

School inspection report

14 to 16 October 2025

Handel House Preparatory School

The Northolme

Gainsborough

Lincolnshire

DN21 2JB

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. The proprietor does not ensure that the school meets all the Standards. Several policies are not updated in a timely manner or implemented in a suitable fashion. Leaders do not have the skills or knowledge to fulfil all their responsibilities effectively to promote pupils' wellbeing. There are serious and multiple failings in the school's provision.
2. Leaders do not ensure that safeguarding practices at the school reflect current statutory guidance. Leaders with safeguarding responsibilities are not suitably trained for their role, and the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is not a member of the senior leadership team. Leaders and staff do not have a secure understanding of low-level concerns, and leaders do not maintain a low-level concerns log as required. Staff are not provided with effective safeguarding training. Safeguarding records are not maintained as required by current statutory guidance. The DSL does not provide oversight of the school's internet filtering and monitoring system. The school does not require all staff to complete an application form before they commence working at the school. The proprietor does not maintain effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
3. The school's attendance policy and procedures are not suitable and do not reflect the requirements of current statutory guidance. The senior attendance champion is not named in the policy. The length of the registration period is not included in the policy. The school does not use the codes correctly in the attendance registers. The admission and attendance registers are not kept electronically, as required.
4. The school's management of risk is not thorough or suitable. Potential risks to pupils, including with regard to the premises and educational trips, are not identified or mitigated effectively.
5. Leaders do not manage formal complaints appropriately. They do not maintain complete records of formal complaints submitted, including any actions taken or resolutions reached.
6. Leaders do not keep suitable records of any allegations of bullying or incidents of misbehaviour. The current procedures for maintaining behaviour and bullying records are not in keeping with the reporting procedures outlined in the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies. The school does not keep a log of serious sanctions, as required.
7. Leaders do not provide or make available to parents all the required information. For example, the proprietor does not provide parents with their full contact details throughout the year in line with requirements.
8. Staff know pupils well. They meet every week to discuss pupils' emotional wellbeing so that their individual pastoral needs are consistently and carefully supported.
9. Leaders in the early years provide a stimulating and nurturing environment. Children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of teacher-led and independent activities. Children develop self-esteem and confidence and are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
10. Teachers plan and teach effective lessons. Pupils demonstrate consistently diligent and motivated attitudes towards their learning. Pupils make good progress in their work and are prepared effectively for their next schools.

11. Staff provide adequate classroom support for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). However, leaders do not consistently share detailed information about the ongoing, individual needs of pupils who speak EAL. Consequently, teaching strategies do not always ensure that the progress of pupils who speak EAL is promoted effectively.
12. The school provides a well-planned programme of physical education (PE). Pupils regularly participate in sport and physical activities and understand that this promotes their mental and physical health.
13. Leaders teach pupils a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum which supports their emotional wellbeing and helps them to understand how to manage their feelings. The school maintains an appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE) policy. However, pupils do not receive coherent, ongoing RSE education throughout the school year. As a result, they are not prepared to manage different aspects of their relationships as well as possible.
14. Leaders provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop leadership skills and to help and serve others. Prefects and house and sports captains support staff in promoting a respectful and supportive school environment. The school council meets regularly and effectively represents the views of others.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are not 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 not met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are not met.

Areas for action

The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:

- demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently
- actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

so that:

- the safeguarding leaders are appropriately trained for their role
- the DSL is a member of the senior leadership team
- leaders and staff have a secure understanding of low-level concerns and leaders maintain a low-level concerns log as required
- safeguarding records are maintained as required by current statutory guidance
- staff are provided with effective annual safeguarding training
- the DSL maintains effective oversight of the school's internet filtering and monitoring system
- all staff are required to complete an application form before they commence working at the school
- leaders and staff strengthen their understanding of when to report safeguarding concerns to the local authority
- the school's safeguarding policy and procedures are subject to effective oversight

- the attendance policy includes details of the senior attendance champion and the length of the registration period
- the correct codes are used in the attendance registers
- the admission and attendance registers are kept electronically
- records of behavioural and bullying incidents are maintained in line with the behaviour and anti-bullying policies, and include a log of serious sanctions
- the school identifies and mitigates potential risks effectively in all areas of school provision, including with regard to the premises and educational trips
- all required information is provided and made available to parents, including contact details for the proprietor throughout the year
- the complaints policy is effectively implemented and full records of any formal complaints are kept.

