

# The Hall School

The Grange, Rickmansworth Road, Northwood HA6 2RB

## Inspection dates

27 February–1 March 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The headteacher, who is also the proprietor of the school, has not kept up to date with the requirements of the independent school standards. Consequently, not all of the independent school standards are met.
- Senior leaders, including those responsible for the leadership of the early years provision, have not kept up to date with the latest statutory guidance for education. As a result, the school's checks and procedures have not paid due regard to current statutory advice.

### The school has the following strengths

- All staff have high expectations of the pupils in their care, monitoring each individual's progress closely. As a result, activities provided are stimulating, challenging and linked securely to pupils' abilities.
- All pupils make excellent progress and achieve very well in relation to their starting points. This is due to the quality of teaching, which is outstanding as a result of the clear leadership of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Outstanding teaching in the early years is ensuring that children make strong gains in their learning whatever their individual starting points.
- The school is a happy place where pupils are engaged in purposeful learning. This is because of the broad range of learning experiences on offer, and the caring, dedicated staff.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well because they are fully engaged in what they are doing. Parents and carers are delighted with the nurturing environment promoted by leaders and how quickly their children grow in confidence and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils are encouraged to stay healthy. Staff help pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Full report

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, ensuring that practice reflects the latest statutory guidance for children at risk of missing education by:
  - swiftly referring all past pupils who have left the school and who meet the criteria for children at risk of missing education to the local authority.
- The school must make arrangements to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school does not meet all of the independent school standards. Standards relating to leadership and management, welfare, health and safety and the provision of information are not met. Elements relating to the suitability of staff and proprietors, along with some elements relating to the provision of information, were unmet but were swiftly rectified by senior leaders during the course of the inspection.
- Some changes to the requirements from statutory guidance have not been implemented since the school's last inspection. For example, the school's admissions register does not contain detailed information about the destinations of pupils who leave the school. Leaders have failed to report to the local authority any pupils with no forwarding information.
- Despite this lack of rigour in maintaining admissions documentation, leaders' overall efforts to ensure that a culture of safeguarding and care pervades the school has not been undermined. Staff are vigilant and clearly aware of their duty to act on any concerns, thus ensuring a safe, caring environment.
- Recent external safeguarding training in the autumn term did not pick up on leaders' and staff's lack of awareness of the most recent statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education 2016'.
- Leaders have created a culture of care and concern for pupils' welfare. They ensure that staff receive regular training in safeguarding. Staff are aware of the 'Prevent' duty, and their duty to report incidents of suspected female genital mutilation.
- The headteacher and her deputy headteacher focus on the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' personal development and well-being. Consequently, since the last inspection they have maintained the outstanding quality of teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes in both key stage 1 and the early years.
- The school has continued to meet all the independent standards linked to the quality of education provided and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- School leaders ensure that there is an appropriately planned curriculum which provides a broad range of learning experiences for each of the age ranges the school serves. This broad and balanced curriculum ensures pupils' outstanding academic achievement and their good personal development.
- Pupils are respectful of all cultures and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. SMSC development is carefully threaded through the curriculum, taught through assemblies or in discrete activities. Opportunities are taken to link SMSC to key events like Remembrance Sunday, or the personal, social and health education curriculum.

### Governance

- The proprietor demonstrates a strong commitment to the achievement and well-being of pupils at the school. However, she has not been curious or thorough enough in checking that published policies and procedures accurately reflect current guidance. For example, no policy exists outlining the school's arrangements for dealing with pupil exclusion. There

is also no clear anti-bullying strategy in place. As a result, parents do not have up-to-date, clear information around school exclusions or the effectiveness of the school's approach to dealing with potential bullying. Also, though the school has a suitable health and safety policy, the proprietor has not ensured that assessments of substances that could be hazardous to health are completed annually in line with the school's own health and safety policy.

- The proprietor has not ensured that the school has a suitably detailed accessibility plan. Consequently, arrangements have not been made to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Despite leaders' inattention to the latest statutory guidance, pupils at the school are happy and safe. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, who are also the designated safeguarding leads, are effective in ensuring that staff understand how to raise concerns. Staff are vigilant and take good care of the pupils at the school.
- The school has maintained a single central record of checks (SCR) on staff. Leaders have recently reviewed and published a safeguarding policy on the school's website. However, as leaders were unaware of the document 'Keeping children safe in education 2016', the SCR and the published policy did not reflect the most up-to-date statutory guidance. The SCR was swiftly rectified by senior leaders during the course of the inspection. Leaders are aware that the school's safeguarding policy requires urgent revision to ensure it reflects the requirements of current statutory guidance.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- School leaders have maintained the outstanding quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection. Staff know the children very well and have exceptional skills in adjusting their approaches to meet the needs of all pupils. They provide excellent support to pupils while setting challenging tasks to ensure that they learn exceptionally well.
- The school teaches the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics extremely well. This enables pupils to apply these skills in other subjects, making strong gains across the curriculum. For example, in science pupils have many opportunities to carry out investigations such as, when exploring insulators, predicting the effect that wrapping an ice cube will have on the time it takes to melt. Pupils are skilled in identifying variables and what needs to remain constant in order to ensure a fair test. They use their mathematical skills extremely well to record results and interpret data, coming to accurate conclusions.
- Great importance is placed on developing pupils' love of reading throughout the school. Pupils develop a love of books through the frequent opportunities to choose and share books with adults. Adults skilfully engage in meaningful conversations about the text, probing pupils' understanding further and exploring the range of meaning that words may have as contexts change.

