

Wetherby Kensington

4 Wetherby Gardens, Kensington SW5 0JN

Inspection dates

13–15 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, governors and the proprietor are ambitious for pupils and have a clear vision for the school. They have worked effectively to ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Governors are highly skilled and know the school well. They provide strong support and challenge to the headteacher to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress across the curriculum.
- The broad curriculum is engaging and encourages pupils to be inquisitive and achieve well. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities and visits.
- Children in early years make strong progress because of the good quality of teaching they receive. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. They are polite, friendly and respectful. They conduct themselves well around the school and their behaviour is good.
- Parents and carers think very highly of all aspects of the school, including its leadership.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Leaders and staff ensure that most aspects of British values are taught well. However, leaders are aware that more needs to be done to promote pupils' knowledge of the culturally diverse nature of British society.
- Occasionally, work is not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. Consequently, they sometimes do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and their punctuation are not consistently high.
- The senior and middle leadership teams are not fully established to ensure there is sufficient capacity to bring about rapid improvements. Currently, the headteacher has all the leadership and management responsibilities.
- The system for routinely assessing pupils' progress across different subjects is not fully implemented.
- The attendance of a few pupils is not as good as that of their classmates.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils, including the most able children in early years, are consistently challenged so that they make the progress of which they are capable
 - expectations of pupils' handwriting and punctuation are routinely high.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - establishing and embedding the senior and middle leadership teams to ensure that improvements are rapid and sustainable, especially as the school expands
 - improving the system for monitoring pupils' progress in subjects so that leaders, including governors, have a clear overview of performance across the school
 - further developing pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the culturally diverse nature of modern Britain.
- Improve attendance further by reducing the rates of persistent absence among small numbers of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's high expectations and ambition are shared by governors and staff. Leaders have, over a short time, created a culture of high aspiration, support and mutual respect where every child matters. Staff and parents are very supportive of the school's leadership.
- The headteacher, governors and proprietor have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, including its effectiveness. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met, and the school continues to improve.
- There are good systems in place to check the quality of teaching and learning and for the performance management of staff. Teachers are provided with strong support and training, including through Wetherby School and the Alpha Plus Group, to improve their classroom practice. This has a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Staff know their pupils very well. The headteacher and the head of learning support identify pupils who need additional support to ensure that they make good or better progress. These pupils are provided with timely and effective support in smaller groups to address any gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and engages pupils well in their learning. The curriculum in key stage 1 is designed well to prepare pupils for the 7+ and 8+ examinations, as well in the national curriculum subjects. Specialist lessons are taught in computing, French, music and art to strengthen pupils' learning and enhance their experiences. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits and events further enrich the curriculum.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of most aspects of British values are good. They know right from wrong, listen to each other's views, show respect for others and follow school rules well. However, their knowledge and understanding of the culturally diverse nature of British society are not as strong as they should be to prepare them fully for life in modern Britain.
- The system for monitoring the progress of pupils across different subjects is not fully implemented. This means that the leaders do not have an accurate overview of how much progress pupils make across the subjects throughout the year.
- Leaders are aware that the leadership structure involves the headteacher carrying out nearly all of the leadership and management duties. Governors and the proprietor have plans to strengthen leadership capacity, especially as the school expands.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are supportive of the school's leadership. All parents would recommend the school to another parent.
- Parents are very positive about all aspects of the school. Some of the many supportive comments that parents made to describe the school included, 'excellent', 'caring and supportive', 'nurturing' and 'remarkable'.

Governance

- Governors have high expectations and are ambitious for pupils. They are experienced, knowledgeable and highly skilled in matters relating to school improvement. They know the school well, including its strengths and areas for improvement. They visit the school regularly to find out for themselves how well pupils are learning.
- Governors are trained appropriately, including on safeguarding and safer recruitment of staff, and carry out their role to support and challenge leaders effectively. They check that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.
- Governors hold the headteacher to account for the work she does to bring about improvements. They manage the performance of the headteacher well, and set challenging targets, including to improve the quality of teaching.
- Governors and the proprietor are strongly involved in setting the school's vision and strategic direction. They work closely with the headteacher to ensure that all the independent school standards are met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training and updates on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff know what to do if they are worried or have any concerns about a child's safety and welfare.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school, and staff are vigilant and work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that all the appropriate checks are made on the suitability of staff before they are allowed to work with children.
- The system for record keeping to safeguard pupils is effective and pupil records are well maintained.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and takes into account current government requirements. The safeguarding policy is available to parents on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have created a positive learning culture throughout the school. Teachers are provided with strong training and support to improve the quality of teaching. Consequently, the quality of teaching is good and continues to improve.
- Teachers know their pupils very well. They use this information and their secure subject knowledge well to plan learning and help pupils make good progress.
- The strong relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults strongly support teaching and learning throughout the school. They help pupils feel secure and confident in their learning, and to ask and respond to questions.
- Teachers make learning exciting. In a Year 1 geography lesson, for example, pupils investigated and found out about the different layers of the rainforest. There were good links made with science when pupils found out the difference between amphibians and

mammals.

