

# Heath House Preparatory School

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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DfE registration number	209/6294
Unique Reference Number (URN)	<del>209/6294</del> 10976294
Inspection number	<del>385053</del> 385053
Inspection dates	<del>28 September 2011</del> 28 September 2011
Reporting inspector	<del>Mike Best</del> Mike Best

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## **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.<sup>1,2</sup>

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

## **Information about the school**

Heath House Preparatory School is a non-selective independent primary day school for boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. It is located in two separate buildings in Blackheath in south-east London and makes use of local facilities for pupils' physical education and recreation. The school was first established in 1993 by the current proprietor and her husband. Most pupils are White British, with some from minority ethnic groups. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are currently 13 children, none of whom is in receipt of government nursery funding. There are currently no children with a statement of special educational needs. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language and several with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school runs a range of after-school clubs which are well supported by pupils. The school is registered to take 80 pupils and currently has 97 on roll.

The school's ultimate aim is to prepare pupils for 11-plus entrance examinations into grammar and independent schools. This aim is supported by the school's ethos which is based on pupils receiving a good 'all round' education, helping pupils to progress to the next stage of their education with self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience. The school motto is, 'Give me a place to stand and I will move the earth.'

## **Context of the inspection**

The school was last inspected in January 2011 when it was judged to provide a good quality education for its pupils. However, the welfare, health and safety of pupils were judged to be inadequate, as were a number of regulations relating to the premises and accommodation. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage was also judged inadequate because of shortcomings in the welfare, health and safety of children; aspects of provision; and the leadership and management. A material change inspection was incorporated into the January 2011 inspection for increasing the registered number to 102 but this was declined.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

The school submitted an action plan which was evaluated and accepted in April 2011. This first monitoring inspection was made to check the progress the school had made in implementing its action plan. A second material change inspection with respect to increasing the number on roll was made simultaneously with this visit and is reported separately.

## **Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan**

The inspection in January 2011 found that the school did not always carry out the full range of checks on staff prior to their appointment. As a result, a number of regulations to do with safeguarding procedures were unmet. In addition, the child protection policy was not sufficiently detailed. The school submitted an action plan to address these shortcomings, which was evaluated and accepted in April 2011. The school has implemented a revised child protection policy which now meets requirements. All the required checks are now made on staff prior to their appointment, including enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosures, and the information is systematically recorded on a single central record, as required.

The inspection in January 2011 found that some classrooms were too small for the number of pupils, that there were insufficient washroom facilities for them and that the accommodation for pupils who were ill did not meet requirements. The school submitted proposals to address these shortcomings in its action plan which was evaluated and accepted in April 2011. This visit found that the school has reconfigured the washroom provision so that the regulations are now met. The proprietor has secured a lease (subject to contract) and permission for change of use on nearby additional premises for which a material change application was considered as part of this visit and reported upon separately to the Department. The present accommodation remains overcrowded and fails to meet requirements. However, relative to the timescale approved in the evaluation of the action plan and in view of the proprietor's clear commitment to resolving this issue, the school is on track to implement its action plan proposals by the established deadline of September 2012. Although the school has done what it can within the constraints of the present accommodation by providing beds and screens, the provision for pupils who are ill still does not meet requirements.

At the time of the inspection in January 2011, the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage was inadequate because of shortcomings in aspects of the provision; its welfare, health and safety arrangements; and, consequently, the leadership and management. The school has sufficiently improved the quality of its planning and assessment in each of the six areas of learning and has resolved the majority of the issues relating to the leadership and management and the welfare, health and safety of children, with one exception which relates to the qualifications of staff. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is suitably qualified but although many staff have undertaken higher education courses, an insufficient

number have the required additional qualifications for working with children of this age.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

As a result of this inspection, the school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010<sup>3</sup> ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- have regard for the age, number and needs of pupils such that all classrooms are of an appropriate size (paragraph 23(i))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with regulation 5 of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 23(k)).

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must ensure that there are a sufficient number of suitably qualified adults.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Preparatory		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1993		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 53	Girls: 44	Total: 97
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£10,350 – £10,950		
<b>Address of school</b>	37 Wemyss Road Blackheath London SE3 0TG		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8297 1900		
<b>Email address</b>	info@heathhouseprepschool.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sophia Laslett		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Sophia Laslett and Ian Laslett		