Recommended next steps

The proprietor should:

- ensure that teaching strategies consistently support the individual needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language
- strengthen the teaching of RSE throughout the school.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

15. The proprietor does not ensure that the school meets all the Standards. Several policies are not implemented effectively or updated in a timely manner. The proprietor's oversight of the school is insufficient. It does not ensure that leaders have sufficient knowledge or skills to fulfil all required responsibilities or promote pupils' wellbeing effectively.
16. The school does not identify, mitigate or evaluate risks with sufficient robustness. Leaders and staff do not provide risk assessments for the premises and accommodation or for areas of school provision which can carry additional risk. Risk assessments are written for educational visits and trips. However, staff are not provided with any risk assessment training which means that off-site risk assessments are limited and vague. For example, such risk assessments do not consider the particular needs of any vulnerable pupils, do not always include the number of pupils participating in the trip and do not consistently identify the staff who will accompany the trip. Overall, risk assessments do not ensure that potential risks are identified or mitigated effectively.
17. The school provides parents with an appropriate complaints policy, which includes a three-stage complaints procedure and suitable timescales. However, leaders do not maintain complete records of formal complaints. These records do not always include the original communication from parents when they first register their formal complaint. Leaders inform parents of the decisions taken by the school once investigations into their complaint have been concluded by the school.
18. The proprietor does not ensure that parents are provided with all required information or have this made available to them. Parents are not provided with sufficient contact information so that they can correspond with the proprietor at any time of the school year. The proprietor does not efficiently revise the information provided to parents about the school's academic performance so that it reflects the previous academic year. Parents are not provided with information about the number of formal complaints registered in the previous academic year in a timely manner.
19. In other areas of the school's provision, pupils' emotional wellbeing is actively promoted. The proprietor holds weekly staff meetings so that any pastoral concerns can be appropriately shared. This means that staff provide pupils with effective emotional support in line with the school's aims.
20. The headteacher works effectively with staff to evaluate and improve the school's educational provision. For instance, following consultation with staff, the headteacher has developed the extra-curricular and PE programmes to increase pupils' opportunities to develop new skills and interests.
21. Leaders in the early years work closely with staff to promote children's personal and academic development. Leaders maintain close links with parents so that their child's pastoral and individual needs are well understood and supported. Those who work in the early years actively promote a secure, nurturing and stimulating environment.
22. Leaders maintain appropriate links with external agencies. The school notifies the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.
23. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. They implement a suitable accessibility plan which seeks to promote an inclusive curriculum for pupils. Leaders provide appropriate support in lessons for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

24. Standards are not met consistently with respect to safeguarding, behaviour and bullying, admissions and attendance, risk assessment, provision of information and the management of complaints.
25. As a result, Standards relating to governance, leadership and management are not met.
- 26. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

