

Finchley and Acton Yochien School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	302/6107
Unique Reference Number (URN)	131128
URN for registered childcare	EY240936 and EY303773
Inspection number	386847
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2012
Reporting inspector	David Rzeznik

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}

The inspection of registered provision was conducted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.^{3, 4}

Information about the school

The Finchley and Acton Yochien School opened in north London in 1993. The school is owned by a sole proprietor and is located on two sites, in Finchley and in Acton. It admits children aged from two to six years and all of them speak Japanese as their first language, and learn English as an additional language. Virtually all of the staff are Japanese. The school follows the Japanese National Curriculum and the English Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which is taught and assessed in Japanese. The vast majority of the children live temporarily in London and move back to Japan to continue their education. There is considerable movement of children in and out of the school throughout the academic year. There has also been a high turnover of staff in the last two years. The headteacher has been in post for 15 months. There are currently 157 full-time children on roll and 24 are in receipt of government funding. There are 42 children aged two to three years; 80 aged three to five years; and 35 aged between five and six years. No children have a statement of special educational needs.

The school aims to help children learn the skills and knowledge they require to be successful and to grow into happy, healthy, well-behaved, kind and considerate people. The last integrated inspection of education provision and childcare was in October 2008.

Two progress monitoring inspections, with accompanying reports, were conducted in January 2010 and July 2010 to check the school's progress in implementing its action plan. The school was told to take urgent steps to bring about improvement.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of education is satisfactory. The school does not meet all of the regulations for independent schools, and in particular the overall provision for

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

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

³ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

⁴ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents.

children's welfare, health and safety is inadequate. This is because safeguarding procedures and fire safety arrangements are inadequate. Because this is so, the overall effectiveness of the registered Early Years Foundation Stage provision and the leadership and management of this phase are inadequate. The teaching, curriculum and learning in each phase are satisfactory. Provision enables children to make satisfactory progress given their original starting points. Improvement since the last inspection has been inadequate. While the school has rectified all of the shortcomings associated with the premises, the proprietor has not done enough to rectify longstanding fire safety weaknesses.

Quality of education

The curriculum provided for children aged three to six years is satisfactory. All provision is a blend of the Japanese National Curriculum and the English Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Both curricula are taught primarily in Japanese although English is used where appropriate. Provision enables children to acquire communication and numeracy skills in both languages. Schemes of work and curriculum plans exist for all of the subjects taught but there is no written curriculum policy as required.

The Japanese curriculum is based on health, human relationships, communication, expression and environmental themes. The early years provision for those aged three to six covers all of the required areas of learning. For this age group, an appropriate balance is achieved of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Outdoor learning mainly promotes children's physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The creative, aesthetic and communication work done indoors is not always being sufficiently extended outdoors. There are times when the imaginative learning areas in classrooms lack stimulating resources to promote effective learning. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

All children aged three to six learn English, and their English communication skills are developing satisfactorily. Provision is enriched by Kendo (Japanese fencing), tennis, Japanese chequers and cultural activities, such as the tea ceremony. After-school activities are provided in ballet, sports, English and abacus work, but a charge is made for participation. There are occasional trips to local places of interest, but in general there are too few visitors and educational trips off-site to broaden children's horizons.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. As a result, children make satisfactory progress over time. The strengths in teaching lie in the excellent relationships between adults and children in all phases of the school. This means that learning is conducted in a very positive climate. Children respond well to the praise and encouragement that they receive and good behaviour management means that children behave well and learning is not disrupted. Children thoroughly enjoy the Japanese finger threading and spinning top activities. Such work helps to further improve children's manual dexterity and spacial awareness.

