

Inspection of Blooming Tree Pre Prep School

Swarn House, 296 High Street, Acton W3 9BJ

Inspection dates: 17 to 19 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, who all have complex needs, do well at Blooming Tree Pre Prep School. This is because leaders and staff are experts in understanding autism spectrum disorder.

Pupils enjoy a personalised curriculum and specialist support from highly skilled staff. Pupils enjoy being at school. They especially like singing, going to the park and spending time in the soft-play spaces. Leaders and staff are particularly successful in developing pupils socially and emotionally. Pupils are well supported to learn to communicate and, when they are ready, to read.

Leaders ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils attend well and are closely supervised. Staff balance a patient and caring approach with high expectations of pupils' behaviour and engagement. Pupils' behaviour improves significantly over time. They learn to share, take turns and regulate their emotions. Bullying is not a problem. Pupils trust staff to help them overcome challenges when these arise. Staff quickly and consistently notice any emerging issues and take suitable action to resolve these.

Almost all parents and carers who contributed to Ofsted Parent View said that they would recommend the school to other parents.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils receive a good quality of provision as soon as they start in early years. Leaders have established an ambitious, specialist curriculum and have ensured that staff receive regular, high-quality training so they can deliver it well. The curriculum focuses sharply and successfully on developing pupils' abilities to behave safely, self-regulate and socialise.

Staff carefully design effective learning activities, which are informed by precise, ongoing assessment of pupils' achievements. Staff skilfully adapt sessions and tasks as and when they need to. Teachers, tutors and therapists share their detailed knowledge of pupils as a matter of course. This ensures that the team has a thorough understanding of how well each pupil is doing and what they need to work on. This means that pupils are continually building on their prior learning. As a result, pupils are successful in learning the intended knowledge and skills over time. The impact of the specialist curriculum on pupils' behaviour and personal development is excellent.

The school's programme of personal, social, health and economic education is woven into the specialist curriculum. Pupils learn about different people, how to treat each other nicely and how to manage difficult situations. Pupils access speech and occupational therapies. They are also taught relationships education in line with the requirements. Together, the specialist curriculum and therapies are highly successful in developing pupils' social skills and emotional well-being.

The academic curriculum for English, mathematics and other subjects ensures that pupils experience all the required areas of learning when they are ready. Leaders make sure that teaching pupils to communicate is a priority. When the time is right, a suitable phonics programme is taught to help pupils learn to read. Pupils enjoy story time and phonics songs. They also enjoy counting and matching numbers in their numeracy sessions. Staff provide personalised support whenever pupils need additional help. However, the academic curriculum is a relative weakness of the school's work. Leaders have not given the same level of thought to the planning and assessment of pupils' learning in the academic subjects as they have for the specialist curriculum.

Proprietors and leaders work hard to fulfil their vision to provide a high-quality provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. They have ensured compliance with statutory requirements. These include the independent school standards, early years foundation stage requirements and schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. However, proprietors and leaders receive no external support or scrutiny. The proprietors are rightly planning to introduce arrangements for external oversight as soon as possible. In addition to regular training, leaders provide staff with supervision sessions. Most staff are positive about working at the school. However, some expressed their dissatisfaction with leaders, especially in relation to staffing levels and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders maintain a strong culture of safeguarding. The school team works successfully to keep pupils as safe as possible. There are clear and rigorous procedures in place to deal with concerns, incidents and allegations. Staff regularly complete appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders ensure that suitable actions are taken quickly when concerns are raised.

The school's safeguarding policy reflects current statutory requirements and is published online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders' curriculum thinking is not as strong in the academic subjects as it is for the specialist curriculum. Proprietors and leaders should ensure that a well-sequenced curriculum enables pupils to learn well in all academic subjects when they are ready. They should ensure that assessment in these subjects informs teaching as regularly and precisely as it does in the specialist curriculum.
- There are no arrangements for oversight of leaders' work. The proprietors need to realise their plans to draw on external expertise to provide support and hold leaders to account for the quality of their work.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	148807
DfE registration number	307/6014
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10254700
Type of school	Primary day school for pupils with autism spectrum disorder
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Proprietor	Easy Steps Limited
Chair	Alice Koriki
Headteacher	Alice Koriki
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,000 to £56,000
Telephone number	0208 354 0032
Website	www.bloomingtree.co.uk
Email address	admin@bloomingtree.co.uk

Information about this school

- Blooming Tree Pre Prep School is an independent special primary school catering for up to 50 pupils with education, health and care plans for their primary need related to autism spectrum disorder.
- This was the school's first graded inspection.
- The school's current pupils are aged between three and eight years.
- The school opened in January 2022. Following a material change inspection in September 2022, the school's age range and maximum capacity were both extended.
- Blooming Tree clinic, which previously was also operating from this school's premises, has now closed.
- The proprietors also run Blooming Tree Primary School at 37–38 The Mall, Ealing W5 3TJ.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, topic (which includes other academic subjects), and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, observed and listened to pupils, and considered evidence of pupils' learning.
- Inspectors met with the proprietors and the headteacher and deputy headteacher throughout the inspection. They also met with groups of staff.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards and the early years statutory requirements.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Strong

His Majesty's Inspector

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