27. Leaders implement a well-planned curriculum which appropriately meets the needs of pupils. The curriculum provides pupils with effective opportunities to develop new skills and widen their knowledge. For example, leaders have introduced Russian in addition to French lessons, which support pupils to develop the confidence and knowledge to write and communicate in different languages. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) lessons encourage pupils to combine subject knowledge and develop critical problem-solving skills. The curriculum is planned to support the values of respect and inclusion. For instance, pupils explore topics about ancient China and North and South America, which helps them to develop their understanding of diversity and contrasting cultures. As a result of the effective implementation of the curriculum, pupils make good progress, develop confidence and prepare well for the next stage of their education.
28. Leaders monitor the effective implementation of the curriculum by visiting lessons and scrutinising pupils' exercise books. Leaders consult with staff to evaluate and adapt the curriculum so that it continues to meet the needs of pupils. For example, in mathematics, staff now routinely begin lessons with a regular starting activity covering a range of mathematical topic questions, so that pupils continuously consolidate and build on prior teaching.
29. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan effective lessons. In English, teachers ask probing questions that help pupils to explore the difference between main and subordinate clauses. In art, teachers provide clear instructions and carefully prepare resources to support pupils as they learn to enlarge pictures accurately using scaling techniques. Teachers provide pupils with individual and focused guidance during lessons so that any misunderstandings are quickly addressed. As a result of effective teaching, pupils make good progress in their work.
30. Pupils demonstrate consistently diligent and motivated attitudes towards their learning. Pupils listen attentively in lessons and respectfully consider alternative points of view. In religious studies (RS) lessons, for instance, pupils share prayers and reflections drawn from the religions they study. In geography, pupils extend their thinking by researching information they include in their digital presentations about the United Kingdom. In history, pupils explore the Shang dynasty and show resilience and independence in improving their work when they add further detail to their illustrations and writing.
31. Leaders and staff meet regularly to discuss the progress pupils are making. They scrutinise information from assessments and adapt the curriculum in response, so that pupils continue to be supported effectively. For example, leaders analyse pupils' responses in mathematics and English assessments. Staff identify pupils who need additional challenge or further support and adapt the curriculum and their teaching in response. Teachers inform parents about the progress their child is making through an appropriate schedule of written reports and parents' meetings.
32. Leaders in the early years provide a wide range of stimulating lessons and activities, which effectively support children's language and communication skills. Children listen carefully to skilful questions asked by their teachers, which prompt and guide them through activities such as carving patterns out of pumpkins. Children widen their knowledge of phonics through a range of reading, speaking and writing activities. For instance, teachers read books to children and highlight the starting sounds of different words in the stories. In mathematics, teachers use pictures of dinosaurs

and encourage children to count and add up how many dinosaurs they can see. These well-planned activities help children to develop linguistic and numerical skills effectively.

33. Leaders provide suitable support for pupils who have SEND. They disseminate information so that staff know how to support the individual needs of pupils. Staff adapt resources and lessons for pupils who have SEND when required. For instance, teachers provide pupils with resources such as enlarged texts and word lists and facilitate movement breaks when these support the pupils' learning and engagement. These measures support pupils who have SEND so that they make good progress from their starting points.
34. Pupils who speak EAL are provided with adequate support overall. Teachers adapt teaching strategies in their lessons to support pupils' access to the English language. However, leaders do not provide teachers with systematic or detailed information about the pupils they teach who speak EAL to help them determine the most appropriate teaching strategies to use. Consequently, the progress of these pupils in developing their English speaking, reading and writing skills is not promoted as well as it could be.
35. Leaders provide a suitable programme of extra-curricular activities which enables pupils to develop new skills and widen their knowledge. Pupils participate in a running club and work on fitness and technique so that they improve their competitiveness in cross-country activities. Pupils attend a newspaper club, learn how to conduct an interview and produce an informative school newsletter. In chess club, pupils develop their understanding of strategy and problem-solving.

