



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

LORENDEN PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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Lorenden Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Lorenden Preparatory School
DfE Number	886/6064
Registered Charity Number	3093684
Address	Lorenden Preparatory School Painter's Forstal Faversham Kent ME13 0EN
Telephone Number	01795 590030
Email Address	admin@lorenden.org.uk
Head	Mrs Ros Simmonds
Chair of Governors	Mr Dudley Shipton
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	105
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (49 boys; 56 girls)
Number of EYFS Children	26
Ownership and Governance	The school is a registered charity and a limited company. In 2015 it became part of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust. Oversight of governance now lies with its sister school, Kent College, but most aspects apart from key financial decisions are delegated to the Lorenden Governing Committee.
School Structure	The school has eight forms, one in each year group from the Nursery to Year 6.
Inspection Dates	24 Nov 2015 to 25 Nov 2015

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, this inspection records whether the school complies with each of these Regulations, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. Compliance is judged both by written formulation and by implementation. The Regulations represent minimum requirements and are given as either 'met' or not 'met'.

Additionally, inspections consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the Education (Abolition of Corporal Punishment) (Independent Schools) Regulations 1989.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. For children aged from two to five, this report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations and related aspects of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) the school's aims, detailed coverage of the quality of educational provision or pupils' achievement;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (iv) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures;
- (v) an investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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

The report reflects the evidence used in deciding whether the school's provision meets or does not meet the various requirements. Grades are not provided for the quality of the school as a whole or for each aspect inspected.

If the school has EYFS registered provision (for children under the age of two), reports use the same evaluative terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff and governors. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended an assembly. Inspectors saw the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

INSPECTORS

Mrs Joy Richardson	Reporting Inspector
Mr Tony Hawksley	Compliance Team Inspector (Bursar, IAPS school)

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3. SUMMARY OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INCLUDING ACTION POINTS

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Lorenden Preparatory School is a co-educational day school, founded in 1993. It occupies a Victorian house in the Kent countryside, close to Faversham.
- 1.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), comprising the Nursery (known as the Kindergarten) and Reception, provides for children between the ages of three and five. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and a few are from minority ethnic groups.
- 1.3 Since the last inspection the school has become a member of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust, in partnership with Kent College.

2. COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY STANDARDS

Part 1 Quality of education provided

Curriculum

- 2.1 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.2 The school has a written curriculum policy, supported by appropriate schemes of work and weekly plans which do not undermine British values. An outline of work to be covered in each subject by each age group is provided on the school website. Planning of the curriculum takes account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, and lessons are adapted accordingly. The curriculum appropriately supports pupils' personal development. [Paragraph 2(1)(a) and (b)]
- 2.3 Throughout the school, the curriculum is suitably broad and includes the teaching of French. Pupils develop skills in speaking and listening, and in literacy and numeracy. The school is currently introducing a new programme to accelerate mathematical learning. Pupils learn to 'think like a scientist' and gain experience in technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative aspects of education. Extra-curricular activities further develop pupils' skills, for example in music and sport. [Paragraph 2(2)(a) and (b)]
- 2.4 A suitable programme of personal, social, health and economic education supports the school's declared aim to develop self-disciplined, thoughtful pupils with a cheerful 'can do' attitude to life, respect for all and a strong sense of fair play. Pupils are prepared effectively for the opportunities and responsibilities of life in British society. [Paragraph 2(2)(d) and (i)]
- 2.5 The EYFS curriculum programme includes all the required areas of learning. Children's personal and social development is fostered. Activities, indoors and outdoors, are systematically planned to enrich and extend learning in accordance with individual needs. [Paragraph 2(2)(f)]
- 2.6 All pupils are enabled to learn and make progress. Individual education plans are utilised for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and additional learning support is provided. Individual needs are taken into account in lessons, aided by plans that identify where extra help or challenge is required. [Paragraph 2(2)(h)]

Teaching

- 2.7 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.8 In all subjects pupils acquire new knowledge and make good progress, developing understanding and skills as a result of the teaching that they receive. In the EYFS, teaching is well matched to children's needs and stage of development. Across the school, teaching fosters pupils' interest and application'. All pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they are encouraged to do their best and they are given help if they need it. They recognise the importance of effort in striving to succeed. Behaviour is well managed and lessons are planned so that time is used effectively. Class teachers and specialist teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach and use suitable teaching methods to ensure understanding. Pupils' learning is regularly assessed as a guide for future teaching.

