

Haddon Dene School

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

Haddon Dene School is an independent day pre-preparatory and preparatory school which provides education for boys and girls aged between three and 11 years. It was founded in 1929 and occupies two large, adjacent former houses near to the centre of Broadstairs, Kent. The school is non-selective and supports pupils who have mild specific learning difficulties and pupils who have English as an additional language. There are currently 134 pupils on roll aged between three and 11 years, none of whom has a statement of special educational needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of the Little Denes Nursery with currently 22 children and one Reception class with 19 children. There are 20 children attending part time and 24 children who receive free nursery education. The school was last inspected in June 2009.

Haddon Dene aims to value the individual nature of each child and to forge a strong home-school partnership, which it considers to be the foundation for each child's success. The school's motto is 'Aspire, Experience, Achieve' and the school seeks to 'encourage all children to have high aspirations, to experience as many of life's opportunities as possible and to achieve in all that they do'.

Evaluation of the school

Haddon Dene School provides a good quality of education and meets its stated aims. Consequently, parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Throughout the school, most pupils make good progress and some make outstanding progress in their academic learning, owing to good teaching and a good curriculum. The outstanding provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and exceptional attitudes to learning. The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety and meets safeguarding requirements. Having much improved its provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is now good, and rectified all its previous shortcomings since its last inspection, the school now complies with all the regulations for independent schools.

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

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

Quality of education

The good curriculum serves the needs of all pupils well, enables them to make outstanding progress in their personal development and prepares them well for their future. The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection in the Nursery and Reception where children now enjoy learning through a balance of play, which they initiate, and activities led by adults. A broad range of indoor and outdoor learning experiences is planned across the six areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and children learn French from Nursery onwards.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the broad curriculum enables pupils to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge while the balance between subject areas and enrichment activities promotes pupils' all-round education. In Years 5 and 6, the curriculum helps pupils meet the demands of the Kent entrance test to secondary schools. The curriculum benefits from specialist teaching in information and communication technology (ICT), French, drama, music and games. Provision for creative subjects, humanities, ICT and physical education (PE) is good. Pupils develop investigative skills in science from Year 1 and the coverage of this subject is good in most classes. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) makes a strong contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. The curriculum is enhanced very effectively by extra-curricular activities which extend pupils' creative, technological and physical skills.

The curriculum is suitably planned and regularly reviewed. Schemes of work are sufficiently detailed to support the teaching. Recently implemented strategies to raise standards of reading and writing in Key Stage 1, rightly judged by the school as areas for further improvement, are beginning to bear fruit. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early through testing and are supported effectively through individual educational plans. The school liaises appropriately with outside agencies to meet these pupils' needs fully and parents and carers say that they are satisfied with the provision. Small-sized classes and an emphasis on developing literacy skills in all subjects serve the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language well. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is currently satisfactory but is developing well. The curriculum is adequately resourced.

Teaching and assessment are good throughout the school and there is evidence of outstanding practice. Teachers establish excellent working relationships and plan a variety of activities that are conducive to great enjoyment of learning. Lessons have clear learning objectives which are shared effectively with pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and routinely ask open-ended questions to probe pupils' understanding. They use resources and teaching assistants very effectively to support pupils' learning. They frequently check on pupils' work during lessons and give them constructive oral feedback. Where the teaching is outstanding, it is based on very high expectations of what each pupil can achieve and a thorough understanding of how best to challenge each pupil, whether through the use of varied resources or by setting different tasks. In such lessons, pupils are consistently stretched and make exceptional progress. Where the teaching is satisfactory, discussion of a topic or text is too brief to deepen pupils' understanding. There are

also inconsistencies in the teaching of reading and writing skills; teachers do not fully share the best practice in teaching these skills. Whereas in most lessons, questions extend pupils' comprehension of a text very well, in a few, reading is limited to the decoding of words. While cross-curricular links afford many good opportunities for extended writing in subjects other than English, the use of worksheets in a few lessons restricts pupils' independence and opportunities to write creatively.

Structured systems enable staff to assess pupils' learning regularly and to monitor their progress rigorously. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, accurate assessments inform the planning of activities for individual children. However, initial assessments of children's development are not always carried out sufficiently early to measure their later progress rigorously. In Key Stages 1 and 2, marking clearly indicates to pupils how to improve their work and they respond well to this but learning targets which they can use to self-assess are not always precise enough or reviewed regularly.

As a result of good teaching and a good curriculum, pupils make good progress and some make outstanding progress in their academic learning and there is no variation between different groups of pupils. Between Nursery and the end of Reception, children make good progress towards the expected goals, showing a good level of development and achievement.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Throughout the school, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school creates a warm family atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued and no one is isolated. From the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance levels are high. Much work has been done recently to further develop self-discipline in pupils. Behaviour is outstanding.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to school, reflected in their high levels of participation in class and in extra-curricular activities and in careful presentation of their work. Pupils form very positive relationships, accepting and respecting their differences. They feel free from bullying and harassment. Their self-knowledge, self-confidence and self-esteem are fostered extremely well through pastoral care, assemblies, PSHE and the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are reflective, self-assured, considerate and courteous. Every care has been taken to provide each pupil with an opportunity to find something they can excel at, whether through drama presentations, the school choir, sports competitions or participation in local challenges and festivals. Pupils often win top prizes at these events and they are naturally proud of their achievements.