However, despite these positive aspects, lesson planning does not always make sufficiently explicit what the lesson objectives are. Consequently, there are times when staff and children are unclear about what exactly must be achieved. On occasions teachers do not intervene quickly enough to ensure children learn at a good rate and class time is not always used wisely. There are times when activities lack challenge and occasions when staff do too much for the children thereby limiting their independence. For example, putting on shoes and coats or feeding children, when they are capable of doing these things for themselves. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Regular observations of learning are carried out and children's attainment and progress are suitably recorded. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to match work to children's capabilities, especially for the more able. Overall there are too few computers, and other technological aids in school, and not enough creative and imaginative learning resources.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children say that they enjoy school and are happy there. It is therefore no surprise that attendance is good. Children have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Children have a strong sense of right and wrong. Relationships between adults and children are excellent and staff are developing children's self-esteem and self-confidence very effectively. Japanese cultural traditions, such as the tea ceremony and New Year celebrations, are taught very effectively too, and children enjoy the activities and learn a great deal about Japanese traditions and customs. Provision also ensures that children are suitably taught about British lifestyles, culture and institutions. For example, personnel from the emergency services visit the school, providing insights into their jobs and the world of work. The school community is a very tolerant, moral and harmonious one. Children have responsibilities in school, for example, as milk monitors and take on tidying up duties. They have made a contribution internationally by raising funds for the Japanese earthquake appeal. However, children's contribution to the local and wider community is underdeveloped and they do not play an active role in school decision-making.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for welfare, health and safety is inadequate. This is because safeguarding procedures are inadequate and fire safety arrangements are unsatisfactory. A satisfactory child protection policy exists but it is not implemented effectively. The designated person for child protection has not received training at the appropriate level to fulfil their child protection responsibilities. A number of staff, on both school sites, have not undergone child protection training as required. In October 2008 and July 2010, fire safety at both school sites was not robust enough. The school has not brought about improvement quickly enough and fire safety remains inadequate. No fire risk assessment has been carried out, at either site, so health and safety requirements are not met. The fire alarm and emergency lighting systems are

serviced annually but interim checks, to ensure systems are fully operational, are not carried out with the recommended timescales.

First aid arrangements are satisfactory. There are a sufficient number of qualified first aiders, including those with paediatric training, on both sites. Behaviour and anti-bullying procedures are clear and promote good behaviour and prevent bullying. Admission and attendance registers are kept in good order. All children are effectively supervised at all times. The school does not fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No three-year plan is in place to increase, over time, the accessibility of the school premises, the curriculum and the information provided to those with a disability or who have special educational needs.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All of the required recruitment and staff vetting checks are made on staff and the proprietor to confirm their suitability to work with children. Additional checks are carried out on Japanese and other foreign nationals as required. The information recorded in the single central register meets requirements.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation at both sites are satisfactory. They enable satisfactory learning and keep children secure. Classrooms are of an appropriate size and the furniture and fittings are suitable for the various age ranges. The Acton site has extensive grounds and there is sufficient outdoor space for play and recreation in Finchley. The buildings are clean and are decorated to a satisfactory standard. There are sufficient toilet and washroom facilities for staff, children and visitors. In July 2010, hot water was not provided in toilets on either school site and there were no appropriate facilities for those who were ill on the Acton site. Both weaknesses have been successfully addressed and the relevant regulations are now met.

Provision of information

The school does not provide, or make available, all of the required information. For example, the details provided to parents, carers and others does not specify which policies are available and in which form. Some contact information for the proprietor is also missing. There is a school website but it does not include a copy of the safeguarding children policy, and information supplied to parents, carers and others does not state that a copy of the policy is available on request. Parents and carers receive regular reports on their children's attainment and progress.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints procedure does not meet all education regulatory requirements. The areas of non-compliance are specified below.

Registered provision for children aged from birth to three years

The overall effectiveness and the quality of leadership and management are inadequate. This is because safeguarding and fire safety procedures are inadequate. The quality of provision and outcomes for children are satisfactory. Not all Early Years Foundation Stage or childcare requirements are met.

Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their learning. Children enjoy being at school and have settled well into daily routines. Relationships between adults and children are very positive and staff are good at making children feel safe and secure. Established routines such as register and circle times and singing sessions enable children to interact well with each other and develop a positive sense of belonging to the school community.

Children are encouraged to make choices and their independence is adequately promoted; however, there are times when staff do too much for them, for example hanging up coats and putting on footwear which children can do for themselves. At times the role-play areas are not well enough resourced to promote effective learning. For example, the writing table provided writing paper and crayons but no other writing materials. Resources to support learning are adequate.

Well-established arrangements are made for rest and sleep. Children are comfortable on personal mats and were suitably soothed to sleep with staff's support and background music. Detailed records are kept of sleep duration; amount of fluids taken, toileting progress and whether clothes were changed or not.

Staff liaise appropriately with parents and carers to obtain valuable background information on the children, their dietary needs, interests and stages of development. Overall, there are an insufficient number of suitably qualified staff on both sites. This said, the failing does not have a detrimental impact on children's development or safety.