This is reflected in lesson plans which identify those for whom learning, in respect of the current topic, is 'emerging', 'as expected' or 'exceeding expectations'. Classrooms are well organised and suitably resourced. Pupils are treated fairly and without discrimination. Values such as mutual respect and tolerance are consistently reinforced in the course of teaching. [Paragraph 3(a) to (j)]

- 2.9 The school has a clear framework for evaluating pupils' performance. In the EYFS, profiles are maintained from the start which track progress towards and frequently beyond the Early Learning Goals for the end of Reception. Throughout the school, regular tests and standardised assessments provide information and feedback for pupils, parents and staff about pupils' progress and attainment. [Paragraph 4]

How well do pupils achieve?

Pupils' Ability	Standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. Pupils have a fairly wide spread of abilities, with variations between the average and spread of abilities in separate cohorts.
Pupils' Needs	The school provides for eleven pupils who are identified as having SEND because of specific medical needs or learning difficulties. Seven receive additional learning support on a regular basis. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Four pupils speak English as an additional language, though almost all are fluent. Extra support is provided if the need arises. The school identifies those in each class who are higher achievers so that they can be challenged within lessons to exercise deeper thinking and to apply their learning.
Pupils' Achievements	Results in national tests at the age of eleven are exceptional in relation to the average for maintained junior schools.

Part 2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.10 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.11 The school actively promotes pupils' personal development, including their understanding of fundamental British values such as liberty, tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Such values are demonstrated and practised in the school context so that pupils are prepared for responsible citizenship and gain appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures. [Paragraph 5(a) and (b)(v)]
- 2.12 Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem through the school's cultivation of the attributes needed to maximise their learning potential such as resilience, co-operation and responsibility. They readily accept and include others. From the EYFS on, pupils learn to 'care and share' in line with their personal, social and emotional development. Buddies in Years 5 and 6 engage actively with younger children. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils indicated that their views and ideas are not listened to. Inspection evidence found that pupils are actively encouraged to express opinions. In 'Pupil Voice' meetings, they discuss and contribute ideas, and take action to improve the school for the benefit of everyone. They also look outwards and develop awareness of

global issues, such as when considering the Global Goals for 2030, in conjunction with schools worldwide. [Paragraph 5(b)(i), (iii) and (vi)]

- 2.13 Pupils learn democratic principles through the course of elections to positions within the school. They learn about British institutions and the rule of law through, for example, trips to the Houses of Parliament and a court of law, and from visiting speakers such as a magistrate and a police officer. [Paragraph 5(b)(ii), (iv) and (vii)]
- 2.14 Teaching is non-partisan and pupils receive a balanced presentation of opposing views. [Paragraph 5(c) and (d)]

What are pupils' views of the school?

Pupils are asked to respond as 'agree' or 'disagree' with the option to specify 'no view' or not to answer individual questions. Twenty-four pupils responded to part or all of the questionnaire. The table below shows the proportions of pupils who responded 'agree' or 'disagree' in relation to each question, and the number who didn't offer a view.

