

Bloo House School

The Lodge (Moore Place), Portsmouth Road, Esher, KT10 9LN

Inspection dates

14–16 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This is an outstanding school

- The Principal and director have created a warm and friendly school, where pupils thrive. Staff are proud to work at the school and parents say that their children are cared for extremely well.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average and, as a result, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils make rapid progress from their starting points and achieve extremely well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has a strong focus on teaching English grammar so that pupils are able to spell words and punctuate correctly.
- Pupils' exemplary behaviour makes a significant contribution to their learning. This is because they feel happy, safe and valued by all staff. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and love being in school.
- Teaching is outstanding as all staff have consistently high expectations of themselves and of the pupils. This enables pupils of all abilities to make excellent progress. Staff set work at the right level for all pupils.
- The interesting and innovative range of subjects ensures pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The Principal and director, who are also the proprietors, have ensured that the requirements for the Independent Schools Standards are met.
- The Principal, and staff team have worked relentlessly together to develop a school that is securely outstanding.
- Pupils say, 'Teachers are so creative, they give us so many amazing things to do,' and 'this is the best school ever'. This is confirmed by their enthusiasm for learning and high levels of attendance.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons. He held informal discussions with Key Stage 2 pupils.
- There were 21 responses to the online survey (Parent View). The inspector considered nine responses to the staff questionnaire, and met with the Principal, director and other staff.
- The inspector reviewed key documents and policies and scrutinised pupils' files and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bloo House School is an independent day school situated in Esher, Surrey. It caters for boys and girls aged from five to eleven years.
- The school is registered to admit 30 pupils. At the time of the inspection, there were 19 pupils on roll, and equal numbers of girls and boys.
- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school's curriculum is based on the principles of Waldorf Steiner, Montessori and Reggio. It seeks to provide 'an enriching experience, developing every child's eight 'aptitudes' including their 'intellectual, artistic, expressive, creative, physical, social and behavioural faculties'.
- Bloo House is an accredited Forest School, and in 2013 achieved the Green Tree School Gold Award.
- The school was founded in 2007 as a specialist tutorial establishment providing part-time education. In 2013, it was registered as a school to offer full-time education. This is the school's first inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen further the impact of leadership by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to reflect and respond to feedback
 - ironing out any variation in pupils' rates of progress from year group to year group
 - implementing plans to improve governance by expanding its membership and formalising arrangements to evaluate the school's work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are outstanding

- The Principal and director, who are also the proprietors, have established a school where pupils thrive in a consistently caring and supportive atmosphere. All staff are passionate about the school and as a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding because of the strong individual pastoral care.
- The carefully thought out curriculum is a significant strength of the school. It promotes a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. The exceptionally wide range of subjects on offer ensures pupils have a clear understanding of cultural differences and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully achieved through regular assemblies and visits from outside speakers. Pupils celebrate their achievements in assemblies that also give time for reflection. Moral values are frequently emphasised through story-telling. In addition, the school's dynamic Forest School programme promotes practical skills, happiness and well-being. Here pupils have the opportunity to connect with the natural world, by participating in engaging and motivating activities that develop social and emotional skills. These, together with trips and visits and after-school clubs, enrich pupils' experience of school still further and promote equality well.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in most subjects, and reading has a very high profile across the school. The curriculum is very effective in promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in preparing them actively to understand and accept British values.
- Senior leaders have ensured that excellent policies, training and procedures help pupils achieve high levels of literacy. Staff training and development are a high priority and all staff have visited good and outstanding schools to improve their practice.
- Senior leaders check pupils' learning, and set challenging targets as part of their evaluation of the quality of teaching; as a result, they have an accurate view of its effectiveness. They ensure that salary increases are not awarded unless staff have met their targets in relation to pupils' progress.
- The school works extremely well with parents to ensure their children receive the right kind of support when it is needed. Communication is a strength of the school and all parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents. Leaders have provided parent workshops on such topics as mathematics, reading, managing your child's behaviour and how to keep your child safe online.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are kept safe and the school meets current safeguarding requirements.
- The premises and accommodation are well maintained, clean and free from graffiti and litter. Classrooms are well equipped with resources that provide pupils with a stimulating place to learn.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The proprietors have ensured that all of the Independent School Standards are met and that the school is in a position to educate and safeguard pupils. They have a good understanding about information on pupils' performance and how it compares with similar schools, both locally and nationally.
 - As Principal and director, the proprietors have an excellent understanding of the quality of teaching and how the process for setting targets for teachers is linked to pupils' progress. They also know what is being done to reward good teaching.
 - The proprietors ensure school finances are monitored and evaluated rigorously and have undertaken training in human resource management and motivating staff.
 - Plans are well advanced to strengthen governance by expanding its membership and formalising arrangements to evaluate the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and thrive on its warm and friendly atmosphere.
- Excellent relationships are evident throughout the school. Pupils benefit from the small classes which enable them to develop highly positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the site is excellent. They are polite, well mannered and respectful to staff and other pupils and behave responsibly and maturely.
- The school's records indicate bullying is extremely rare. There are no recorded incidents of racist behaviour or homophobic comments. Pupils reported, 'there is no bullying in our school because we are all friends', and 'because it feels like home'. A positive and supportive atmosphere pervades the school

