

# Froebel House School

Independent school standard inspection report

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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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Froebel House School is a small, independent preparatory school for children aged from three to 11 years of age. There are currently 116 children on roll, of which 21 are in the Nursery/Reception class. Fifteen children aged three and four are funded under the nursery funding scheme. The school's philosophy, as stated in its prospectus, is to 'provide a firm foundation upon which all aspects of education will be built'.

Children are prepared for entrance examinations to independent schools, including the nearby Hymers College. In most cases these examinations are taken at the age of eight or 11.

A supervised after-school club runs until 5.45 pm.

The school was established in 1906 and is situated in a residential area of Hull. Its last inspection was in November 2007.

## **EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL**

Froebel House provides a good quality education. Children make outstanding progress in their learning, enabling them to join independent and other schools of their choice. Behaviour is outstanding: children show high levels of enthusiasm for learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teaching, assessment and the curriculum are good. All the requirements for safeguarding are met and the overall welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. The school fulfils its aims well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory: here, the outcomes for children are good, but the curriculum has fewer opportunities in it for learning through play than are usually found. The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection. It now meets all of the regulations for independent schools.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The curriculum is good. It prepares children well for entrance to independent and other schools of their choice, with a strong foundation in the acquisition of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, so that children reach above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Those leaving at the end of Year 3 reach well above average standards for their age in both literacy and numeracy.

The curriculum is appropriate and closely focused on developing literacy and numeracy skills rapidly: every morning session is devoted wholly to these basic skills. Other subjects are taught in the afternoon. These arrangements, together with good teaching and close monitoring of progress throughout the school, ensure that children make rapid progress right from the start. Children quickly learn to read. Accurate spelling, punctuation and sentence structure are built up year on year, so that children's writing is of a high standard. The curriculum also enables children to gain a very firm grasp of basic skills in mathematics. Schemes of work are detailed and extensively draw on tried and tested published materials.

There are a number of good features to the curriculum: the annual residential visit to the Lake District for children in Years 3 to 6; and the provision of a modern foreign language (French) for Years 4 to 6. Latin is taught in Years 5 and 6. These subjects and learning opportunities offer additional challenge to the children and add breadth to the curriculum. Children benefit from having specialist teachers, for example, in music and art. There is an annual drama production and a talent show. Some links operate with Hymers College. For example, the school uses the theatre there on occasions. There are some visits and trips out of school but few visitors into school to enhance the curriculum.

A few parents and carers commented on the range of activities the school offers. As an optional addition to the fees paid, children can learn to play guitar, piano and other musical instruments or take speech and drama lessons. However, there are few opportunities for children to follow personal interests or learn new ones. There is little for the children to do at break or lunchtimes. There are no games, toys or equipment that might enhance further their personal development and promote their social skills. Children commented in discussion that they really enjoyed school and singled out creative writing and art as favourite subjects. They said they enjoy using their imagination in these subjects and would welcome further opportunities for work of this nature.

While good, the curriculum is not outstanding, as the school had judged. The school's information makes it clear to parents and carers that opportunities for some curriculum subjects are restricted by the space and facilities available. Nevertheless, the school meets all of the regulations. There is a room for information and communication technology (ICT) but no, specialist facilities or accommodation for physical education (PE), science, design and technology or art. There is a small

music practice room suitable for individual or small-group tuition. Classrooms double up for practical subjects. This limitation is compensated for to a certain extent by regular visits to a local sports centre and weekly swimming sessions at a local pool. The school hall is used for indoor PE and other activities. The playground, normally used for PE, has no equipment or markings for organised team games.

Information and communication technology is taught to children in Years 4 to 6 on a rota with art, and design and technology. This is a satisfactory arrangement, but there is little evidence that children use, apply or develop their ICT skills in other subjects or that ICT is used to enhance teaching and learning, for example in mathematics, or literacy. This would help children develop useful skills for their future.

The curriculum provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage of the school is satisfactory. The outcomes are, nevertheless, good, with strong foundations laid in basic skills and good habits for learning established early on. However, there are few opportunities for learning through play and for children to make choices that help them develop independence and which promote their personal development.

Teaching and assessment are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure good engagement in learning. They have high expectations of what the children know and can do. Lessons are well planned, to a set format to ensure consistency across the school and to ensure that lessons meet the needs of the class as a whole. Teachers give clear explanations and support those children who find the work more difficult. Teaching is effective, with an appropriate range of methods and resources used.

Relationships with children are a strength. Teachers encourage the children to do their best. Lessons are closely directed by the teacher; consequently, there is less emphasis on developing independence of thought. There are few opportunities for children to experience working in pairs or groups or to work together collaboratively, for example, on projects to foster their independence in learning. Extra work is set in lessons for higher-attaining children if they finish quickly.

Assessment is continuous. Children's work is marked promptly, allowing teachers to give them swift feedback. Learning is regularly tested. Overall attainment and progress are tested in the summer term. Children must reach set levels before proceeding to the next year and in practice almost all do; if they are not met they may stay on in that year group to consolidate their learning.

## **SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is good. There is strong provision for children's moral development, underpinned by daily aims that are well known: 'do your best, be kind to others and do what you are told'.

Attendance is good. Children show excellent attitudes to school and their behaviour is outstanding. They take an active part in their lessons. The children work hard, are courteous and organise themselves well. The school rules stress cooperative behaviour and thinking of others. Assemblies, led by the headteacher, reinforce these. They promote children's spiritual development well. Music is an integral part of the regular assemblies. The children sing hymns well, sometimes in two parts, with good expression and clear diction. Assemblies offer opportunities for the children to be creative, for example when a class leads an assembly based around a specific theme.

The children's personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is delivered by the headteacher through assemblies. Teachers are available at other times for children to approach them, if they wish. This provision is satisfactory and meets the needs of the younger children.

The PSHE programme does not include a number of important issues that are relevant to older children, such as those in Years 5 and 6, as they are growing up. For example, there is no input for this age group on awareness of the dangers of illegal drugs, alcohol or smoking to encourage them to lead healthy lives and keep themselves safe. Older children say that they would like opportunities to discuss such matters informally or with their peers.

A small number of children take on leadership roles through the house system, but there is no formal channel for children to express their views, such as a school council, about decisions that may affect them.

The personal development of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is restricted to a certain extent by the range of learning opportunities offered. These do not support the development of children's independence and creative skills sufficiently well: there are few opportunities for them to learn through play, for example, or to work collaboratively in groups.

Children learn about other cultures and religions through their lessons in religious education. The school misses some good opportunities to promote tolerance and understanding further, for example, by drawing directly on the many different faiths represented amongst the children on roll or by celebrating important cultural and religious festivals from all faiths.

## **Welfare, health and safety of children**

The welfare, health and safety of the children are good. Safeguarding arrangements are good. All the required policies to minimise health and safety risks to children are in place. Child protection arrangements and practice, including staff training, meet requirements. Children say that they feel safe at school. They report that there is no bullying, but feel teachers would deal with it if it occurred. All are very cheerful and say that they love school. Parents and carers, in their questionnaires, were delighted with the school regarding the care of their children and at how well they were

making progress. Inspectors noted the good relationships and trust between staff and children. Weekly swimming lessons and attendance at a local sports centre help the children to keep healthy.

Children show good awareness of the rules that are prominently displayed in the playground and appreciate the importance of good behaviour. Sanctions are rarely needed.

At lunchtimes children can play in the playground, which provides a good break from their studies, but there are no toys, games or equipment provided for play. Children may choose to stay inside at lunchtime to colour in a picture and older children may use the computers, if they wish.

A few children expressed concern to inspectors about bumping into the adjacent fire escape when playing outside. The school reports that it has received no formal complaints from parents, carers or children regarding this.

The school is extending the information it provides to children regarding keeping themselves safe as they grow up and are out and about outside of school. For example a workshop on safety when using the internet is scheduled to take place shortly.

The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, as amended.

## **THE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF**

The school's procedures for the recruitment of staff meet the regulations. The school has conducted all the checks that are currently required on its staff, including a check with the Criminal Records Bureau, and holds this information appropriately in a single central register.

## **PREMISES AND ACCOMMODATION AT THE SCHOOL**

The premises are suitable. The school is clean, tidy, bright and well maintained. The premises provide a very pleasant environment in which to learn. The playground is adequate for the numbers and age range of the children in school. There are no specialist facilities, except for ICT. The school hall is used for indoor PE, music, assemblies and other whole-school events. Since its previous inspection, the school has increased the number of toilets for children, so that this feature now meets the regulation.

## **PROVISION OF INFORMATION**

The school has added further details to its prospectus so that this now provides all the information required for current or prospective parents or carers. Parents and carers receive an annual written report of their child's progress with details of how they are doing in each subject and a termly update in between. Over and above this, they receive regular information from weekly tests of children's learning, such as for spellings.

## **MANNER IN WHICH COMPLAINTS ARE TO BE HANDLED**

The school has a written complaints policy that meets all the requirements.

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The outcomes for children are good and are high in children's abilities in speaking, reading and writing and in their understanding of number. Children arrive from a wide variety of settings and settle in quickly. They make rapid progress in acquiring good habits for learning. They engage happily in the activities that are set for them, showing good attitudes to each other. As a result of good teaching, the children make good and, in many cases, excellent progress in learning.

Provision is satisfactory, as all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are not always securely in place. For example, learning opportunities do not always support the development of children's independence and creative skills sufficiently well. As a result, children make less progress in creative development than in their other areas of learning.

Children have no direct access to an outdoor play space. To overcome this, staff take the children into the playground and to weekly swimming sessions, which helps to satisfactorily promote their physical development.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. All the policies and procedures with regard to the welfare and safeguarding of children are securely in place. The progress that children make against early learning goals is noted appropriately. Parents and carers feel their children are well cared for and appreciate the secure environment the staff create.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').



## **WHAT THE SCHOOL COULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

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

- Extend the range of topics and opportunities for discussion within the personal, social and health education programme to further promote children's awareness of how to keep themselves healthy and safe.
- Identify occasions and ways in which children could increase their awareness and knowledge of other faiths and cultures, and thereby enhance their understanding and tolerance towards different beliefs and lifestyles.
- Provide toys or games that would provide additional opportunities to further children's personal and creative development, specifically at lunchtimes, but also for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Enhance the opportunities for children to work together collaboratively, such as on projects, to enable them to use their imagination and express their views more frequently.

## 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	√			

### Children' 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

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Preparatory		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1906		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 69	Girls: 50	Total: 116
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,600		
<b>Address of school</b>	5 Marlborough Avenue Hull East Yorkshire HU5 3JP		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01482 342272		
<b>Email address</b>	froebel@froebel.karoo.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L A Roberts		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mrs L A Roberts		