

# **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Barfield Prep School** 

June 2023

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# **School's Details**

School	Barfield Prep School
DfE number	936/6308
Registered charity number	309639
Address	Barfield Prep School
	Runfold
	Guildford Road
	Farnham
	Surrey
	GU10 1PB
Telephone number	01252 782271
Email address	admin@barfieldpst.org
Headmaster	Mr Andrew Boyle
Chair of trustees	Mrs Emma McKendrick
Proprietor	Prep Schools Trust
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils on roll	287
	EYFS 126 Lower school 65
	Upper school 96
Inspection dates	20 to 22 June 2023

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## 1. Background Information

#### About the school

1.1 Barfield Prep school is an independent co-educational day school. It is part of the Prep Schools Trust and is administered by a board of trustees. Each school in the trust has a local advisory group which acts to ensure effective governance and compliance at school level and reports to the board of trustees via the chief executive. Since the previous inspection, a new headmaster has been appointed and the school has changed its age range to two to eleven years.

#### What the school seeks to do

1.2 The school's priority is to create an environment where all the children enjoy coming to school and feel supported as part of the Barfield Family. Within the belief that happy children achieve more, the school aims to provide a breadth of opportunities, both curricular and extra-curricular, to give them confidence to try new things and be brave. The school seeks to work collaboratively with families to ensure the next step into secondary school is a smooth one and to ensure that children look back in the future and reflect on how special their primary school days were.

## About the pupils

1.3 Pupils come mainly from two working parent families and live within thirty minutes travel of the school. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared with pupils taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 25 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, all of whom receive additional specialist support. Two pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). English is an additional language (EAL) for six pupils, two of whom receive additional support. Pupils that the school has identified as being able, gifted or talented receive an individualised approach to their learning and are encouraged to pursue a scholarship.

## 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 <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. 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: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> <u>Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.</u>

## **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 school

- 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 wellbeing 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 make at least good, and often rapid, progress from their starting points so that their attainment is high.
  - Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills and understanding over a wide curriculum that includes outdoor education and life skills.
  - Pupils achieve high standards of literacy and numeracy relative to their abilities.
  - Pupils' achievements are underpinned by their positive and enthusiastic approach to learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
  - As they move up through the school, pupils develop strong self-knowledge as a result of regular opportunities to make decisions and individual support and feedback from their teachers.
  - Most pupils are willing to take responsibility for their own behaviour and demonstrate good manners and consideration to one another.
  - Pupils develop an excellent awareness of how to keep healthy and safe, including assessing and managing risks involved in their outdoor activities.
  - Pupils' social awareness and ability to work with one another is outstanding.

#### Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
  - Ensure pupils are better able to communicate their views by raising the profile of the pupil parliament and its role in contributing to school development.

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

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils demonstrate excellent learning across a broad curriculum which is enriched by life skills, outdoor education and, from Year 3, current affairs. Leaders have ensured that this programme strongly contributes to the fulfilment of the school's aims for children to enjoy school, and to be confident and brave. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all pupils agreed that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons, that teachers know their subjects well, are supportive and help them to learn. The vast majority of their parents agreed that the range of subjects is suitable for their

child. Pupils are highly enthusiastic and enjoy learning which means they quickly engage with tasks which invariably stimulate their interest; for example, through investigating and dissecting mammalian organs in science which excited fascination and wonder. Pupils show excellent recall of prior knowledge which they apply to new learning, such as designing board games which reflect their learning in history during the year. In design technology (DT), pupils' technical drawing skills develop well because they are given opportunities to practise them in meaningful contexts. Pupils demonstrate excellent understanding and engagement in immersive French lessons which enhance their pronunciation through songs and games and then secure learning with reading and writing tasks. In science, pupils benefit from excellent opportunities to consolidate learning through carefully structured lessons such as when pupils observe life processes in nature and demonstrate their understanding through problem-solving challenges. Pupils' learning is strongly supported by the individual attention given to all. Staff ask them open questions and offer suggestions in a manner which, in many classes, creates an inclusive learning community. Pupils with additional needs report they are well supported in all subjects. This is because teaching incorporates appropriate strategies shared by the learning support department. Lessons are invariably well-planned and executed and enable pupils access to a varied range of resources to support their learning. Pupils' learning in subjects such as science and food technology is enriched through teachers' creative use of excellent specialist facilities. Pupils develop their confidence, initiative and skills in specialist taught outdoor lessons which are a feature of the curriculum for all age groups.

