

Eridge House School

Independent school inspection report

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| Unique reference number | 134010 |
| URN for registered childcare and social care | 205/6401 |
| Inspection number | 341940 |
| Inspection dates | 24 November 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Sue Frater HMI |

Age group: 2-11

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002¹, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of registered provision³ was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.⁴

This was a light touch inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Eridge House School is a co-educational, independent day school for pupils aged two to 11 years. Currently, there are 173 pupils on roll, including 72 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Government funding is provided for 65 children. Childcare provision is registered separately. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, with most being of White European descent. The proportion speaking English as a second language is high and many of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is low and none of the current pupils has a statement of special educational needs. The school was founded in September 2001 and the first cohort of Year 6 pupils is due to transfer to secondary provision in 2010. The school aims 'to provide a supportive, positive and challenging environment, where each child can be supported, extended and nurtured towards personal excellence'. The school was previously inspected in January 2007.

Evaluation of the school

Eridge House School provides a good quality of education. Pupils make good progress due to the good quality of the curriculum and good teaching and assessment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is also outstanding. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Good provision and leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage result in good outcomes. While there are strengths in the provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety, this area is inadequate overall

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

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.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga_20060021_en_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49

because safeguarding procedures are not fully compliant with the regulations. Some regulations relating to the complaints policy are not met. The school has not provided that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school. The school has not yet informed parents, carers and others that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential. Regulations not met in the previous inspection are now met. These relate to the provision of medical facilities, risk assessments on activities outside the school, and provision of information for parents. The quality of information for parents, including written reports on children's progress, is now good. Parents say they are well informed and that the school is, 'very warm and welcoming' with 'approachable staff'. Pre-inspection questionnaire responses from parents indicate that most parents are very positive about the school.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is good; it provides breadth and balance. It covers all six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage well. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum covers the National Curriculum subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, geography, history, art and design, music and physical education. Personal, social and health education suitably covers aspects of keeping safe and healthy, as well as rights and responsibilities. The curriculum is extended effectively by specialist teaching in French, music and singing, football, tennis, swimming, drama and contemporary dance. It is enriched by a wide range of residential trips and visits that are thoughtfully linked to the topics studied, such as visits to museums, the theatre and historical buildings. Most pupils participate in an extensive range of clubs that enable them to pursue new interests. Curriculum policies are supported by good quality planning that provides for progression throughout the school. Specialist support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils for whom English is a second language enables them to access the full curriculum. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy a good balance of activities in the classroom and in the outside areas and flow freely between the two. The outdoor areas have been imaginatively developed to enhance pupils' learning and physical development. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities with emphasis on first-hand experiences.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. This good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in most lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2, promotes pupils' good progress and enthusiasm for learning. In a few lessons the pace of learning is slow because activities are not sufficiently varied to sustain pupils' interest. In all lessons, pupils are motivated to apply new skills independently, as in younger children investigating an archaeological dig and writing in role play areas, and older pupils researching the properties of glass or highlighting metaphors in a text. Strengths in teaching include effective lesson planning, the use of interactive

whiteboards to demonstrate new skills, and probing questions to extend pupils' thinking and responses. Pupils say they particularly enjoy working with others, using computers for research, and solving problems as in their mathematics lessons. Year 6 pupils appreciate the good support they are given in preparing them for transition to secondary school. Pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English are supported well by teaching assistants and they make good progress.

The use of assessment to inform planning for individual children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promotes their good and often outstanding progress. In Key Stages 1 and 2, while pupils' progress is good overall, assessment is not used to tailor activities closely enough to the learning needs of individuals, particularly more able pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work includes encouraging comments. However, it does not identify consistently the 'next steps' to help pupils to improve their work. Although the school monitors pupils' progress accurately in relation to National Curriculum levels, it does not yet evaluate the progress made each year by the pupils to ensure they reach their highest possible standard.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

A special feature of pupils' and young children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is their ability to reflect on issues, such as how they behave towards others. Pupils learn to value other religions, ethnicities and cultures through the inspiring curriculum and visits. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and discuss moral issues avidly in circle time. High expectations of behaviour and self-evaluation help pupils and younger children to develop outstanding self-discipline. The pupils get on exceptionally well together. They say, 'Everyone in school is a friend'. They take their responsibilities for recycling, and as house captains and prefects, seriously and raise funds for a range of charities. They participate enthusiastically in a range of cultural visits and learn about public institutions and services, for example through visits from the police, visits to the local fire station and to the Houses of Parliament.

Pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire responses indicate that they are very happy at school. This is evident in their good attendance and in their high levels of participation in the many clubs available. The very positive relationships between pupils and teachers help them to grow in confidence and self-esteem. This is further supported by an increasing repertoire of independent learning skills, including thinking 'outside the box'. As a result, pupils develop great enthusiasm for learning. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are curious and motivated to investigate the world around them. Inquiry is encouraged to good effect as pupils move through the school. To aid them in their pursuit of knowledge, pupils develop good skills in literacy, numeracy, ICT, teamwork and time management. These skills promote their future economic well-being.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The headteacher has recently undertaken training in safer recruitment procedures and is improving the school's systems. Some newly implemented procedures reflect good practice. However, arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety are inadequate overall because recruitment checks on the suitability of staff, and the child protection policy, are not fully compliant with the regulations. The school has secured the required criminal records bureau (CRB) checks on most staff, but had not checked whether new staff were barred from working with children, prior to their appointment and while waiting for the CRB clearance. The single central register is not complete with respect to the checks on new staff and also in relation to checks made of the right of staff to work in the United Kingdom. By the end of the inspection, the checks on new staff had been carried out and the school was aware of the information that is required in the single central register. Staff are trained appropriately in child protection, but important procedures are omitted from the policy. The omissions include the frequency of training, responsibilities of key staff and procedures for interagency work. All other essential policies are implemented satisfactorily. There are some good features, notably the recording of health and safety risk assessments. Since the previous inspection, appropriate risk assessments have been carried out on all visits out of school and this requirement is now met.

Young children and pupils feel safe in school because staff know them very well and provide good day-to-day care for them. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage move about safely in the classrooms and outside. They use tools and equipment carefully. Parents are informed of who the key person is for each group of children. Older pupils claim there is no bullying. The school's anti-bullying policy is effective, reflects the latest guidance and is supplemented by an internet safety policy. The promotion of healthy lifestyles is a particular strength of the school. Pupils eagerly participate in the wide range of physical exercise on offer and appreciate the good quality healthy food provided.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Due to recent training by the local authority and weekly meetings with the school's consultant, staff have a sound knowledge of the welfare requirements and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and are sufficiently vigilant to protect children's safety and well-being. As a result, good outcomes are secured through good provision. The quality of planning and assessment is good. There are some examples of outstanding practice in assessing children's learning and development and using the information to plan to meet the needs of individual children. These strategies have not yet been disseminated to secure consistently outstanding practice. The staff work as a cohesive team. Their self-evaluation is accurate and focused clearly on raising the quality of outcomes for children. While the learning and development needs of each individual child are met well, children's progress over time has not been evaluated to ensure that all children reach the highest standard possible.

However, most children make good progress in their learning and outstanding progress in their personal development. Given these improvements and the accurate identification of priorities for further development, the capacity to improve is good.

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 written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance 'Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education' (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff carry out a check of their suitability to work with children through List 99 (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- record in the single central register that the check has been made (paragraph 4C(2))
- for each member of staff in post on or after 1 May 2007, ensure the register shows that a check was made of their right to work in the UK and, where relevant for those who have lived outside the UK, additional checks as appropriate to ensure suitability to work in a school (and the date these checks were completed) (paragraph 4C(3)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- ensure that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g))
- inform parents, carers and others that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential (paragraph 7(k)).

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

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 to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they possibly can by:
 - matching lessons more closely to the needs of all pupils, particularly more able pupils
 - ensuring the marking of pupils' work consistently indicates how they can improve it
 - evaluating rigorously the information from assessments on individuals and class groups, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, each year and throughout their time in the school
 - sharing the best practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage in using assessment to plan for the learning and development of each individual child.

Inspection judgement recording form

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|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|

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 | | | | ✓ |
|--|--|--|--|---|

The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

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|---|---|--|--|--|
| How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS? | ✓ | | | |
| What is the quality of provision in the EYFS? | ✓ | | | |
| How effectively is the EYFS led and managed? | ✓ | | | |
| Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS? | ✓ | | | |

School details

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|---|---|-----------|------------|
| Name of school | Eridge House School | | |
| DCSF number | 205/6401 | | |
| Unique reference number | 134010 | | |
| EY URN (for registered childcare only) | 205/6401 | | |
| Type of school | Preparatory | | |
| Status | Independent | | |
| Date school opened | 11 September 2001 | | |
| Age range of pupils | 2-11 years | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | | |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils) | Boys: 87 | Girls: 86 | Total: 173 |
| Number on roll (part-time pupils) | Boys: 5 | Girls: 3 | Total: 8 |
| Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision | Boys: 5 | Girls: 3 | Total: 8 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need | Boys: 0 | Girls: 0 | Total: 0 |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £12,636 | | |
| Annual fees (childcare) | £6,567 | | |
| Address of school | 1 Fulham Park Road London SW6 4LJ | | |
| Telephone number | 020 73719009 | | |
| Fax number | 020 73719229 | | |
| Email address | office@eridgehouse.co.uk | | |
| Headteacher | Mrs Janie Richardson | | |
| Proprietor | Mrs Lucinda Waring | | |
| Reporting inspector | Sue Frater HMI | | |
| Dates of inspection | 24 November 2009 | | |