

La Petite Ecole Bilingue

Inspection dates

22–23 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Good leadership has ensured that this school is improving. The headteacher and proprietor have been successful in securing good progress since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Their highly positive attitudes to learning combine with strong teaching to ensure that boys and girls do equally well.
- Teachers plan interesting and stimulating activities that engage pupils well. This enables pupils to make good progress in both English and French.
- Early years foundation stage children and pupils in other year groups are very happy and content, and feel safe. All have a strong desire to learn and they attend well.
- Early years provision is good. Children make strong progress because they are well taught; they feel secure, are inquisitive learners and thoroughly enjoy school.
- The bilingual curriculum is very successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils take great pride over the content and presentation of their work. Their behaviour in the classroom and around the school is exemplary.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' understanding quickly enough and miss opportunities to take swift action to address them.
- Information about pupils' progress is not analysed well enough to enable the setting of additional challenges for pupils, especially the most able.
- Although clear in what will be done, the current improvement plan does not specify what has to be achieved, particularly in terms of outcomes for pupils, how improvement will be regularly checked and who must take responsibility to drive these improvements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further increase the rate at which pupils progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers identify more quickly when pupils develop gaps in their understanding and take swift action to fill those gaps
 - sharper analysis of information about pupils' progress is used to set more precisely targeted challenges for pupils, in particular the most able, to further accelerate their progress.
- Develop plans so that they are more precise and therefore more effective in driving improvement by ensuring that:
 - criteria by which success can be measured are made clear and based, where possible, on pupils' outcomes
 - interim checks are made on the impact of improvements enabling, if necessary, different strategies to be adopted
 - those who are responsible for driving aspects of improvement are clearly identified.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher is committed to providing high-quality education for all pupils who attend the school. She and all staff, leaders and managers share high aspirations for pupils and are committed to the continuous improvement of the school.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and accurately identify areas of weakness. They provide good feedback to teachers, identifying the most important development points to help staff to lift the quality of their teaching to outstanding. Teachers value this ongoing professional development.
- The pupils' good educational achievement and well-cultivated personal development ensure that they are well prepared for their next steps in education.
- Parents are consulted frequently about school developments. They are also consulted on how well they think the school is performing. There is a very strong consensus among parents that the school is providing a quality education and that their children are very well looked after.
- Pupils have access to a rich and varied bilingual curriculum; this is a key strength of the school. Teachers provide a wealth of stimulating and exciting opportunities for pupils that deepen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded successfully through the curriculum. This is achieved by delivering the school's aim of providing an 'exciting, broad and varied curriculum that is enriched through the arts, music and sport'.
- The school is very effective in developing pupils' understanding of what it is like to live in modern Britain. British values are taught alongside French national values, with the emphasis on mutual respect and tolerance and the rule of law. Pupils routinely engage in the voting process to decide on a range of classroom issues and hence learn about the importance of democracy.
- The school has made significant progress in improving safeguarding; this was a key area in which several regulations were not met at the previous inspection. Well-organised systems ensure that all suitable checks are made on staff prior to their appointment. Safeguarding training is routine for all staff. Those with particular safeguarding responsibilities in the school have received up-to-date training at a higher level. The pastoral care systems within the school ensure that the welfare, health and safety of pupils are of the highest priority. Swift action is taken to address any issues that arise. Parents are kept fully informed if concerns are raised. Leaders involve parents and relevant agencies at an early stage if required, for example the local authority's early years intervention service.
- Leaders monitor the work of the school but some of the systems do not lead to rigorous evaluation of the school's overall performance. For example, pupils' progress is recorded but the information is not used well enough to set more precisely targeted challenges for the most able pupils.
- Leaders are currently unable to identify whether or not different aspects of the school improvement plan have been realised. This is because the plan does not state precisely what a successful development will look like in terms of outcomes for pupils. As roles are not clearly defined in the plan, leaders are unable to hold others to full account for bringing about improvement.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The proprietor works effectively with the headteacher and welcomes the skills that she brings to the school. The proprietor is highly committed to improving the school and has provided a well-organised support system to secure development in the school. For example, the headteacher meets regularly with a few other school leaders within the La Petite family to share ideas and gain further support.
 - The proprietor is knowledgeable about the school's achievements and the quality of teaching. She provides appropriate support and challenge to the leadership in the school through the leadership team meetings that are held every two weeks.
 - The proprietor has not yet worked with the headteacher to improve the quality of the school improvement plan and to use it to evaluate the performance of the school more rigorously.
 - The proprietor and headteacher ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers know their pupils well and plan interesting and stimulating activities in lessons to enable pupils to build on their learning and make good progress over time.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong and a strength of the school. This results in pupils being confident learners who are not afraid to seek clarification to increase their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding effectively through questioning. They provide useful feedback on the quality and content of pupils' work. Teachers use this information to provide additional support to pupils who are struggling with any aspect of their learning. During the inspection, teachers and teaching assistants often provided effective one-to-one support in the classroom to address misunderstandings or to further consolidate pupils' learning.
- Teachers give careful consideration to the activities they set for pupils and ensure that they meet the needs of pupils with differing abilities. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disability, and those at the very early stages of learning English or French.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Specialist teachers are used effectively in some subjects. These include music, dance and drama. Pupils benefit from this expertise, which results in them achieving well. For example, pupils confidently performed songs and dances from different cultures at the school's annual music festival which took place during the inspection at a local community centre.
- Teachers and bilingual teaching assistants are skilful in developing pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. They model good use of language in French and English. Their approach in mathematics is to model how to work through a mathematical problem, with the emphasis on the thinking processes involved.
- Occasionally, teachers do not spot gaps in pupils' learning quickly enough. This is evident in lessons and pupils' books where, very occasionally, teachers do not pick up early enough on something that has not been well understood.
- Occasionally, teachers do not provide additional challenge for the most able pupils in their day-to-day learning. As a result, some pupils do not consistently make the rapid progress of which they are capable, especially in English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- All parents and members of staff who expressed a view agree that the pupils are safe at the school.
- Pupils take great care and pride over the content and presentation of their work. Pupils' handwriting is very neat in both French and English. Equally, when pupils redraft or edit their work, for instance during French lessons in dictation, the end result is very positive.
- Those pupils who met with the inspector said that they feel safe at the school and that they have an adult they can speak to should they have a concern. They all said that they are confident that the adult will listen to and help them.
- Pupils have a clear, age-appropriate understanding of the different types of bullying. Those pupils who the inspector met said that bullying at the school is rare. However, when it does occur, they said staff deal with it effectively. The school's records demonstrate that incidents are rare but dealt with very well when they do occur.
- The school promotes healthy eating very effectively. As a result, pupils are able to develop further their sense of self-worth through their greater understanding of how to lead healthy lives. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the daily social occasion of eating together a nutritious meal prepared on-site with fresh ingredients.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- All staff and parents who expressed a view agree that leaders and staff manage pupils' behaviour well.
- Staff consistently model the excellent behaviour they expect from pupils, which results in the exemplary behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very strong. Pupils actively listen to teachers' explanations, process the information and are keen to discover more. As a consequence, pupils are successful learners in both the French and English curriculum.

