



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

The White House School and Woodentops Day Nursery

February 2020



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School's Details

School	The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Day Nursery			
DfE number	208/6384			
Early Years registration number	EY414063			
Address	The White House Preparatory School 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 Mrs Laura McCahery			
Age range	6 months to 11 years			
Number of pupils on roll	147			
	EYFS	56	Juniors	91
Inspection dates	12 to 13 February 2020			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Day Nursey is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged 6 months to 11 years. It is situated in its own grounds in a residential area in the London Borough of Lambeth. The Woodentops Day Nursery is managed separately and is open fifty weeks a year. It operates from premises adjacent to the school. Children attending the day nursery may attend the school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting when they reach an appropriate age. 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. Together, they fulfil the role of governors.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and senior leadership team have been appointed. The school has constructed new classrooms for Years 5 and 6 and a drama studio has been built.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a broad curriculum in which art, music and sport are as important as traditional academic subjects so allowing each child to reach their full potential. It aims to ensure that each child is recognised as unique and valuable with the firm objective to cultivate a love of learning through a strong support system which includes home, family, their peers, their teachers and their school. Pupils are encouraged to develop a strong moral compass through kindness and empathy.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of business and professional backgrounds, mostly from the local area. The majority are white British with a wide range of other ethnic groups represented. The school does not use standardised tests, but its own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified eight pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist help. None of these pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. Fifteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), three of whom require additional support. The particular needs of more able or talented pupils are catered for within lessons.

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](#), [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 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 proprietors, 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 and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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. This includes details about the proprietor, 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 any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, 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 proprietor ensures 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 Leaders and providers are highly effective in their planning and designing of the curriculum to meet the unique needs and interests of each child. High-quality educational programmes are overseen by rigorous monitoring practices. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully implemented. Management roles have since been clearly defined and leaders and managers now regularly and very effectively monitor the recording of planning and assessment. Since the previous inspection staff have improved transition processes and have further developed the outdoor learning area.
- 2.21 The high-quality curriculum and rigorous care practices meet the needs of all children who attend, ensuring they are safe and happy. Practitioners' excellent knowledge of how each child learns and develops ensures that the delivery of the curriculum is highly effective and supportive. Any child for whom a practitioner has a concern is carefully supported and regular meetings with parents and outside agencies enable them to progress rapidly.
- 2.22 All children make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. Most children meet or exceed age-related expectations in all areas of learning.
- 2.23 Children display high levels of personal and emotional security and form strong and positive attachments with their key persons. They consistently demonstrate that they feel safe, secure and happy, especially when they leave their main carer or when trying something for the first time. Routines are rigorously adhered to, enabling each child to develop an extremely strong sense of familiarity and security.
- 2.24 Requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare are fully met and monitored rigorously by the leaders and managers. There is a clear understanding of how to protect children and an excellent, embedded culture of shared responsibility, ensuring children are safe and cared for.
- 2.25 Leaders and managers are highly effective in their provision and support of all children. They have an excellent knowledge of the EYFS learning requirements as well as a shared vision for future development.

Quality of education

- 2.26 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 2.27 High-quality educational programmes are rigorously reviewed by nursery leaders ensuring they are very confident that curriculum intentions are met and are challenging for all children. Highly effective curriculum planning, including next steps for all children, is monitored by leaders to ensure that intentions and outcomes are carefully planned for each child's individual learning.
- 2.28 Outstanding content, sequencing and progression in all areas of learning are secured by detailed planning and assessment. Practitioners have an excellent understanding of how children learn and know each child's needs and interests extremely well, including children who need extra support or further challenge. Information gained as a result of very effective assessment is used to ensure that all children are very well supported according to their individual needs.
- 2.29 Enabling environments provide all children with excellent opportunities to choose from high-quality resources and activities as they discover and learn. Children's independence and curiosity is evident as they deepen their knowledge and skills, for example when investigating the properties of paint underneath plastic film. Younger children babble to make their needs known and, as their language

develops, the use of simple words to express their opinions shows the excellent progress they make. Highly effective transition procedures before children begin nursery, and when they move to the next class, ensure they are confident and prepared extremely well for future success.

Behaviour and attitudes

2.30 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.

2.31 As children play and explore, they demonstrate a high level of engagement enabling them to be successful learners. They experiment with sounds whilst banging quietly and loudly on a table, showing a keen willingness to learn. They steady themselves whilst trying to climb, and investigate bottles filled with water or dried lentils by shaking and squeezing. They choose their own ingredients as they make 'soup' in the outdoor kitchen. As they explore the properties of sand and water, they discover what happens when they mix them together and show excellent imagination as they make 'cakes'.

2.32 Children are very active learners who are highly motivated. They independently join in a variety of interesting and age-appropriate activities with great enthusiasm and a desire to find out more. They demonstrate increased confidence and focus when learning to walk, persevering as it becomes more challenging. They concentrate extremely well whilst carefully fitting the last brick on a stacking tower and are delighted and proud when they are rewarded with success. As they join in with the actions during singing time they concentrate extremely well and enjoy listening to the sound of the guitar.

