

The Danesfield Manor School

11 Rydens Avenue, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 3JB

Inspection dates 28–30 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have very positive attitudes to learning, and are polite, well mannered and courteous. They feel extremely safe.
- Good teaching ensures pupils make good progress over time. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are above average.
- Pupils are cared for exceptionally well. They have a very good understanding of how to live healthy lives and a well-developed knowledge of how to keep safe.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership which has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Expectations are high and the ambition to further improve the school is strong.
- The curriculum is broad and varied, particularly in sport, music and art. This provides pupils with a good all-round education and contributes to pupils' outstanding personal development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The quality of teaching varies from outstanding to adequate. It does not always challenge all pupils, particularly the more able. Teachers' questioning does not always develop pupils' thinking well enough.
- School development planning is not sharply focused on how planned improvements will be measured. The challenge and support from governors are at an early stage of development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day’s notice.
- Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 14 teachers, and held meetings with senior leaders, staff, a governor, a parent and pupils. Her Majesty’s Inspector held telephone discussions with two governors and two officers from CfBT. Inspectors also had informal discussions with parents and carers.
- A wide range of documentation was viewed, including school development plans, pupils’ work, information on pupils’ achievement, governor minutes and curriculum documents.
- The views of 30 staff were considered through questionnaires. The views of parents and carers were taken into account through 18 Parent View online responses.

Inspection team

Ann Henderson HMI, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Christine Bennett	Additional Inspector
Matthew Haynes HMI	Her Majesty’s Inspector (Ofsted Shadow)

Full report

Information about this school

- The Danesfield Manor School is a co-educational, non-selective independent primary school, providing education for girls and boys between the ages of 3–11. It opened in 1943. CfBT Education Trust took ownership of the school in 2006.
- There are 145 pupils on roll, which includes 11 part-time children who attend the nursery class. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is situated in a large Victorian house in a residential street in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey. The school has an on-site swimming pool and recently refurbished outdoor play area. Since the previous inspection, four new classrooms have been built in the grounds of the school.
- The school received a light touch inspection in November 2010. It received a progress monitoring inspection in 2012.
- The school provides before- and after-school care for pupils from 4–11 years of age.
- There is an Early Years Centre on-site which operates from a room within the school building. This provision was inspected separately in March 2013.
- The school aim is for all children to be motivated, enquiring and enthusiastic to learn and achieve. Its motto, 'non progredi est regredi', means 'not to go forward is to go backwards'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a higher proportion is consistently good or outstanding by:
 - providing more training and development opportunities for teachers to increase their skills and understanding linked to areas of improvement identified during lesson observations
 - ensuring teachers use the responses from pupils during questioning to develop their understanding and expand their thinking
 - increasing the level of challenge for pupils of all abilities, but particularly the more able.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring the school development plan identifies clear steps to be accomplished in order to measure the success of the schools' actions
 - increasing the level of challenge and support provided by the governing body in order to hold senior leaders and teachers to account more effectively
 - securing effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are conscientious, hard-working and eager to learn. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good progress. Over time, throughout the school, pupils' progress continues to be good because of the individual attention they receive. Pupils who find learning difficult are supported well; they make similar progress to their peers. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average. In 2013, in the national tests, all pupils achieved the national standard and a significant proportion reached the higher level in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher level in mathematics was particularly impressive. All pupils pass examinations to enable them to move to the senior school of their choice. Some pupils obtain scholarships and achieve standards that are exceptional for their age. Pupils offer their ideas and respond to learning opportunities with great enthusiasm. They show high levels of curiosity and concentration. Pupils also excel in art, music and sport. Weekly swimming lessons enable pupils to develop their confidence and skills to a high standard. This is evident in the success of individuals and teams in swimming competitions. Pupils regularly take part in inter-school sporting fixtures in football, hockey, cricket, rounders, netball and swimming. They are rightly proud of their musical skills. Pupils' artistic talents, evident in displays of their artwork around the school, show high levels of skill and creativity. A combination of good academic achievement, high levels of motivation, imagination and inquisitiveness and a keenness to succeed ensures pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. They have mature attitudes and a well-developed sense of responsibility. They relish the additional responsibilities they are given, such as head boy and head girl in Year 6, sports and house captains and computer monitors. Even the nursery children enjoyed their health and safety walk to check that the outside area was a suitable area for learning. All pupils cooperate together to agreed their class rules. Pupils are extremely caring, thoughtful and kind. They look after one another well and are considerate of the needs of others. The youngest pupils take turns and share extremely well. Pupils support one another to make the right choices exceptionally well. All pupils display good manners, holding doors open for others, and even the younger pupils remind each other to say 'Thank you' politely. They are proud of their contribution to the school and the wider community. This was clearly evident when they were invited to attend the opening of the new Walton Bridge across the River Thames. One pupil was particularly proud to be chosen to cut the ribbon!

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are successful in their learning because they concentrate and support each other well. Their positive attitudes and conscientiousness make a very positive contribution to their successful learning in lessons. As a result, they thrive socially and academically. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying or racism in school. Their comments during discussions with inspectors showed how pupils accept, respect and celebrate different cultures, races and beliefs. Pupils said, 'it's a good place to be', and 'it's quite safe here and a happy place to be'. However, pupils also know that if something goes wrong, they can trust adults to help them and sort out any problems. Attendance is high and pupils are punctual when coming to school and going to lessons.

The wide range of activities the school provides enables pupils to develop a broad range of skills. The weekly philosophy lessons for pupils in Key Stage 2 enables them to explore their thinking, develop their reasoning skills and share their opinions confidently. These positive experiences make a strong contribution to their high self-esteem. Regular visits to places of interest, including the Houses of Parliament, where pupils attended a democracy workshop run by members of

parliament, enable pupils to develop a good understanding of British institutions and public bodies.

