



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Newton Preparatory School

March 2022

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School's Details

School	Newton Preparatory School			
DfE number	212/6385			
Address	Newton Preparatory School 149 Battersea Park Road London SW8 4BX			
Telephone number	020 7720 4091			
Email address	enquiries@newtonprep.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Fleming			
Proprietor	Dr Farouk Walji			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	617			
	Lower school	282	Upper school	335
Inspection dates	22 to 25 March 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Newton Preparatory School is a co-educational independent day school. It was founded in 1991 by the proprietor, who has overall responsibility for governance. He is supported by an advisory school council which comprises approximately 15 members.
- 1.2 The school occupies a former 20th-century primary school building in Battersea, with more recent additions. It is divided into 2 sections, lower school for pupils in Nursery to Year 2, and upper school for pupils in Years 3 to 8.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aspires to ensure that every child is given opportunities to flourish and develop in all areas of school life. It aims to listen and respond to the 'pupil voice' and celebrate and embrace difference and diversity. The school seeks to encourage every child to make a positive contribution to school life. It endeavours to prepare each child for senior school entrance examinations and to provide a forward-thinking educational experience that equips the children for future life.

About the pupils

- 1.5 The majority of pupils come from professional families within a three-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 60 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 47 receive specialist support, due to difficulties with cognition and learning such as mild dyslexia. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 145 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), 12 of whom receive additional support for their English. The school modifies the curriculum for the most able pupils in its population.

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. 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 in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. 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 have highly developed communication skills and apply them well across the curriculum.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve notable standards across the curriculum.
- Pupils consistently exhibit high rates of progress.
- Pupils of all ages show highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are eager participants in their lessons and work very effectively in groups.

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

- Pupils display notable levels of self-knowledge and self-discipline which promotes their personal development.
- Pupils exude a mature self-confidence.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to others, to the school and to the community, by successfully fulfilling a range of additional responsibilities.
- Pupils demonstrate a highly developed moral understanding, displaying excellent behaviour.
- Pupils' respect for diversity and inclusion is outstanding.

Recommendation

3.3 The school should make the following improvement:

- Enable pupils to consistently acquire and apply higher-level information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 The overall achievement of the pupils is excellent. Data supplied by the school show that in standardised tests and examinations, including the EYFS Profile, attainment is far above that of the national average for maintained schools. Data, supported by observations of lessons, show that rates of progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and the most able, are usually high. There is no discernible difference in rates of progress between male and female pupils. Particular progress is made by many pupils in reading. Most pupils successfully gain places at their destination of choice for

the next stage of their education. The school fulfils its aim to prepare each child very well for the range of senior school entrance examinations.

- 3.6 Pupils' attitudes to learning are overwhelmingly positive. They settle very well to their tasks and work with sustained concentration. They are happy working independently or in groups. For example, Year 4 pupils showed independence and initiative at registration as they prepared for the session ahead with an excellent level of maturity and calmness. Such attitudes are developed in the EYFS where pupils are encouraged to be independent, for example when tidying up and putting resources away for themselves. Pupils work exceedingly well collaboratively, and this is something that is embedded throughout the school day. For example, in a Year 5 art lesson pupils were observed helping each other to succeed by recommending appropriate tools to complete their task more effectively. Such attitudes are promoted by well-manged lessons which include a balance of independent and collaborative work.
- 3.7 The pupils' wider achievements are excellent. Large numbers achieve music grades across a range of instruments and music technology, with many earning distinctions. The school choirs regularly perform with success in high profile events at venues such as Southwark or Winchester Cathedrals. Significant numbers also achieve distinctions in LAMDA examinations. Pupils have been placed well in a variety of local sports competitions and some individuals have performed at county level. The opportunities offered in the school's comprehensive co-curricular programme play a significant part in this success. Pupils perform well in academic ventures, with a large number of higher awards being earned in the UK Primary Maths Challenge and the UK BEBRAS challenge in computational thinking. Pupils have earned a range of scholarships in music, drama, art, sport and academic disciplines, from highly competitive senior schools.
- 3.8 Pupils' communication skills are excellent and they enjoy sharing their ideas and opinions. They speak confidently and fluently, exhibiting a wide range of vocabulary for their age. This begins in Nursery where children were able to express themselves very well for their age when discussing their ideas for catching mini-beasts in the school garden. Pupils develop confident public speaking skills which are developed through drama lessons in the curriculum and the chance to present in class. In class assemblies across the age range, pupils confidently present to sizeable audiences of their peers and parents. They speak with good volume, pace and expression. Through their assembly, Year 4 pupils demonstrated an excellent knowledge of terminology and parts of speech such as suffix, acronym and fronted adverbial sentences.
- 3.9 Pupils develop sophisticated writing skills and employ these across the curriculum. This was seen in a Year 8 English lesson where pupils demonstrated confident use of literary devices. Pupils' writing skills develop as a result of leaders' and staff's expectations of excellence in literacy, whether accurate spelling in science or perfect punctuation for coding. Lesson observations and assessment data provided by the school show that many pupils read at a sophisticated level and demonstrate well-developed comprehension skills. Pupils across the age range routinely read aloud in class exhibiting lively expression and intonation. Pupils with SEND or EAL show confidence in taking their turn. Pupils listen attentively to others, especially when working in groups such as in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils listened effectively to each other's ideas and examples to explain the text being studied.
- 3.10 Pupils display an excellent affinity with number. They readily apply their mathematical understanding to other areas such as calculating money raised for charity or measuring to reconstruct the crime scene from *'The Hound of the Baskervilles'* in English. Pupils also show a high capacity for drawing on knowledge in other topics when solving mathematics problems. For example, whilst interpreting data shown in graphs and tables, Year 4 mathematicians used prior knowledge on unit conversions to answer questions about height. Assessment data show that all groups of pupils make good progress mathematically, in many cases facilitated by individualised work. The most able pupils are provided with extension activities to further challenge their thinking. During the inspection, adaptations were made to teaching to successfully incorporate pupils isolating at home, sustaining their progress.

