwell

Bristol

BS48 3PD

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. Senior leaders, supported by the governing council, lead the teaching and pastoral staff effectively. Leaders demonstrate suitable knowledge, skills and understanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. Governors have effective oversight of school operations and collaborate with the headmistress on formulating strategies for development intended to promote pupils' wellbeing and maintaining the school's ethos.
2. Leaders work collaboratively with staff on the development of curriculum plans to ensure that there is a cohesive curriculum. Teaching enables pupils to make progress. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning does not effectively address that in some lessons pupils are not challenged as effectively as they are in others to enable them to progress as well as possible.
3. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support within lessons and staff meet their needs well. Leaders and teachers use standardised assessment to evaluate pupils' performance. Pupils, including those who have SEND, make good progress from their starting points.
4. Staff in the early years know the children well and meet their needs effectively. Activities for learning and development are well planned so that the children make good progress. Regular communication by staff with parents keeps them well informed of their child's learning and development.
5. Arrangements for pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are thorough and effective. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes contribute constructively to pupils' understanding of respectful relationships. This is clearly reflected in their positive behaviour towards one another and to others. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively by staff when it occurs.
6. Pupils' social and economic education is planned effectively and supports their positive contribution to society. Teachers engage pupils with issues relating to equality, prejudice and changing social attitudes so that pupils develop an appreciation of and respect for diversity. They prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education. Through lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils develop their understanding and appreciation of British society and British values. The taught curriculum, assemblies and the positive role-modelling by staff help pupils to develop respect for different cultures, learn to understand right from wrong and take responsibility for their actions. Pupils engage in charitable work and with the wider community so that they develop a sense of citizenship.
7. The premises are subject to regular checks and maintenance. Appropriate measures ensure that risk is well managed and minimised as much as possible for staff, pupils and visitors. Health and safety and fire safety procedures are implemented in accordance with relevant legislation.
8. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. All staff, including leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities, are appropriately trained to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Governors are trained about any updates to current statutory guidance. They support leaders in developing and implementing effective systems and controls to help safeguard pupils.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are 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 met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that pupils are consistently challenged in lessons so that they make as much progress as possible
- strengthen the monitoring of teaching and learning across all age groups to ensure that lessons are consistently well planned and delivered.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. Leaders use their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively to fulfil their obligations. Governors receive appropriate training, including with regard to safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty, which is refreshed regularly. Leaders' evaluation of the school identifies strategic plans for development that are well supported by the governing council. For example, leaders recently implemented an online software system for helping to manage the recording and monitoring of information about pupils' welfare.
10. Governors oversee the school effectively through sub-committees and work cohesively with leaders to evaluate systems and ensure the school is suitably resourced. They visit the school frequently and listen to the views of the pupils.
11. The school's aims and ethos are successfully promoted. Pupils learn to appreciate and understand their own and others' needs and strengths. The school environment is a close and supportive community where pupils are happy, feel secure and valued. The community ethos of the school is maintained effectively.
12. Leaders maintain close oversight and careful monitoring of pupils' wellbeing. Leaders know the pupils well. They are alert to any signs of potential concern and respond promptly to individual pupils' needs.
13. Leaders implement appropriate strategies to identify, manage and mitigate risks. Risk assessments for on-site and off-site activities, including educational visits, are suitably thorough. Risk assessments are checked and updated annually to ensure their continued effectiveness. Leaders are mindful of potential hidden risks. Teaching ensures that pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and are made aware of online and social media dangers. Governors undertake a regular review of the school's risk register and evaluate the measures to minimise potential risks that have been identified.
14. Leaders provide a curriculum with breadth and depth supported by teaching through which pupils successfully acquire knowledge and develop their skills and understanding. It is supported by teaching that engages pupils' interest and enables progress. Leaders diligently assess pupils' progress using standardised tests. However, leaders' oversight of the taught curriculum is less rigorous in identifying and ensuring that pupils are consistently challenged to make as much progress as possible. Leaders ensure that children in the early years are successfully supported to develop their independence and explore their interests.
15. Leaders provide and make available all information required to parents and prospective parents. The school provides relevant policies and procedures through its website, and these are also available from the school office. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through a range of communication methods, including online records for children in the early years. Twice yearly written reports, regular parent evening meetings and newsletters help to ensure that communication is effective.
16. Leaders maintain effective links with agencies such as local safeguarding partners to promote pupils' wellbeing. Reports to the local authority are made when pupils join or leave at non-standard times.
17. A clear procedure for parents to make complaints is in place. Informal concerns, such as those raised by parents to teachers, and any formal complaints are responded to within the given timeframe.

