

# L'Ecole des Petits

2 Hazlebury Road, Fulham, London SW6 2NB

## Inspection dates

21–23 November 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The school is popular with pupils, parents and carers, and staff alike. It is an attractive and well-maintained environment. Pupils are happy to come to school each day.
- Leadership at all levels is outstanding. Leaders are ambitious to provide the highest quality of education and care for the pupils. All adults share the ethos of the school.
- Leaders keep a close eye on the quality of teaching. They provide excellent support for new members of staff and ensure that high standards of teaching are maintained over time. Leaders ensure that staff have every opportunity to further their teaching skills.
- The governors, who are the proprietors, understand their school and are passionate about it. They provide strong support to leaders. Governors continually improve the premises so that the school is pleasant and runs efficiently.
- Leaders provide an excellent range of subjects for pupils to learn. The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within the curriculum is a particular strength.
- Pupils make excellent progress at the school. Their bilingual skills are second to none.
- The school is extremely safe. Pupils are equipped with skills appropriate for their age to keep themselves safe.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is extremely high. Adults measure pupils' learning carefully and put additional support in place for the most able and for those who need to catch up. This ensures that all pupils learn very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. There is no bullying or unkind behaviour. Pupils are confident, articulate and polite to visitors. They are eager to come to school, and attendance is above average.
- Children in the outstanding early years provision follow a carefully planned curriculum, delivered by nurturing adults. Children learn a wealth of skills and are cared for extremely well.
- Pupils are successfully prepared for the next phase of schooling. The focus of their learning is on the careful and deep mastery of literacy and numeracy skills, and on their creative and emotional development. Pupils learn dance and some sporting activities well. However, they sometimes do not have access to sufficiently high-quality resources to make substantial gains in their physical skills.

### 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?**

- Ensure that pupils routinely benefit from high-quality and well-chosen resources which stretch their physical skills and promote substantial gains in their physical development.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- This successful and much-loved school is led exceptionally well. The school and its sister school in Battersea share senior leaders. In this way, they are able to draw on the strength of the partnership and provide a bilingual education of exceptionally high quality.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school to succeed in its aim 'to provide the best possible all-round education and care for the children in the school'. Leaders continually look for ways to improve the school, and their self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders have worked tirelessly to maintain the outstanding quality of education identified at the previous inspection.
- Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching throughout the school is outstanding. They observe teaching, offer valuable guidance to adults and check that their advice is acted upon. Leaders provide effective support to new teachers so that they adapt quickly to the high standards of teaching that are expected.
- Adults back the leaders strongly. Their responses to the Ofsted online survey of their views were entirely positive. Staff told inspectors that they appreciate the many opportunities they have to develop their teaching skills and to seek further professional development in their careers.
- Leaders and governors are meticulous in meeting statutory requirements regarding pupils' welfare, health and safety. They ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders are highly aware of their duties to ensure equality of opportunity for pupils. Their admissions policy welcomes all. They plan well to ensure that they are ready for anyone attending the school who might need additional help.
- The curriculum provides an excellent spread of subjects and topics for pupils to learn. Teaching activities are delivered through two languages, so that pupils leave the school understanding and speaking both French and English fluently. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' mastery of literacy and numeracy skills. A wide range of additional activities enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils were inspired by a visit to the National Gallery to produce high-quality art work in the style of Cézanne.
- The curriculum contributes exceptionally well to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, one assembly seen by inspectors encouraged pupils to respect their natural environment. Pupils from one class confidently and charmingly used songs and actions to convey the message to their fellow pupils.
- The curriculum promotes fundamental British values successfully. Adults take pupils on trips to the Houses of Parliament, for example, as a basis for learning about democracy. For the commemoration of Armistice Day, pupils decorated the walls with the British symbol of remembrance, the red poppy, as well as the French 'bleuet' or cornflower. Such symbolism effectively promotes tolerance and respect for others.

### Governance

- The proprietors are responsible for the governance of the school. They care deeply for the school and are involved fully in its life.