- 3.6 Throughout the school standards in English are high. In the Nursery, children's oral language is well developed through adult modelling, and questioning which develops their vocabulary and confidence in conversation. Once children are ready, they join a highly effective phonics programme which extends across the lower school and is organised according to ability rather than age. This has a significant impact on the development of pupils' reading skills so that most pupils read fluently for their age and with good comprehension. Pupils' work shows that most write competently for a range of purposes, both factual and creative. Relative to their abilities, their work shows good understanding and use of spelling and punctuation which reflects carefully structured teaching. Careful attention paid in Reception to cursive letter formation enables most pupils in Year 1 to write in neat cursive script. Pupils express their ideas and opinions confidently. They generally listen well to their teachers and one another. For example, in art, pupils in Year 2 displayed high levels of confidence when talking about their observational drawings of enlarged insects. They discussed their design decisions and explained their creative process.
- 3.7 Pupils develop excellent numeracy skills so that many are working at levels in mathematics much higher than expected for their age. Children in the EYFS quickly develop an understanding of numbers since counting is incorporated into daily routines. In Reception, children are able to return to activities first introduced with an adult, to practise independently, apply learning and secure concepts. Pupils apply mathematics in practical science investigations in science. Their numerical understanding is greatly enhanced through meaningful and practical experience of weights and measures. For example, in a Year 1 life skills lesson, pupils used scales to independently measure out quantities of ingredients for a cheese straw recipe. High teacher expectations are evident in pupils completing a good volume of work accurately and neatly. Tasks are differentiated for varying abilities which ensures challenge for the most able. Special puzzle and mathematics days, when pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively to find solutions to real-life problems, contribute well to pupils' successful development of problem solving.
- 3.8 As they move through the school, pupils develop confident computing skills which give them a secure base for future learning. These encompass programming, research, office and presentation skills. Younger pupils are able to conduct internet research, such as in Year 2 on Ancient Egypt and in Year 3 when in pairs, pupils were able to quickly find out whether a virus is living. Pupils show great enthusiasm and motivation in computing lessons, such as when working on elementary coding in Year 1 and stop-motion animation in Year 5. In these projects they appreciate being able to work at their

- own pace, sometimes collaboratively. Their independence is promoted through provision of helpful resources such as a laminated mat with prompts for the younger children.
- 3.9 Pupils develop excellent study skills as confirmed in scrutiny of their work and discussions with inspectors. The youngest children are very keen to engage in interesting activities and in so doing develop their curiosity and concentration. Plausible prediction and keen observational skills in science investigations enable pupils to reach rational conclusions. The written work in English of older pupils demonstrates outstanding understanding of critical thinking skills through the effective application of Bloom's Taxonomy to comment on class literature. In French lessons, the classroom environment provides pupils with a safe space to successfully practise, explore and synthesise their understanding of the language. Pupils are supported in developing higher order thinking skills for their age through provision of varied tasks which require complex thought for the more able; but which ensure that basic concepts are understood before proceeding.
- 3.10 The overall achievement of pupils is excellent. As they progress through the school, they make rapid progress from their various starting points so that by Year 6, most achieve results well ahead of their chronological age in standardised tests in mathematics, reading and spelling. Children in the EYFS make good progress so that by the end of Reception the majority attain the level expected in all the areas of learning. The most able pupils make particularly rapid progress and most pupils with SEND attain well in relation to their difficulties. This is confirmed through pupils' consistent success in gaining entrance to their senior schools, some with scholarships and awards. Leaders ensure that the system to track pupils' assessment results is sufficiently robust to ensure that any pupil not making expected progress is identified and supported effectively through carefully structured targets, either in class or with a specialist, which are regularly reviewed. Similarly, the progress of pupils who present as more able is monitored to ensure they are making the progress of which they are capable. Trustees provide leaders with regular and experienced support to assist them in ensuring pupils are achieving to the best of their abilities.
- 3.11 For a small school, pupils do well in a wide range of interests and pursuits outside of the academic curriculum. School sports teams compete against local schools with a good measure of success. The school's swimmers and triathletes have been highly successful in various competitions. The school affirms pupils' achievements outside of school in a range of sports such as gymnastics, show jumping, and ice skating. Several pupils extend their interests to play for local cricket, football and rugby teams. A group of pupils recently qualified for the semi-finals in a national science competition. Pupils are regularly awarded art scholarships to their senior schools and Year 6 entered and won an art competition. Pupils are also successful in instrumental and LAMDA examinations.
- 3.12 Pupils fulfil the school's aims by demonstrating highly positive attitudes to their learning. In this they are supported most effectively by the fruitful rapport they enjoy with their teachers. Teachers convey an optimistic confidence that pupils can meet their expectations, which means pupils adopt an enthusiastic and confident attitude. The outdoor education programme which encourages all pupils to enjoy learning outside the classroom and challenge themselves in a different way underpins pupils' enjoyment, initiative and sense of achievement.

