

Inspection of Maple House School

Maple House, Maple Road, Bournville, Birmingham B30 2AE

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 July 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	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?

Maple House School has quickly established itself as a safe and nurturing place to learn. Once pupils join, the school pieces together why they have struggled with education and learning in the past. Staff work with determination to understand pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. They provide strong support to help pupils re-engage in their education, develop resilience and a strong sense of self-worth.

The school has achieved a great deal in a short space of time. Typically, pupils work hard and grow in confidence. Their attendance improves notably. This helps pupils to meet the school's high expectations for their learning and development.

Pupils value the trusting relationships they have with staff. It makes them feel valued and understood for who they are. Pupils know that the school expects them to behave well, and they do. When pupils may be upset or growing anxious, staff notice readily. They put in place effective and highly personalised strategies. Increasingly, pupils learn to manage their personal challenges confidently.

A highlight for many is the 'Active Citizen' programme. Here, pupils visit places of interest, such as animal sanctuaries, museums and rock-climbing centres. This broadens pupils' interests and develops their social skills and independence beyond the classroom.

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

Many pupils arrive at the school with negative experiences of education or may not have attended for long periods. The school designs an effective transition programme. During this time, staff get to know pupils' starting points and begin to integrate targets from their education, health and care (EHC) plan. Alongside internal specialists, such as the speech and language therapist, the school creates comprehensive support plans for each pupil. Staff use this information to guide their interactions with pupils and to help pupils learn well.

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. It provides a range of qualifications, including, where appropriate, GCSEs. The careers programme is equally comprehensive. Pupils receive impartial advice about future jobs. For instance, pupils in Year 9 attend an options afternoon to learn about career pathways and the skills they need for the next stage of their education.

For the most part, the school has identified what it wants pupils to learn. Staff explain information clearly. They use effective strategies to revisit and check on pupils' understanding. Personalised 'now and next' and 'task boards' break important content down into small steps of learning. Pupils use these well to secure new knowledge. However, in a few subjects in the primary phase, the school has not clearly identified the precise content that pupils should learn. This slows down how securely pupils build their knowledge in these subjects.

The school is developing a strong culture of reading. Some pupils join the school with a negative view of reading. Staff select high-quality books that interest pupils and extend their vocabulary. They find creative ways to renew pupils' enjoyment of reading, for example, by using audio books and subtitles. Staff deliver the school's phonics programme expertly. Pupils at the early stages of reading are well on their way to secure their knowledge of phonics and develop the confidence to read fluently.

The school has designed an effective personal development offer. Pupils have a voice in the school. For example, they select charities to raise money for and look after the school ducks. Lunchtime activities, such as table tennis, cards and puzzles, help to improve pupils' social skills. Staff use real-life scenarios and news stories to discuss relevant topics, including consent, equality and keeping safe online. This prepares pupils well for life beyond school.

Daily 'debriefs' provide staff with the opportunity to share vital information and to reflect on patterns of behaviour and attendance. Staff use this to identify any additional support that pupils might need. This contributes to the calm and purposeful atmosphere in school. Pupils enjoy being nominated for the 'student of the week' and entering the termly raffle.

The school is led with unquestionable dedication to do what is right for pupils. Staff benefit from a comprehensive programme of professional development. This gives them the expertise to do the job well. Initiatives, such as staff breakfast and a 'perk box', support their well-being and a spirit of teamwork. Similarly, parents and carers express enormous confidence and trust in the school. Many commented that the school has 'transformed' their children's educational experiences after years of struggle.

The proprietor and governors work closely with school leaders. They understand the school's priorities and share in the strong vision school leaders have set. The proprietor has ensured that the school consistently meets the independent school standards ('the standards') and complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Pupils' safety and welfare sit at the heart of the school's work. Safeguarding information is up to date and reflects the latest statutory guidance. All required information is readily available to parents from the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In the primary phase, some subjects do not identify the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn. This slows pupils' learning of important information. The

school should shape the curriculum and clearly outline the specific knowledge and skills it wants pupils to learn and remember in each subject.

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	151203
DfE registration number	330/6144
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10404500
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Maple House School Ltd
Chair	Jawad Sheikh
Headteacher	Jayson Rawlings
Annual fees (day pupils)	£61,500
Telephone number	0121 805 1222
Website	www.maplehouseschool.com
Email address	jayson.rawlings@rests-sen.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Maple House School provides education for pupils with SEMH needs, including autism. It is based in a large two-storey building in the Birmingham village of Bournville.
- All pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan.
- Pupils are placed in the school by several local authorities.
- The school opened in February 2025. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- There are eight classes, five are for secondary aged pupils and three for primary aged pupils. Currently, there are no pupils on roll in Years 1, 2 and 10.
- The school does not currently make use of any 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.

