

Longwood School

Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey, WD23 2QG

Inspection dates 4–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well in the school's warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- Leaders and managers help teachers to improve. They check teachers' work, set targets with them and provide opportunities for further training.
- Pupils' attainment is higher than average. Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported.
- Children in early years achieve well because they are well taught and the needs of each one is valued.
- Pupils have good reading, writing and mathematical skills, and well developed personal and social skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; in lessons it is often exemplary.
- Pupils develop tolerance of differences in the way people live and have a good awareness of British values.
- Teachers' marking helps pupils to make their work better.
- The curriculum is wide and interesting. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- There are good relationships with parents.
- Pupils' welfare and safety is a high priority and safeguarding is robust. Pupils very much enjoy school and feel safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils, including the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Checks on pupils' progress are not sufficiently detailed to shape precise learning objectives for all pupils, and children in the early years, in every lesson.
- There is no whole-school record to track pupils' progress as they move through the school.
- Information from the checks made on pupils' progress is not used to monitor the work of the teachers.

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

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, including some jointly with the headteacher, and carried out learning walks of lessons in progress. They observed breakfast club, breaks and lunchtimes.
- Members of the inspection team heard pupils read and looked closely at samples of their work.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, the school’s own self-evaluation report, monitoring files, information on performance management, finance and safeguarding documentation and policies.
- Meetings were held with two different groups of pupils. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils during lesson observations.
- Discussions were held with the proprietor, headteacher, and teachers in charge of special needs and the early years, and the teacher in charge of the welfare of children.
- Inspectors analyzed 11 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and took account of their comments. They talked to parents in the playground, and examined evidence from the school’s own parent questionnaires.
- Inspectors considered the 14 staff responses that were submitted to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Johnson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a small, non-selective independent school for children from three months to 11 years old. It has a separate Nursery for children from three months to three years old which was inspected on 14 March 2014. There are 91 children on the school roll and a further 118 in the Nursery.
- This inspection examined provision for pupils aged three to eleven years old. There are three classes for the early years and three mixed-aged classes for pupils from five to 11 years of age.
- A wide range of cultures are represented in the school but all pupils are fluent in English.
- A much smaller proportion than average have disabilities or special educational needs. Most of them are school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- All pupils in the early years attend on a full-time basis. There are 39 children in receipt of government nursery funding.
- This is a family-run school, where the proprietors work closely with staff.
- The school was last inspected in January 2009.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - sharing good practice in providing high levels of challenge in every lesson for pupils, including the more able, particularly in Key Stage 1
 - using assessment information to tighten up the match between work set and pupils' ability.
- Improve the leadership and management by:
 - establishing a coherent record of all pupils' progress as they move through the school
 - using the record of progress to check pupils' achievement in relation to that of others and appraise teachers' work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management of the school are strong. There is good oversight of the work of teachers and the progress of individual pupils. The leadership has welded an experienced team of teachers that is keen to improve provision.
- The proprietors have a high profile in the school and good oversight of day-to-day routines. Any biased views are quickly addressed. There is strong emphasis on ensuring each pupil succeeds and has an enjoyable experience of school. Pupils' different cultural backgrounds are valued and embraced.
- The headteacher and teachers with responsibility for special educational needs and the early years work well with staff on a regular basis to help pupils to achieve well.
- The curriculum is wide and well-balanced. It provides interesting experiences for pupils that are underpinned by a firm foundation for literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. Specialist teachers for French, dance and music contribute valuable and highly enjoyable experiences for pupils.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available and these are well attended. This year, ballet throughout the school is very popular with boys and girls. There are also opportunities for piano, Spanish, drama, art, computers, cooking, reading and games.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. It successfully achieves its aim to provide a stimulating, healthy, safe environment where all pupils can attain high standards and become well-balanced citizens.
- Safeguarding is robust and meets statutory requirements. Policies are regularly monitored and procedures are well understood.
- The school works closely with parents and makes every effort to respond to their requests. Parents are happy with the provision and appreciate the warm family atmosphere that pervades the school.
- Teachers' performance is regularly monitored. There are good opportunities for teachers to keep abreast of new developments through training. As a result, they reflect well on their practice.
- The school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Since the last inspection, achievement has continued to improve. More pupils achieve higher levels in tests. The accommodation has been enhanced. Provision for physical education and the outside areas have been developed. There is now a secret garden and space for growing vegetables.
- The school is purpose built. It is well-maintained and appropriate for pupils' needs. The close proximity of the leisure centre has allowed the school to extend its provision for sports and swimming.
- Although assessment records are in place, there is no system that gives staff a detailed awareness of patterns of progress for individual pupils as they move through the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
All the independent schools standards are met. Parents are well informed. Relevant policies and clear procedures are in place for giving parents information about their children's progress and for handling any complaints. Financial issues are competently managed and monitored. Although teachers' work is regularly appraised, there is not yet a policy that links pupils' progress to teachers' progression up the salary scale.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are eager to learn and they often concentrate outstandingly well throughout lessons. They work collaboratively and support one another when necessary. Pupils wear their

uniforms proudly and take pride in their work and their school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. Occasionally, pupils are not sufficiently engaged by the activities that have been set. Nevertheless, pupils try their best and remain polite and respectful.

