

Charterhouse Square School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	201/ 6354
Unique Reference Number (URN)	100463
Inspection number	393357
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2012
Reporting inspector	Susan Mann HMI

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090070.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2012



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

Charterhouse Square School is situated in the Barbican in Central London. It was founded in 1985 and occupies a five-storey Victorian building overlooking Charterhouse Square. The school is non-selective and provides for up to 220 pupils aged from 3 to 11 years of age. There are currently 199 on roll and all attend full time. The school has two Early Years Foundation Stage classes, Nursery and Reception, which contain 60 children in total. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs and none receives the nursery education grant. The school is owned by Cognita Schools Limited. The school was last inspected in February 2009. The school believes that a happy and stimulating learning environment is fundamental to academic success. It aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that places a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy whilst giving many opportunities for physical education, humanities, and the arts.

Evaluation of the school

Charterhouse Square School provides an outstanding education for its pupils. It very successfully meets its aims. The school rightly prides itself on the exceptional contribution it makes in developing pupils' self-assurance and overall well-being. It makes outstanding provision for the curriculum and teaching and in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils thrive at the school, make outstanding progress and the overwhelming majority say they enjoy school. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection: concerted and highly effective improvements have resulted in improved progress in literacy and mathematics. It now meets all regulations, including those for safeguarding. The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils enjoy superb lessons that excite their interest and they greatly enjoy their learning. Since the last inspection, subject leaders and staff have worked on improving schemes of work and these now provide a comprehensive framework for learning and a very good level of challenge for almost all pupils. The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs

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

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

has undergone recent review. Systems are in the final stages of becoming fully embedded and so special educational needs provision is currently good rather than excellent.

Curriculum planning meets pupils' different learning needs so the pupils receive a tailored education. There is a very high emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills, as well as skills and understanding in a wealth of other subjects, so pupils develop an extensive portfolio of knowledge. The school places high emphasis on physical education and pupils enjoy a wide selection of activities, ranging from dance to competitive athletics. The school has limited outside space available, but makes excellent use of external facilities for activities such as swimming, tennis and football. The wholly inclusive ethos of Charterhouse Square is exemplified by the physical education curriculum aim of helping every child to feel special and find something they can excel at. Visiting teachers in subjects such as music and modern foreign languages provide additional expertise and enhance pupils' experiences further. Pupils enrich their learning through frequent trips and listening to visitors and speakers. The programme of extra-curricular activities is exceptionally broad and includes, for example, a chess club and table tennis. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent. It enables pupils to make well-informed choices as they mature. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum comprehensively covers all areas of learning very well. It provides a very high level of challenge for children so they progress as quickly as they are able.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. The headteacher has worked diligently to establish supportive systems for the monitoring of teaching and has gained an accurate overview of its quality. This has resulted in exemplary teaching standards throughout the school. Excellent lessons are grounded in teachers' expert knowledge and superb preparation. Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils. Pupils and teachers demonstrate informal, yet respectful, relationships. Lessons contain lots of humour and an exceptional level of challenge to extend pupils to their maximum ability. As a result, the classroom is a very happy and purposeful environment.

The use of assessment has developed very well since the last inspection and is now firmly established in all lessons. Teachers ensure all pupils manage the rapid pace of lessons by checking their understanding continually through lessons with quick indicators, such as 'thumbs up'. Marking and feedback are extremely thorough so pupils know how well they are doing. Pupils fully understand their targets and are eager to achieve more. Leaders have introduced secure systems for the measurement of pupils' work against national benchmarks. This was suggested at the last inspection and parents and carers had also expressed a wish for it. This system is used to rigorously track individual progress so all can achieve their full potential. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly excellent progress as their peers because of the rigorous individual attention given. For those in mixed-age classes, the organisation of pupils into groups for literacy and numeracy lessons provides highly effective teaching. Further investment in teaching assistants since the last inspection has improved the level of support pupils enjoy in

the classroom. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children receive a very good provision that is wholly suited to their young age. This promotes outstanding progress in their learning and development. One young child illustrated her learning thus, 'If you find work easy, then it goes one step further and it gets a little bit harder.' Teachers have utilised all available outdoor space well so that, although it is a relatively small area, it strongly enhances pupils' learning experiences and is very well used.

