



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

WEST HOUSE SCHOOL

MAY 2018



CONTENTS

SCHOOL'S DETAILS	3
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	6
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	8
Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision	8
Effectiveness of leadership and management	8
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	9
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	9
Outcomes for children	10
Compliance with statutory requirements	10
Recommendation for further improvement	10
3. INSPECTION EVIDENCE	11

SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	West House School		
DfE number	330/6059		
Registered charity number	528959		
Address	West House School St James's Road Edgbaston Birmingham West Midlands B15 2NX		
Telephone number	0121 440 4097		
Email address	secretary@westhouseprep.com		
Headmaster	Mr Alistair Lyttle		
Chair of governors	Mr Steven Heathcote		
Age range	1 to 11		
Number of pupils on roll	362		
	Boys	327	Girls 35
	Early years	150	Pre-prep 73
	Prep	139	
Inspection dates	16 to 17 May 2018		

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 West House is a preparatory day school for boys aged from 4 to 11 years with a co-educational Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting caring for children from 1 to 4 years. It was founded as a day and boarding preparatory school in 1895. The school, situated in Edgbaston near the centre of Birmingham, merged with an established local co-educational nursery school in 1999. The school is a registered charitable trust overseen by a board of governors.
- 1.2 The school has 3 distinct sections: Early Years, including a nursery and pre-school for boys and girls; Pre-prep, for boys from Reception to Year 2 inclusive; and Prep for boys in Years 3 to 6.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection a new head of EYFS has been appointed and the school has provided several additional facilities which include those for games, medical care, dining, and parking.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to provide a happy, caring atmosphere encouraging academic, sporting and musical success whilst preparing pupils for their future with a strong focus upon: an inclusive environment with a broad and balanced curriculum; developing the whole child in an atmosphere of genuine care; promoting positive behaviour, attitudes and values; and celebrating success.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above average. The school has identified 22 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, all of whom receive specialist support from the school including for dyslexia and dyspraxia. No pupil has a statement of special needs or education, health and care plan. The school has also identified 1 pupil for whom English is an additional language and who receives support from the school. The school provides additional challenges in areas such as mathematics and music for those pupils regarded as more able. Most pupils come from professional and business families with a wide cultural diversity.

2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

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

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) and [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 Pupils in the prep part of the school take tests of attainment in English and in mathematics. In the years 2015 to 2017, the results indicate that the pupils are above average in these two subjects.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and governors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the governors, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The governors ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 2.19 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.20 Children under the age of two years make rapid progress relative to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Excellent care and planning meets the needs of all the children. They are happy, safe and secure within their nurturing, family environment. Requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been fully met; staff work together as a strong and successful team who fulfil their responsibilities and protect the children in their care. The leadership and management is a strength of the setting. Practitioners rigorously evaluate and reflect on their practice, ensuring continuous improvement.
- 2.21 The school has fully implemented the recommendation from the previous inspection to extend opportunities for children in the EYFS to reason, and create situations for them to discuss and negotiate in order to solve problems

