

Ofsted registered early years setting inspection report

24 to 25 February 2026

Park School Nursery

43 Queens Park South Drive

Bournemouth

BH8 9BJ

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 | Needs attention |
| 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 does not consistently meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006. A schedule of unmet requirements is included below.

Summary of inspection findings

1. Children of all ages form warm and trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff are kind, caring and respond to children’s emerging needs with sensitivity and respect. Staff tailor care practices to each child’s individual needs, and the positive relationships staff build with children are evident. Children show that they feel emotionally secure as they confidently explore their surroundings, knowing that staff are nearby to offer support when needed. Overall, staff follow procedures and practices that promote children’s welfare. However, during mealtimes for children over two years old, staff do not consistently ensure that seating arrangements are appropriate for their age and in line with safer eating guidance.
2. Leaders and staff provide a wide range of engaging activities and learning experiences that support children’s development well across all areas of the curriculum. Regular observations and assessments enable leaders and staff to identify what children know and can do. Staff use this information effectively to plan activities that reflect children’s individual interests and learning needs. Overall, staff interact well with children and use effective teaching strategies, such as showing, demonstrating and explaining, to help children build on their existing knowledge and skills. Children show they enjoy their learning.
3. Children progress well from their starting points. Leaders are committed to providing good quality care and education for all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who face other barriers to their learning. Leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum that is designed to give children the knowledge and skills they need for the

next stage in learning. They work closely with parents and with other professionals involved in children's care. This helps to provide continuity in the care and education for children and successfully supports smooth transitions into their next stage of education.

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 are committed to ensuring that all children, including those who have SEND, as well as those who face other barriers to learning, have full access to the curriculum. They provide guidance and training to help staff understand their roles and responsibilities in supporting children who have SEND. As a result, staff successfully help all children to learn well and make good progress from their starting points.
8. Staff make effective use of assessments to monitor children's progress and clearly identify what they need to learn next. They implement a graduated approach, such as through individual support plans and seeking the advice of other professionals when needed. Staff work effectively with parents and other agencies involved in children's care to ensure that suitable adaptations and support are put in place in a timely way.
9. Staff with responsibility for SEND demonstrate an accurate understanding of each child's individual needs and characteristics. When allocating additional funding, leaders carefully consider children's needs and direct resources appropriately. This ensures that additional support focuses on the areas that will have the greatest impact on improving outcomes for children. As a result, children who have SEND continue to make steady and sustained progress.

Curriculum and teaching

10. The grading for curriculum and teaching is at the expected standard.
11. Leaders have constructed a curriculum that ensures all children, including those who have SEND and those who face additional barriers to their education, benefit from a broad range of activities that promote their development across all areas of learning. Leaders recognise that communication and language development underpins progress in every other area of learning. Therefore, staff place an appropriate emphasis on supporting this area of development. Staff ensure that stories, songs and rhymes form part of children's daily routines. Staff working with the oldest children skilfully use open-ended questions to extend children's thinking and encourage rich conversations that help deepen children's understanding.

12. Staff complete regular assessments to check children's progress, identify any emerging gaps, and plan for their next steps in learning. Overall, staff deliver teaching that supports children's learning, good health and wellbeing effectively. However, some staff are not as confident as others in adapting their practice, or planned activities, to meet children's individual interests or needs. As a result, certain activities are either too challenging or not closely aligned with what children need to learn next. When this happens, children are not able to build effectively on what they know and understand.
13. Staff successfully weave mathematics into children's everyday play experiences. For example, as children play with sand and water, staff encourage them to explore different concepts such as heavy and light, and full and empty. Children confidently recognise that when a watering can is full it feels heavy, and predict that it will become lighter as it gradually empties.

Achievement

14. The grading for achievement is at the expected standard.
15. Children of all ages develop age-appropriate listening, attention and speaking skills. They enjoy listening to songs, stories and rhymes, joining in with energy and enthusiasm. Babies respond with actions and gestures as they listen to familiar rhymes. Toddlers begin to hold simple conversations with adults, and older children confidently take part in two-way discussions, drawing on past experiences and events to express their ideas clearly.
16. All children, including those who have SEND and those who face barriers to their learning, progress well from their starting points. They successfully develop the skills they need for the next stage of their education, including school. Children learn to make choices, manage tasks and take responsibility for their learning. They demonstrate confidence in completing tasks independently, join in with activities with enthusiasm and are keen to explore, investigate and acquire new skills and knowledge.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

17. The grading for behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines is at the expected standard.
18. Staff provide a broad range of activities to motivate children to learn. Children demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and are highly motivated and eager to join in. Staff use positive reinforcement, such as praising and encouraging children to complete tasks independently. These positive strategies help children to develop perseverance and resilience.
19. Children generally demonstrate positive behaviour. They use good manners, are polite and kind, and play harmoniously alongside their peers. Staff make effective use of everyday interactions to help children understand their own feelings and how their emotions affect themselves and others. For example, when children play with toy animals and describe them as fighting, staff use these as opportunities to encourage children to explore how the animals might feel. Children recognise emotions such as anger and sadness, and suggest strategies like yoga or deep breathing to help the animals feel happy again. However, the support offered to help children manage their behaviour and regulate their emotions is not consistently applied across the setting. Some staff do not always make

reasonable adjustments or adaptations in response to children’s individual needs. As a result, not all children receive the tailored support they require to regulate their emotions and behaviour consistently well.