Pupils make outstanding progress in all subjects. The vast majority of parents and carers believe their children are doing well and almost all pupils believe they are taught well. Standards in writing now match the excellent standards in reading and mathematics. Independent learning, excellent collaboration, and intelligent debate are consistent features of lessons. The school's leaders prioritise the importance of all pupils having the best chance to succeed. All teachers strive to empower their pupils to take responsibility for their own learning: pupils demonstrate an impressive eagerness to try their best. Pupils are very well prepared for entrance examinations, so the overwhelming majority are successful in gaining a place at their next school of choice.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Almost all parents and carers feel that pupils are safe and behave well. The atmosphere of the school is extremely warm and friendly. Pupils' attendance is very good. Exemplary attitudes are evident throughout the school and the school community is extremely harmonious. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding: they are very considerate towards one another. The overwhelming majority of pupils believe the school helps them to value others, and many express the view that 'everyone respects one another'. The school uses a number of highly effective strategies to help pupils feel safe. Older pupils can make use of classroom 'feelings boxes' to share concerns privately with teachers, and the 'buddy' system supports pupils new to the school. The vast majority of pupils feel safe. Pupils follow the few school rules and understand the reasoning behind them. For example, they know to stop talking whilst crossing the quiet road to The Square to give their full attention to any traffic. Visiting teachers give specialist education on issues such as safe use of the internet or substance misuse.

Pupils develop an extremely thorough understanding of cultural and spiritual issues through the curriculum and school events. The headteacher holds weekly assemblies which have a spiritual context. Religious education lessons teach pupils about a wide range of faiths. The school makes a very significant contribution to the local and wider communities through a wealth of charitable events and initiatives, such as supporting Charterhouse or raising funds to help an Australian school in need. All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, show a strong sense of belonging and this is nurtured by the determination of leaders to involve all pupils in events. One such example is the imminent 'Premiere Performance' held in the Great Chamber in Charterhouse, for which pupils diligently rehearse.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. Pupils' well-being is the highest priority for leaders and staff. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous in ensuring that they keep pupils safe. Recruitment procedures are very thorough and all adults in school are rigorously checked. Child protection procedures fully meet requirements and all staff have been trained at the appropriate level. The school adopts an exceptionally well-organised approach to implementing an extensive range of robust policies. These comply fully with government legislation and the specific requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff are fully aware of these policies, and practice is consistent throughout the school. The school is vigilant about fire safety. Frequent training for this aspect and for first aid secures a highly knowledgeable school team. The school has given very good consideration to its duty under the Equality Act 2010: accommodation for pupils with a disability is suitable and future needs are planned. Pupils are resolute that there is no bullying at the school and say teachers manage any concerns effectively. Pupils' understanding of being healthy is very good as a result of the educational provision and school policies, such as making checks on the contents of lunch boxes. Pupils are very well supervised and all pupils appear to be content at school. They say anyone appearing lonely at break times is quickly befriended by another pupil.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school's single central record is comprehensive and meets requirements. It shows all the adults, including visiting teachers, have been properly vetted to keep pupils safe.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation are well maintained and provide a pleasing environment throughout the school. Since the last inspection, the premises have undergone considerable transformation and have expanded into the property next door. This has increased the overall floor space by almost half to provide additional classrooms and facilities, all of which are all fully utilised.

Provision of information

There is a wealth of current and accurate information provided for parents, carers, and other interested parties which meets requirements. The school website provides a wealth of information for prospective and current parents and carers. This is supplemented by additional booklets and letters. Termly reports are detailed and the overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel they are well informed about their child's progress. A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the pre-inspection survey. Almost all gave extremely positive feedback about the school. Typical comments are that the school 'fosters a lifelong love of learning' and 'it is an outstanding school!' 'My child loves every day of her school life!' A very small

minority expressed some concern about the impact of mixed-aged classes on their child's development: the school is aware of these concerns and checks that these arrangements support excellent pupil progress.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's procedure for dealing with complaints meets requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

What the school could do to improve further

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

- ensure the intervention and monitoring systems to provide for pupils with special educational needs are fully embedded.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made.

Inspection judgements

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	✓			
--	---	--	--	--

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Preparatory school		
Date school opened	September 1985		
Age range of pupils	3 to 11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 103	Girls: 96	Total: 199
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
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)	£12,735		
Address of school	40 Charterhouse Square London EC1M 6EA		
Telephone number	0207 6003805		
Email address	life@charterhousesquareschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Lloyd		
Proprietor	Cognita Schools 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.



28 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charterhouse Square School, London EC1M 6EA

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed speaking with many of you and spending time in your lessons. We have judged Charterhouse Square to be an outstanding school. These are the reasons why.

- Your headteacher and teaching staff give the highest priority to keeping you safe and well. They believe it is very important that you are happy and confident at school.
- Lessons are of a very high standard. Teachers are friendly and provide you with excellent opportunities to learn. You all play a very good part in your learning: you work very well towards your targets and achieve very well indeed. You all have excellent attitudes towards your lessons and try your best.
- There are lots of interesting subjects and activities to do at school and this makes your school day very interesting and varied.
- You contribute a great deal to your school community. You take part in events such as the end-of-term concert and you help others through your many charity projects.
- The behaviour of all pupils is exemplary. You are kind and considerate to one another, and you follow teachers' instructions carefully.

The school has already started to improve lessons for those of you who need a little more help with some lessons, and we have asked them to carry on improving this provision so all pupils can do as well as possible.

We hope you continue to enjoy your time at The Charterhouse Square School.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector