



Material Change Inspection Report

The White House Preparatory School

September 2023

School's details

School	The White House Preparatory School			
DfE number	208/6384			
Address	The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Day Nursery 24 Thornton Road Clapham Park London SW12 0LF			
Telephone number	020 86749514			
Email address	office@whitehouseschool.com			
Headteacher	Mr Tony Lewis			
Proprietors	Mrs Mary McCahery Mr Stephen McCahery			
Age range	3 to 11 years			
Number of pupils on roll	162			
	EYFS	31	Juniors	131
Date of inspection	6 September 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 The White House Preparatory School is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged 3 to 11 years and includes a non-registered Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. The Woodentops Day Nursery which shares the same site is registered and managed separately. The school was founded in 1985 by the current proprietors, two of whom act as principals, one responsible for the day nursery, and one for the school. The school has identified 19 pupils as having special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND). No pupil in the school has an educational, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 19 pupils.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its registered capacity from 150 to 230 pupils. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the relevant requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.4 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2023. Regular meetings indicate that the safeguarding team works closely together to promote pupils' wellbeing, including that of children in the EYFS. Safeguarding information is regularly shared with staff, parents and pupils and procedures are regularly monitored. In discussions, pupils reported that there are many opportunities to raise any concerns and that they feel that they are listened to by staff when they do so. Inspection of safeguarding records confirms this view, and that suitable action is taken when pupils' individual needs are identified. Senior leaders and staff understand how incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence should be dealt with if they arise, including by seeking external advice where necessary. Members of staff are confident to identify if a pupil is in need or at risk. They understand that if pupils are victims or potential victims of harmful sexual behaviour, safeguarding partners and the police should be contacted promptly. Suitable filtering and monitoring of technology are undertaken and staff are appropriately trained in this area.
- 2.5 Detailed records of all safeguarding concerns are regularly monitored to identify patterns so that any early indicators of risk or harm can be acted upon. Regular safeguarding training, including by local partners, includes identification of the signs of abuse. In discussions, staff demonstrated a clear awareness of their training and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They confirmed that they would know how to respond if a situation of child-on-child sexual abuse arose. Staff new to the school receive suitable training, and from thereon, regular update training about the most recent statutory guidance. Staff have completed training in the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified and training rescheduled.
- 2.6 Arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures and, in discussions, staff showed an appropriate awareness of what may constitute a low-level concern. The school safeguarding team works closely with proprietors to produce a suitable annual review of safeguarding. Scrutiny of the minutes of proprietorial meetings where safeguarding has been discussed confirms an appropriate depth and breadth of oversight. Proprietors receive effective safeguarding training and regular updates from the DSL. Discussions with proprietors and the safeguarding team reveal that appropriate thought and forward planning has been given to the impact of the proposed increase in registered capacity on related safeguarding procedures and arrangements.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.

- 2.8 The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. Health and safety measures within the school are implemented appropriately. Systematic procedures, including checks of equipment are implemented. The outcomes are regularly reviewed by the proprietors. Such checks have been made of the new building and refurbished classrooms that are in place to provide for the proposed increase in registered capacity.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard and is likely to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.10 An appropriate fire safety policy is implemented effectively and is regularly reviewed by the proprietors, who engage accredited external agencies. The school acts in a timely manner to address recommendations from the annual external audit of fire safety arrangements. Procedures for emergency evacuation are implemented effectively and suitably recorded, including regular fire drills. Suitable fire risk assessments have been undertaken for all school buildings, including the new one, and recommended actions are addressed quickly. The required fire signage, refuge points for the disabled and evacuation routes are clear throughout and all members of staff have been trained to manage any emergency evacuation.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.12 The school ensures that pupils are always under appropriate supervision while attending school and on any trips or visits, including in the EYFS. Duty rotas, provision in the classroom, and supervision before and after school are implemented effectively. Arrangements have been reviewed effectively in order to maintain suitable supervision if the increase in registered capacity takes place.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.13 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.14 The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy which sets out a suitable approach to the management of risk and includes the actions to be taken to reduce any risks that are identified. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school including the EYFS, recreation and play areas and for trips and visits offsite. Suitable assessments of the risks associated with the proposed increase in pupil numbers in each year group of the preparatory school have been conducted by the proprietors and senior leaders.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.16 The school implements a suitable recruitment policy which has due regard to all statutory requirements. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. The information on the single central register reflects documentation seen in staff files.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23–29]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.18 The site provides appropriate provision to allow for additional pupils. Building work has been completed to provide additional classroom accommodation and a main hall that will meet the needs of the increased numbers. The new building includes additional toilets and washroom for both pupils and staff. A new playground and garden provide additional space for outdoor activities and recreation and this ensures that overall provision is suitable. Pupils have easy access to drinking water and lunch arrangements have been enhanced by the provision of a new kitchen and service area which is intended to cater also for increased numbers of pupils. Furnishings and resources are of a suitable quality in all areas of the school and internal lighting and acoustics promote effective learning. Appropriate medical facilities exist which are sufficient to cater for the proposed increase in total pupil numbers. External lighting ensures that all areas are appropriately lit when required. The site is maintained in a suitable state of repair and regular monitoring ensures that any maintenance issues are promptly addressed.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.19 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.20 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.21 Those in leadership and management positions demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. They fulfil their responsibilities effectively and provide effective support and guidance for all staff to ensure that the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. The proprietors have worked closely with senior leaders to consider with suitable care the implications and requirements of the proposed increase in total pupil capacity. As a result, planning is effective and the school is suitably prepared for the material change.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school is granted permission to increase its registered capacity from September 2023 from 150 to 230 pupils.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietors. He visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. He scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Roger Tapping

Reporting inspector