- During playtimes, pupils play well together. Any very occasional unkind behaviour is promptly and effectively addressed. Pupils are confident that if they have concerns, these will be heard and dealt with by staff. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. There are no exclusions. It is very rare for sanctions to be given.
- Pupils are responsible, thoughtful and learn to be good citizens. They learn about how the political system works in Britain through lessons in personal, social and health education and in humanities. The school council works democratically gathering the views of others before making decisions. They have recently consulted their peers about e-safety. There is a house system and older pupils support younger ones as 'buddies'.
- Adults provide good role models in their day-to-day interactions. The school is bright, attractive and well maintained. There is no litter. Attendance is very high. Pupils love school and respect their teachers. They are very well prepared for secondary school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe in school and their parents and teachers confirm this. Staff and visitors are appropriately checked. Any prejudiced views are well challenged. There is little evidence of discrimination because each pupil is valued.
- Pupils have a really good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They can explain how to react in a variety of potentially unsafe contexts, including when using computers. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and well understood by all staff. Pupils' welfare and safety are given the highest priority and the school is sensitive to concerns raised by any pupil, their parents and the staff.
- Pupils, parents and staff agree that behaviour is good and pupils are safe in school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers know pupils well and plan lessons that appeal to them. They help pupils to become confident and independent learners. Most teachers reflect well on pupils' learning. In the majority of lessons, pupils who find the work too difficult or too easy are identified quickly and work is modified accordingly.
- Pupils make very good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills because they have lots of opportunities to practise and apply their skills in other lessons and contexts. Some pupils keep diaries; some use word processing when they carry out research.
- Teaching assistants and other adults provide good support for pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs. They check pupils' work, select resources to support their understanding and ask questions to extend and reinforce their learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Pupils thoroughly relish their growing mastery of new skills, for example in French and dance.
- Homework is regularly set and complements classwork well. Some pupils make good use of information and communication technology to support the work they do at home.
- Teachers' marking is very helpful. It identifies what pupils have done well and how to make their work better. In some books pupils make written responses, showing good engagement with their learning. The comments in the books of more-able pupils are less challenging than for other pupils.

- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning either by acting on comments from their teachers or by marking each other's work against pointers for success. Pupils' books are neat and carefully presented.
- More-able pupils have been identified and these pupils spend some time working on more challenging work with older pupils. Nevertheless, the work routinely set for some younger more-able pupils is not always sufficiently exciting and challenging; teachers do not always ask questions in lessons that are sufficiently searching.
- Very occasionally, where work is not well matched to pupils' needs, particularly in Key Stage 1, the noise level increases and pupils do not concentrate well enough to make the best progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The pupils' good achievement is supported by the school's ethos of hard work and application. Almost all pupils get into the school of their first choice at the end of Key Stage 2.
- More Key Stage 2 pupils achieve the higher levels in tests year-on-year. The work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported. Their work is well presented and their learning is reinforced very well.
- The vast majority of pupils achieved Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and Level 5 at Key Stage 2 in reading writing, mathematics, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- A coherent curriculum ensures that literacy and numeracy are well reinforced in a variety of contexts. For example, through writing up experiments showing reversible and irreversible states in science and keeping personal diaries. Mathematical concepts are reinforced well through comparative graphs in humanities.
- Regular testing ensures that pupils become familiar with test conditions and reach good levels in the tests. Leaders and managers collate the information to ensure that every pupil is successful.
- The work of the more-able pupils is good overall. They read extensively; their writing is colourful and lively and holds the readers' attention very well. They have a wide vocabulary and their spelling and grammar are accurate. Regular and extensive practice in mathematics ensures that they can manipulate numbers easily in their heads. The Year 6 pupils solve difficult number problems, such as those using symbols, with great enthusiasm and application. However, some younger more-able pupils are not always sufficiently stretched.

The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management ensure that all children exceed levels typically expected at the end of Reception. Staff routinely share information regarding individual needs and abilities. Learning journeys show good progress for all children.
- Children with disabilities and those who have special educational needs are well supported to achieve. Their needs are sensitively addressed in all settings.
- Strong safeguarding procedures ensure that children are well cared for and happy. Children's welfare is a high priority.
- Activities provide exciting and relevant contexts within which children develop their spiritual, moral, social

and cultural understanding. Questioning helps them to consider issues and dilemmas in stories. The practices in other cultures are considered when trying out rangoli designs.

- Children are well prepared for school. They understand routines and expectations. They have good levels of communication and language, mathematics and well-developed personal and social skills, and are sufficiently independent to confidently join the main school in Year 1.
- The vast majority of children are secure when they count to at least 20, can tell the time and read simple books. They are beginning to spell out words that are decipherable when making simple sentences.
- Teaching is good. There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves throughout the school day. Teaching assistants work seamlessly with other adults. As a result, children are well engaged.
- In lessons, children play well, showing good concentration and cooperation. Adults help them to question and predict. Children readily eat healthy snacks of fruit, choosing for themselves when to do so. They are beginning to understand patterns using two different coloured beads. Their enjoyment of books is fostered through the use of recordings to hear the stories in the book corner.
- In some lessons, there is no clear focus for the learning of different children. This is because there is no coherent system for showing pupils' progress throughout the early years.

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	117662
Inspection number	443462
DfE registration number	919/6236

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	Nursery and Primary
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 months to 11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Proprietor	Malcolm Livesey
Headteacher	Muriel Garman
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,060
Telephone number	01923 253715
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