- The governors, who set up the school as a family concern, are highly committed to ensuring its success. They maintain the school to a high quality so that the environment is pleasant for both pupils and adults. The premises are safe and kept in very good repair.
- The governors set high standards for leaders and staff. They support leaders effectively, and are not afraid to challenge any underperformance, should it occur. In this way, they maintain the school's excellent standards over time.
- Leaders are united in acknowledging the support governors give to them in the running of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The suitability of all adults who work with pupils is rigorously checked, as is their right to work.
- Leaders promote a culture of safety. All members of the school community, pupils and adults alike, are alert to potential concerns. Leaders are trained in handling any safeguarding matters. They know when to refer such matters to external agencies and to whom. Staff, too, are well trained in safeguarding procedures, and refer to leaders or external agencies any concerns they might have about the pupils in their care.
- Adults are trained in recognising signs of neglect or abuse, including female genital mutilation. Adults are trained to spot signs of radicalisation or extremism. As a result, potential issues are spotted and addressed promptly.
- The school is an extremely safe environment. Fire safety arrangements are thorough, and there are regular drills. Governors and leaders respond effectively to local and national safeguarding concerns. For example, they have set up a comprehensive system of alerts and lock-down procedures. There are robust risk assessments to ensure that all possible risks are considered, whether pupils are in school or on trips outside school.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and reflects the latest statutory guidance. The policy is made available to parents on the school's website, alongside all the information required by the independent school standards.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Outstanding**

- The excellent teaching throughout the school enables pupils to achieve great proficiency in both French and English. Adults keep a close watch on pupils to ensure that each receives the teaching most suitable to his or her language needs. Adults adapt their teaching or move pupils to classes with a stronger focus on one language than the other. As a result, pupils leave school able to communicate fluently in both languages.
- Pupils learn a wide range of subjects in depth. Pupils learn valuable skills, not only in literacy and numeracy but also in dance, sport, art and drama. Such exposure to this breadth of skills promotes pupils' curiosity and love of learning exceptionally well.
- Teaching has a strong focus on encouraging pupils to ask questions and think deeply about their learning. In one challenging science lesson, for example, pupils performed experiments to find out for themselves that the water level is always horizontal. Pupils

were asked to tip receptacles of water and draw the receptacle showing the level of the water. One pupil asked, 'But water is transparent. How can we draw it?' This sophisticated response shows how fully pupils typically consider the topics they learn.

- The teaching is highly successful in ensuring that pupils have a solid grounding in skills before moving on to the next level. For example, pupils develop a thorough understanding of basic concepts of mathematics, such as shape and symmetry. Pupils then move on to number skills and calculation and make very strong progress in learning new skills.
- Each pupil receives the right support to ensure that he or she makes substantial progress. Adults provide additional support for those who need to catch up. Adults also make sure that the most able receive challenging activities that enable them to make excellent gains in their skills and knowledge. As a result, all pupils are successful learners.
- Teachers plan tasks which promote pupils' enjoyment of physical activity. However, pupils sometimes do not have access to resources which challenge them to excel in their physical skills.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The school is a secure environment, enabling children to thrive. Parents are extremely happy with the school. Inspectors received such comments as, 'I appreciate the teaching and values my child receives from this school' and 'Our child goes to school with a skip in her step.' A common theme among parents is that the school has a warm, family ethos, in which pupils learn and play with confidence.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and articulate in two languages. They can explain clearly to visitors what they are learning. For example, pupils who had been making an American-style chocolate pie to celebrate Thanksgiving were able to explain what went into the pie and how it was made.
- Pupils have a mature understanding of how to keep healthy. For example, pupils told inspectors what foods were healthy and also stressed the importance of sleep in maintaining health.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying or unkind behaviour at the school. Respect for others is a key message that pupils absorb through example. A typical comment from one pupil was, 'We learn from teachers to be nice to friends and not to push or do anything silly.'
- Children are aware that many of their peers come from other faiths and backgrounds. They accept one another and enjoy each other's company. School records show that there are no instances of racist name-calling or other unkind words.
- Pupils are very well protected. The school effectively teaches pupils in age-appropriate language the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Pupils told inspectors that they wait for permission before opening doors. They understand the reasons for regular fire drills. They are taught to be alert to any possible risks from strangers or when using computers.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are highly attentive in class and are fully absorbed in their learning. They move quickly and without fuss from one activity to the next, so that no time is wasted.
- Pupils keep the school environment pleasant and tidy. They take pride in displays of their work, and these are regularly refreshed.
- Pupils listen attentively in assembly, and are pleased when their classmates receive a gold star for being kind or working hard.
- Pupils are extremely happy at school. A typical comment from one pupil was, 'We have friends who are boys and girls and we all play together.' Such sociability reflects the family ethos of the school, where all are valued and treated equally.
- Pupils' eagerness to come to school is reflected in their excellent attendance, which is above average.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils' outcomes are outstanding because, throughout their time at the school, pupils make substantial and sustained progress. Their progress in acquiring bilingual language skills is particularly strong. This is because of excellent teaching, flexibly arranged to provide the right challenge for individual pupils. As a result, all pupils leave school with language skills second to none. These bilingual skills prepare pupils extremely well for the next stage of schooling.
- Pupils make equally strong progress in all areas of the curriculum. In their time at the school, pupils master a range of language, mathematical and science skills. Pupils also make excellent progress in learning creative skills and developing an understanding of the world around them.
- The flexible and individual approach to teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities make substantial gains in their learning. The most able are encouraged to progress at their own pace. Those who take longer to catch up are given effective support and are able to make up ground.
- Pupils learn extremely well because they are provided with well-planned materials. They are encouraged to learn with as much independence as possible. Pupils are therefore practised in choosing their own activities, so that no time is wasted. When pupils complete a task, they mark it off on a chart. In this way, they are actively involved in their learning.
- In the indoor learning areas, resources are extremely well chosen to ensure that pupils learn a wide range of skills. The outdoor areas, however, are less well resourced, and this limits pupils' ability to master and deepen their physical skills.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- In the early years provision, children learn a wide range of skills through well-chosen play activities that are carefully matched to their age and stage of development. A typical