2.33 Children have their own ideas and confidently choose their own way to do things. They know their likes and dislikes, communicating their needs very effectively as they choose which fruit to eat at snack time. As they access resources, they have clear ideas about which book to look at and show good levels of independence as they make choices. They problem solve with great enthusiasm as they turn a handle to make cogs work on a board, recognising cause and effect. They make excellent links between objects when handing over a toy phone for a practitioner to talk into. As they make 'soup' in the outdoor kitchen they name yellow and green colours matching them with each vegetable. They play imaginatively when pretending to be different animals.

2.34 The very successful partnership with parents promotes children's attendance. Children arrive at nursery enthusiastically and, as they happily leave their carer, they manage their feelings well showing they are emotionally secure. They respond with enthusiasm to familiar routines, for example at mealtimes and when going outside. Their behaviour is excellent, and they show that they can concentrate for extended periods, forming good habits for future learning.

Personal development

2.35 The personal development of children is outstanding.

2.36 Very effective care practices promote and support children's emotional security and the development of their character. Each key person's excellent knowledge of a child's unique needs and interests ensures that all children receive high-quality care. They show how secure they feel emotionally when they wake from their nap.

2.37 Staff encourage resilience and independence as they gently help a child learning to walk. Their excellent support encourages greater independence as children make their own choices. They praise children when they have a go and promote kindness by encouraging kind hands, enabling their confidence and self-esteem to grow. All practitioners interact enthusiastically with the children ensuring that they learn and develop appropriately.

2.38 Practitioners successfully encourage and support children to take appropriate risks to succeed, for example when managing the steps outside. They encourage children who have not yet mastered a skill to watch a child who has, for example when joining in the actions for a song. This develops their

confidence and a desire to have a go. All children are physically and emotionally secure as a result of the excellent provision and care of all practitioners.

- 2.39 Secure attachments with their key person and rigorous daily routines promote children's independence and well-being. As children arrive, they are enthusiastically welcomed by their key person or another adult. All practitioners respond extremely warmly to all children if they need reassurance or extra support. However, if a key person is absent there is no specific alternative person with whom a child has established a similar secure attachment.
- 2.40 Children are encouraged to be physically active both inside and outdoors. Practitioners provide excellent opportunities for children to grow in confidence as when climbing up, down and over a small ramp. The excellent outdoor provision is used regularly throughout the day to strengthen motor skills and enjoyment of the outdoors. Nutritious meals are provided, and food preferences and allergy needs are catered for. Children have an effective understanding of risk and know how to play safely and be considerate of others.
- 2.41 Staff have an excellent knowledge of policies and procedures which are implemented robustly. Staff training is provided, including safeguarding and paediatric first aid. The setting meets the EYFS statutory requirements for safeguarding, welfare, learning and development. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.
- 2.42 Hygiene practices are rigorous and meet the personal needs of all children. Practitioners help them to understand how to keep safe by washing hands before and after meals. Children know this is an important routine and are encouraged to become increasingly independent by managing their own personal needs.
- 2.43 Practitioners successfully prepare children for life in modern Britain by teaching them important values. Children make their own decisions and follow rules. Within the diverse nursery community children learn to respect and care for each other, including those who are different from themselves. Children celebrate British festivals and those from other cultures, for example Bonfire Night and Eid.

Leadership and management

- 2.44 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 2.45 Leaders and managers demonstrate an ambitious vision for future development and believe that all children should be happy, well cared for and challenged. They realise this through shared values, policy and practice, evaluating and planning together to provide high-quality inclusive care and education for all children.
- 2.46 The well-being of staff is important to leaders and managers, and practitioners feel extremely well supported on a daily basis. High-quality supervision is provided for all staff who are also given many opportunities to build their knowledge through professional development. This translates into substantial improvements in teaching which have a very positive impact on the children's outcomes. For example, as a result of a practitioner attending training about use of the outdoor area, new resources now enable children's imagination and language to further develop.
- 2.47 Leaders work very closely with practitioners to ensure that all children, including those with SEND, those who speak a second language and the more able, receive a curriculum appropriate for their needs. Robust systems ensure that every child's needs are fully met.
- 2.48 Leaders and managers are successful in engaging with children, their parents and others in the community, including local services, ensuring excellent partnerships. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that the vast majority of parents believe that practitioners help their children to become confident and independent learners.

2.49 The needs of the nursery are thoroughly known and understood by the school's proprietors. Leaders fulfil their statutory duties; for example, under the Equality Act 2010 and other duties, and in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy, safeguarding and safer recruitment.

Compliance with statutory requirements

2.50 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.

- Establish an effective system to ensure that all children have a secure attachment with another adult if their key person is absent.

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 proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr William Ibbetson-Price

Reporting inspector

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