

Ecole Française de Londres Jacques Prévert

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi

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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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

The Ecole Française de Londres Jacques Prévert is a French school which admits boys and girls from the age of four to 11 years. It is located in a residential area of West London, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It was founded in 1974, initially to serve the local community of French nationals. There are currently 262 pupils on roll, of whom 28 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (moyenne section). None of the children under the age of five years have entitlement to free education.

Over the years, an increasing proportion of bilingual French/English pupils have been admitted. About one third of pupils have dual British and French nationality and 30 have solely British nationality. A few pupils speak other languages than French or English at home. There are a few pupils identified as being at an earlier stage of learning French than their peers. None have statements of special educational needs.

The school is 'une école conventionnée' subject to the authority of the French Ministry of Education, exercised through the Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger (AEFE) and the French Embassy in London, including visits from the French inspectorate. The school teaches the French national school curriculum in French. A substantial amount of time is devoted to the teaching of English. The vast majority of pupils continue their education in the Lycée Français. The school is also registered as an independent school with the Department for Education (DfE). It was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2008 when it met most of the regulations.

The school aims to 'promote a friendly, familial atmosphere... to provide a harmonious educational experience based on the official French programmes, and it is open to the culture of the United Kingdom'.

Evaluation of the school

L' Ecole Française de Londres Jacques Prévert provides an outstanding quality of education and meets its aims fully. Parents are extremely positive about the school's work, typically saying, 'The teaching team is amazing and very supportive of all children.' As a result of significant improvements in the curriculum and teaching since

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

the last inspection, pupils make outstanding progress in their learning over time and are exceptionally well prepared for their future. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their good behaviour. Having rectified the regulatory failures reported in the last inspection, the school now meets all the safeguarding requirements and complies with all the regulations for independent schools. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and, although the school is in breach of one of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, this deficiency has no negative impact on children's learning and development, which are good.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. It is exemplary in that it is directly relevant to pupils' needs and makes excellent provision for their basic skills. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, it is good and characterised by a good balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for independent learning. In the primary school, the curriculum has evolved over the last few years as a result of very close partnerships with the pupils' next secondary schools. The breadth of the curriculum includes the full French curriculum and a well-structured English programme. Pupils have English lessons from the age of four years and start writing in English from the age of nine years. The teaching of some science in English has recently been introduced and, along with English history, geography, literacy, numeracy and swimming, ensures that pupils develop a broad knowledge base and a wide range of English linguistic skills to the high standards expected by the secondary schools to which they will transfer. In the French curriculum, there is excellent provision for reading, writing and mathematics throughout the primary school. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in English and music, and teachers' subject specialism is used very effectively in the upper school, ensuring very effective learning in geography, history, science and citizenship. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught through several subjects and reflects the ethos of the school. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly since the last inspection with the purchase of new equipment and appropriate teacher training, and it is now good. Physical education (PE) is exemplary and includes swimming for all ages and the development of physical skills through imaginative projects such as circus workshops.

The curriculum is planned well. Good procedures and links with parents enable the early identification of children's linguistic or special educational needs and the provision of targeted support. Consequently, these pupils progress as fast as their peers. Very able pupils are fast-tracked. The 'projet d'école' enlivens the whole curriculum with a current focus on bilingualism, scientific skills and British culture. The curriculum is well supported by a wide range of resources including two well-stocked French and English libraries. It is exceptionally well enriched by a wealth of educational visits, workshops and cross-curricular projects, and by a wide range of after-school clubs run by the parents' association.

Teaching and assessment are outstanding. Teachers and classroom assistants work as a cohesive team focused on best practice to ensure that pupils make as much progress as possible. Teaching is consistently underpinned by good subject knowledge and very high expectations. Consequently, pupils behave well, take pride in their work and give of their best. Staff model very high level language skills and routinely use open-ended questions, which promotes pupils' language and intellectual development very effectively. The tasks planned take into account pupils' prior attainment and match their varying needs closely, providing enough challenge to stretch all pupils. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to involve pupils actively in the assessment of their learning. Pupils develop a good understanding of what to do next to improve through constructive verbal and written feedback, and through termly reports that track their progress against attainment targets. In the most successful lessons, teachers check on pupils' learning frequently and use this information to maintain a high level of challenge and deepen pupils' understanding. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching is good. However, opportunities for outdoor learning are not planned as rigorously as for indoor learning.

Pupils make outstanding progress over time owing to an outstanding curriculum and outstanding teaching. Very close links with their next secondary schools prepare them extremely well for their future. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress overall towards the expected goals and outstanding progress in their oral communication skills.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good throughout the school. Pupils' love of their school is reflected in their high levels of attendance and participation in class. Some of the older pupils summarise the sentiment of many when saying, 'This is a very warm school where classes are smaller than in other schools and teachers really care about us.' Pupils form positive relationships from a young age and live in harmony with their peers, whatever their cultural backgrounds. They are considerate and work constructively in pairs or in groups. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children negotiate the use of resources amicably and take turns to play. Pupils' behaviour is good and indicates good spiritual and moral development. Instances of bullying and the need for serious sanctions are rare. Most pupils show awareness of others' needs and respond positively to the expectations of staff and promptly to any additional guidance from teachers about how to conduct themselves. They demonstrate a good sense of responsibility. Pupils' spiritual development occurs within a secular system where religious education is not taught. Nevertheless, they demonstrate a good level of spiritual development when they express their views confidently, listen to others' opinions respectfully, argue a point and debate issues coherently, explore the motives of characters in a story and feel empathy for those less fortunate than themselves.

Pupils of all ages enjoy a good cultural programme centred on French and English cultures and increasingly open to developing a wider appreciation of multicultural Britain under the impetus of the 'projet d'école'. Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures in history, geography, and through project work, workshops and educational visits. Through citizenship and English programmes, they learn about French, English and European institutions and their understanding is enhanced by relevant educational visits and activities. For example, the older pupils have worked on several aspects of recycling and visited the local recycling centre. Pupils have many opportunities to appreciate what it means to be a good citizen. They contribute to school life by taking turns to help around the school, recycling materials, participating in drama and choir presentations. Every year, they experience democracy by electing class representatives who form a school council that collects pupils' views on needed improvements. Pupils contribute to the wider community by playing matches against local French schools and running in a 'race against hunger' to raise funds for charity. However, the school has rightly identified that pupils are capable of shouldering more responsibilities within the school and the wider British community.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are good throughout the school. The school has rectified the shortcomings outlined in the last inspection report and it now meets all the requirements for safeguarding pupils. The staff gain a good understanding of their duties and responsibilities in matters of child protection through a detailed child protection policy and training at appropriate levels and intervals. The employment history of staff and volunteers is verified and references are obtained. The policies and procedures aimed at minimising risks, promoting high standards of behaviour and preventing bullying pay due regard to the latest guidance and are implemented consistently. The school has a satisfactory level of fire safety. Previous shortcomings in the maintenance of attendance registers have been rectified and all registers are maintained properly. Thorough risk assessments of the premises and activities allied to good supervision and first-aid procedures contribute to pupils feeling safe. There is a sufficient number of staff who have received first-aid training that is appropriate for the ages of the pupils. Pupils learn how to keep safe through daily reminders, learning to swim and be safe near water, sessions on internet safety, visits to the fire station and activities during the anti-bullying week. Pupils' commitment to healthy lifestyles is strongly encouraged through PSHE, the nutritious and well-balanced meals cooked in the canteen and visits from a dentist. In conformity with the practice in French schools, pupils are also screened by a doctor. In addition to PE activities, they are encouraged to walk to school and many choose to join after-school sports clubs.

The school has satisfactorily updated its accessibility plan to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has carried out the appropriate checks on the staff and proprietors to ascertain their suitability to work with children before confirming their employment. These checks are recorded on a single central register as required.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises are fit for purpose and provide safe and effective learning for the numbers on roll. Issues of non-compliance highlighted in the last inspection report have been remedied and both the facilities for pupils who are ill and ventilation throughout the building now meet requirements. The school minimises the impact of the limited space available for outdoor play by staggering playtimes and using the adjacent green. It makes effective use of local facilities for swimming and music. The proprietors are seeking to extend the premises.

Provision of information

Parents and carers receive clear, accurate and up-to-date information, mainly through the school website and through an information pack. They feel well informed of their children's progress through clearly written termly reports and through meetings with teachers which they can arrange at any mutually convenient time. Parents express a very high level of satisfaction with the school's work.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints procedures meet all requirements to handle complaints promptly and fairly.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness and leadership and management of this stage are good and the good provision secures good outcomes for all children. Close partnerships with parents promote children's learning and welfare well, and diversity. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Children's behaviour is managed well. Consequently, children feel well cared for and safe. They are encouraged to eat healthily and to observe hygiene routines. They enjoy learning through play and achieve a good level of development in most areas of learning. They only just achieve the expected goals in reading and writing because they are not taught formally at this age in the French system. Their oral communication skills are promoted very well in both English and French.

The curriculum is developed well by teachers who make very effective use of resources, educational visits and workshops to develop children's independence and exploration skills. However, outdoor learning is not planned as rigorously as indoor learning. Teaching is good. Observations of individual children's development are

used effectively to stretch those who are more able and provide targeted support for those who need it. Consequently, children make good progress in relation to their varying starting points. They make excellent progress in their oral communication skills because staff model high level language and continuously engage children in conversation.

The staff compile detailed termly reports which record the progress made by each child against the goals of French nursery education. However, this information is not transferred into English Early Years Foundation Stage profiles for children coming up to the age of five. Although this constitutes a breach of one of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, it has no negative impact on children's learning and development. The staff are qualified and experienced and their accurate self-review reflects good capacity to make continuous improvement.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

ensure that, at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are assessed against the 13 scales in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and that this information is properly recorded.

What the school could do to improve further

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

Further develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness by supporting them in shouldering a wider range of responsibilities within the school community and the wider British community.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, plan outdoor learning as rigorously as indoor learning.

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	✓			

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		✓		
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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

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Foreign national day primary school		
Date school opened	1974		
Age range of pupils	4–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 139	Girls: 123	Total: 262
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,895 for pupils aged under six years £4,265 for pupils over six years of age		
Address of school	59 Brook Green London W6 7BE		
Telephone number	0207 602 6871		
Email address	Info@ecoleprevert.org.uk		
Headteacher	Patrice Possenti		
Proprietor	Ecole Française de Londres Ltd		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of the Ecole Française de Londres Jacques Prévert, London W6 7BE

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team so warmly when we visited your school recently. We greatly enjoyed meeting you, seeing you learn and talking to you. You go to an outstanding school where adults work very hard to prepare you for the future.

You make excellent progress in your subject areas and good progress in your personal development. You enjoy school and your attendance is very good. Your teachers and teaching assistants care for you well. We were really impressed by your rapid progress in reading and your high level of development in French, English and mathematics. This is because your teachers know you well as individuals and teach you very well. You are well behaved, get on well with each other and make a good contribution to school life. You feel safe and really understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and taking exercise.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked the school to:

- help you to make even better progress in your personal development by encouraging you to take on a wider range of responsibilities in the school community and in the British community
- plan outdoor activities as rigorously as indoor activities for nursery children
- ensure that the progress of nursery children is recorded in the way that is required in England.

You can help your teachers to achieve this if you continue to work as hard as we saw during the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Michèle Messaoudi
Lead inspector