- Homework is reviewed and used effectively to pick up on any misconceptions pupils have and where they may be struggling to grasp a concept or apply their knowledge. Staff are very knowledgeable about the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.
- In mathematics, teachers have high expectations and provide varied opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills, solve problems of increasing complexity and reason mathematically. Subject specialists in art, PE, music, French and Italian are contributing to a culture of high expectations for all as they set learning that is challenging, but also achievable.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff ensure that the premises are assessed daily for potential hazards and share them with pupils. For example, before leaving the building to go outside, staff and pupils discuss what the potential risks are after a particularly heavy snow fall. Pupils are able to identify how to play safely, recognising the importance of suitable clothing and footwear in protecting them from the cold.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work to nurture pupils' personal development. They are highly appreciative of the school's work. One parent commented that, even though 'elements of the work are tough', pupils still persevere and they know 'that everyone is on hand to help'. Many parents spoke of the nurturing environment staff create. Parents value the encouragement staff offer so that their children are supported 'to be the best they can'.
- Pupils learn about the many different cultures in Britain and the importance of showing respect towards each other. They value the opportunity to take part in local Remembrance Day events, making their poppy wreaths to lay at the memorial.
- Pupils speak of the many different cultural celebrations they have studied such as Chinese New Year, Eid, Hanukah, Lent and Diwali. They have clearly enjoyed their learning, engaging fully in retelling the traditional stories they have learned. However, they are less able to confidently articulate a deeper understanding of the cultural traditions they have studied.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They enjoy school, and this is reflected in pupils' very high attendance.
- A happy, purposeful and calm atmosphere permeates the school. Pupils know how to behave in classes and when moving around the school.
- Pupils respond positively to the high expectations of behaviour and care for others set by all staff at the school. They look after their environment, taking responsibility to pack away their resources and carefully tucking in their chairs under their desks.
- Pupils take pride in their work. They proudly share their painted self-portraits, explaining their research into the life and works of the artist Van Gogh.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that pupils achieve exceptionally well across key stage 1 and in all subjects. Outcomes for pupils remain outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their school life.
- Pupils make excellent progress in reading, building on the strong teaching of phonics in the early years. Regular opportunities to read with an adult and discuss their understanding of the text contribute to pupils securing rapid gains across the whole curriculum. Pupils read texts which exceed their chronological age, fluently and with understanding.
- From secure starting points on entry to key stage 1, pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in curriculum subjects, sustaining high outcomes. The school's performance information indicates that pupils achieve well above national age expectations. The work seen in pupils' books and their learning in class confirm this. Annual reports to parents are detailed, demonstrating the progress pupils make across the curriculum.
- In mathematics, pupils make rapid gains from their starting points and achieve well. Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of numbers particularly well and are proficient in working out increasingly complex problems. The most able pupils are challenged effectively through well-planned work in numeracy, and opportunities to develop their expertise in reading and writing across the curriculum.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement. Leaders acknowledge that they have not kept up to date with the requirements of the most recent statutory guidance or with all the requirements of the independent school standards. Many of the unmet standards identified for the main school apply equally to the early years.
- Leaders have not ensured that effective systems are in place to find out information about whether a person may be disqualified. This was swiftly rectified by the head of early years during the course of the inspection. In practice, safeguarding in the early years is effective. Adults are appropriately trained, watch children carefully and know how to report any concerns that they may have.
- Overall, children join the setting with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. Outstanding teaching in the early years is ensuring that all children make rapid gains in their learning, regardless of their individual starting points. Consequently, they are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- All staff have high expectations of the children in their care, monitoring each child's progress closely. As a result, the activities provided are stimulating, fun and linked securely to children's ages, interests and abilities. For example, two- and three-year-olds who are learning about the weather have lots of fun in the art room making rainbows, clouds and the sun with a wide range of interesting materials. Mixing, squeezing and sticking all help to prepare children well so that they are supported to hold pencils and pens correctly.