The outcome of the complaints and any actions taken as a result are recorded in line with the stated policy.

18. The school has an appropriate accessibility plan and fulfils its duty under the Equality Act 2010. For example, where required, leaders make effective adjustments to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to enable them to access the curriculum fully.

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

19. **All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. The curriculum has breadth and depth. Schemes of work are thoughtfully planned and constantly adapted with many cross-curricular links. Staff collaborate on creating a thematic study programme that changes termly and does not repeat annually. Pupils are stimulated and well-motivated by the curriculum themes as well as the opportunity to add their own input to the evolving schemes of work. Teachers adjust the topical theme to enable pupils to develop their acquisition of knowledge and skills in each subject broadly in line with their age.
21. The curriculum for children in the early years is implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-led activities. Children learn and develop successfully through planned and purposeful play in their indoor and outdoor environments. Staff consistently model the use of accurate and interesting language in their dialogue with children in a way that helps develop children's communication skills and enriches their vocabulary. For example, as a result of such dialogue children in the Nursery are beginning to use appropriate scientific vocabulary to describe their observations of the natural world.
22. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and employ typically effective methods to promote and develop pupils' learning. Staff encourage pupils to develop their study skills effectively from an early age. For example, in science, Year 1 pupils are enabled to hypothesise and make predictions. Staff effectively encourage pupils to adopt a positive attitude to their learning. Most teaching is well planned and makes effective use of a range of resources which enable pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding and make good progress. However, there is a little teaching that is less well planned. On these occasions, there is insufficient challenge for those pupils who quickly grasp the topic to make as much progress as possible.
23. Teachers know their pupils well. They make effective use of the thematic studies enabling pupils to acquire knowledge and successfully develop their skills and understanding across linguistic, mathematical, scientific and technological areas. The selection of topics helps to engender interest. Teachers make effective use of lessons and performance opportunities, whether in assemblies or larger scale productions such as plays by Shakespeare, for pupils to develop their aesthetic and creative skills.
24. Standardised testing is used regularly throughout the school to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress in English and mathematics. This enables staff to develop strategies so that pupils can continue to make good progress. Planning and assessment in the early years ensures that children receive a tailored and personalised approach to their learning.
25. Pupils who have SEND are supported within the curriculum by their class teachers and receive additional specialist support when required. Teachers support pupils who have SEND through effective implementation of individual support plans which identify clear targets and the teaching strategies and resources to be used. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points.
26. Leaders provide a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their musical, dramatic, creative, artistic and physical skills. These are well received by pupils who participate enthusiastically.