- 3.11 Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding across the wide range of subjects are excellent. Pupils' knowledge and understanding develops rapidly, facilitated by the leaders' focus on 'Assessment for Learning' techniques. Pupils also demonstrate excellent skills in specialist subjects such as ballet and French in the EYFS and classical civilisations in the upper years. Additionally, they acquire high standards in their extensive range of co-curricular clubs and activities. Pupils are highly effective in applying their knowledge across the curriculum. For example, this was displayed by Year 7 and 8 pupils' work in the 'Newton Diploma', a cross curricular programme linking aspects of the social sciences and arts. Pupils' wide-ranging achievements are due to leaders' effective provision of a broad curriculum. The school is successful in meeting its aim to provide a forward-thinking educational experience that equips the children for life in the future.
- 3.12 Pupils display excellent study skills for their age. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. Observations during inspection confirmed that pupils are active participants in their lessons and activities. They think for themselves and work with information to make deductions or form hypotheses. For example, in a Year 8 science lesson, pupils used their prior knowledge of reactivity to predict chemical reactions using equations and then evaluate their results. Similarly, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils used excellent deductive skills to establish what unfamiliar Victorian artefacts may have been used for. Pupils routinely support their own learning by successfully drawing on a wide range of sources such as thesauruses, the internet and dictionaries including French/English translation works. Pupils' competencies are developed as a result of skilful questioning and effective lesson structuring by their teachers.
- 3.13 Pupils are confident and highly adept users of information and communication technology (ICT) overall. They are competent coders and are at ease using control technology to issue commands to floor-based robots or drones. Pupils' confident use of technology extends to music composition and controlling the lights and sound in theatre productions. Pupils regularly and capably use both personal computers and tablet computers to access research or specific programmes to aid their learning. For example, in Year 1, pupils were able to write out their own sentence successfully when completing their 'E-Book'. They spoke confidently about how to use technology to edit their own work, highlighting and going back to add in specific punctuation as well as changing the size and colour of font. Similarly, Year 8 pupils demonstrated sophisticated skills when coding and installing a graphical user interface to operate a robotic head in their ICT lesson. Pupils' ICT skills have strengthened from the proprietor's recent funding of new equipment. However, the successful incorporation of technology into lessons is varied. A number of examples were seen of seamless integration in lesson planning to allow the pupils to take advantage of new ways of learning, but this was not universal. As a result, pupils do not consistently acquire and apply higher-level information and communication technology (ICT) skills to their learning.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Pupils' respect for diversity and understanding and appreciation of different cultures are outstanding. In discussion with inspectors, pupils were fierce defenders of equality and conveyed an understanding of the dangers of discrimination and the relevance of protected characteristics in a manner well beyond their years. This understanding is founded in the wide-ranging personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), religious studies (RS) and theology, philosophy and religion (TPR) programmes. It is also strengthened by leaders' promotion of such issues. Excellent understanding was seen when, as part of their class assembly, a Year 4 group presented acrostic poems based around the word 'tolerance'. The class used these to proudly proclaim to their peers that everyone is equal, demonstrating a thorough grasp of the concept. Pupils exhibited a strong understanding of neurodiversity. Pupils articulated to inspectors that the internal differences between people are as important as the external ones. Other year groups reveal a well-developed understanding of particular

cultures as illustrated in Year 3 Aboriginal artwork and a Year 1 assembly on Brazil. The school meets its aspiration to celebrate and embrace difference and diversity.

