

School inspection report

18 to 20 June 2024

Loyola Preparatory School

103 Palmerston Road

Buckhurst Hill

Essex

IG9 5NH

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. Governors regularly visit the school and their presence at events, governors' days and formal meetings contributes to their understanding of the school's performance against agreed objectives in the development plan. They challenge leaders appropriately whilst providing support. Governors ensure leaders carry out their responsibilities effectively and actively promote pupils' wellbeing.
2. Leaders have a clear vision for the school and take effective measures to bring about the changes that they desire on a continual basis. Their implementation of the current school improvement plan has achieved several developments that leaders have considered key.
3. Leaders have created a broad curriculum that carefully considers pupils' needs. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop skills in a diverse range of subjects. Pupils learn skills, deepen their understanding and make good progress. The curriculum is supported by well-planned schemes of work.
4. Teachers have typically high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and most teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. However, there is an inconsistent approach to the management of low-level behavioural incidents in lessons, which can impact on the overall effectiveness of teaching. A new system of behaviour management and recording has recently been introduced but this has yet to produce consistent results.
5. Leaders ensure pupils' attainment and progress are regularly assessed. Standardised assessment data and teachers' professional judgments are recorded and tracked. However, leaders do not use this information as effectively as possible to ensure that this provision is tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and of groups of pupils.
6. The school provides extra-curricular activities, which enrich the curriculum at lunchtimes and after school, and enable pupils to develop a range of additional skills.
7. Pupils' moral and spiritual understanding is effectively developed through a range of activities and is supported by Catholic and other teachings. Leaders encourage pupils to develop their appreciation of diversity and celebrate the skills, talents, views and successes of their peers.
8. Leaders actively promote fundamental British values. This results in pupils showing mutual respect for one another and demonstrating an appreciation of the views and beliefs of others. Pupils are enabled to develop a clear understanding of the principles of democracy and the rule of law and understand that their actions can have a positive impact on the lives of others in their local community and wider society.
9. Leaders ensure that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place and that risk is managed effectively through the school. The premises and accommodation are suitably maintained. Pupils are effectively supervised at all times.
10. The suitable safeguarding policy is implemented effectively. However, at the start of inspection, the single central record of appointments (SCR) contained some minor administrative errors relating to the dates of some pre-employment checks.

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:

- strengthen the oversight of the SCR to ensure that it is completed without minor administrative errors
- ensure the consistent application of the behaviour management policy, particularly with regard to low-level behavioural incidents in lessons
- strengthen the use of assessment data to ensure that provision is tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and of groups of pupils as effectively as possible.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Governors' regular attendance at events, governors' days and formal meetings with leaders ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the work of the school. They provide leaders with support as well as focused challenge about the information they regularly receive. Governors have a robust approach to ensuring leaders carry out their responsibilities effectively to meet the Standards and to ensure that all policies are implemented appropriately in a way that actively promotes pupils' wellbeing.
12. Leaders communicate the Catholic nature of the school's roots and vision effectively throughout the school community. The school's aims are expressed daily through reference to the motto, 'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam', 'To the greater glory of God'.
13. Leaders effectively manage risk across the school. They have developed a positive culture of risk assessment. Appropriate risk assessments for all areas of the school, educational visits, vulnerable pupils and school events are created to support the safety of pupils and staff. Individual risk assessments identify appropriate control measures to mitigate the potential risks that have been identified. At the start of the inspection, the risk assessment policy did not fully reflect the breadth of the school's work in this area. Leaders quickly updated the policy to ensure it more clearly reflected the effective procedures in place across the school's activities.
14. Governors maintain effective oversight of the complaints procedure and understand their obligations regarding panel hearings. Leaders and teachers effectively manage informal concerns raised by parents and formal complaints are responded to in an efficient and timely manner. The headmistress maintains a log of formal complaints, including any actions taken as a result of these and how they were successfully resolved.
15. Leaders demonstrate a thorough and ongoing approach to self-evaluation and continued improvement across the school. They have a clear vision for the school, especially in achieving the school's aims and ensuring its Catholic values are front and centre. The current development plan is nearing its conclusion and leaders are in the process of compiling the next school improvement plan, which demonstrates a keen understanding of areas for development as well as of where the school is most effective.
16. An appropriate accessibility plan has been created to ensure that any current and prospective pupils who have disabilities have appropriate access to the curriculum, buildings and information, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders ensure that no pupils are discriminated against.
17. Parents receive regular reports about their children's progress and all other required information is provided on the school's website.
18. Leaders liaise with external agencies effectively. For example, leaders communicate with relevant safeguarding agencies and refer concerns to them when appropriate.

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. Leaders have created a broad curriculum that provides appropriate learning opportunities for pupils of all ages and aptitudes, including children in the early years. It provides pupils with opportunities to develop skills in a diverse range of subjects. Curriculum planning considers pupils' individual needs and prior attainment through pupil progress meetings and analysis of assessment data. As a result, pupils learn skills, acquire new knowledge and make good progress. The curriculum is supported by well-planned schemes of work which demonstrate effective mapping across a range of topics for each subject.
21. Leaders in the early years create a range of activities to effectively develop children's communication and language skills throughout each day. For example, the focus on weekly letters and sounds, identification of key words and daily collaborative activities continually build children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
22. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' learning. They apply their good subject knowledge and use a range of methods and resources to engage pupils effectively in well-structured lessons. Pupils respond positively to teachers' verbal and written feedback and acknowledge that mistakes are not to be feared. As a result, pupils acquire new skills and knowledge with confidence and deepen their understanding across the curriculum. Staff develop effective relationships with pupils and nurture them with the support and challenge they need to make good progress.
23. Leaders carry out learning walks and lesson drop-ins to monitor the quality of teaching across the school and regular supervisions in the early years support effective practice.
24. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively using a newly implemented seven-step approach. However, this is not yet fully embedded in all teachers' practice, which leads to an inconsistent approach to the management of low-level behavioural incidents, and a lack of clarity in the recording and monitoring of such incidents. This inconsistency impacts on the overall effectiveness of teaching.
25. Appropriate systems are in place to identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result of the early identification of their needs, focused teaching, support groups, one-to-one support and careful assessments, leaders ensure these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
26. Currently, most pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) do not require additional support with their English. Those who do are enabled to access the curriculum and make good progress with their English through careful monitoring and support with their language skills.
27. Suitable systems of assessment track pupils' attainment and progress over time. Termly pupil progress meetings assess the impact of support strategies. The assessment framework and ongoing in-class assessment support continual adaptation of the curricular provision to ensure pupils make good progress. However, leaders' use of standardised assessment data or teachers' professional judgements to tailor provision to individuals' and groups' needs is not as effective as possible.
28. A varied programme of additional activities is available through the extra-curricular programme at lunchtimes and after school. These activities enrich the curriculum and include opportunities for

pupils to develop physical, problem-solving and social skills. Pupils appreciate the range of activities on offer and engage with them enthusiastically.

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

29. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

30. The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme enables pupils to learn about, recognise and deal with their emotions. The programme encourages pupils to develop mutual respect and actively promotes self-confidence, often referring to the importance of love as underpinning the respect pupils develop for other people. As a result, pupils understand the importance of good physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.
31. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme incorporates the Catholic Church's 'Journey in Love' approach into the scheme of work. Age-appropriate reference is made to enable pupils to understand appropriate boundaries and respect people from diverse backgrounds, and a range of family types. Pupils learn to value the qualities of respectful and supportive relationships, and caring friendships.
32. Leaders enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through a range of positions of responsibility from an early age. For example, children in early years act as line leaders and prayer monitors, and as they progress through the school, pupils take on responsibilities as play leaders, head and deputy head pupils, prefects, and eco and school councillors.
33. Pupils develop a wide range of physical and sporting skills through effective physical education (PE) and a programme of fixtures and clubs. Pupils make good progress in this area of the curriculum. Pupils are taught about the importance of maintaining positive physical and mental health and strategies for doing so. School lunch menu options and the PSHE curriculum support pupils' understanding of the importance of a balanced diet.
34. Behaviour charts and emotional self-regulation strategies contribute effectively to promote pupils' typically good conduct around the school. Pupils' positive engagement and motivation in lessons are supported by teachers' guidance and use of praise. The recently introduced seven-stage behaviour code helps most pupils stay on task and remain focused. It enables pupils to be clear about the consequences of both negative and positive behaviours and most pupils are keen to do their best. However, there are instances where low-level disruptive behaviour in some lessons is not effectively dealt with, recorded or monitored as effectively as possible by leaders.
35. The school implements a successful anti-bullying strategy to the extent that pupils do not perceive that bullying takes place. Any issues or concerns are swiftly resolved by class teachers and leaders ensure that care is given to all parties involved.
36. A rigorous approach to health and safety is in place. All required checks and maintenance are logged and monitored. Leaders make use of external specialists to audit matters such as fire safety and carry out any recommendations that they make. Termly fire evacuations are recorded, and feedback is acted upon. The premises and accommodation are suitably maintained and contain appropriate facilities for the pupils. Clear procedures are in place for staff to notify appropriate personnel of any health and safety defects that might arise and have them addressed swiftly.
37. Effective supervision of pupils is in place including at drop off, collection and key transition points during the school day. The required staff-to-child ratios are maintained in the early years. As a result, pupils feel safe in all areas of the school.

38. The admission and attendance registers are appropriately managed and maintained. Absences are followed up effectively. Staff inform the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard times.
39. First aid is provided in an appropriate and timely manner and any medication is administered suitably. Staff across the school have received appropriate first aid training, with staff in the early years trained as paediatric first aiders. Accurate records of any administration of first aid or medication are maintained, and parents informed appropriately.

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

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

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

41. Leaders actively promote fundamental British values which results in pupils showing mutual respect for one another and demonstrating an appreciation of others' views and beliefs. Leaders further promote pupils' understanding of different lives, for example, through pupils' exploration of neurodiversity and its impact on how people learn, and the importance of accepting people from different types of family. Pupils supplement such understanding by visiting a care home to better understand how dementia affects people's lives.
42. Pupils' moral awareness is developed through masses and assemblies and the teachings of Catholic and other faiths. For example, teachers encourage pupils to consider right and wrong with regard to whether Jesus would want them to act in a particular way or not. The school provides a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual understanding, not least through regular collective worship in class and Masses led by visiting priests and assisted by pupils. Pupils take an active part in these services which develop their understanding of the school's values.
43. Pupils study the beliefs, principles and values of different world religions as well as of Catholicism. Pupils share aspects of their lives and contribute to events on occasions such as Eid, Diwali and Hanukkah. This enhances pupils' understanding of and respect for the range of faiths and beliefs of people with diverse backgrounds.
44. Effective transition strategies in early years ensure children are prepared for life in Year 1. Pupils in Year 6 feel well prepared for their next stage in education through a variety of curriculum support sessions and discussions about expectations. Governors and former teachers conduct practice interviews, developing pupils' confidence in presenting to wider audiences, and preparing them for senior school interviews.
45. From early years onwards, children and pupils start to develop a broad understanding of public services and institutions. They consider the roles and responsibilities of 'people who help us' through visits from local fire, ambulance and medical services.
46. Leaders place emphasis on societal responsibility by ensuring that pupils develop an understanding of rights and responsibilities from the youngest age. Pupils learn about democracy from an early age. For example, early years children vote for the story of the day. As pupils move through the school, events such as 'Parliament Week' help pupils develop an understanding of democracy. The curriculum requires pupils to consider the role of general elections and the democratic representation of people. Visits to the Houses of Parliament further develop pupils' understanding of the democratic process.
47. Pupils' economic and monetary understanding is effectively supported through themes throughout the mathematics curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 visit a local shop to purchase items with cash. And, in an annual 'enterprise week', pupils in Year 6 devise budgets, marketing plans and the promotion of their ideas to develop businesses to raise funds for charity.
48. The school council encourages pupils to engage in supporting the views of others in their school community. Through the processes of applying, interviewing and being selected on merit, and carrying out various roles of responsibility, pupils understand the role of service to the community.

Pupils contribute to the lives of others in the community through regular contributions to local food banks and children's charities.

49. Through the PSHE programme, assemblies and masses, and discussions with teachers, leaders ensure that pupils accept responsibility for their own actions and the impact they can have on others. Through a series of talks, pupils develop an understanding of current affairs, drug awareness and issues in the local area. Staff create a safe environment to ensure impartial and unbiased discussion takes place.

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

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

Safeguarding

51. Leaders implement an appropriate safeguarding policy which reflects current statutory guidance effectively. Governors provide regular oversight of safeguarding procedures and offers appropriate challenge regarding the implementation of safeguarding arrangements, including through an annual review. A designated safeguarding governor meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to review safeguarding procedures and the school's responses to any concerns that have arisen.
52. The DSL and other safeguarding staff are appropriately trained and respond effectively to any safeguarding concerns raised. When appropriate, they liaise with relevant external agencies and make referrals in a timely manner. The DSL maintains suitable records of any concerns and actions taken in response.
53. Staff receive effective induction training in safeguarding when they join the school, and all staff are regularly trained, including about any changes to statutory guidance. Staff are confident in their knowledge of safeguarding matters and know how to report any concerns raised. Staff know they have a responsibility to report low-level concerns and allegations against adults and who to report these to.
54. Staff teach pupils how to keep safe, including when online. The school filters and monitors pupils' use of the internet through appropriate systems.
55. Staff with responsibility for safer recruitment ensure all required checks are undertaken before staff and governors take up their roles. These checks are recorded in a single central record of appointments (SCR). This is regularly checked by senior leaders and the designated safeguarding governor. However, at the start of the inspection, the SCR contained some minor administrative errors regarding the dates recorded for the checks of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and of application forms. These anomalies were quickly rectified by the school during the inspection.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

56. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Loyola Preparatory School
Department for Education number	881/6007
Registered charity number	1085079
Address	Loyola Preparatory School 103 Palmerston Road Buckhurst Hill Essex IG9 5NH
Phone number	020 8504 7372
Email address	enquiries@loyolaprepschool.co.uk
Website	www.loyola.essex.sch.uk
Proprietor	The Loyola Preparatory School
Chair	Mrs Anne Marie Fox
Headmistress	Mrs Kirsty Anthony
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	157
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 June 2019

Information about the school

57. Loyola Preparatory School is an independent Catholic day school for male pupils aged between 3 and 11. The school is overseen by a trust who appoint a board of governors to oversee the work of the school and its leaders. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are organised in single classes by year group.
58. There are 38 children in the early years comprising two Nursery rooms and one Reception class.
59. The school has identified 19 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
60. English is an additional language for 13 pupils.
61. The school states its aims are to identify and develop pupils' skills and abilities, so that they fulfil their potential and are well equipped for their future lives of service to others as an expression of 'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam', 'To the greater glory of God'.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

18 to 20 June 2024

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

63. 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.

64. 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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