

Educare Small School

12 Cowleaze Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 6DZ

Inspection dates

17–19 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, with good support from the staff and trustees, has taken successful steps to improve the school. These measures have ensured that the teaching and the pupils' progress are good.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan interesting activities that motivate and engage them in their learning. However, teaching does not always challenge the most able pupils to achieve their best.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well and this is a strength of the school. Pupils participate in many interesting activities which help to build their confidence.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they are up to date with the latest guidance.
- Effective leadership and teaching in the early years ensure that children make good progress and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Parents hold the school in very high regard. They appreciate its caring and nurturing ethos. All parents who expressed a view would recommend the school to another parent.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They feel safe and secure in school. Sometimes pupils are over-reliant on adults to guide their learning.
- Staff receive effective training to improve their teaching and help them take on additional responsibilities. However, the coaching programme for teachers is not fully developed and is not therefore making the best possible contribution to the drive to improve pupils' progress.
- Governance is effective. Trustees use their expertise to provide helpful advice. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that they need to formalise arrangements for the headteacher's appraisal to ensure that her leadership is held to account more rigorously.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that staff:
 - challenge the most able pupils to do as well as they can
 - help pupils to become less reliant on adults to support their learning.
- Strengthen leadership and management still further by ensuring that:
 - the coaching programme is improved so that it has the best possible effect on the quality of teaching and the pupils' progress
 - trustees set up formal performance management arrangements for the headteacher.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has successfully overseen the reorganisation of staff responsibilities. This has ensured that more staff are gaining useful experience in leading different aspects of the school's work. The headteacher is also successful in bringing about continuing improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. She has instilled a culture of nurturing pupils' self-esteem and aspirations.
- The stimulating curriculum enables pupils to develop many interests and skills, including cooking and French. Pupils begin each day with relaxation techniques. These are intended to enable them to focus on their learning and to understand how to use their bodies efficiently. They learn how to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across a variety of subjects. Trips, visits and after-school pursuits enrich pupils' experience of school still further and promote equality well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given a high priority and is a strength of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a broad range of stimulating activities through which they grow in confidence. For example, during the inspection, younger children and pupils celebrated the festival of Diwali. This enabled them to gain a good understanding of how people from different cultures, lifestyles and backgrounds contribute to life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' involvement in the 'forest school' strongly promotes their practical skills, happiness and well-being by connecting with the natural world. Planned activities are clearly linked to the themes in the school's curriculum. This helps pupils to make connections and to explore topics in greater depth.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, have very favourable opinions of the school. All said they would recommend it to another parent. They also spoke particularly highly of the excellent levels of care and nurturing that the staff give to their children.
- The headteacher has ensured that all the independent school standards are met, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- Effective training and performance management arrangements have enabled staff to improve their teaching and to extend their experience by taking on new areas of responsibility. Leaders are increasingly effective in checking the quality of teaching. However, they have not yet made the best use of the staff training and coaching programme to ensure that its effect on the teaching and the pupils' progress is maximised. For example, following lesson observations, leaders do not always identify precisely enough the areas for improvement to move teaching more rapidly from good to outstanding. Information from unannounced informal lesson observations is not collated or analysed to enable the best possible feedback to be given to staff.

Governance

- Governance is effective.
- Trustees bring a wealth of experience from the fields of early years, finance, higher

education, human resources, public relations and communication. The chair of the trustees is particularly well qualified for the role, having a background in education, school inspection, health and craft. The skills that trustees have gained in different and relevant areas give them the confidence to hold the school to account for pupils' outcomes.

- The school's finances are carefully monitored through internal checks and are externally audited to ensure that the best value is achieved.
- Trustees regularly visit classrooms with the headteacher and produce helpful reports for the board of trustees. There are informal arrangements for the appraisal of the headteacher. Trustees acknowledge that more formal arrangements need to be put in place so that they can more rigorously hold the school's leadership to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's caring and nurturing ethos effectively promotes a strong culture of safeguarding vigilance. The school's effective safeguarding policy, which is published on its website, is firmly based on the Secretary of State's latest guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016). Staff receive up-to-date training in this aspect of the school's work. For example, they are aware of the requirement to inform the police if they have concerns regarding a pupil being at risk of female genital mutilation.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection feel that the school keeps their children safe, for example when entering the school site or while using the internet. They commented that teachers are very approachable if they need to raise any issue about the school's work. Staff work well with external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, both academically and personally. They know their pupils extremely well and plan a range of activities that capture pupils' enthusiasm. These attributes, together with warm and caring relationships, motivate pupils to involve themselves fully in their learning and to achieve well.
- Teachers provide interesting tasks that enable pupils to explore mathematical ideas and apply them to different situations. During the inspection, for example, pupils visited a pizza take-away restaurant, and learned how pizzas were made and sold. Later, using their mathematical knowledge, pupils successfully worked out how they could divide the pizza up fairly, so that each person would receive a similar-sized slice.
- Pupils write with enthusiasm and imagination, often because their writing is linked to the text or topic they are studying. For example, older pupils confidently practised various ways in which they could summarise two chapters from 'My side of the mountain' by making economic use of persuasive language.
- Pupils who need additional support make good progress because adults help them effectively and give them the confidence to overcome any barriers to their progress.
- Pupils' reading abilities have improved because of the strong teaching of phonics. The

effective deployment of teaching assistants enables the least able readers to make good use of their phonics skills and to persevere in sounding out unfamiliar words.

