

# Milbourne Lodge School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Susan Gadd HMI

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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

Milbourne Lodge School in Esher, Surrey, is an independent co-educational day school for boys and girls aged four to 13 years. The school takes up to 200 pupils. Currently, there are 134 pupils on roll, the great majority of whom are boys. Most pupils are White British with a few from minority ethnic groups. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school was founded in 1912 and registered in its present guise in 1951. The school was purchased by the Cognita group in September 2007 after the last inspection, since when it has undergone a number of changes. Until 2009 it catered for pupils between the ages of eight and 13. In 2009 the school expanded to take pupils from age five, and in September 2010 a Reception class was established. No children receive free education. This class has eight pupils aged from four to six. Over the last three years the school has had three headteachers with the most recent taking up post in September 2010.

The school's ultimate aim is to prepare pupils for Common Entrance and scholarship into independent day and boarding schools. This aim is embedded in a desire to ensure each child can flourish and grow academically and personally and where everyone feels valued. The school seeks to help develop happy and well-rounded pupils who grow up to be confident individuals. The school had its last inspection in July 2007.

## Evaluation of the school

Milbourne Lodge School provides a good quality of education and meets its aims well. Significant improvements have taken place since the last inspection. The curriculum, teaching and progress are good overall but satisfactory in the new Reception. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The school takes good steps to ensure that pupils feel safe, through its regard for their health, welfare and safety and robust arrangements for safeguarding. The school now meets all but one 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 overall but satisfactory in Reception. Where the curriculum is good it is because it provides pupils with a range of academic studies and includes a strong emphasis on sports and the creative arts. Pupils have an opportunity to learn French, Greek and Latin while studying the more traditional subjects of history, geography, science, English, information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics, music and religious studies. Wherever possible, links to other subjects are made in art and ICT. Speaking and listening are strengths of the curriculum. For example, pupils excel in classroom debates, confidently expressing their views on complex issues such as 'the rights and wrongs of war'. Many pupils produce exceptional pieces of art and, currently, their three-dimensional models are on display in the Saatchi Gallery in London. Some pupils have expressed a desire to see changes made to the sports curriculum and some parents and carers would like to see a reduction in the amount of homework set in some subjects. Senior leaders are considering how this should be achieved. Personal, social and health education prepares pupils well for their adult life. Educational visits and extra-curricular activities are varied in range and pupils particularly enjoy the many trips available. As one pupil stated, 'I really enjoyed going to the theatre, especially the play 'The Persians.' Pupils have many responsibilities around the school. They feel particularly proud of supporting younger pupils in the Pre-Preparatory department during their break time. The curriculum in Reception is new and in the early stages of development. It is beginning to provide opportunities in all the six areas of learning, although the range of learning experience indoors and outdoors is variable.

Features of the good quality teaching and assessment include teachers' very strong subject knowledge and the skilful use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding of concepts. The best lessons planning takes account of pupils' prior learning and as a result, activities are suitably tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils. Interactive whiteboards, where available, are used well to stimulate learning and capture pupils' imagination. In lessons where a variety of teaching strategies are used, pupils demonstrate their good cooperation skills and work effectively in teams. They listen to the views of others and respond with well-reasoned answers. When marking is good, pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work. However, this good practice is not embedded across the whole school and information gained from assessments and marking is not always used to fully support planning or set appropriate work to match individuals' needs. Adaptations to teaching or additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure that they make similar progress to their peers.

Teaching and outcomes in Reception are satisfactory. The opportunities for the youngest ones to make learning choices for themselves are still being developed. Pupils from Year 1 in the Pre-Preparatory department make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. In the Preparatory department pupils continue to make good progress so that by the time they are 13 many are predicted