# The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupil's strong self-confidence is seen in their willingness to explain their work and ideas to inspectors. The wide range of available opportunities means that as they move up the school pupils are increasingly able to articulate their strengths, interests and preferred learning styles. They are actively encouraged to compare their own progress with their individual targets and as a result pupils in Year 6 demonstrate excellent reflection on their learning and progress. Most pupils show resilience in recognising their areas of difficulty and are quietly proud of their successes. As they prepared for sports day, pupils displayed an appropriate understanding of the part their school values play in both

enjoyment for themselves and their classmates, in being good sports and improving their performance. In discussions, pupils confirmed the consensus in the questionnaires that they are well prepared for transition to senior school. They enjoy opportunities to develop life skills and understand the world around them. This is evident in the work of Year 3, who learn to evaluate their work at the end of a project and explain how they overcame challenges. Pupils' self-knowledge is promoted through marking which gives clear indication of how to improve. Pupils are confident that they receive prompt support from staff should they experience any issues with wellbeing. Pupils in Year 5 shared activities and places in the school that they may go to relax and praised the availability of individual support from the school counsellor.

- 3.15 Excellent implantation of the EYFS curriculum with a good balance between adult guided and child-led activities, as well as encouragement from staff to make their own choices, prepares children well to make confident decisions. Pupils are able to make choices in class such as when deciding the level of challenge in mathematics or how to present their work in history. In life skills lessons, staff encourage pupils' independence and initiative by supporting pupils to make choices and in organising their resources independently. The classroom environment is set up to encourage pupils to do this through the provision of equipment, prompts and labelled cupboards. Older pupils are developing an understanding that making the wrong decision can have unforeseen consequences.
- 3.16 As they grow older, pupils deepen their appreciation of the school's values and their impact on the wellbeing of both themselves and others. They willingly listen to the prayer and participate well in singing during assemblies. Pupils develop an appreciation of art and music, for instance expressing satisfaction at seeing their work displayed around school. They show generous praise for the instrumental playing of their peers in assembly. Through spending so much time outside, they develop a fascination and respect for the natural world and an understanding of their responsibility to care for it. At breaktimes they enjoy opportunities for creative play in nature. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed creating fairy playgrounds using pinecones, leaves and sticks. In so doing, they engage naturally and fluently in imaginative discussions. Many express great enthusiasm for their gardening sessions and others explain that visiting the orchard during breaktimes helps them to feel calm.
- 3.17 Pupils understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own behaviour. In the questionnaire, all agreed that the school expects them to behave well. The youngest children in Nursery are reminded to say "please and thank you" so that good manners develop naturally as they progress through the school. Whilst pupils are exuberant and enjoy releasing their energy outdoors, they generally show consideration for one another. Older pupils reflect that behaving well has for them, become sub-conscious saying, it makes them feel happy. They display a strong sense of fair play and say the school rules are fair. They appreciate, however, that a few pupils find it harder to conform and in this mature view show compassion and support for one another. Pupils in the upper school have a strong awareness of the wider world through current affairs and life skills lessons. Staff develop positive behaviours in pupils through supportive and consistent interventions such as focused praise when the right decisions are taken. Reflection time with an adult is generally effective in enabling staff and pupils to understand triggers and work towards greater self-regulation.
- 3.18 Pupils' social awareness and ability to work co-operatively is excellent. They greatly value their friendships since from an early age they are encouraged to understand how to build and maintain a positive relationship. Through personal, social and health education and life skills lessons, as well as assemblies, pupils realise they are in a highly supportive school community. Older pupils, through working with partners and small groups, understand that in order to collaborate successfully compromise may be necessary, as well as fairness, such as ensuring everyone has a turn. Whilst confident that a teacher will help resolve a disagreement, they can offer suggestions about how they might do this themselves. Year 6 pupils in DT demonstrate excellent collaborative skills when working together on design projects. They are able to explain the benefits of teamwork and are enthusiastic about the impact it has had on their enjoyment of the tasks. In joint working observed, much peer support was in evidence. Pupils float ideas off one another, negotiate and arrive at a workable