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

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

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

37. The behaviour policy is not followed effectively. Staff do not record incidents of misbehaviour other than those which occur during breaktimes. Leaders do not maintain a serious sanctions record as they are required to do.
38. Leaders do not implement or update the anti-bullying policy effectively. Leaders do not maintain any bullying records. For example, they do not record the actions they take in response to any allegations of bullying.
39. The admission and attendance procedures do not reflect current statutory guidance. The attendance policy does not name a senior attendance champion or specify a registration period. The attendance registers do not use the correct codes. The admission and attendance registers are not maintained electronically as required.
40. Teachers know the pupils well and record and report any pastoral concerns that arise to senior leaders. Staff hold weekly meetings and discuss any pastoral concerns relating to pupils which have been raised. In this regard, the emotional wellbeing of pupils is effectively promoted.
41. Other aspects of the school's behaviour and anti-bullying strategies are implemented effectively. Positive behaviour is rewarded through the award of certificates and house points. Pupils learn about the harmful consequences of bullying through PSHE lessons, assemblies and a regular anti-bullying week. The school promotes the values of respect and inclusion so that pupils typically behave well and demonstrate supportive attitudes towards others.
42. Leaders provide effective opportunities for pupils to learn about moral responsibility and to develop an understanding of spirituality. In assemblies, pupils reflect on moral themes such as helping and supporting others. They visit a local church to participate in harvest and Christmas celebrations. Leaders teach pupils about the world's major religions through RS lessons and organise educational visits to places of worship, such as a Sikh gurdwara.
43. Leaders provide pupils with a well-planned PE curriculum which supports their physical and mental health. Pupils are taught specific skills relating to a range of different sports, including cross-country running and football. Leaders arrange weekly swimming lessons for pupils throughout the year so that they develop their swimming techniques and learn to be confident in water. Senior pupils serve as sports captains and support staff in promoting the values of positive sportsmanship.
44. Pupils are taught a balanced PSHE programme. They learn about the onset of puberty and how their body will begin to change. PSHE lessons help pupils to understand the importance of healthy sleep and personal hygiene. Pupils explore and learn how to manage their emotions. Teachers use effective teaching methods in PSHE lessons, such as acting out scenarios so that pupils engage with the topics which are being taught. The school prepares pupils well to be able to take responsible personal decisions to promote a healthy lifestyle.
45. Leaders provide pupils with appropriate RSE overall. They consult with parents about the content of the RSE curriculum. Leaders invite an external organisation to visit the school every year to provide age-appropriate workshops for pupils which cover some parts of the RSE curriculum. Pupils

occasionally learn about other aspects of the RSE programme through their PSHE lessons during the year. However, the provision overall for RSE is limited which means that pupils' understanding of how to build and maintain positive relationships is not supported as effectively as it could be.

46. Leaders in the early years promote children's emotional wellbeing and personal development through well-planned lessons and activities. Specialist staff teach children PE and help them to develop their balance, co-ordination and agility. Staff encourage children to be adventurous when playing outdoors, such as when they use the climbing equipment. Children participate in music lessons and learn to sing and play musical instruments. Children approach their education with enjoyment and develop self-esteem and confidence.
47. Leaders implement a thorough approach to health and safety. They commission an external fire assessment and ensure that pupils undertake a termly fire drill so that they know how to evacuate the premises and accommodation efficiently in case of an emergency. Leaders carry out and record required health and safety checks in a systematic and timely manner.
48. Staff supervise pupils effectively throughout the school. Leaders are visible, alert and welcoming every morning when pupils arrive at school. Staff proactively supervise pupils during breaktimes. Suitable staff-to-child ratios are maintained in the early years.
49. Leaders implement appropriate first aid and medical provision. The administration of medicines is managed competently. Several staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications, including all staff who work in the early years.
50. The admission registers contain all required information.

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

51. Standards are not met consistently with respect to the management of behaviour, bullying or the school's admission and attendance procedures.
52. As a result, Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are not met.
- 53. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.**

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

54. Leaders support pupils' understanding of values such as inclusion and tolerance towards others. Assembly themes, for example, focus on different forms of disability and celebrate the successes of Paralympians. In English, pupils read books which consider, at an age-appropriate level, sexual and cultural identity. Pupils make poppies, attend Remembrance events and visit a Holocaust museum to deepen their knowledge about the consequences of prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes. As a result of these measures, pupils develop a broad and effective understanding of respect, kindness and individual liberty.
55. Pupils are appropriately taught about financial matters and money. In mathematics, for example, pupils engage with a range of problem-solving questions which help them to understand how to make totals using different combinations of coins. Pupils run fundraising stalls at school fairs and manage the process of accepting payment and offering change. Older pupils learn about bank accounts and debit cards during their PSHE lessons.
56. The school prepares pupils for their next steps in education effectively. For instance, leaders invite local businesses to visit the school to inform pupils about the work they do. Staff prepare pupils well so that they manage the assessment process for senior schools confidently. Year 6 pupils attend transition events so that they are positive and ready to move to their senior schools.
57. The carefully planned curriculum supports pupils' effective understanding of law and order, responsible actions and British institutions. In PSHE lessons, pupils study how laws change and develop over time and explore the purpose of the criminal justice system. Pupils are impartially taught about the main British political parties and develop their knowledge of how democracy promotes fairness and equality. They learn about Parliament and explore the role of national and local government. Leaders invite the police to attend the school to inform pupils about their work to keep local communities safe.
58. The school provides a range of appropriate opportunities for pupils to provide service and help within the school community. Older pupils are democratically elected as house and sports captains. They support staff in acting as positive role models and provide help at school events. Pupils volunteer to be librarians and maintain the library as a tidy and well-organised school facility. Pupils of all ages join the pupil council and represent the views of other pupils at regular meetings. Leaders respond positively to suggestions from this council, such as by developing the outdoor facilities to include an area for pupils to be reflective and to play quiet games.
59. Leaders and staff in the early years promote and model positive values so that children learn to act in a socially responsible manner towards each other. Children manage their emotions well and are supported effectively so that they easily resolve any minor conflicts. They show empathy and celebrate the successes of others who are awarded certificates in assemblies. Children are keen to be helpful, such as when they support each other in fastening coat zips and searching for mislaid items. They readily assist their teachers in clearing away resources after outdoor activities. Children are supported effectively so that they learn to be kind, respectful and generous to other members of the school community.

60. Leaders implement a range of suitable opportunities so that pupils are prepared to make a positive contribution to British and global society. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of social responsibility and contribute to their local community. Pupils participate in sponsored walks to raise funds for charities which rehome and rescue domestic animals. They donate food items which are distributed by a local charity to people who are homeless and hungry. Such activities promote and broaden pupils' understanding of the importance of providing help and support to others.

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

61. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

62. The proprietor does not maintain sufficiently effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that they are robust and effective.
63. The DSL is not a member of the school's leadership team. Neither the DSL nor the proprietor, who acts as the deputy DSL, is appropriately trained for their safeguarding roles. As a result, leaders with responsibility for safeguarding do not have a secure knowledge of current statutory guidance.
64. Staff are not provided with sufficiently thorough safeguarding training. They have a very limited understanding of low-level concerns and self-reporting. They are not confident about the process to follow should they need to report any serious safeguarding concerns about another adult who works at the school. Leaders do not maintain a log of low-level concerns as required.
65. The proprietor, leaders and staff do not fully understand when it is appropriate to refer safeguarding concerns to the local authority. The school's safeguarding records are not maintained as required by current statutory guidance. Leaders do not maintain chronological records or include the decisions and subsequent actions taken to promote pupils' wellbeing and safety. Records of meetings and related email communications between the school and external agencies are missing from safeguarding files.
66. The school does not ensure that all adults who are appointed to work at the school complete an application form before commencing work at the school.
67. The DSL does not maintain any oversight of the school's filtering and monitoring procedures as required.
68. The school's attendance procedures do not comply with current statutory guidance. Staff do not always formally record pupils' attendance during the morning registration period.
69. The safeguarding team responds to safeguarding concerns effectively, including through consultation with external safeguarding partners.
70. The school enables pupils to understand that it is important to ask for help, if required, and encourages them to feel confident talking to their teachers about any concerns they may have.
71. Leaders promote pupils' thorough understanding of how to use the internet in a responsible and safe manner through assemblies, PSHE and computing lessons and during online safety days. For example, pupils learn not to share any personal information, to report any concerns to a trusted adult and to be kind and respectful when engaged in online activities. Leaders implement an internet filtering and monitoring system which alerts the school to any irregular or suspicious online activity.
72. Leaders ensure that most required employment checks are carried out before an adult begins work at the school. These checks are recorded in a suitable single central record of appointments (SCR). However, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates are sometimes retained in staff personnel files, in contravention of current statutory guidance.

73. Staff who work in the early years consistently adhere to the school's specific safeguarding expectations relating to working with young children.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

74. Standards are not met consistently with respect to safeguarding and attendance.

75. As a result, Standards relating to safeguarding are not met.

76. Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included in the report.

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The following standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR ¹ Part 3, paragraph 16	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
16(a)	The welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
16(b)	Appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32	The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—
32(1)(a)	the information specified in sub-paragraph (2) is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
32(1)(b)	the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
32(2)(b)(i)	where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted.
32(3)(e)	particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations.
32(3)(f)	details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.
ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33	The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which—
33(j)	provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and—
33(j)(i)	whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
33(j)(ii)	action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management

¹ The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('ISSR')

	responsibilities at the school—
34(1)(a)	demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
34(1)(b)	fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
34(1)(c)	actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
EYFS ² 3.89	Children must be kept safe while on outings. Providers must assess potential risks or hazards for the children and must identify the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment must include consideration of staff to child ratios. The risk assessment does not necessarily need to be in writing; this is up to providers.
EYFS 3.91	Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks 57. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.
EYFS 3.98	Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers, and must keep a written record of any complaints, and their outcome. All providers must: • Investigate written complaints relating to how they are fulfilling the EYFS requirements. • Notify the person who made the complaint of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. • Make a record of complaints available to Ofsted, or the CMA with which a provider of CoDP is registered, on request.

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

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that—
9(b)	the policy is implemented effectively; and
9(c)	a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

² Early years foundation stage statutory framework ('EYFS')

ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
EYFS 3.73	Providers are responsible for supporting, understanding, and managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.
EYFS 3.12	Providers must have an attendance policy that they share with parents and/or carers. This must include expectations for reporting child absences and the actions providers will take if a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period of time, for example: implementing the setting's safeguarding procedures, following up with the parents and/or carers and contacting emergency contacts if parents and/or carers are not contactable.

Safeguarding

The following Standards in this section of the Framework are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that –
7(a)	arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
7(b)	such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
EYFS 3.4	In every setting, a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs). All practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.
EYFS 3.5	Providers must have and implement policies and procedures to keep children safe and meet EYFS requirements. Schools are not required to have separate policies to cover EYFS requirements provided the requirements are already met through an existing policy. Where providers are required to have policies and procedures as specified below, these policies and procedures should be recorded in writing. Policies and procedures should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant LSP.
EYFS 3.7	Providers must put appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for all staff (including students and volunteers) to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the setting's safeguarding provision. This must include when and how to report concerns and the process that will be followed after staff report concerns. Providers must ensure staff are aware of the setting's whistleblowing procedures and must ensure all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.
EYFS 3.13	Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable; they must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles. Providers must take appropriate steps to verify qualifications,

	including in cases where physical evidence cannot be produced. Providers must also ensure that any person who may have regular contact with children (for example, someone living or working on the same premises the early years provision is provided), is suitable.
EYFS 3.30	Providers must ensure that all practitioners are trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C. Providers must ensure that practitioners are supported and confident to implement the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures on an ongoing basis. Providers should read 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners'.
EYFS 3.31	The DSL must provide support, advice and guidance to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL must attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C.
EYFS 3.32	Training must be renewed every two years. Providers may consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting.

School details

School	Handel House Preparatory School
Department for Education number	925/6023
Address	Handel House Preparatory School The Northolme Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 2JB
Phone number	01427 612426
Email address	admin@handelhouse.com
Website	www.handelhouseschool.com
Proprietor	Mr Mark Raisborough
Headteacher	Mr Mark Raisborough
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	43
Date of previous inspection	8 to 10 November 2022

Information about the school

77. Handel House Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. The headteacher is also the proprietor of the school.
78. There are four children in Nursery and six children in Reception, taught together in one class.
79. The school has identified four pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
80. The school has identified five pupils as speaking English as an additional language (EAL).
81. The school states its aims are to encourage all pupils to love learning. It endeavours to place importance on personal, social and citizenship education so that pupils develop good manners and a spirit of responsibility towards those in school and in wider society.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

14 to 16 October 2025

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

83. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons
- observation of registration periods, breaktimes and assemblies
- discussions with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher
- discussions with pupils
- discussions with the headteacher and other members of staff
- tour of the school
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

84. 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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