



Eridge House School

Independent School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

DfES Registration Number 205/6401
Unique Reference Number 134010
Inspection number 302155
Inspection dates 30-31 January 2007
Reporting inspector Greg Sorrell

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Age group 2-8	Published 23 February 2007	Reference no. 302155
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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, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

The school was founded in 2001 and is located in a residential area of Fulham. The premises are a large Victorian house that has recently been significantly extended. The school aims 'to enable the children to achieve their potential academically as well as acquiring a good knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world around them in a non-pressurized environment.' The school was originally registered in 2003 to provide part-time funded day care for children under three, nursery education for children under five years of age and full-time education for pupils from 5 to 11: although currently the oldest pupils are 8 years old. Many of the pupils are bi-lingual in French and English. The intended destinations for the pupils on leaving the school are independent day and boarding schools in London and beyond. The headteacher was promoted to the post one month ago and this is the school's first inspection.

Evaluation of the school

Eridge House is a good school. The quality of education provided is good as is the attention to the pupils' welfare health and safety. The pupils make at least good progress in their learning as a result of good teaching, while their personal development is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their views of what the school provides for their children. The school meets nearly all statutory requirements.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education provided is good. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of activities that support the school's ethos of providing rich experiences that promote not just learning, but a curiosity to find out more. An appropriate emphasis is given to encouraging independence and social skills from the earliest days at the school.

The school's curriculum policy clearly sets out how subjects are taught to the age range currently in school. The programme for Nursery and Reception classes addresses all the required areas of learning with clear attention given to enable the young learners to make choices within well planned lessons. The

curriculum for older pupils is informed by the National Curriculum and enriched by the study of French. Curriculum planning and resourcing are good for the current age-range and detailed arrangements are in place for all subjects for Years 4 and above as required for the next academic year.

Personal, social and health education is good and is closely allied to the school's ethos of self knowledge and respect for others. There are many opportunities provided for regular exercise and sport. This emphasis on staying fit and healthy has had a major boost from the new outdoor play facilities. As pupils get older, they also get the chance to take part in competitive team sports with other schools. There are regular visits to local sites of historical and cultural interest. The school has good links with the community, including visitors, which promote awareness and participation in their local community.

Teaching across the school is typically good and occasionally outstanding. In turn this leads to good and sometimes outstanding progress, especially in the Foundation Stage, where over half of the children exceed the early learning goals expected of them. All pupils enjoy their learning and attain high standards by the time they leave, particularly in English, mathematics and French. Teachers make good use of questioning to see how well pupils have understood and they readily offer answers confident that all contributions will be welcome. Occasionally, some pupils are allowed to answer several times while others look on, however, typically, all pupils respond well and when concentration drifts, they are quickly brought back on task. Resources are generally good and teachers are quickly adapting to their newly enhanced facilities. For example, the teachers and pupils make good use of the newly installed interactive whiteboards and relevant computer programs to support literacy, numeracy and topic work.

Assessment of work is good overall. The teachers know their pupils well and use this to plan learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by individualised planning with suitable targets for improvement. The use of assessment information to develop challenging targets for all pupils is underdeveloped and whole school evaluation of achievement is at an early stage. The senior managers recognise the need to strengthen assessment procedures beyond the Foundation Stage when pupils access the National Curriculum.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school makes outstanding provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy school very much and they are very enthusiastic about their work. They have a very positive attitude to school and attendance is good. One parent wrote to inspectors

saying, *'the school bubbles with with lively happy children excited about their lessons'*.

Pupils grow in self-confidence and take pride in themselves and their work as they move through the school. There is a friendly welcoming atmosphere and visitors are made very welcome. Pupils take responsibility for themselves, and even the youngest children have the opportunity to choose their learning activities on a regular basis. Older pupils, who take their responsibilities very seriously, act as head boy, head girl and prefects, having been elected by their peers. Pupils know that their views are listened to, as they are encouraged to discuss any suggestions for improvement with the headteacher.

Relationships are excellent at all levels with an atmosphere of mutual respect between pupils and staff. Staff treat pupils with kindness and consideration and value their contributions in lessons. The pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They know the difference between right and wrong and all understand the simple 'golden rules' and playground rules.