Quality of teaching

Good

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. The impact of the small class sizes is that pupils benefit from the individual attention that is provided. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and all adults support pupils' learning effectively. Consequently, pupils make good progress over time and reach above average standards. Although sometimes outstanding, there is also some adequate teaching. In these lessons, teachers do not help pupils to develop their thinking and understanding well enough. Their questioning, although initially effective, does not make enough use of pupils' responses in order to interrogate their thinking and lead them to a deeper understanding. As a result, their progress is more limited. Some teachers do enable pupils to make accelerated progress by challenging them through appropriate, sharply focused support and intervention, which enables learning to progress at a rapid pace. This was clearly seen in one outstanding lesson where open-ended questions were used well to check pupils' understanding, and supplementary questions followed up their responses to provide further challenge. Resources such as the interactive whiteboard were used well to actively engage pupils in their learning and, throughout the lesson, the time given for the completion of tasks was well planned and utilised effectively. This resulted in pupils making outstanding progress.

The school assesses and carefully tracks individual pupils' progress. Teachers mark work regularly and provide verbal and some written feedback. This is always encouraging, but does not always guide pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are clear about the targets they are working to achieve and they understand what they need to do to achieve them.

Quality of curriculum

Good

The quality of the curriculum is good. Based on the National Curriculum, it is broad, balanced and varied, with a good range of additional enrichment to ensure pupils develop their knowledge and skills progressively in each subject and across the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology and the opportunities for sport have improved since the previous inspection. The science curriculum is being developed further. The school has also introduced a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme and a broad range of lessons for all year groups to increase pupils' understanding and awareness of how to keep safe. This includes keeping safe when using new technologies (e-safety) and safety issues relating to health, such as alcohol, drugs and smoking. Personal hygiene and sex and relationships education are also included in the schools' extensive curriculum. This contributes extremely well to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. The religious education programme has also been broadened to include the understanding of a range of religions in addition to Christianity, such as Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism. Visits to various churches and places of worship are arranged to enable pupils to gain first-hand experience of how people from various faiths choose to worship. One of the distinctive features of the curriculum is the opportunity pupils have to take part in the extra-curricular activities afternoon, where pupils from different age-groups learn together through activities such as gardening, cooking, chess, music technology, pottery and textiles. These activities make a positive contribution to the curricular experiences of pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the philosophy and problem solving element of the curriculum and thoroughly enjoy the discussion and debate which enable them to develop their ideas in a safe and relaxed environment.

The inclusive nature of the school and the individual attention provided for all pupils help them to learn well and make good progress. Educational visits and links within the community are a particular strength of the school. Pupils relish the opportunity to take part in the local Rotary Club

'Top of the Form' quiz and also in the BBC Radio 2 '500 words' writers' competition.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Outstanding

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. All the independent school standards are met. Thorough checks are made during the recruitment process for all staff, including support staff and volunteers. The results of these checks are appropriately recorded on the single central register. All required policies relating to child protection are in place and up to date. All staff, including the designated lead child protection officer, have received training at the correct level. This training is updated within the appropriate timescales. Robust risk assessments identify potential risks and provide information on how to mitigate hazards. Very good attention is paid to fire safety and evacuations regularly take place; fire safety equipment is checked and tested regularly. A suitable policy is in place to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils during off-site educational visits. Many members of staff have up-to-date first-aid training, including the required paediatric first aid training to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage requirement. The admissions register and attendance registers meet requirements. Site and school security is very good. As a result, pupils feel safe and are safe during the school day.

Effective policies are in place for promoting good behaviour and pupils are well supervised on and off the school site. Although pupils report there is no bullying, a suitable procedure exists should the school be required to deal with such incidents. Pupils say they feel safe and parents and carers indicate strongly that their children are kept safe. The school promotes healthy lifestyles, including the need for a healthy diet. Pupils benefit from a daily healthy meal at lunchtimes and are encouraged to eat a healthy snack during the morning break time. There are good opportunities to participate in many exercises and sports.

Leadership and management

Good

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and members of the recently expanded governing body have successfully communicated the mission and aims of the school to staff, pupils and parents and carers. There is a shared commitment to improve the school even further. The response from the staff questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive. One response reflected the views of many, 'Danesfield is a fantastic school with a strong family ethos'. There are effective systems in place to check on pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This information is shared regularly with governors. Senior leaders use formal and informal methods to identify the most important areas of improvement for the school. There is a suitable plan in place to ensure weaknesses are addressed. However, the plans are not linked precisely enough to the impact they are expected to achieve related to outcomes for pupils. It is not always clear which member of staff is responsible for implementing each action or how its success is to be measured.

The headteacher does check on the quality of teaching and provides suitable feedback to teachers to help them to improve their practice. However, plans for supporting less effective teachers to improve their practice are limited. In addition, there are insufficient formal opportunities for all teachers to keep up to date with specific teaching strategies or to learn from outstanding teachers.

All the independent school standards are met. The school provides all the required information for parents and carers. The complaints policy and a range of other policies are available via the school website and paper copies are provided where necessary. The grounds and accommodation are generally well kept and provide a safe environment for pupils and staff alike.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	125360
Inspection number	422712
DfE registration number	936/6091
Type of school	Independent Day School
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Number of part time pupils	29
Proprietor	CfBT Education Trust
Chair	Alexander Scott
Headteacher	Helen Chalmers
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7077 - £7602
Telephone number	01932 220930
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