- Teachers usually plan work that is set at the correct level for the pupils' abilities and attainment, and they are skilled at adapting and changing plans to meet differing needs. However, sometimes activities do not provide sufficient challenge or depth, especially for the most able.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The caring family ethos promotes positive and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils who spoke to the inspector reported that they are happy and feel safe and secure in school. They are confident that they are able to share any worries with an adult and that they will be swiftly resolved.
- Pupils are asked regularly to reflect on their learning and say how well their day has gone. This activity is very beneficial in improving pupils' self-esteem and helping them to understand how to learn successfully.
- Pupils regularly participate in sports and physical education. These opportunities make a strong contribution to their physical and emotional development and well-being.
- Pupils reported that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including racist and homophobic forms. They know how to stay safe while using the internet and while travelling outside school.
- Staff provide effective role models that help to ensure that pupils are protected from extreme views and have a mature appreciation of what is right and wrong.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Positive relationships are nurtured throughout the school. This helps to ensure that pupils are polite, courteous and have good manners. They show high levels of respect towards adults and each other. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils play happily together in the outside area and enjoy socialising with their friends.
- Teachers have established clear expectations of pupils' conduct and attitudes to their work. Pupils respond positively and poor behaviour is extremely rare.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, work conscientiously and attend school regularly. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in the many interesting activities on offer to them each day. However, behaviour is not outstanding because, sometimes, pupils are over-reliant on adults to support and guide their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Teaching-group sizes are small. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and higher-than-average proportions of pupils join and leave the school at different times of the year. For these reasons, information about achievement needs to be interpreted with caution, because analyses of trends or comparisons with national results are likely to be misleading.
- Work in pupils' books, together with the school's information, shows that pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils who have additional needs make strong progress due to the excellent support, care and guidance they receive.
- Pupils have many opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills. Over time, they become confident in structuring longer and more in-depth pieces of writing.
- Pupils use their phonics skills well to tackle unfamiliar words when reading aloud or working out how to spell unfamiliar words when writing. They read with confidence and feeling.
- Pupils practise their speaking and listening skills regularly across a range of subjects, for example by reciting poems or explaining their solutions to mathematical problems. These regular classroom activities provide a firm foundation for their academic development.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in creative work in art, drama and music. Participation in these activities helps them to become confident and assured.
- However, staff do not always set sufficiently challenging activities to enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding, particularly the most able.

Early years provision

Good

- Overall, children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that are typical for their age, but with some below those normally expected. Because of effective teaching, children make good progress and achieve levels of development that are often above national expectations by the end of the Reception Year.
- Staff get to know children's interests and needs well through regular contact with parents and close observation of learning. Well-planned activities enable children to explore the indoor and outdoor environments to develop their own interests, self-confidence and independence, and to achieve well.
- Children's literacy and numeracy skills are well developed through regular practice in their books and 'learning journals'.
- From the time when they arrive at the school, children are taught to reflect on their learning. For example, during the inspection, younger ones celebrated the festival of Diwali. They learned about the story of Rama and Sita, tasted Indian food and wore traditional costumes. This enabled them to reflect on the morals highlighted through storytelling and to appreciate the customs and beliefs of people with different faiths from their own. Activities of this kind contribute well to the excellent promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths of the setting and has made a number of improvements. For example, she has ensured that the assessments of the children's progress are accurate by arranging regular moderations with other settings

and attending the local authority moderation sessions with the kindergarten teacher. She has ensured that all the statutory requirements for the early years are met, including all aspects of safety, safeguarding and children's welfare. The children play and learn confidently. They clearly feel very safe, secure and happy.

- Children behave well. From the time when they join the school, they show increasingly mature attitudes to learning. They show respect to adults and each other, and are curious and motivated to learn. Occasionally, however, when concentration wanes, some children are overdependent on adults to guide their learning.
- Overall, the most able children make strong gains in their learning. However, staff do not always set sufficiently challenging activities to enable them to make the best possible progress.

School details

Unique reference number	131351
DfE registration number	314/6070
Inspection number	10012830

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part-time pupils	11
Proprietor	Educare Small School Ltd
Chair	Janice Gravett
Headteacher	Elizabeth Steinthal
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,880
Telephone number	020 8547 0144
Website	www.educaresmallschool.org.uk
Email address	educaresmall@btconnect.com
Date of previous inspection	18–20 June 2013

Information about this school

- Educare Small School is a non-selective independent primary school for boys and girls aged three to 11. The school offers before-school care for children, from 8am, and after-school care until 6pm.
- There are 37 pupils on roll, 11 of whom attend part time. In total, 11 children attend the kindergarten. One in five pupils has additional learning needs. None has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- There are three mixed-age classes: kindergarten (the early years), key stage 1 and key stage 2. There is flexibility between these classes, and pupils move between different

groups based on their academic ability and maturity.

- Just over half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the remainder being White British.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils join and leave the school at different times of the year.
- The school was last inspected in June 2013, when it was judged to be good.
- The school meets the independent school standards for what it must publish on its website.
- The school aims 'to provide a safe, balanced and nurturing education for children to develop their potential as individuals in their own right'.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes jointly with the headteacher. He spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- There were 20 responses to Parent View and 20 text comments. The inspector spoke with parents in the morning before school started. He also considered the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, staff members and the chair of the trustees.
- The inspector reviewed important documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. He scrutinised pupils' books and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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