	% Agree	% Disagree	Number offering no view
School questions			
1. I enjoy school	96	4	0
2. I find my lessons interesting and engaging	91	9	3
3. The school gives me the support I need to learn	96	4	0
4. I can get help if I need it	100	0	4
5. The school encourages me to do my best	100	0	0
6. I feel safe and happy at school	87	13	1
7. My views and ideas are listened to in class and in school	89	11	7
8. Behaviour is good in the school	80	20	9
9. Teachers are fair in the way they give rewards	95	5	5
10. Teachers are fair in the way they give sanctions	95	5	6
11. The school deals with bullying	91	9	3
12. There is a member of staff or senior pupil I can turn to if I have a problem	100	0	1

Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.15 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.16 Adults working in the school receive suitable safeguarding training and know what to do if a child is in need or at risk of harm. Any concerns about pupils are appropriately recorded and sensitively handled in conjunction with local agencies. The school's safeguarding and recruitment policies are up to date and include the detailed content required by the latest official guidance. Specific requirements relating to the EYFS concerning the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting, and declarations of disqualification by association, are met in full. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL understand their responsibilities. Safeguarding arrangements are overseen by a nominated governor on the Lorenden Governing Committee, and the policy and procedures are reviewed annually by the governing body. Close attention is afforded to e-safety, and the staff have completed training on the prevention of extremism. [Paragraph 7]
- 2.17 The school's behaviour policy sets out the school's expectations of behaviour, and consequent rewards and sanctions. These are clearly understood by pupils who discuss the school's 'golden rules' and how these apply to community life. Poor behaviour is rare but dealt with effectively. Positive behaviour is consistently encouraged and pupils are awarded 'gems' for showing good learning characteristics. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils felt that behaviour is not always good in the school, and a few indicated that they do not feel safe and happy at school. Inspection evidence found that behaviour is closely monitored and any concerns that pupils may have are dealt with quickly. Incidents are suitably recorded and followed up. [Paragraph 9]
- 2.18 The school has an appropriate anti-bullying strategy that is implemented effectively. Staff are actively involved in educating pupils and informing parents about the nature of bullying, including cyberbullying, and how to deal with and prevent it. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they know to whom to turn if they have any worries. They said that bullying is rare and that they look out for each other to ensure that nobody feels excluded. [Paragraph 10]
- 2.19 The school complies with health and safety legislation and has a policy that guides daily practice. It seeks expert external guidance and takes timely action in response to recommendations. A health and safety committee reviews issues at a termly meeting. The site is well maintained and identified hazards are dealt with swiftly. [Paragraph 11]
- 2.20 The school has a suitable fire-safety policy. Equipment is regularly serviced and tested. Termly fire drills are carried out satisfactorily and class teachers are suitably trained. Recommendations from a recent fire risk assessment, made in conjunction with Kent College, are being implemented. [Paragraph 12]
- 2.21 Staff are kept informed about pupils' medical needs, and appropriate provision is made for the administration of first aid. First-aid boxes are suitably equipped. Sufficient staff are trained in first aid to provide coverage on and off the school site, and the level of provision meets the paediatric-first-aid requirements of the EYFS. Accidents and injuries are recorded and reported to parents. [Paragraph 13]
- 2.22 Pupils are appropriately supervised in school and in the playground, at clubs including the after school club, and on outside visits. Suitable staff-to-child ratios are maintained in the EYFS. [Paragraph 14]

- 2.23 The school admission register is completed appropriately, and attendance registers are satisfactorily maintained. Both are suitably stored. [Paragraph 15]
- 2.24 Risk assessments are carried out appropriately for all areas of the school that contain potential hazards. Separate risk assessments are made for external visits. [Paragraph 16]

Other legislation

- 2.25 The school has a suitable accessibility policy. This includes an action plan for 2014 to 2017 to further improve physical and educational access to the school and its facilities for current and future pupils, including those with SEND. [Equality Act 2010]
- 2.26 Corporal punishment is not used or threatened. [The Education (Abolition of Corporal Punishment) (Independent Schools) Regulations 1989]

Part 4 Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- 2.27 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.28 The school carries out all the required checks to ensure the suitability of staff before appointment, an improvement since the previous inspection. Enhanced criminal record checks are secured in timely fashion, and requirements are met concerning the checking of prohibition orders and disqualification by association. [Paragraph 18]
- 2.29 Where staff are supplied through an external employment business, the school checks the individual's identity and criminal record certification. It secures notification, with respect to each individual, that all other required checks have been completed. [Paragraph 19]
- 2.30 The required checks are carried out on all members of the Lorenden Governing Committee and, as the proprietor body, on all members of the Kent College Board. [Paragraph 20]
- 2.31 The single central register of appointments is fully and accurately completed. [Paragraph 21]