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

27. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

28. Staff use the curriculum topics and the PSHE and RSE schemes of work to promote pupils' emotional wellbeing effectively. Their teaching develops pupils' understanding of the importance of mutual respect, which is modelled throughout the school community. In PSHE lessons and assemblies, including those that focus on particular themes, such as the school's 'Pride month', pupils learn about protected characteristics, such as sex, sexual orientation, belief and race. As a result, pupils demonstrate respect for others and appreciation of diversity.
29. In all stages of the school, staff help pupils to develop self-confidence and self-esteem through praise and by celebrating achievement in and out of the classroom. Pupils share and demonstrate pride in their individual successes and those of others. The positive relationships between members of the school community instil the pupils with confidence that they are valued. Pupils say that they are listened to and express themselves as happy. Staff in the early years develop effective partnerships with parents to support children's emotional security while in the setting. Children's confidence is strengthened through their interactions with each other and adults.
30. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies are clearly understood by staff who implement them consistently. Staff encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour which pupils accept and manage maturely. Staff praise and reward polite and courteous behaviour. Pupils respond to leaders and staff clearly valuing their positive behaviour with more of the same. This contributes to making a warm and friendly environment the norm. Sanctions for misdemeanours such as bullying are rare as pupils respect each other, their teachers and the environment.
31. Staff are deployed efficiently so that pupils are well supervised throughout the day and feel safe. Those supervising know the pupils well and are alert to any changes in behaviour or demeanour which may indicate that support is required. Supervision ratios in the early years meet requirements.
32. Schemes of work in PSHE and RSE help pupils to understand different types of relationships and what makes them healthy. Talks from agencies such as NSPCC on themes such as speaking out and staying safe further contribute to pupils' understanding of how to recognise and guard against potential risks in relationships and helps to develop their resilience.
33. Cross-curricular topics are delivered effectively to help develop pupils' wider knowledge and understanding, including their spiritual awareness. Ideas of beauty are explored in music and art and science teaching enables pupils to develop ideas about life as they explore the life cycles of creatures.
34. The physical education (PE) curriculum and activities programme encourages pupils to be physically healthy, as well as developing their fitness and physical dexterity. The opportunities to participate in team sports, such as football and rounders, compete as individual athletes and have regular swimming sessions benefit pupils' physical health and development. The school supports children in adopting a healthy lifestyle through educating them about positive choices related to healthy eating. Enrichment activities such as 'mindfulness' yoga help promote pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

35. Governors and leaders effectively oversee the maintenance of the school premises and the implementation of required health and safety checks. They take appropriate precautions to reduce the risk from fire. There are regular fire evacuation drills that teach pupils how to safely leave the buildings. Staff receive regular fire safety training, and a suitable fire risk assessment is in place.
36. Arrangements for pupils who are unwell or who require first aid are suitably resourced and supported by appropriately trained staff.
37. The school's admission and attendance registers are maintained appropriately. Any unexplained absences are followed up swiftly. Staff transfer child protection files and information appropriately to destination schools of leavers in accordance with statutory guidance.

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

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

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

39. The curriculum is suitably planned and delivered so that pupils develop an understanding and appreciation for people's diversity and cultures. In assemblies and RE (religious education) lessons, pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. Teachers help pupils to develop their understanding and appreciation of cultures across the world through music and art. Themed curriculum work enables pupils to research influential current and historical figures in different disciplines, such as sport, and discuss how these figures changed attitudes to social inequalities and prejudice. Curriculum work on the local city's cultural heritage provides older pupils with developing insight into current cultural debates, such as about historical merchant venturers and links with the slave trade. The exploration of such themes helps pupils to develop their understanding of moral principles and the rule of law. Leaders ensure that any discussions about topical or political issues are carried out fairly and in an unbiased manner.
40. Teachers use suitable curriculum topics to equip pupils with an economic understanding appropriate to their age. Children in the early years develop their knowledge of money and economics through activities such as exploring the cost of iron used to build the Eiffel Tower and why this would be used instead of a precious metal. The Year 3 shop unit and residential visits enable pupils to learn how to handle money. Older pupils develop their economic understanding as they learn about fair-trade and economic factors affecting migration and settlement in geography.
41. Through PSHE lessons, assemblies and visits, teachers help to develop pupils' understanding of life in Britain and help prepare them for life in British society. Principles of right and wrong are promoted effectively as pupils draw up their class charters. Elections to the school council and eco-council engender pupils' understanding of a democratic process. Visits to the Houses of Parliament are regularly planned.
42. Leaders promote supportive social behaviour and create opportunities for different year groups to mix frequently. When sitting with them at lunch, older pupils are considerate and kind towards younger pupils and actively engage them in conversation whilst helping serve or clearing up. Initiatives such as 'reading buddies' enable older pupils to support young children in the early years. Older pupils take these opportunities to care for younger pupils responsibly and seriously.
43. Daily interaction with each other and adults promotes and strengthens children's social and emotional development in the early years. Learning about feelings and emotions through characters in stories supports their emotional development. Daily routines, activities in the woodland and visits to an activity centre in the Mendip hills contribute positively to their social development.
44. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their social awareness and responsibility through engagement with the different school councils. Through the school council, pupils select and actively contribute to charitable causes locally, nationally and further afield. Staff make effective use of well-selected themes and topics that promote pupils' mature appreciation of others' needs and a sensitivity to humanity's impact on the natural environment. Staff also effectively encourage pupils to be responsible and proactive. Pupils on the school council and eco council have successfully implemented eco waste bins throughout the school site. Year 5 pupils have organised a sponsored swim to raise funds for a local clean water project, 'From City to Sea'.