- The school's records show that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare; when they do occur, they are dealt with very effectively by bilingual staff who have a good understanding of the cultural background and emotional state of their pupils.
- Attendance at the school is above average. This is because of the school's excellent support for the pupils, as well as the pupils' strong desire to be in school to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' standards in English and mathematics are broadly average and in some cases above average. Most pupils meet the expectations of the French curriculum and some exceed them. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in both languages.
- Pupils in all year groups learn quickly and make good progress. This was seen across different subjects, including English, mathematics and French. The evidence is well supported by the standards of work seen by the inspector in a range of pupils' books and in lessons.
- Pupils make rapid progress from their starting points in reading. Over half of those currently in school have age-expected reading abilities, while others are rapidly closing the gap in attainment. This is because pupils read widely and often. Leaders and teachers strongly promote a love of books.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disability are making good progress in all subjects, including English, mathematics and French. This is because staff adapt their teaching and resources to meet their specific needs, for example by breaking down the problem into component parts so these pupils can access the learning.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning English or French also make good progress and achieve well. This is partly because staff are using good resources and strategies to meet the needs of these pupils in the classroom. The use of role play, for example, when pupils became customers and shopkeepers, enabled these pupils to gain a better understanding of how to work out change during a transaction.
- Although the most able pupils make good progress overall, sometimes their understanding is not probed and challenged as well as it could be to ensure these pupils give of their very best.
- Currently, leaders are not analysing the information on pupils' achievement well enough to enable them to help all pupils to make accelerated progress, in particular the most able. The breakdown of information on the progress of different groups of pupils is at an early stage of development.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership and management in the early years are good. They are effective in meeting the independent school standards in early years provision.
- Staff use questioning effectively to make children think carefully about what they are doing and why. For example, when asked about why the angler fish has a light on its head, a child's thoughtful response was 'because it is very dark deep inside the sea'.
- Relationships between the children and staff are a strength. This enables children to thrive and develop in an environment where they feel safe and secure. Consequently, children are happy and confident in their learning, quickly acquiring the necessary skills to do things for themselves. This makes them well prepared as they start in Year 1.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. Routines are well established and consistently applied by all staff in and outside the classroom. Adults are appropriately trained in all aspects of keeping children safe. They watch children carefully and know how to report any concerns they may have.
- Parents are delighted with how quickly their children settle in the early years and with the education their children are receiving. They welcome the opportunities they have to talk with staff, effectively linking learning at home and school.
- Areas of learning are well organised, providing children with a range of activities to make links in their learning and stimulate creativity. Consequently, children develop into inquisitive learners and make good progress over time.
- Evidence of children's learning and development is recorded well by the bilingual adults who work in the setting. However, information about the children's progress is not analysed sharply enough to shape the additional provision for the most able and ensure they make even better progress.

