

Ofsted registered early years setting inspection report

3 to 4 March 2026

West House School Nursery

West House School

24 St James's Road

Edgbaston

Birmingham

B15 2NX

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is commissioned by Ofsted to inspect registered early years settings in independent schools in England which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council. Ofsted is the regulator for early years registered settings in England.

Inspection outcomes

Safeguarding	Met
Inclusion	Expected standard
Curriculum and teaching	Expected standard
Achievement	Expected standard
Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines	Expected standard
Children's welfare and wellbeing	Expected standard
Leadership and governance	Expected standard

The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

Summary of inspection findings

1. Children are safe, happy and made to feel very welcome. Staff are kind and caring. They go about their day cheerfully, which adds to the positive and happy environment. Relationships between children and staff are warm and reassuring. Babies smile on seeing their key person, and older children are relaxed around familiar staff. Leaders clearly spend time with the children, who smile and wave as they enter rooms. The nursery provides a happy space for children to learn and grow.
2. The nursery provides a safe place for children. Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure. There are robust arrangements in place for minimising risks and ensuring resources are suitable for the ages of the children who have access to them. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure children are always supervised appropriately. For example, staff sit with children as they eat, ensuring they are closely supervised and food is prepared safely. They regularly check on the children as they move around the nursery, such as when going outside or moving to other parts of the school.
3. Across the nursery, children enjoy their learning and achieve well. Staff who work with younger children focus very well on the children's social, emotional and physical development. They actively support children as they learn to move and control their bodies in different ways. Staff help children build relationships through simple back-and-forth games, and speak clearly with them about what they can see and do. As children move through the nursery, staff build effectively on what they know and can do. Children learn more complex language, develop their understanding of numbers and mathematics and gain confidence in a range of physical skills. For example, children learn to pedal wheeled toys and to climb and kick balls with increasing accuracy and skill when playing outside.

Safeguarding

4. Safeguarding is met.
5. The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed.

Inclusion

6. The grading for inclusion is at the expected standard.
7. Leaders successfully create an inclusive environment, where children are valued equally. This includes children who may face particular challenges to their learning. Leaders work closely, empathetically and effectively with parents to help them understand their child's specific learning needs. They support parents as they navigate the pathway to accessing the additional funding and support to which their child is entitled, and which can help their child reach their full potential.
8. Leaders effectively co-ordinate the support of other professionals when planning for the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They draw on the expertise of staff from the school, such as those with responsibility for children who have SEND, and speech and language specialists. Leaders also proactively reach out to other professionals who are working with these children. This enables staff who work day-to-day with children to use the relevant strategies and skills of these professionals to inform their own planning and support.
9. Staff promptly identify children who may need extra support. Typically, they plan well for their needs. Staff make accurate decisions when whole-class learning experiences will not meet children's specific needs and offer support for children to explore other resources in the room. At these times, staff support children to stay safe and follow their interests. However, because staff do not consistently and precisely plan for these times, children are not always taking part in activities that would best help them work towards their individual next steps in learning.

Curriculum and teaching

10. The grading for curriculum and teaching is at the expected standard.
11. Leaders support staff to make accurate assessments about what children know and can do. Staff then use this information effectively to plan for children's next steps in learning and to plan a broad overview of the curriculum. When needed, staff devise specific learning plans for children who may need extra help to support their learning and progress. As a result, the curriculum meets children's learning needs. However, for pre-school children the balance of the curriculum does not fully ensure that children continue to have the wide range of play-based experiences that, when supported by skilful staff, enable children to develop the highest level of tenacity, imagination and curiosity that will continue to aid their learning throughout their school life.

12. Staff deliver a very effective programme of learning for mathematics. Staff plan for this area of learning for children from the earliest age. They start by introducing babies and younger children to number songs and rhymes. When children are a little older, they begin to learn through practical activities about size, shape and measure. Staff working with pre-school children teach them to practise and apply their knowledge to solving mathematical problems.
13. Staff deliver a suitable programme of learning for physical development and there are plans to develop this further. All children have daily access to outdoor learning and there is plenty of space to move about energetically. Staff provide babies with equipment that encourages early walking. Staff working with babies use mealtimes well to teach them how to use cutlery and drink from a cup. Older children learn about oral hygiene and the importance of brushing teeth regularly.
14. Staff understand the importance of high-quality story time for children's language and literacy development. They read to children every day and children regularly find books to look at independently. They mimic what they see adults do, turning the pages and using the pictures to work out the story and tell it to each other. These skills are taught from the youngest age. For example, staff show babies how to lift the flap on books and verbalise what they can see in pictures. Staff consistently talk with children about what they are doing and what they can see, adapting the complexity of their language well to the age of the children. Throughout the nursery, staff support children well to develop their listening and communication skills.

Achievement

15. The grading for achievement is at the expected standard.
16. Children develop a rich vocabulary, learn how to listen and have lots of opportunities to practise their conversational skills. Babies and younger children learn about the sounds that animals make, and to use simple greetings. They delight in greeting adults and children with the welcoming words they have learned. As they progress through the nursery, children learn to take turns in conversations, taking account of what others say and broadening their understanding and vocabulary. This is especially evident in children aged two and three years old.
17. Children who have SEND make steady and sustained progress from their starting points. Where necessary, they learn how to communicate their needs and opinions using non-verbal aids. For example, children learn to use simple signing. As well as making progress with skills they may find more challenging, they also develop in areas where they excel. For example, children who may face challenges with their communication skills, but who may have an aptitude for mathematics, learn to recognise and use numbers to solve mathematical problems.
18. Overall, children are well prepared for their future learning. They develop a range of skills and knowledge that help them make the transition to school smoothly when the time comes. They learn to do things for themselves, to listen to what adults say and to speak confidently. However, children of pre-school age have fewer opportunities than younger children to extend some aspects of their learning development, such as their creative play.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