- Pupils said that they enjoy mathematics. They are able to use different concepts and methods to solve a range of mathematical problems. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher's effective planning and clear explanations helped pupils to learn how to use bar charts to represent information.
- Teaching assistants are skilful and are used effectively to support the learning of pupils, particularly the lower attaining pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of questioning to test pupils' knowledge and understanding and to consolidate their learning. They monitor pupils' learning well and address any misconceptions they may have.
- The teaching of phonics is strong, and pupils are able to use their phonic skills well to read difficult or unfamiliar words. This helps pupils to become confident readers and enjoy reading.
- Pupils' writing is improving. Pupils write using descriptive and colourful language and staff build their vocabulary well to help them improve their writing. Teachers provide pupils with strong examples to help pupils structure their stories and, as one pupil said, 'set the scene for writing'.
- Pupils are encouraged to think through their ideas. In a learning for life lesson, for example, pupils gained a sound understanding of animals that are in danger of becoming extinct and the reasons why. Pupils interacted well with each other to discuss why some animals become endangered, and the moral issues of why it is important that we should care. Pupils routinely have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers make good use of resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils show confidence and enjoy explaining their answers, including through the use of technology.
- Although pupils' writing is improving, many pupils' handwriting is poor and some do not routinely punctuate their work correctly. Some pupils that inspectors met agreed that handwriting could be better.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to deepen their learning. Occasionally, they receive similar work to their classmates, and questioning is not probing enough to make them think hard. A few pupils said that their work is sometimes 'too easy'.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View survey stated that their children are taught well and agreed that they receive appropriate homework for their age.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a strong sense of moral purpose that lies at the heart of the school's work where safety and welfare of pupils are paramount. Staff ensure that pupils are happy, confident and well looked after. They work well with external professionals to keep pupils safe.

- Pupils are very polite, kind and courteous. They treat each other and adults with respect. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, which has a positive impact on the progress they make. They are proud of their school and achievements.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in the school, and know they can talk to a member of staff if they have any concerns about their well-being. They are taught well, for example, about how to cross roads safely, and about fire safety and online safety.
- Leaders ensure that risk assessments are carried out effectively. Appropriate action is taken to reduce any potential risk, so as to keep pupils safe in school and when travelling to sports grounds and on school visits.
- Pupils know about healthy foods and how to keep healthy. They benefit from professionals visiting the school to talk about healthy eating and hygiene.
- Pupils have some responsibilities around the school such as those of ambassadors and monitors. However, pupils said that they would welcome more responsibilities.
- All parents who responded to Parent View, including those who spoke to inspectors, said that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a calm and orderly place, including during lunch- and breaktimes. Pupils' conduct around the school and in classrooms is good. Disruption to learning is rare.
- Pupils said that behaviour is good, and that bullying, including name-calling or racist comments, is rare. The school's own behaviour log shows that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils know the behaviour policy well, including its rewards and sanctions. The behaviour policy is consistently applied and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, pupils said that occasionally, a few pupils lose concentration and chatter in class, and this slows their progress.
- Attendance is just below the national average. Persistent absence among a small proportion of pupils affects the school's overall attendance figures. Punctuality is good overall, and there have been no exclusions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The good quality of teaching, learning and assessment ensures that pupils make good progress. They develop secure knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum subjects. They are prepared well for Year 2.
- The school's own assessment system and work in pupils' books show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress is particularly strong in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Those who read for inspectors, including the lower attaining pupils, used their phonics strategies well to read with confidence. Pupils have access to a range of books and read widely and often. Pupils achieve well in phonics and their progress in reading is strongly improving.