and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. There have been no exclusions since the school was founded.

- The majority of pupils attend very well. Pupils are punctual to lessons and come into school each day with happy smiles and friendly greetings for staff and other pupils.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The required safeguarding policies and checks on adults are in place to ensure pupils are safe and secure. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet through the teachers' promotion and demonstration of safe practices in the classroom.
- Pupils gain an excellent understanding of their own and other cultures through Humanities, philosophy, personal, social and health education, art and music. This, together with the many trips and visits to places of interest, ensures they appreciate and promote diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- Parents report that they are extremely happy with the school's care of their child.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is typically at least consistently good with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use a range of support strategies to ensure they are fully involved and motivated to succeed. As a result, pupils thrive in this atmosphere, and achieve exceptionally well.
- Teachers routinely plan interesting activities that arouse pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm and engage them in learning. For example, in a philosophy lesson, younger pupils were studying a very well known fairy story about a dragon. As a result of the teacher's highly skilful questioning, pupils became totally engrossed in the activity, and then re-created scenes from the story, in paint.
- Teaching is characterised by thorough planning, and excellent subject knowledge. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and make very good use of checks on pupils' progress to plan suitable work. Where teaching is most effective, pupils make rapid progress in their learning because they are given opportunities to develop and practise their basic skills. This was evident where pupils were developing their understanding of division in mathematics, through a variety of activities. Here pupils were able to feedback confidently their responses as a result of positive encouragement and guidance from the teacher.
- Relationships in classrooms are excellent. Teachers consistently create a positive atmosphere where pupils feel happy, safe and well supported. Staff plan activities that are set at the right level, so all pupils can flourish in their learning, including the most able. Marking is regular, often with detailed and helpful comments. However, teachers continue to develop and strengthen opportunities for pupils to reflect and respond to their feedback.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils generally enter the school with skills that are expected for their age. As a result of excellent teaching and the rich and innovative curriculum, pupils make exceptionally rapid progress. Pupils perform extremely well because staff provide a happy, relaxed and warm learning atmosphere.
- In 2014, all Year 6 pupils made exceptional progress in reading and mathematics. They made slightly slower progress in writing. Younger pupils learn to master basic numeracy skills and have a well-developed understanding of how letters and sounds link together to form words. Rigorous initial and ongoing checks enable teachers to identify gaps in reading and numeracy skills early and to help pupils catch up rapidly.
- Last year, all pupils, including the most able, achieved the higher National Curriculum Levels 5 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. They also passed the 11-Plus and 13-Plus examinations and all gained entry to the secondary school of their choice. As a result, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils achieve high standards in reading and make rapid progress in their reading skills, through daily opportunities for reading a wide variety of texts. They develop into very confident and fluent readers. Often their reading age exceeds their chronological age by between two and three years.
- School records and inspection evidence confirm that there is no significant difference in the rates of progress of different groups including boys and girls. However, some pupils make variable rates of progress during their time in the school, depending upon in which year group they are working. Leaders

are fully aware of this and specialist support has been provided.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	140485
Inspection number	447232
DfE registration number	936/6003

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted 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.

Type of school	Primary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Proprietor	Bloo House Ltd
Director	Piers Hesketh-Gardener
Principal	Melissa Carter
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,150
Telephone number	01372 477133
Email address	enquiries@bloohouse.com

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