- conclusion. In the questionnaire, almost all parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.19 Pupils understand the importance of taking responsibility and, as they grow older, a strong desire to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. They are keen to play their part, whether it be helping to tidy up in the EYFS or undertaking a position of responsibility in Year 6. For example, pupils enjoy opportunities to be a buddy for a new pupil. Pupils are highly motivated to contribute positively to improving the school. Many are keen to preserve the natural environment they so enjoy. Whilst there is a pupil parliament, in discussion with inspectors, pupils were unclear of its function and did not feel involvement with it. They expressed a desire to increase its role and impact. Inspectors agreed, noting that meetings are irregular and mostly to discuss a limited range of issues such as uniform and food. Pupils are aware of their opportunities and talk enthusiastically about their efforts, within their house system, to support charities such as by donating goods to the local food bank and raising money through sponsored events.
- 3.20 Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding about different cultures and faiths across the school's broad and integrated curriculum. They demonstrate a positive attitude towards diversity and show empathy for pupils who may experience different and difficult childhoods to their own, such as girls in Afghanistan. Pupils' knowledge is strengthened through current affairs lessons and library resources and by displays around the school which promote their understanding. The pupils explained that they are encouraged to read and discuss current affairs using a variety of sources, including children's newspapers. The school invites visitors including parents to extend pupils' understanding of diversity, and marks special events such as International Women's Day. Pupils state their understanding that respect is about appreciating people and being considerate and kind. There is a culture of respect and tolerance throughout the school. This view is reflected in the questionnaire where almost all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.

Pupils have an outstanding age-appropriate understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. In the questionnaire all indicated that they are encouraged to be healthy and are taught about safety including how to stay safe online. They understand the importance of good nutrition and a balanced diet and its role in giving sufficient energy for their sports and outdoor pursuits. They all enjoy being active since this is a major part of their experience at the school. Pupils develop excellent life-saving skills during swimming lessons. From an early age they learn to understand their mental and emotional needs such as being able to request a brain break in class, engaging in pastimes that make them feel good, and enjoying being outside. They point to the quality of their trust in staff as important to their wellbeing. Pupils have a suitable understanding of online safety and older pupils are aware of sensible measures to take to be physically safe as they become more independent. In lessons where there are additional safety risks, pupils are learning to assess risk and take sensible precautions to reduce it. For example, pupils in Year 4 demonstrated an outstanding grasp of how to stay safe when shelter building, explaining the procedures for carrying large logs.

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## 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 chief executive and a trustee, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form times 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**

Mrs Jan Preece Reporting inspector

Mr Neil Cufley Compliance team inspector (Director of operations and finance, HMC

school)

Mrs Katharine Meunier Team inspector (Former deputy head, BSO school)