The school's proposed change to increase the age range and maximum number of pupils was considered as part of this inspection.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a range of senior leaders and staff to discuss aspects of the school's work. The lead inspector held meetings with the chair of the proprietor and the chief operations officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, personal, social, emotional and health education and performing arts. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation and samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils reading.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors conducted a range of activities to confirm whether the school met the standards in full. This included health and safety checks of the premises, risk assessments, record-keeping for behaviour management and supervision during social times.
- Inspectors met with pupils to talk about their experience of school life and observed breaktimes, lunchtimes and the school's arrangements for supervising pupils on their arrival at school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey. The lead inspector also spoke to some parents face to face.

The school's proposed change to the age range of pupils and maximum number of pupils

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the material change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the provision is implemented.**
- The school is currently registered to accommodate up to 72 pupils between the ages of 5 and 15. The proprietor requested an increase in the maximum number of pupils the school can admit, from 72 to 120 pupils. The proprietor also asked that the age range be raised from 15 to 19 years old.
- The proprietor has refurbished the school's current accommodation to a high standard. This includes additional classrooms, a science laboratory, toilets and intervention spaces. A clear strategic plan is in place to ensure that the provision to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Accommodation across the site provides ample space for the increase in pupil numbers. Additional work to create a second dining hall and a new outdoor play area is scheduled to start in July 2025, when the school is closed to its pupils. Once this work is complete, it will be sufficient to allow for the proposed increase in pupil numbers, if approved by the DfE.
- The school has created a systematic plan to increase the current number on roll incrementally. For example, the proprietor does not expect to reach maximum capacity for at least 18 months. The school has worked closely with several local authorities to ensure that the material change can meet local needs.

- The proprietor has suitable plans in place to ensure appropriate staffing and supervision arrangements for the proposed number of pupils. Currently, there is a high staff-to-pupil ratio. Staff supervise pupils well, including upon arrival and as they depart at the end of the day. The proprietor intends to recruit additional staff should the material change be approved. All new staff are subject to stringent safeguarding checks.
- The proprietor and school leaders have considered how to amend safeguarding, health and safety, risk assessment and fire safety policies and procedures to ensure that these are suitable for the proposed increase in pupil numbers. Risk assessments, including for individual pupils, are routinely updated to ensure pupils' safety. The school is well placed to adapt existing policies and procedures should the material change be granted.
- The school has designed a bespoke curriculum for key stage 3, 4 and post 16. Its schemes of work incorporate all aspects required by the independent school standards. The organisation of the curriculum is coherent. It fully accounts for the needs of pupils who may join the school. For example, the proprietor has recruited staff with experience of teaching secondary and sixth-form students. The curriculum combines high academic expectations. The school intends to provide a personalised pathway that includes functional skills, vocational and GCSE qualifications to ensure that each student can access learning at the right level. The curriculum will enable pupils in the 16 to 19 age bracket to reach their full academic, social and emotional potential.
- The current curriculum outlines how pupils develop an understanding of tolerance and respect, including for those with characteristics protected by law, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The curriculum plans extend to the proposed increase in the age range.
- The school has already implemented a comprehensive professional development programme for staff. This will continue for any new staff to ensure that there is sufficient expertise to meet the range of SEND needs for older pupils.
- There is compelling evidence that the proprietor will ensure that the independent school standards will remain met if the material change is granted. The proprietor and school leaders possess extensive knowledge and expertise in providing education and well-being support for pupils with SEMH needs. They demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge to implement the material change requests, if approved by the DfE.

Information about the material change inspection

- The DfE commissioned this part of the inspection in response to the proprietor's request to increase the maximum number of pupils from 72 to 120 and to extend the age range from 15 to 19 years old.
- This is the first time the school has applied for these material changes.
- Inspectors gathered evidence to assess whether the school is likely to meet the independent school standards. Inspectors gathered this information alongside normal standard inspection activities. For example, the lead inspector assessed the school premises, including proposed classrooms, dining areas, outdoor spaces

and toilet facilities to ensure that these are suitable to accommodate additional pupils.

- The lead inspector held meetings with the proprietor, school leaders and curriculum leaders to discuss the implications of increasing pupil numbers and extending the school's age range.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025