- Staff pay particularly close attention in ensuring children's fine motor skills are developed further to help them to pick up, control and handle objects with increasing precision and accuracy. For example, adults set challenges for the older three-year-olds in the class, using pipettes. These older children enjoyed carefully squeezing droplets of water onto powder paint, making their own raindrops.
- Reading, writing and an understanding of number are very well promoted across all areas of learning. The teaching of phonics is precise and matched closely to children's starting points so they learn new sounds swiftly. Those who are hesitant or need to practise the sounds of speech work at times in smaller groups to develop their attention, skill and confidence in their use of language. These children are quickly able to participate fully in the activities offered.
- All staff record and check children's learning. They observe and photograph the children learning and at play, capturing learning on each child's electronic early years log. These informative, individual electronic logs are used regularly to provide a shared record, between school and home, of children's learning across all areas of the early years curriculum.
- Staff use the electronic records to plan children's future learning, so that planning is based securely on what children need to learn next and their interests. Consequently, activities are very well matched to the needs of each child and drive the strong progress seen.
- There are secure links between home and school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive, particularly about how well the electronic log links with home and develops their participation in their child's learning. Parents also value the school's links with external services, such as the speech and language therapy service, to signpost additional support for children and their families.
- There is a happy atmosphere in the early years provision. Children play exceptionally well together and their behaviour is outstanding. Children interact well during outdoor play and when attending the breakfast club. They show good manners when eating their morning cereal, taking responsibility for wiping down the tables after an art activity, or when taking turns to share a puzzle or book.
- Early years staff know the children extremely well and form very positive relationships. This enables children to thrive and develop in an environment where they feel safe and secure. Consequently, even the youngest two-year-olds in the baby room are happy to approach visitors and share their learning and play.

## School details

Unique reference number	102455
DfE registration number	312/6054
Inspection number	10008545

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	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Number of part-time pupils	23
Proprietor	Mrs Suzanne Goodwin
Headteacher	Mrs Suzanne Goodwin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,300 to £9,900
Telephone number	01923 822 807
Website	<a href="http://www.thehallschool.com">www.thehallschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@thehallschool.com">info@thehallschool.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2007

## Information about this school

- The school opened in 1958, with the current proprietor taking over its running in September 2008.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in February 2007. A light-touch inspection, focusing primarily on the quality of education, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, took place in October 2009. This light-touch inspection also focused on the improvements the school had made since the previous full standard inspection in 2007.
- The school is registered with the Department for Education for 70 pupils aged one to seven years. Since the last light-touch inspection in 2007, the school has doubled in size. The provision is separated into five classes: the baby room, pre-school, Nursery,



Reception and a key stage 1 class.

- The provision in the baby room, for children under two-years-old but taught alongside the youngest two-year-olds, is the subject of separate inspection arrangements. There are currently seven under-twos on site. The Hall School baby unit was last inspected in November 2013.
- 62 of the 63 remaining places on the site are allocated. The majority of children are taught in one of the four early years classes. The remaining 14 pupils are taught in one mixed key stage 1 class.
- Pupils are mainly from a range of minority ethnic groups. The majority, approximately four-fifths, are of Indian heritage.
- The proprietor runs breakfast- and after-school clubs for those on the school roll.
- The school is located in a quiet residential part of Northwood, in the London borough of Hillingdon. The building the school occupies, The Grange, is a grade 1 and 2 listed building. It is rented from a company which also uses it in the evenings and at weekends for community meetings and for functions such as weddings.
- The school 'strives to create a nurturing, challenging, secure and happy environment in which pupils are able to explore ideas, develop independence of thought and enhance self-esteem.'

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed pupils' learning across all classes, listened to pupils read and watched a whole-school assembly. A visit was also made to the breakfast club, which is managed by the proprietor.
- A meeting was held with the proprietor, who has responsibility at this school for overseeing the checks made to keep children safe. Meetings were also held with senior leaders, a group of staff and a group of pupils.
- Senior leaders accompanied the inspector during a tour of the school site to check compliance with the independent school standards. The inspector also scrutinised records of checks on the premises, including risk assessments and fire safety records.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents and policies provided by the school, considered leaders' own evaluation of the school and their annual development plan. The school website and records relating to keeping children safe were also checked.
- Work in pupils' books and evidence of children's learning and progress captured in their electronic early years logs were evaluated.
- The inspector met informally with parents at the start of the school day, took into account the 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 21 free-text comments. The inspector also met with a group of staff and took account of the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jean Thwaites, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school must meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 10 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
  - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
    - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
    - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
    - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
  - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
- 21(4) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of staff in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (3) was made and whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained.

## **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
  - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school’s policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
  - 32(3)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2;
  - 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13;
  - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school’s academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations.

## **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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