Pupils are willing to help around the school and show initiative. In addition to daily responsibilities, they can aspire to be head girl and head boy, or members of the active pupil council. They have contributed to providing better play areas and a wider range of after-school clubs. They contribute to the wider community by raising funds for charity, for example by selling cakes to support Children in Crisis. Pupils' cultural

development is promoted well through the curriculum and through enrichment activities, often with the support of parents and carers who share their knowledge and experiences with them. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children develop an awareness of diversity through multicultural toys and images. Pupils learn about world religions and visit various places of worship. They learn about public institutions and services through the citizenship programme and visits from public officials, for example, Members of Parliament, and police and fire officers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Throughout the school, the good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is underpinned by the staff's caring attitudes and the consistent implementation of all the essential policies aimed at safeguarding pupils in all circumstances. All staff receive the appropriate levels of training in child protection and the child protection policy is sufficiently detailed to support them. Recruitment checks on staff and volunteers have regard to the latest guidance. A high proportion of staff receive training in first aid. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies are clear and up to date. Although the need for serious sanctions is rare, the school does not hesitate to apply them when necessary. Supervision is vigilant throughout the day. Parents, carers and pupils have full confidence in the school's ability to deal with incidents very effectively. Pupils feel safe and their awareness of safety matters is enhanced well through assemblies and visits from public service officers. Risk assessments, including those for fire of the premises and of on-site and off-site activities are carried out appropriately. Termly fire drills are satisfactorily recorded but the records lack the detail to create improved procedures. Registers are maintained properly and attendance is monitored closely. The school has a three-year plan to fulfil its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through the curriculum and many choose to join the sports clubs on offer. While the school provides healthy and well-balanced meals, pupils say that the menus are insufficiently varied. This was also reported in the last inspection.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All the required checks are carried out on staff and the proprietor to confirm their suitability to work with children and they are appropriately recorded in a single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

While the premises provide teaching accommodation that enables safe and effective learning, some classrooms have reached maximum capacity. All the deficiencies identified in the last inspection have been remedied. The accommodation is well maintained, attractively decorated with pupils' work and benefits from plenty of natural light. The playgrounds provide safe outdoor play and the younger children

now have sufficient play equipment. The school uses local facilities for games and swimming effectively.

Provision of information

The school provides or makes available all the required information. Parents and carers say that they are encouraged to contribute to school life in a way that is enabling and not forceful. They feel well informed of their children's progress through two formal opportunities to meet teachers, with one interim and one full report each academic year. They say that the headteacher and staff are very approachable and they appreciate the school's open door policy.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy meets all requirements to handle complaints promptly and fairly.

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.

- Further develop the provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- Share the best practice in teaching, particularly in reading and writing.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure that children's starting points are assessed soon after they join the school so that their later progress can be measured more rigorously.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, help pupils to gain an even clearer picture of how to improve and make even faster progress by:
 - involving them consistently in the assessment of their learning against learning targets that are always subject specific and frequently reviewed.

Inspection judgements

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|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
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The quality of education

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|--|--|---|--|--|
| 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

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|--|---|--|--|--|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | ✓ | | | |
| The behaviour of pupils | ✓ | | | |

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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|--|--|---|--|--|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils | | ✓ | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|

School details

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| School status | Independent | | |
| Type of school | Day pre-preparatory and preparatory school | | |
| Date school opened | 1929 | | |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | | |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils) | Boys: 53 | Girls: 61 | Total: 114 |
| Number on roll (part-time pupils) | Boys: 7 | Girls: 13 | Total: 20 |
| 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) | £5,085 to £6,315 | | |
| Address of school | 57 Gladstone Road Broadstairs Kent CT10 2HY | | |
| Telephone number | 01843 861176 | | |
| Email address | secretary@haddondene.co.uk | | |
| Headteacher | Ellen Rowe | | |
| Proprietor | Ali Khan | | |

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Haddon Dene School, Broadstairs CT10 2HY

Thank you for your welcome and the help that you gave us when we visited your school. You impressed us by your excellent behaviour, considerate attitude towards others, high level of participation in class and maturity in discussions. You were very keen to share your views. You told us that you enjoy school, appreciate your caring teachers and feel safe because your school is like a second home. We found that your school is a good school. These are the things we liked best about your school.

- You learn a wide range of subjects and have many different activities that enable you to develop a broad range of skills and find something you are really good at.
- Your teachers teach you well and so you make good progress.
- Your teachers look after you well.

To make your school even better than it is, we have asked Mrs Rowe to:

- help those of you who have a particular gift or talent to develop these gifts or talents even more by taking part in a wider range of special activities
- ensure that teachers always use the best strategies to help you to make even better progress
- help you to improve your work more easily by giving you success criteria that are always challenging and precise learning targets that are reviewed frequently.

You can help your school to achieve this by continuing to behave as well and working as hard as we saw during the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Michèle Messaoudi
Lead inspector