

Material change inspection report

19 June 2025

Elm Green Preparatory School

Parsonage Lane

Little Baddow

Chelmsford

Essex

CM3 4SU

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'.

Inspection outcome

The school has requested a material change request to alter its age range from 4 to 11 years to 3 to 11 years.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 2(1), 2(2), 2(A)(1), 2(A)(2), 3 and 4

1. The school's curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. It is carefully planned to develop pupils' knowledge and skills incrementally as they move through the school. The curriculum includes subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history, music, art and physical education. In Reception, the curriculum covers the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.
2. The curriculum is delivered effectively by knowledgeable teachers. Younger pupils, including in the Reception class, are mainly taught by their class teacher, with specialists teaching music, art and physical education (PE). Leaders intend that the Nursery curriculum will also include this specialist input. Gradually, as they move through the school, pupils are increasingly taught by teachers who are subject specialists. For pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, all subjects are taught by subject specialists.
3. Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the curriculum. Results of the Year 6 national assessments are well above the national average. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply. This is evident in their written work and their verbal responses. Their work is of a high quality. Pupils take pride in their work and exercise books are neat and well presented.
4. The school is well resourced. In addition to its classrooms, it has a range of facilities, including a purpose-built library, a science room, a music block, a swimming pool and extensive outdoor space. The school already has sufficient space to accommodate the proposed Nursery class. The intended classroom is fit for purpose and benefits from a small outdoor space that is accessed directly from it.
5. Pupils develop good relationships with the adults that work with them. Classrooms are positive places where a love of learning is ignited in pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils behave well so that everyone can concentrate and learn. Pupils are given the support they need to be successful.
6. The school has a suitable assessment policy that is implemented effectively. Leaders monitor the results of assessments closely so that they understand how well pupils are learning. They also use assessment effectively to help them identify where pupils require additional support or a different approach.
7. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. Their needs are understood well and they are provided with the support they need to be successful.
8. The school has a suitable relationships education policy, which is shared appropriately with parents. Leaders provide parents with useful information about what is taught as part of relationships education, which enables them to be well informed. The curriculum is appropriate and well considered, including as part of personal, social and emotional development (PSED) in the early years.

9. Leaders have good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They have thought carefully about how to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of younger children. They have started to put curriculum plans in place that are suitable for three-year-old children and are continuing to develop them. For example, curriculum plans place emphasis on the development of pre-writing skills, including building hand strength and dexterity as key steps before children are ready for formal writing.
10. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

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

ISSR paragraph 5

11. The school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is suitable and well developed throughout the school. This includes personal, social and emotional development (PSED) in the early years. Suitable content is allocated to each year group and developed as pupils move through the school.
12. From the early years onwards, pupils learn that 'it is okay to be different'. They are taught about the importance of showing respect for other people, regardless of their personal characteristics. They learn about a range of cultures and religions. Pupils are given opportunities to talk about and share their own cultures and beliefs. This helps them to develop a well-rounded view of the world and their own place in society.
13. Pupils learn about fundamental British values such as individual liberty and democracy. They learn about rules and how these relate to the country's laws. In the early years, children in Reception quickly learn the school's rules and understand why they are needed to help everyone to be safe and happy at school.
14. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a) and (b)

15. Suitable measures are in place to ensure that only suitable people are employed to work with children. All required checks are carried out before anyone is allowed to take up their post at the school. These are recorded accurately in the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks.
16. Leaders have put a suitable intimate care policy in place. This is focused on ensuring that children are safeguarded effectively if they require personal care from an adult to help with toileting or personal hygiene.
17. The school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL receive suitable training. They have good knowledge and understanding of the role. They take prompt and appropriate action to protect pupils, as necessary, in response to concerns that are raised.
18. Staff receive regular and ongoing safeguarding training. They know about possible signs of abuse and neglect. Staff report concerns about pupils promptly when they arise, using the school's agreed systems. Pupils are well supported by staff and know that the adults in school are always there to support them.

19. Pupils are taught about a range of ways to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. As soon as they join the school, children learn about the rules that are there to keep them safe. For example, they learn how to walk along the lane outside the school safely, holding hands with a 'buddy' and staying to the side.
20. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

21. The school's safeguarding policy is suitable and up to date. It reflects current statutory guidance. The policy is made available on the school's website.
22. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraphs 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c), 34(2)

23. Leaders have good knowledge and skills that are appropriate to their roles. Leaders focus well on promoting pupils' wellbeing. This is at the heart of all their work and the decisions they make.
24. Leaders have a clear rationale for requesting this material change. They have thought carefully about the possible impact on the school of lowering its age range. They have ensured that they have the capacity necessary for this change, including securing suitable resources and staffing.
25. Leaders have put suitable plans in place to ensure that the Standards continue to be met if the material change is implemented. They are continuing to work on developing these plans further.
26. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Elm Green Preparatory School
Department for Education number	881/6017
Address	Elm Green Preparatory School Parsonage Lane Little Baddow Chelmsford Essex CM3 4SU
Phone number	01245 225230
Email address	admin@elmgreen.essex.sch.uk
Website	www.elmgreen.essex.sch.uk
Proprietor	Mrs Ann Milner
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Milner
Age range	4 to 11
Number of pupils	179
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 February 2023

Information about the school

27. Elm Green Preparatory School is co-educational day school in Little Baddow, Essex. The school is owned by a limited company of which the proprietor is the sole director.
28. There are 18 children in the early years comprising one Reception class.
29. The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small proportion of pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
30. The school has identified a very small proportion of pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
31. The school states that its aims are to value each individual child instilling confidence, independence and self-esteem; to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment in which each child can be challenged academically, creatively, physically and socially to achieve high standards and fulfil their individual and unique potential; to foster curiosity and a love of learning which will enhance the child's whole education and provide a foundation for life-long learning; to work with parents enlisting their co-operation and interest in order to create a happy partnership working together with trust and respect; to provide a caring and compassionate ethos where children can live amicably together and develop values based on Christian principles; to promote courtesy, good manners and good behaviour in all settings.

Purpose of the material change inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

19 June 2025

32. One reporting inspector visited the school for one day.

33. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the school site
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- observation of lessons, in conjunction with school leaders.

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

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit isi.net