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.⁵

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- produce a curriculum policy set out in writing which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and ensure it is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1))

⁵ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- ensure that the teaching involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and appropriate management of class time (paragraph 3(c))
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the children, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- ensure that classroom resources are of an adequate quality, quantity and range and that they are used effectively (paragraph 3(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school and arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- ensure that there are effective measures to ensure children's health and safety which have regard to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance (paragraph 11)
- ensure that there is compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.⁶

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the proprietor provides to parents and carers, parents and carers of prospective children and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, all of the following information:
 - the school's address and telephone number and the name of the headteacher
 - where the proprietor is an individual provide their full name and address for correspondence during both term time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which they can be contacted at all times (paragraph 24(1)(a))
- ensure that all of the following information is made available to parents and carers, parents and carers of prospective children and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate:
 - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions
 - particulars of educational and welfare provision for children with statements of special educational needs and for children who speak English as an additional language

⁶ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents.

- particulars of policies relating to bullying, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of children misbehaving as required under part 3, paragraph 9
- particulars of the arrangements for tackling bullying, and for promoting children's health and safety on the school premises and on educational visits as required under part 3, paragraphs 10, 11 and 12
- particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
- details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
- details of the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b))
- ensure that a copy of the school's safeguarding policy (as required under part 3, paragraph 7) is published on the school's website or the school sends a copy to parents and carers of children, and prospective parents and carers, on request (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the manner in which complaints are to be handled (standards in part 7) and must:

- ensure that the complaints procedure is made available to parents and carers (paragraph 25(b))
- ensure that where parents and carers are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint (paragraph 25(f))
- ensure that where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, provision is made that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 25(g))
- ensure that the procedure allows for parents and carers to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 25(h))
- ensure that the complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and procedures stipulate that a copy of the findings and recommendations are:
 - sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant the person complained about
 and
 - made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the headteacher (paragraph 25(i))
- ensure that the procedure provides for written records to be kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 25(j))
- ensure that the procedure provides for correspondence, statements and records of complaints to be kept confidential (paragraph 25(k)).

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

- ensure that safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively
- ensure that the designated person for child protection is appropriately trained at the advanced level and attends refresher training every two years
- ensure that all members of staff are appropriately trained in child protection, understand the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and that they are implemented effectively
- ensure that a member of staff on the Acton and Finchley sites holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification (as defined by the Children's Workforce Development Council) and half of all other staff members hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire. Ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out, and is reviewed regularly, and appropriate fire detection and control equipment, for example fire alarms and emergency lighting, are in working order.

In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those who provide the registered provision for children under the age of three must:

- ensure that safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively
- ensure that the designated person for child protection is appropriately trained at the advanced level and attends refresher training every two years
- ensure that all members of staff are appropriately trained in child protection, understand the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and that they are implemented effectively
- ensure that a member of staff on the Acton and Finchley sites holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification (as defined by the Children's Workforce Development Council) and half of all other staff members hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire. Ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out, and is reviewed regularly, and appropriate fire detection and control equipment, for example fire alarms and emergency lighting, are in working order.

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				✓
--	--	--	--	---

The quality of the registered provision for children aged from birth to three years

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	Kindergarten		
Date school opened	1993		
Age range of pupils	2–6 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 85	Girls: 72	Total: 157
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of children aged 0–3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 34	Girls: 17	Total: 51
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)	£6,135		
Annual fees (childcare)	£6,195 full-time and £4,365 part-time		
Address of school	6 Hendon Avenue Finchley London N3 1UE		
Telephone number	020 8343 2191		
Email address	schooladministrator@goldershillschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	S Kitano		
Proprietor	K Maeda		

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.



21 January 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Finchley and Acton Yochien School, London, N3 1UE

Hello, I am one of the inspectors that visited your school. Thank you for talking to me and for being so friendly. I think that your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

This is what I liked most.

- You are happy and enjoy school.
- You are really friendly and well behaved.
- You said that you feel safe and secure.
- At the tea ceremony you were learning a very important Japanese tradition and you participated in the activity very well indeed.
- You told me that you like playing with the Japanese spinning tops and Japanese finger threading activities.

I have asked the proprietor and teachers to do some things to make the school even better, by:

- ensuring your lessons are well planned so that you make even better progress
- providing more computers and resources for learning
- making sure your health, safety and welfare are better protected
- providing your parents and carers with all of the information about the school
- making sure all adults who work in school are properly qualified.

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik
Lead inspector