Part 5 Premises and accommodation

- 2.32 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.33 The school provides adequate toilet and washing facilities. A suitably equipped medical room is available for the treatment of pupils and the short-term care of those who are ill or injured. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. [Paragraphs 23 and 24]
- 2.34 The school's premises and buildings are suitably maintained to secure pupils' health and safety. Heating, lighting and acoustic conditions are appropriate for the activities taking place. [Paragraphs 25, 26 and 27]
- 2.35 Hot and cold water supplies are adequate, and fountains provide drinking water that is clearly labelled as such. [Paragraph 28]
- 2.36 The school provides suitable outdoor space, including grass and hard surfaces, for physical education and pupils' play, and for outdoor learning in the EYFS.

Improvements in this provision have been made since the time of the previous inspection. [Paragraph 29]

Part 6 Provision of information

2.37 The school meets the Regulations.

2.38 The school makes available to parents of current and prospective pupils all the required information about the school, including that concerning the EYFS. It publishes its policies on its website. Throughout the school, parents receive regular written reports about their children's attainment and progress. Online information about EYFS children's learning is readily accessible to parents. [Paragraph 32]

Part 7 Manner in which complaints are handled

2.39 The school meets the Regulations.

2.40 The school has a suitable policy and clear procedures for handling complaints. Records are kept of concerns and complaints, whether resolved informally or through a formal process. No formal complaints were made in the academic year 2014 to 2015. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school's education and care of their children. [Paragraph 33]

Part 8 Quality of leadership and management

2.41 The school meets the Regulations.

2.42 Those with leadership and management responsibilities within the school have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their role. The well-being of pupils is actively promoted. Policies and procedures, and their implementation, are regularly reviewed and updated. Governance oversight is exercised effectively across the whole school, including the EYFS, to ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently. This oversight is maintained during the transition to new governance arrangements, in which the Lorenden Governing Committee reports to the Kent College Board as the proprietorial body. [Paragraph 34]

What are parents' views of the school?

Parents are asked to respond as 'agree' or 'disagree' with the option to specify 'no view' or not to answer individual questions. Eighty-nine parents responded to part or all of the questionnaire. The table below shows the proportions of parents who responded 'agree' or 'disagree' in relation to each question, and the number who didn't offer a view.

	% Agree	% Disagree	Number offering no view
School questions			
1. My child is happy at the school.	100	0	1
2. My child is making good progress at the school.	99	1	1
3. My child feels safe at the school.	100	0	3
4. My child is well looked after at the school.	100	0	1
5. The school actively promotes good behaviour.	100	0	1
6. There is someone for my child to go to if problems arise in the school.	100	0	2
7. The school welcomes my views.	98	2	14
8. The school deals well with bullying.	99	1	15
9. Behaviour is well managed.	97	3	4
10. I receive good information about my child's progress, the school's policies and activities/events.	97	3	1
11. I receive timely responses to my questions, concerns and complaints.	98	2	8
12. My child has access to a broad curriculum.	100	0	4
13. My child's individual educational needs are being met at school.	99	1	5
14. I would recommend the school to another parent.	99	1	1

3. SUMMARY OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

	All requirements met?
Part 1 Quality of education provided (curriculum)	Yes
Part 1 Quality of education provided (teaching)	Yes
Part 2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	Yes
Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils, including Other legislation	Yes
Part 4 Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors	Yes
Part 5 Premises and accommodation	Yes
Part 6 Provision of information	Yes
Part 7 Manner in which complaints are handled	Yes
Part 8 Quality of leadership and management	Yes
National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools	Yes

Action points

3.1 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Progress since the previous inspection

3.2 At the time of the previous inspection in 2012, the school was required, in order to meet the Regulations: to implement all recruitment checks on staff before they begin work, to ensure appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, and to ensure appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely. These requirements are now met.