19. The grading for behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines is at the expected standard.
20. Children behave very well. Staff are clear about their expectations for behaviour and embed these expectations right from the start. Instances of challenging behaviour are extremely rare. The nursery is full of polite, considerate children who show kindness towards each other. They play together collaboratively and happily.
21. Leaders promote to parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance, while ensuring that there is the flexibility needed to meet the individual needs of families. Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and show they are eager to start their day. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the nursery and routines are used effectively to help children learn and to reinforce behaviour expectations. For example, children know how to line up for mealtimes and that they must walk calmly around the school buildings. Staff make effective adaptations to ensure all children understand what is going to happen next. For example, they use visual timetables to help ensure children understand the daily routines.
22. Overall, children show a keenness to learn and a thirst for new knowledge. Staff adapt teaching effectively to encourage this enthusiasm, such as by ensuring that activities are age-appropriate, so that children are able to focus, concentrate and develop the skills of effective learners. For example, during a whole nursery project on the life cycle of plants, babies enjoy the sensory experience of exploring soil; younger children develop their hand-to-eye co-ordination as they pour, collect and use a range of tools. Pre-school children learn about the care plants need to grow and thrive. Staff successfully adapt activities to the ages of the children taking part, meaning children can focus and join in well.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

23. The grading for children's welfare and wellbeing is at the expected standard.
24. Staff meet children's care needs with kindness and dignity. Where possible, they tailor babies' care needs to their routines from home. For example, they work with parents to support weaning, offering advice and guidance that will help babies enjoy their food and develop an interest in a varied and healthy diet. They encourage parents to bring in familiar objects from home to help young children sleep well and get the rest they need to stay healthy and fully enjoy their time at nursery. Staff also ensure children have opportunities for energetic play, to help them understand the importance and benefits of physical exercise.
25. Typically, the key person system is well understood by staff and parents and used well to help children settle and feel secure. This is especially evident in the warm bonds between the youngest children and key staff. Babies crawl onto laps and smile warmly at familiar adults. They look to them for reassurance when needed and receive the reassuring kind words they need to feel ready to happily continue with their play. This, alongside staff teaching children the words they need to express their feelings, helps children develop secure levels of emotional wellbeing.
26. Staff teach children a range of age-appropriate skills to keep them safe. For example, once children move into the rooms upstairs, they are taught how to safely hold the banister as they go up and

down. There are suitable arrangements to help children develop an awareness of the risks and benefits around digital technology.

Leadership and governance

27. The grading for leadership and governance is at the expected standard.
28. Leaders maintain effective oversight of the nursery. The newly structured leadership team has swiftly identified the many strengths of the provision and clearly identified areas where further improvements could be made to enhance children's experiences. Leaders have begun to make these improvements. For example, they have planned how to improve the outdoor learning environment, and to develop a comprehensive understanding of the languages children speak at home to best support them with the transition into nursery.
29. Leaders have created a knowledgeable staff team. Leaders provide children with secure levels of continuity, which has a positive impact on their learning and wellbeing. Leaders ensure staff feel valued and that their workload is manageable. Leaders deliver effective training for all staff which has a very positive impact on the quality of their teaching, and therefore, outcomes for children. For example, training on how to engage and talk with children as they play has led to staff being far more confident and very effective in supporting children's language development and in developing children's thinking and problem-solving skills.
30. Leaders support staff to build warm, professional partnerships with parents. They ensure parents are given regular updates on their child's progress. Leaders are approachable, which supports effective information sharing about children's care needs and routines. Leaders have begun to develop ways in which they can fully support parents to understand what children learn from all the different experiences available in the nursery, and how these experiences prepare children for their future learning. However, these improvements are still in their infancy and not yet fully effective in helping parents gain a deep understanding of the value of play-based learning for all young children.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- plan more precisely for some children who need extra support, so that there is an even stronger focus on developing the skills they will most benefit from learning next
- support staff working with pre-school aged children to enhance the curriculum further, ensuring a stronger focus on the breadth of skills and knowledge that will best prepare children for their future learning
- support parents to fully understand the value of a broad curriculum for children as the move to school approaches, so there can be a consistent approach to supporting children in their all-round development.

Registered setting details

Registered setting name	West House School Nursery
Unique reference number	EY288576
Address	West House School 24 St James's Road Edgbaston Birmingham B15 2NX
Phone number	0121 440 4097
Email address	secretary@westhouseprep.com
Website	www.westhouseprep.com
Proprietor	Board of Governors
Nominated individual	Ms Aimee Joseph
Age range of children at the time of the inspection	1 to 4 years
Total number of places	99
Number of children on roll	77
Date of previous inspection of the registered setting	1 to 2 March 2023

Information about the setting

31. West House School Nursery registered in 2005. The registered setting operates from West House School. The setting is open for 48 weeks of the year from 7 am to 6 pm.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

3 to 4 March 2026

32. One inspector visited the registered setting for two half days. This inspection took place at the same time as the inspection of West House School.

33. Inspection activities included:

- shared observation of learning in collaboration with setting leaders
- discussions with the school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with parents
- discussions with children
- observations of children's routines, including eating, sleeping and transition times
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the setting.

34. The inspection team considered the views of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

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- Ofsted is the regulator for early years registered settings England.
- ISI is commissioned by the Ofsted to inspect Ofsted registered early years settings in independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
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Independent Schools Inspectorate

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