The school's community is very culturally diverse with pupils from around the world. With the help of parents, pupils are able to gain an insight into different cultural traditions, through activities such as cooking. Art and music add additional cultural dimensions. They make many visits in and around London and are forming a clear understanding of the way society works. In the Nursery, themes such as 'people who help us' give the pupils an awareness through role play of jobs done by nurses and police officers. Assemblies are held once a week and provide an opportunity for reflection on moral and spiritual issues as well as celebrating pupils' successes. This, together with religious education, (RE) gives the pupils a sound spiritual foundation. Within the RE curriculum pupils are taught about world religions.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The staff pride themselves on knowing each child as an individual and the small class sizes and quality of supervision ensure this occurs. Staff supervise children well. Relationships between staff and children are very good and are marked by caring concern. Pupils feel safe, and say that there is someone to whom they can turn if they feel worried.

The pupils are encouraged to follow active and healthy lifestyles. Regular access to physical activities assists the pupils in staying fit and appreciating the benefits of exercise in a healthy lifestyle. Parents have been consulted about the health content and availability of fruits, snacks and drinks during the day. In

lessons, such as science, the pupils are encouraged to think about safety when considering forces such as electricity.

Appropriate training has been undertaken to provide staff with the necessary understanding in matters of safeguarding the pupils' welfare and keeping them safe. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken although the policies and procedures for off-site visits do not taken account of the most recent guidance as required by legislation.

The school's attention to health and safety is supported by a suitable policy and accurate records are kept of safety tests for electrical equipment and fire-drills. There is good provision for First Aid and attendance and admission registers are maintained correctly. Accidents and incidents are properly recorded. The school's behaviour policy is underpinned by high expectations and good role-modelling by staff. As a result of recent building extension, the school complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. During the inspection, a small number of minor health and safety issues were brought to the proprietor's attention.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The proprietor has excellent safeguards to ensure the pupils do not encounter unsuitable adults. Staffing and recruitment procedures are informed by the most recent guidance and are rigorously followed.

School's premises and accommodation

In accordance with the school's expansion plans, the recently completed building works have resulted in the school providing good accommodation with some outstanding facilities. The school has taken good account of providing accessibility for all learners, for example, access for all is assured by providing ramps and a newly installed lift. There are a number of designated specialist teaching rooms, some of which are dual purpose, for science, ICT, design and technology, music, art and French. Classrooms, including those in the original part of the school, offer good conditions for effective learning. The school hall is an excellent facility for physical education, dance, ballet, music and drama. Understandably, in view of the recent completion of works, not all rooms are as yet fully equipped. The premises meet regulations in all respects apart from the sick room not meeting all of the necessary requirements for pupils who become ill during the school day. The recently completed outdoor play area provides excellent scope to support the curriculum and offers secure play for all ages. The school also makes good use of the local community to support the curriculum.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information meets nearly all requirements. The school maintains good contact with some parents at the start and end of each day where they can meet staff. Regular communications are enabled by termly progress meetings and the home-school message books. The annual written progress reports are adequate overall, but some say too little about what the pupils need to do to improve further and there is no space for parents to write their comments about how well they feel their children are doing. The vast majority of parents feel that their children are well supported in their learning but a small number would like more information about progress. Inspectors agree with these views and acknowledge that the school works very hard to keep parents informed about its developments. The school's informative website is also a source of useful information. Currently, the school does not provide information related to its exclusion procedures nor does it make parents or prospective parents aware that they may request particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has recently revised its policy to ensure it meets regulations and to make its procedures clearer to parents. In response to the parental questionnaire most parents indicated that they feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school which has regard to DfES guidance *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits* (reference HSPV2) (paragraph 3(2)(c))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

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- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide particulars of its policy on and arrangements for exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e)) and
- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware they can request particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(i)).

What the school could do to improve further

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

- improve the use of assessment data and other evidence to increase the effectiveness and scope of self-evaluation;
- improve the quality of written reports to parents.

School details

Name of school	Eridge House
DfES number	205/6401
Unique reference number	134010
Type of school	Preparatory
Status	Independent
Date school opened	February 2001
Age range of pupils	2-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 42 Girls: 38 Total: 80
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 13 Girls: 17 Total: 30
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,555 (full-time) £4,965 (part-time)
Address of school	1, Fulham Park Road, London SW6 4LJ
Telephone number	020 7371 9009
Fax number	020 7371 9009
Email address	office@eridgehouse.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Janie Richardson
Proprietor	Mrs Lucinda Waring
Reporting inspector	Mr Greg Sorrell AI
Dates of inspection	30-31 January 2007