20. Leaders ensure that staff implement clear policies and procedures, including ensuring that parents understand the importance of regular attendance. Effective key person arrangements and clear routines help children to build warm, trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. This supports children to feel safe, secure and ready to engage with the wide range of experiences provided within the setting.

Children’s welfare and wellbeing

21. The grading for children’s welfare and wellbeing is needs attention.
22. Staff generally supervise children closely during mealtimes. Leaders ensure that sufficient staff with full and relevant first aid training are always present when children are eating. However, leaders have not ensured that the safer eating requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) are fully met. Staff do not consistently make sure that young children sit on appropriately sized, low-level chairs while eating. This inconsistency represents a breach of EYFS requirements and poses avoidable risks to children’s safety during mealtimes.
23. Leaders and staff have created a welcoming atmosphere where secure attachments are prioritised, helping children feel emotionally supported. Staff are highly attuned to individual needs, particularly for the youngest children. They recognise when babies require additional reassurance, such as after waking from a sleep and offer comfort, smiles and warm words. These sensitive interactions and the respectful relationships between staff, children and parents, help to create a consistently positive and emotionally supportive culture. Across the setting, children build positive relationships with staff and their peers, contributing to a clear sense of belonging.
24. Staff focus well on encouraging children to lead healthy lifestyles. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise, follow robust hygiene practices, and are offered healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Children enjoy spending time outdoors, and staff provide a wide range of opportunities for them to be physically active, such as climbing, balancing and playing ball games.

Leadership and governance

25. The grading for leadership and governance is at the expected standard.
26. Leaders have an ambitious vision for providing high-quality education and care that prepares children well for the next stage in their learning. Overall, leaders have a clear understanding of the setting’s strengths and areas for development, and they act promptly when improvements are needed. Leaders provide regular opportunities for training to develop the knowledge and skills of staff. However, leaders’ self-evaluation is not fully effective in identifying the precise support staff need in order to strengthen their practice so that they are highly effective in ensuring that teaching is precisely matched to children’s learning needs.

27. Leaders check in frequently on staff wellbeing and ensure they have sufficient time to complete their responsibilities. Leaders ensure that staff feel valued and avoid creating unnecessary workload pressures. Staff work well as a team and demonstrate high levels of positive morale.
28. Leaders and staff build effective partnerships with parents. They encourage parents to take an active role in their children's learning and development such as, for example, through stay-and-play sessions, parents' evenings and family or cultural celebrations. Staff share regular updates about the activities children have taken part in throughout the day, and information about children's learning and development is communicated frequently. Parents value the care and support their child receives.

Areas for action

Leaders must:

- ensure that safer-eating practices are consistently implemented, including providing appropriately sized seating for young children and minimising distractions in the designated eating area, so that mealtimes are safe, calm and meet with the requirements of the early years foundation stage.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that staff consistently adapt activities and learning experiences so they build on what children already know and can do, and provide an appropriate level of challenge that is highly effective in meeting children's needs
- provide support, training and guidance to all staff to enable them to understand, and consistently implement, the setting's behaviour management approaches and adapt these in response to children's individual needs.

Schedule of unmet early years foundation stage requirements in the registered early years setting

Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements

The relevant requirements are not met.

| Paragraph number | Early years foundation stage requirements |
|------------------|--|
| EYFS 3.68 | Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised. |

Registered setting details

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|--|--|
| Registered setting name | Park School Nursery |
| Unique reference number | 2665826 |
| Address | 43 Queens Park South Drive Bournemouth Dorset BH8 9BJ |
| Phone number | 01202 396640 |
| Email address | office@parkschool.co.uk |
| Website | www.parkschool.co.uk |
| Proprietor | Park School (Bournemouth) Ltd |
| Nominated individual | Lisa McDonald |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 3 months to 4 years |
| Total number of places | 94 |
| Number of children on roll | 133 |
| Date of previous inspection of the registered setting | 2 May 2024 |

Information about the setting

29. Park School Nursery registered in 2021. The registered setting operates from Park School. The setting is open all year round from 8 am to 6 pm.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

24 to 25 February 2026

30. One inspector visited the registered setting for two days. This inspection took place at the same time as the inspection of Park school.

31. Inspection activities included:

- shared observation of learning in collaboration with setting leaders
- discussions with the nominated individual
- discussions with 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.

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

How are Ofsted registered early years settings in association independent schools in England inspected?

- 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.
- For more information, please visit www.isi.net.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

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