

Mustard School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

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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, 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.^{1, 2}

The inspection of registered provision was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.^{3, 4}

Information about the school

Mustard School is a small Christian school for boys and girls from the age of two to 19 years. It was established in 1996 by the present proprietor and it is located in the London Borough of Hackney. There are currently 23 pupils on roll, aged from two to 17 years, 20 of whom attend full time. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are 10 children on roll and none is in receipt of free education entitlement. Six children are aged from two to three years, and of these, three attend part time. One child is of reception age. Nearly all pupils are of Black African heritage. All pupils speak English as their first language. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. There is after-school childcare provision for pupils from 3.30pm until 5.30pm each day during term-time. This formed part of the inspection. The school provides free education to a number of pupils whose parents face challenging circumstances. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in April 2008 when it was found to fall short in a number of requirements.

The school has a wide range of objectives based on a Christian education which aims to 'educate the children with sound academic standards and in the way of the Lord'.

Evaluation of the school

Mustard School provides a satisfactory quality of education and meets its aims. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points, as a result of the satisfactory curriculum and teaching they receive. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their outstanding behaviour. Safeguarding arrangements are adequate and the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has remedied all the deficiencies reported in the last inspection and it now complies with most of the regulations for independent

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

³ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

⁴ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents.

schools. Although the Early Years Foundation Stage is in breach of two requirements, the overall effectiveness is satisfactory.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory and enables all pupils to develop sound basic skills and to make good progress in their personal development. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a good balance is provided in the six areas of learning between adult-led and child-initiated learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the ACE curriculum provides pupils with a solid foundation in reading and numeracy skills, word building, creative writing and literature, mathematics, science, social studies and Bible studies, cemented by numerous cross-curricular links. This basic curriculum is supplemented by practical experiences in physical education (PE), French, art, music, information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and citizenship. Pupils develop good reading, spelling and handwriting skills but have insufficient opportunities for extended writing. The curriculum is constructed in such a way that an individual pupil usually progresses through units at the same rate across all subject areas, providing a balance of knowledge and skills in these subject areas. However, pupils' progress through the curriculum is not always monitored with sufficient rigour, resulting in a few pupils not covering as much of the curriculum as expected. The teaching of the extended curriculum is supported satisfactorily by schemes of work based on National Curriculum guidance.

The school has recently decided to change the curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 as a consequence of an evaluation which included pupils' views. The curriculum now consists of most National Curriculum subjects and religious education (RE). In Key Stage 4, pupils take GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and the three sciences, along with short GCSE courses in RE and ICT. The teaching is guided by National Curriculum documentation and examination criteria. This new curriculum is working satisfactorily but there is an over-reliance on textbooks and, as yet, no schemes of work.

The programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education reflects the Christian ethos of the school and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Appropriate careers advice is provided for the oldest pupils. Resources are just adequate to teach the curriculum. Curriculum enrichment is satisfactory but secondary pupils say that they would like to extend their skills through clubs. After-school activities are satisfactory and include free play and provision for doing homework, including booster classes. The pupils bring extra food and drink from home. All pupils, including the very youngest, are adequately supervised.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory throughout the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of pupils' aptitudes and needs in the ACE curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2. The supervisor and monitors ensure that pupils

build a solid foundation in their basic skills and knowledge by checking that they master at least 80% of each unit before they move on to the next step. By scoring their own work and then discussing the outcomes with the supervisor, pupils gain a good understanding of what they have to do next to improve. However, occasionally, the work undertaken both in the ACE units and the extended curriculum is insufficiently challenging and, in such cases, pupils do not progress as fast as they could.

In Key Stages 3 and 4, the teaching is good where the teacher has secure subject knowledge and good understanding of individual pupils' prior attainment and capabilities. In these lessons, probing questioning, fast pace, targeted support and effective use of ongoing assessments ensure that all pupils make good progress in their learning. However, pupils lose focus when, in a few instances, the pace of the lesson drops and when they are inconsistently challenged, and so progress is slower. In a minority of lessons, time is not managed wisely, resulting in insufficient curriculum coverage and limited achievement.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the ACE curriculum, there are appropriate systems to record the progress made by each pupil in relation to their starting points. However, in Key Stages 3 and 4, the assessment framework is less well structured. As a consequence, some teachers are insufficiently informed about students' prior attainment and learning needs, which impacts adversely on teaching and learning. Pupils gain satisfactory understanding of how to improve through verbal and written feedback.

As a result of a satisfactory curriculum and satisfactory teaching, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress towards the expected goals and good progress in their reading skills and personal development. Pupils of primary school age make good progress in reading, handwriting and in mathematics. The GCSE results of the last three years indicate variable but satisfactory progress, reflecting, in part, pupils' wide range of abilities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, social, moral, cultural and personal development of pupils is good throughout the school. The staff are excellent role models who provide a calm, warm and caring environment in which pupils can flourish. They consistently promote Christian values through working relationships based on mutual respect. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured well through daily opportunities for prayer and reflection. Their self-knowledge, self-confidence and understanding of right and wrong are developed very effectively through the Christian ethos of the school and Bible teachings. Pupils develop a good sense of responsibility, attend school regularly and most enjoy school and show good attitudes to learning. They work and play in harmony with each other and the after-school childcare provision makes a good

contribution to their social skills. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. Their outstanding behaviour reflects good moral development.