- Year 1 standardised tests in verbal and non-verbal reasoning show that most pupils are achieving in line with or above expectations.
- The school prepares for pupils for 7+ and 8+ examinations. Pupils will be sitting these examinations in the future. There is no information available yet on any externally assessed examinations.
- The most able pupils make good progress across the curriculum. However, they are not routinely challenged to enable them make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders are yet to monitor those pupils achieving a greater depth of learning more closely.
- In some subjects, including history, geography and science, assessments are not as comprehensive as in English and mathematics. Leaders know that the assessment system needs refining to ensure that outcomes are better than good for pupils in all subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- The school's progress monitoring information and work in children's books show that children make good progress from their different starting points. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good, and children receive high-quality care and support. Staff interact well with children and use questioning effectively to build their vocabulary and develop their language skills.
- The teaching of phonics is strong, and children use their knowledge well of the sounds that letters represent to read simple words and write short sentences. They show strong hand control as they write their words. School information shows that children make strong progress with their knowledge and understanding of phonics.
- Children have good opportunities for speaking and listening and to discuss their ideas with each other. For example, in science, children were encouraged to discuss their ideas with each other using complete sentences on how plants grow. Children learned that plants need water, nutrients and sunlight to grow. One child identified a sunflower and the seed that it came from.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their 'show and tell' time. Children talked about the impact of gravity on objects, the invention of shoe polish, making vinegar from apples and about Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman doctor to graduate in the United States. There was much discussion and excitement when a child talked about the shoe polish that his great-great-great grandfather had invented. Children were highly inquisitive and showed strong communication skills and high levels of concentration.
- Although the outdoor area is small, it is used well to support children's learning. Children enjoyed being outdoors and some hung number cards up to 20 on a string, using pegs. However, a few children found this too easy and could have been easily challenged further to use larger numbers. Sometimes, the most able children are not sufficiently challenged to help them make the progress of which they are capable.
- Children enjoyed their music lesson and used different musical instruments to play happy or sad sounds. Children were able to recognise the different emotions in music.
- Children interact well with each other, work collaboratively and are willing to share

resources. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. They show strong attitudes to learning and their behaviour is consistently good.

- Children are aware of healthy eating, and drink milk and eat fruit. A few children talked about healthy eating and said that, 'they do not have fizzy drinks because milk is healthy'. During the inspection, children received a talk by a dentist about how to keep their teeth clean and why this was important.
- Leadership of early years is good. The early years leader knows the provision's strengths and areas for improvement. Although there is a system for monitoring children's progress, it needs further refining to monitor the overall progress of children in different areas of learning more frequently. Leaders are not sufficiently clear about the proportion of children who are on target to achieve or exceed a good level of development by the end of Reception Year. Leaders also have plans to improve the outdoor learning area further.
- There is good communication with parents. Parents are regularly kept informed about the progress their children make. Parents are positively encouraged to visit early years to see how children learn. During the inspection, Fathers' Day was marked by children singing to their parents and discussing their work with them. Children are proud of their achievements.
- Leaders ensure that children are well supervised and kept safe, and that safeguarding is effective.
- The school meets the independent school standards in relation to the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	144516
DfE registration number	207/6013
Inspection number	10044446

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 6
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Alpha Plus Group Limited
Chair	John Ritblat
Headteacher	Helen Milnes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£21,600
Telephone number	020 7727 9581
Website	www.wetherby-kensington.co.uk
Email address	learn@wetherbyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Wetherby Kensington is an independent day school in London's Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
- The school received its pre-registration in June 2017, when it was judged that the school was likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opened. The school received its registration in August 2017.
- The school opened in September 2017 as a pre-preparatory school with two Reception and two Year 1 classes. There are currently 80 pupils on roll; 40 in the Reception and 40 in Year 1. The school will be a two-form, non-selective pre-preparatory school for boys

aged four to eight years. The school plans to increase pupil numbers each year, until it is full.

- The school is part of the Alpha Plus Group. It follows the same curriculum and shares the same values and ethos of nearby Wetherby School.
- The school is led by the headteacher who was a deputy headteacher at Wetherby School. The leadership and management roles are fulfilled by the headteacher; there is no senior or middle leadership team.
- Governance is provided by the Alpha Plus Group's proprietorial board and governing body.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. No pupils have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- There are no disadvantaged pupils. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in Reception and Year 1. Most were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils in Year 1 to discuss their learning and views about the school. The inspectors also heard pupils in Year 1 read and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspectors checked pupils' books in Year 1 and children's books in Reception, and considered the school's own information on pupils' and children's progress. Inspectors scrutinised pre-employment checks on all staff, and looked at pupils' attendance and behaviour records. They also examined documents and policies in relation to the independent school standards, including safety and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the head of learning support, staff, governors (including the proprietor's representative), and parents. Inspectors discussed pupils' learning with them in classrooms during lesson observations.
- There were 59 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There were 53 comments included on Parent View that were also taken into account. In addition, inspectors spoke to some parents during the inspection about their views. Inspectors also considered 14 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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