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

45. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

46. Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders promote the welfare of pupils through the effective implementation of a suitable range of policies and procedures.
47. Staff receive appropriate training when they join the school. This is updated at regular intervals, including in staff meetings. Staff understand key child protection procedures and know how to recognise and report concerns, including any allegations or concerns about staff that may arise.
48. Those with designated safeguarding lead responsibilities receive appropriate training to equip them for their role. They respond to any safeguarding concerns that arise promptly and appropriately. The safeguarding team works effectively with external agencies when safeguarding concerns or the need to make referrals arise. Safeguarding records are well maintained, and the detailed information allows for analysis and identification of any trends so that any necessary action is taken.
49. The school teaches pupils about the importance of staying safe online and develops their understanding of how to do so. Leaders encourage pupils to share any concerns that they might have. Pupils understand that they can talk with members of staff if they are anxious, or something is bothering them. They also use the worry boxes in the classrooms to bring concerns to the attention of teachers. Pupils feel that school is a secure place with teachers whom they trust.
50. The school implements appropriate procedures with regard to children missing or absent from education.
51. Those responsible for recruiting staff across the school have appropriate skills and knowledge. All the requisite pre-employment checks are completed for staff and governors before they join the school. These checks are recorded in a well-maintained single central record of appointments which reflects the content of the personnel files.
52. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including the filtering and monitoring of internet usage. They monitor safer recruitment practices and scrutinise the register of appointments. The designated governor for safeguarding spends time in school, meets with the safeguarding leads, supports staff training and checks documentation. Termly reports keep governors well informed as do visits to the school and an annual safeguarding audit.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	Fairfield PNEU School
Department for Education number	802/6003
Registered charity number	310215
Address	Fairfield PNEU School Fairfield Way Farleigh Road Backwell Bristol BS48 3PD
Phone number	01275 462743
Email address	headmistress@fairfieldschool.org.uk
Website	http://fairfield.school
Proprietor	Fairfield PNEU School (Backwell) Limited
Chair	Mr Ryan Davies
Headmistress	Mrs Lesley Barton
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	138
Date of previous inspection	19 to 21 November 2019

Information about the school

54. Fairfield PNEU School is an independent co-educational day school located in Backwell, North Somerset. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a governing council.
55. There are 44 children in the early years, comprising two Nursery classes and one Reception class.
56. The school has identified 26 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
57. English is an additional language for one pupil.
58. The school states its aims are to provide a broad education based on the national curriculum and Christian principles. It seeks to provide an environment where pupils are happy, feel secure and valued and where they learn to be part of a community, appreciate and understand their own and others' needs and strengths. The school's aims reflect the core values of the Parents' National Education Union (PNEU), to which the school is affiliated.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

25 to 27 June 2024

59. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

60. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

61. 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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