- 3.16 In lessons and in their movement around the school, pupil behaviour is excellent. In discussion, pupils were keen to show their detailed understanding of how the school's core values and golden rules were important in promoting responsible behaviour. In several classes, pupils have demonstrated their responsibility by signing a 'class contract' agreeing to follow the rules. These included being kind and considerate, to respect others and to never bully their peers. Pupils demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of right and wrong. They reflect on their behaviour choices and readily apologise when they are wrong. Pupils' ability to take responsibility for their own behaviour begins in the earliest years. EYFS children are able to share resources and listen to each other well. Older pupils show a strong understanding of issues of justice and democracy. For example, Year 7 pupils explained how law was needed for order, citing examples from their work on *'Lord of the Flies'*. The pupils spoke eloquently about the need for laws to not only keep themselves safe but also others. Pupils attribute their awareness of this to the system of rewards and sanctions provided by school.
- 3.17 Pupils display excellent levels of self-confidence, for example when asked to perform to their peers in drama. Pupils show mature skills of self-reflection when reviewing their work in the routine evaluation sessions that teachers schedule as part of their lessons. For example, Year 2 pupils confidently articulated how they could enhance their piece of writing by changing the adjectives used. Pupils show high levels of perseverance, as observed in a Reception physical education (PE) lesson when some children found activities challenging and lost control of the ball but kept trying. SEND and EAL pupils develop their self-confidence equally well and are aided in this by learning support staff working closely with teachers to support pupils and agree targets for academic progress and self-management. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.18 Pupils show a highly developed capacity for spirituality. They demonstrate a love of music, as seen in an assembly when listening intently to a piano recital. In art, pupils are invited to take a 'walk of inspiration' to notice the creativity of others and absorb the aesthetic opportunity. They do so reflectively and are able to articulate their appreciation. As part of their growing awareness of the wider world, pupils showed an excellent level of compassion and empathy as they contributed heartfelt messages to children in a war-torn area of Europe. They show a well-developed understanding of different faiths which is shown in displays, assemblies and in pupils' thoughtful work in RS lessons and assessments. Recent studies have included, Ramadan, Christmas, Hannukah and the life of Guru Nanak. Pupils value their personal well-being highly. Upper school pupils reflected maturely upon the benefits of mindfulness moments throughout the day advocating that they help them to focus and to relieve stress.
- 3.19 The contribution of the pupils to others, including the wider community is excellent. Pupils demonstrate a keen awareness of the diverse needs of the community in which the school resides. For example, pupils work closely with different charities and community groups to support a range of initiatives. They have raised significant sums for two homeless charities through a sponsored sleep-out. Year 8 pupils visit a local primary school to offer support as part of their post Common Entrance programme. Within school, there are many opportunities across the age range which enable pupils to serve effectively and develop their sense of responsibility. These include leadership in house positions, sport, charity and aspects of academic development. This allows the school to meet its aim of encouraging every child to make their own positive contribution to the life of the school.
- 3.20 Pupils show excellent levels of social development. This begins in EYFS as seen when children happily welcomed a new playmate into their role-play game. They shared roles with a maturity beyond their years, listening carefully to each other's suggestions. The older pupils work effectively together in various enterprises, including charity events and house events. The Year 8 house prefects and sports captains play an active role in assemblies, presenting awards and reporting on sporting endeavours which they had arranged in house teams. Other pupils work well with younger pupils helping with

readers and activities. In response to the questionnaire, almost all parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. This was borne out by inspection evidence.

- 3.21 Pupils' knowledge about how to stay safe and healthy is excellent. Pupils display a comprehensive understanding of how to stay safe when online. For example, older pupils conveyed a strong understanding of the potential dangers of social media. In lessons, Year 6 pupils showed that they had understood fully the ground rules for sensitive discussions in their PSHE lesson. They acknowledged that these are in place to avoid embarrassment or discomfort for all. Nursery children demonstrate an outstanding awareness of the importance of keeping safe for their age. For example, they remembered the basic safety rules about what they could touch, before entering the school garden. To protect their personal safety pupils readily know to whom they can turn with any mental or physical health issues. The vast majority of parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.22 Pupils' decision-making skills are well-developed, beginning with the youngest children who respond thoughtfully to prompts asking if their actions were the right choice. By Year 8, pupils have made important decisions about their choice of future school. In discussion, they were able to articulate sensible and thoughtful reasons for the choices that they had made. Pupils have an acute understanding of the impact of their decisions. This is shown as they have voted for which charities to support, on the food for lunch and selected which friends they might wish to have with them in their new class for the new academic year. Recently, they submitted ideas on how to improve their playground area which the pupil council synthesized effectively, to decide upon a possible solution.

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 and a group of members of the governing council, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and 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 Robert Lilley	Reporting inspector
Mr James Fleet	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Ms Rebecca Tear	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Ms Victoria Playford	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)