to achieve high academic results. For example, current data indicate that many pupils are capable of achieving A to A\* grades at GCSE. However, the best indication of the school's academic success lies in all pupils in the final year at the school gaining entry into the independent schools of their choice, often with a scholarship. For example, in 2010 eight pupils gained scholarships and 11 pupils gained places through the 'entrance on scholarship' route to Eton, Winchester College, Kings College, Wimbledon, Marlborough College, Charterhouse, St John's Leatherhead and Tonbridge School. A further eight were offered places at Eton, King's College, Charterhouse, St Paul's and Westminster through their success in the Common Entrance examination.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand the importance of respect and treating others with courtesy and kindness. Pupils' behaviour is good. As a result of the school's curriculum pupils learn to distinguish between right and wrong and to respect others. They enjoy coming to school, as shown by their high attendance and positive attitudes to learning. As one parent wrote: 'I am happy to report that within weeks my child has flourished into a happy little boy who is clearly fulfilling his potential in all areas.' Each year at Christmas time, pupils enjoy singing carols at church and holding regular 'Family Days' where each House raises money for their chosen charity. Through religious education and assemblies pupils develop their understanding of different religions and cultures. During the inspection the assembly theme was 'Remembrance Day' and pupils spoke with empathy, confidence and pride about family members who had participated in past wars, and considered how authors and poets explore the significance of this special day. The pupils' good personal development helps prepare them for their future personal and economic well-being, and for taking their place in society as independent, successful young adults.

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

This provision is good throughout the school because staff are highly committed to promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety. Pupils say they feel safe. All relevant policies and procedures, such as those for safeguarding and health and safety, including risk assessments, are in place and effectively implemented. Child protection procedures are robust and regulations for fire safety are met. Pupils are supervised appropriately at lunchtime and breaks. As a result of the school's curriculum, pupils are clear about the importance of staying healthy. As one child stated, 'A healthy body is a healthy mind.' The school fulfils the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school implements safe recruitment procedures and carries out all required checks on the suitability of the proprietor and staff to work with children. All regulations are met.

## **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The three school buildings are situated in spacious grounds with an outdoor swimming pool and provide an effective and safe environment in which to learn. The premises and accommodation are maintained appropriately. However, there are no shower facilities for girls of the age of 11 and upwards as required.

## **Provision of information**

The school website and prospectus provide all the required information for parents, carers and others. They are invited to see copies of the policies which are held at the school. Some parents and carers expressed a desire to improve communication systems and develop the school website to hold more information about pupils' learning. Prior to the inspection the school had already identified this as an area for improvement and plans are in place to address this issue. Fifty-six parents completed inspection questionnaires, the majority of which were very positive about the work of the school.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

All regulations are met. The complaints policy is accessible on the school's website and a copy is given to parents on request.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory as are children's overall outcomes. Sound induction arrangements help children settle quickly into school and make a positive start to their education. Children are happy and confident in this new setting. Good relationships between adults and children enhance their social skills and effective links with parents and carers have been established to involve them in their children's education. Good arrangements are in place to ensure children's safety, health and well-being.

In general the skills and abilities of children when they enter school are well above those expected for children of this age. They make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in reading and calculating. Although some good teaching was observed during the inspection, overall teaching is satisfactory. The appropriately

planned curriculum covers all six areas of learning and suitably differentiates between the needs of children in Reception and those in Year 1.

Much of the teaching is indoors and teacher-led. While children learn well by this approach, staff are now, appropriately, beginning to introduce more opportunities for children to learn outdoors, make choices in or initiate their own learning and work in groups where they can practise their social skills. This approach supports their learning and development effectively. For example, children's phonics knowledge was reinforced through a teddy bear hunt where they read clues to find the bears and then identified the initial sounds of each animal.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Nevertheless, much has been achieved in a short period of time. Initial evaluation of the provision has identified its current strengths and areas for development. Examples include improving the use of information derived from observations and children's work to inform assessments and developing a seamless learning environment between indoors and outside.

## **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.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure there are sufficient washrooms for staff and pupils, including facilities for pupils with special needs and disability, which take account of regulations 3 and 4 of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 by providing shower facilities for girls of the age 11 and upwards (paragraph 23(j)).

## **What the school could do to improve further**

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

- develop marking so that all pupils are clear about how to improve their work

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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)

- ensure that assessments consistently inform teachers' planning so that pupils all receive work that challenges them to achieve their best
- improve the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that provision includes all six areas of learning, both indoors and outside.



## 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

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Day Preparatory
<b>Date school opened</b>	1951
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–13 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 125      Girls: 9      Total: 134
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£9,600 – 11,115 per annum
<b>Address of school</b>	43 Arbrook Lane, Esher, Surrey, KT16 9EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01372 462737
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:Stephen.ilett@milbournelodge.co.uk">Stephen.ilett@milbournelodge.co.uk</a>
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen Ilett
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cognita Schools