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- 2.22 The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.23 A recent review of the roles and responsibilities of EYFS leaders has promoted an ambitious vision, with high expectations of what children under two may achieve in their learning and development. Regular supervision of staff supports key people in improving their role with pupils and with parents. Members of staff feel they are listened to by their managers. Appraisal is positive and leads to many opportunities for appropriate professional development.
- 2.24 Adults work together as a strong and conscientious team whose members strive to improve their setting through reflection and self-evaluation, incorporating the views of parents and acting upon their feedback. The pre-inspection questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive; parents spoken to during the inspection were very happy with the care their children receive. They greatly appreciate that children under two years old are included in so many whole school activities.
- 2.25 Learning programmes meet all the statutory requirements. The rich and varied curriculum meets the needs of all children and incorporates all the areas of learning, both indoors and in the extensive outdoor areas. Children also benefit from participating in specialist music and art sessions, the EYFS nativity play, a weekly assembly, a whole school arts festival and sports day.
- 2.26 Children's achievements are regularly and carefully tracked against the development goals; thorough planning ensures that they have the necessary experiences to prepare them to move on successfully to the next stage in their learning.
- 2.27 Equality, diversity and British values of tolerance and respect play important roles throughout the setting, both in displays and in celebrating festivals such as Hanukah, Diwali, Easter and Ramadan. High standards of behaviour are always expected.
- 2.28 Exemplary arrangements for safeguarding are evident throughout the setting. Members of staff are well trained in the latest statutory requirements. All permanent staff have paediatric first aid training. They are aware of how to guard children against extremism and radicalisation. Children's safety is of the utmost importance and thorough daily risk assessments are carried out.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- 2.29 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- 2.30 The well-qualified members of staff are experts in the required content of the EYFS and have high expectations of what each child can achieve.
- 2.31 Assessment information is gathered through regular observations and meticulously maintained records which provide next steps in learning. The well-designed and personalised EYFS 'Learning Journals' and 'Daily Diary' incorporate information and comments from parents and are in themselves a fully comprehensive record of a child's learning and development at the setting.
- 2.32 Key people meet regularly and plan together with the expertise of an EYFS leader, to support every child's individual needs and to incorporate their interests in stimulating and challenging activities, thus enabling them to make good progress; for example, when learning about transport, key people adapted activities to accommodate those children with particular interests in cars.
- 2.33 Children's needs are at the heart of the setting; staff know just when to interact and engage with children during their child-initiated activities and equally when to sit back and observe. They never miss an opportunity to further their language and communication skills, for example when introducing new words such as 'scoop' during sand play.
- 2.34 Parents greatly appreciate the setting's open-door policy and the caring relationship they have with their child's key person along with the information they are given about the EYFS curriculum. They can attend parent evenings twice a year; annual reports against the prime learning areas are thorough and helpful and give individual targets for children to achieve. Children are very well prepared for their progress check at two years which is fully discussed with parents. Parents have half-termly information sheets and greatly appreciate the 'Daily Diary' and 'Learning Journal'.
- 2.35 Members of staff create a highly inclusive environment where children are taught to respect and support one another. Activities are carefully planned to help children acquire the skills that will equip them to progress to the next stage in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- 2.36 The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are outstanding.
- 2.37 Children are happy and secure within a calm and nurturing setting. The encouragement given by adults ensures all children grow in self-confidence, choosing their own activities, exploring their environment and learning to persevere. Going to lunch conjures up a new world of exploration and calculated risk taking, where those who have just learnt to toddle, happily and successfully climb steps holding on to a rail. Children have many opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills within their stimulating setting. Using apparatus in the main sports hall presents exciting new challenges. Whilst the outdoor area gives many opportunities for physical development and exploration, it does not reflect the same level of creativity and imagination as the indoor rooms.
- 2.38 Members of staff have careful procedures to ensure a smooth and gradual transition within the setting; toddlers spend a morning each week in their new room; babies mix with older toddlers on a regular basis and, with the support of their key person, older toddlers move from the security of their high chair to eat at a table in the main dining room.
- 2.39 Children build very strong and loving bonds with their key people and all the staff within the setting. They are exceptionally sociable and friendly with adults. Adults know just when a reassuring cuddle is needed. Babies who are settling in are quickly comforted and distracted. Parents happily drop their children off in the morning and feel reassured to be able to discuss problems with their child's key person. Attendance is regularly and promptly checked and recorded.

- 2.40 Behaviour is exemplary because adults are calm and positive role models. Key people know just when to intervene and encourage sharing and taking turns. Children really enjoy each other's company; kind and gentle hands are emphasised during over-enthusiastic displays of affection. Adults encourage toddlers to put their dummies away during activities, but close to sleep time, when in need of a comforter, they fetch them independently.
- 2.41 High ratios of staff to children ensure they are safely cared for. Members of staff explain and demonstrate how to keep safe, for example by promoting and supporting safe climbing up to the slides in the indoor and outdoor areas. Care is taken to ensure that photographic observations are only recorded on school equipment.
- 2.42 Children enjoy nutritious and healthy meals and snacks. They have many opportunities to exercise, both indoors and outside. They learn the importance of washing hands and hygiene procedures. Members of staff assiduously prepare children to respect one another through the care and guidance they give them. Children enjoy many visitors, for example the police, the fire service, the lifeboat, and the animal man. They enjoy school bonfire celebrations and have the opportunity to go camping with parents on an annual whole school weekend.

Outcomes for children

- 2.43 Outcomes for children are outstanding.
- 2.44 All children make excellent progress in relation to their different starting points. Children are happily engaged in their exciting activities and love the routine of their day. The youngest babies and toddlers successfully order hoops and post shapes, repeating colours and the names of shapes as their key people reinforce them. They enthusiastically join in counting and action songs and love to share books. They make an excellent attempt to wash their hands thoroughly with adult support. They eat their lunch with great care using a spoon. After lunch toddlers make a beeline for their own mattresses and happily lie down for their sleep.
- 2.45 All under-twos learn to celebrate each other's successes as well as their own in the EYFS assembly. Younger toddlers master climbing in and out of the outdoor train carriage, and delight in repeating it several times because they and their key people are so pleased with their achievement. They listen and respond well to their adults, happily following their guidance. Rising twos confidently and independently choose their own activities, such as fetching, opening and squeezing paint pots to mix colours. They discuss colours and shapes made and start to string words together such as 'more red paint'. Children understand language such as 'backwards', 'forwards' and 'round in circles' as they independently program their remote-controlled cars. They proudly receive stickers in assembly for tidying up.

Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.46 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Provide further opportunities to promote the imagination and creativity of the children in the outdoor area.

3. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Christopher Ray	Reporting inspector
Ms Kirsty Henderson	Compliance team inspector (Head of pre-prep, IAPS school)
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating inspector for early years