School details

Unique reference number	138599
Inspection number	10012784
DfE registration number	207/6001

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Bilingual primary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Proprietor	Anne Henderson-Stewart
Chair	Anne Henderson-Stewart
Headteacher	Helene Knupffer
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,900
Telephone number	0208 960 2725
Website	www.petiteecolebilingue.free.fr/
Email address	Head.oxfordgardens@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	20–21 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2012 as an independent school. It is located in a large house in West London. It is a bilingual school, teaching English and French. The proprietor runs three other schools and a nursery, one of which is in Paris.
- The school is registered for 70 boys and girls aged from three to 11 years. The present number on roll is 38. There are 11 children in the early years foundation stage (Reception).
- The school has a few pupils with special educational needs and/or disability. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- About half of the pupils are native English speakers and half are French speakers, but a large minority are bilingual when they come to school. There are also a small number of pupils with other native languages such as Russian, Italian and Spanish.
- The school follows the English early years foundation stage programme.
- The school uses facilities outside school. This includes the local park for recreation, the library and the community centre for art, music and drama.
- The school's aim is to 'provide a bilingual education in a warm, homely and supportive environment where an exciting, broad and varied curriculum offers an intellectually challenging learning experience that is enriched through the arts, music and sport'.
- The current headteacher took up the post in September 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Learning was observed in eight lessons; four of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work and children's learning journeys were scrutinised.
- The inspector spoke to teachers, the headteacher and the proprietor about their work. The inspector also had a discussion with a small group of parents who are part of the parent council, and also pupils around the school.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, and the 13 responses from staff to the staff questionnaire.
- Documentation and policies were checked for compliance with the Independent School Standards.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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