Pupils contribute to school life by helping to tidy up and clean their learning environment after activities. They express their views through the pupil council. However, the work of the pupil council is not sufficiently structured to help pupils derive maximum benefit from it. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the wider community, including taking part in sports day activities with local schools. They learn about British institutions and about other faiths and cultures through social studies and citizenship lessons. The sound basic skills which pupils acquire, along with their good attendance patterns, sense of responsibility, ability to work independently as well as in small teams, prepare them well for their future lives.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory throughout the school. The essential policies and procedures aimed at minimising risks and promoting pupils' welfare, including behaviour, anti-bullying, first aid, health and safety and fire safety, are up to date and they are implemented satisfactorily. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. Procedures for the appointment of staff and volunteers are effective. The child protection policy and procedures are sufficiently detailed to give clear guidance to staff. The staff have received the appropriate level of training in safeguarding children. They successfully create an environment where pupils feel safe to learn and well cared for. Supervision is very good and accidents are very rare. Serious incidents of misbehaviour and instances of bullying are rare. A sufficient proportion of staff has received training in first aid with paediatric qualifications. The school has a satisfactory level of fire safety. Pupils develop a sound awareness of healthy lifestyles through the curriculum. They enjoy PE and annual sports events. However, the older pupils say, justifiably, that they would like more opportunities for physical exercise.

The school has prepared a three-year plan to increase accessibility in conformity with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Satisfactory procedures ensure that all the required checks are carried out on staff, regular volunteers and the proprietor to establish their suitability to work with children. These checks are recorded in a single central register in the appropriate manner.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation enable safe and effective learning for pupils of all ages. The school makes effective use of an adjacent park for physical education.

Provision of information

The school provides and makes available accurate and up-to-date information to parents, carers and others. However, in respect of pupils who have statements of special educational needs, the school does not submit to the funding local authority, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred, as required.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints procedures meet all requirements to handle complaints fairly and promptly.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and enables satisfactory outcomes for children. Small numbers ensure that staff know children well. Satisfactory safeguarding arrangements ensure that children are cared for well.

Children who are under three years old are well integrated into the setting. They enjoy the activities on offer which are well matched to their needs. Their welfare needs are well supported and they can rest when they need to.

Children obey instructions, behave extremely well and feel safe. They are encouraged to wash hands and to drink and eat healthily. They enjoy the good variety of indoor and outdoor activities planned for them. They can also initiate their own learning, which helps to develop their independence, although some opportunities are missed.

Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good teaching. Reading skills are taught well. However, not all adults engage actively in children's play to extend understanding and communication skills. Although the teacher is suitably qualified, the classroom assistants do not have the necessary qualifications. While children make satisfactory progress overall, they make good progress in their personal development and their reading skills.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and ensure that the provision is satisfactory. An appropriate curriculum is planned and daily observations of children's learning and development enable staff to meet the needs of each child satisfactorily. However, assessment observations by staff sometimes lack sharpness. Satisfactory understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework ensures sound self-evaluation. The leadership shows strong commitment to continuous improvement, with the support of the local authority.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.⁵

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that there is a curriculum policy set out in writing which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and that it is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- ensure that there is a framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 3(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that where a pupil who is registered at the school is wholly or partly funded by the local authority, there is an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil submitted to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 24(1)(h)).

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that all staff are suitably qualified.

In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those who provide the registered provision for children under the age of three must:

- ensure that all staff are suitably qualified.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage:
 - provide more opportunities for children to develop independence, especially in the daily routines
 - ensure that all adults engage actively in children's play to extend their understanding and their communication skills

⁵ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- improve the sharpness of observations on each child's progress towards the expected goals in relation to their starting points.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Day Christian primary and secondary school		
Date school opened	1996		
Age range of pupils	2 to 17 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 10	Girls: 10	Total: 20
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 1	Total: 3
Number of children aged 0–3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£600 – £3,820, and £18,750 for pupils with highly challenging behaviour		
Fees (childcare)	£60 per month		
Address of school	Parish Hall Nuttall Street London N1 5LR		
Telephone number	020 7739 3499		
Email address	education@mustard.org		
Headteacher	Amos Johnson		
Proprietor	Faith Johnson		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

11 September 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Mustard School, London N1 5LR

Thank you for your welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed my visit, including opportunities to talk with some of you about your experiences at the school. The inspection judged that Mustard School provides you with a satisfactory quality of education and that you make a significant contribution to its success. I was particularly pleased to see that:

- you enjoy the caring, Christian atmosphere created by the staff, feel safe and live together in harmony
- you show outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to work and you take the responsibility to attend regularly
- you make satisfactory progress in relation to your starting points.

To bring about further improvement, I have asked the headteacher to ensure that:

- in Key Stages 3 and 4, the work you do is based on good schemes of work; and that you are assessed well so that teachers can measure your progress and plan the next steps in your learning
- those of you with a statement of special educational needs receive the education you are entitled to and full information is provided to those who fund you
- in the Nursery, all staff have suitable qualifications; and that they help children to develop their understanding, skills and independence, with systems to track the progress they make.

You can all help the school to improve by continuing to behave and attend so well and by telling teachers when you do not understand your work or think you can tackle something more difficult.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michèle Messaoudi
Lead inspector