comment from one parent was, 'Children are enabled to develop a great sense of curiosity and they thrive on this.'

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding and is of the same high quality as the whole school.
- Teaching in the early years provision is outstanding. Adults are highly trained and knowledgeable about the needs of children. They have a similarly successful focus on helping children to be fluent in two languages as those higher up in the school.
- Adults are extremely caring towards the children. Adults speak gently to them, and their example encourages children to be calm and feel secure. Adults promote excellent behaviour among the children. Adults encourage children to take turns when using the play equipment and to listen to one another. As a result, children in the early years provision are polite, considerate and respectful to others.
- Children's outcomes at the end of the early years are exceptional. Children acquire an excellent grounding in literacy and numeracy skills, and also in a host of other skills promoted by the school, such as art, crafts and dance.
- The school meets all statutory requirements for the early years, both in the independent school standards and in the early years statutory framework relating to safeguarding and welfare. Children are cared for extremely well. Several staff are trained in first-aid procedures for young children. Children are very well supervised. The school keeps children extremely safe.
- The school engages extremely successfully with parents. From the moment prospective parents visit the school, they are told about the curriculum and the school's values. Leaders encourage strong home-school links. Teachers make accurate assessments of how well children are learning and share these with parents online and through regular meetings. Parents show, in their oral and written comments, that they are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- The curriculum is planned extremely well to ensure that children make progress in a range of skills and are fully ready for Year 1. The school's ethos, where each child is known to adults, and where they know one another, gives children the confidence they need to move smoothly into Year 1.

## School details

Unique reference number	100375
DfE registration number	205/6386
Inspection number	10008534

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 6
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	119
Number of part-time pupils	7
Proprietor	Mr and Mrs Otten
Chair	Mr and Mrs Otten
Principal	Frédérique Brisset
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,600 to £11,985
Telephone number	020 7371 8350
Website	<a href="http://www.lecoledespetits.co.uk">www.lecoledespetits.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:accounts@lecoledespetits.co.uk">accounts@lecoledespetits.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2009

## Information about this school

- L'École des Petits is a bilingual school. It follows the French curriculum and covers the 'maternelle' or pre-primary phase of the French educational system, combined with elements of the British system.
- The school is also inspected by inspectors from the French educational system.
- Pupils in the upper phase of the school are broadly equivalent in age to pupils in Year 1. Those in the lower and middle phases are generally equivalent to children in the early years foundation stage. In 2012 the Department for Education granted the school an



exemption from following the early years statutory framework in respect of learning and development. It does not have an exemption for safeguarding and welfare.

- Most pupils move from L'École des Petits to its sister school, L'École de Battersea. This school has a pre-primary section, which also has an early years foundation stage exemption from the statutory early years learning and development requirements. L'École de Battersea takes pupils up to the age of 11. It was inspected in May 2015.
- Pupils come from a wide range of heritages and backgrounds. A large proportion of pupils come from homes where French is the main language for at least one adult. Classes are flexibly organised within each phase to ensure that pupils receive the language tuition they need to be fully bilingual.
- No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school was last inspected in October 2009, when it was judged to provide an outstanding quality of education.
- The school meets the independent school standards for what it must publish on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors visited classes throughout the school and observed pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Senior leaders and a proprietor joined inspectors on most of their classroom visits.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors observed pupils at play and when attending lunchtime clubs.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff members and a proprietor in his role as joint chair of governance.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. There were 68 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 11 written comments. Inspectors took all responses and comments into consideration.
- Inspectors took account of 16 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for members of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils' attainment and progress. They also examined safeguarding information and records relating to attendance, behaviour and welfare.

Natalia Power, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Matthews

Ofsted Inspector

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