

# The Japanese School

Independent school progress monitoring 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.<sup>1,2</sup>

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

## **Information about the school**

The Japanese School opened in west London in 1976, as an independent primary and secondary day school for pupils from six to 15 years of age. There are currently 401 pupils on roll and none has a statement of special educational needs. It is a Japanese-speaking school that follows the Japanese National Curriculum. The school is part of a worldwide network of Japanese schools and it receives financial support for staffing and other subsidies from the Japanese government. The school was created to provide for the children of expatriates on secondment from their companies in Japan, so that they can have a continuous education wherever they are in the world. Each year over a third of pupils leave the school and a similar number of pupils join the school. In the previous academic year, over 200 pupils left the school other than at the usual times to continue their education in Japan. The school has no religious affiliation. The school was previously inspected in June 2011. A key principle is: 'The school aims to educate pupils to be independent citizens (of the world, Japan, and Britain) with broad minds, skills to live robustly, and with humanity.'

## **Context of the inspection**

When inspected by Ofsted in June 2011, the school did not meet all the regulations. A notice to improve was served by the Department for Education in July 2011. The action plan the school submitted to address the shortfalls was evaluated in September 2011 and judged inadequate. A further action plan was submitted in November 2011 which was also judged to be inadequate in some respects. The purpose of this first progress monitoring visit was to check the progress the school has made in implementing the improvements identified in its action plan.

## **Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan**

The inspection in June 2011 found that the school's procedures in relation to many of the requirements concerning establishing the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors were deficient. The school lacked a secure single central register of staff

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

checks, backed by rigorous checking of staff identities and of their employment history. Systems were not securely in place to ensure the completion of enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on current or prospective staff. There were significant omissions in relation to checking the identity and backgrounds of the proprietorial body. The school stated in its action plan that it would remedy the deficiencies. However, although the school now has documented procedures in place to check formally the identity and background of prospective staff and to ensure that background checks of locally employed staff are carried out through the CRB, the system is not robust and the required single central register is not yet in place. Not all members of staff have CRB checks in place. The members of the proprietorial body have agreed to comply with the requirements placed upon them in relation to the required range of checks, but matters have not yet proceeded further. The school anticipates that these matters can be resolved, and a single central register produced by April 2012, once staff have arrived from Japan for the beginning of the new school year and the existing outstanding checks have been completed. Meanwhile, the school fails to comply with the requirements and progress has been inadequate.

At the June 2011 inspection, several shortcomings were identified in relation to the premises and accommodation which had a potential impact on the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. These related to concerns around the safety of glazing in public areas of the school, to the restraints on the opening of upper floor windows, to aspects of daily cleaning practice and to the failure to ensure that portable electrical equipment received safety checks on an annual basis, as required. All of these matters have been resolved and the requirements are now met.

At the time of the June 2011 inspection, the school did not fully meet requirements in relation to the provision of information for parents and carers and prospective parents and carers by ensuring that key documents were readily accessible. The school has now ensured that the policies on bullying, health and safety, safeguarding children and the complaints procedure are signposted in the school prospectus and are available on the school website, the main source of information for prospective and current parents and carers. Information on academic progress from the preceding year is not easily summarised for parents and carers, given the lack of nationally-recognised examinations in Japan to provide a clear benchmark for pupils' achievements. The school, in common with others in Japan, makes use of commercially available standardised tests of their choice and advises parents and carers annually as to how well their children have done. It publishes information in the school brochure as to the schools pupils enter once they return to Japan. In the circumstances the school does the best it can in respect of this issue to provide the required information for parents and others. In one other respect the school has not met the requirements. It does not yet publish details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the last school year.

At its last inspection, there were several procedural omissions in the school complaints policy, mainly around the need to involve an independent member in any panel hearings which might arise in connection with more serious complaints. These

omissions have been rectified in the interim. The school does not, however, yet make it clear that correspondence and other records relating to any complaints made will remain confidential.

The school did not have a three-year accessibility plan in place, to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (since replaced by the Equality Act 2010). While the matter has had attention and some work is in hand to effect modifications to the building, the school is in consultation with pupils and parents and carers with respect to finalising the written plan. It expects to have completed these consultations by April 2012 and to be in a position to finalise the documentation soon after. The requirement is not, however, met at this point.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010<sup>3</sup> ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- verify that no member of staff is barred from regulated activity with children (paragraph 19(2)(a))
- complete an enhanced CRB check on all locally employed staff (paragraph 19(2)(c))
- ensure that checks defined in paragraph 19(2)(b) are completed prior to a person's appointment (paragraph 19(3))
- verify that no member of the proprietorial body is barred from regulated activity with children (paragraph 21(6)(a))
- ensure that checks with the CRB on the right to work in the United Kingdom and clearance from criminal conviction prior to arrival in the United Kingdom are completed for all members of the proprietorial body (paragraph 21(6)(b))
- ensure that the single central register shows for staff appointed after 1 May 2007 checks on their identity, relevant qualifications and whether an enhanced CRB certificate was obtained (paragraph 22(3))
- ensure that the single central register shows for staff appointed before 1 May 2007 checks on their identity, relevant qualifications and whether an enhanced CRB certificate was obtained (paragraph 22(4))
- ensure that the single central register shows for each member of the proprietorial body appointed after 1 May 2007 an enhanced CRB check and for those having lived outside the United Kingdom confirmation of their identity, their right to work and any further checks in relation to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 22(6))
- ensure that the following is included in the information made available for parents and carers of pupils and prospective parents and carers, and on

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made).

request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate:

- details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 24(1)(b))
- ensure that the complaints procedure states that correspondence, statements and records of all complaints will remain confidential (paragraph 25(k)).

In order to comply fully with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the school should devise a satisfactory three-year accessibility plan.

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Japanese day primary and secondary school		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1976		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	6–15 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 233	Girls: 168	Total: 401
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<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>	£1,980		
<b>Address of school</b>	87 Creffield Road Acton London W3 9PU		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8993 7145		
<b>Email address</b>	sugano-s@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr K Tomomura		
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Japanese School Limited		