

Inspection of The Japanese School

87 Creffield Road, Acton, London W3 9PU

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 July 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a cheerful atmosphere around the school. Pupils said that they are happy here and make lots of friends. Pupils are loyal and respectful and celebrate each other's successes. Pupils told us that no one in school makes any unkind remarks and there is no bullying. They said that there is always an adult to go to if they have any worries.

Pupils readily take on responsibilities as charity fundraisers, broadcasters on the school's radio station and cheerleaders at whole-school events. Selected pupils provide a warm 'daily greeting' to welcome pupils at the start of the day.

Pupils take their schoolwork seriously. Teachers help them to do well in their studies. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils enjoy the many clubs on offer, including kendo, music, dance and table tennis. They are proud of the vegetables they grow and use to cook healthy meals.

Pupils take great care of the school's resources. They willingly work together to tidy their classroom and the playground. They said that they feel safe in school. Since the previous inspection, leaders have made improvements, including to safeguarding procedures. However, leaders have not made sure that all actions from specific reviews of the premises' safety have been actioned fully and swiftly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils study the Japanese national curriculum which covers a suitably broad and balanced range of subjects. Leaders ensure that the content of each subject is well planned. Pupils have many opportunities to revisit prior learning and apply and deepen their understanding so that they achieve well.

Teachers are well qualified and are generally specialists in the subjects they teach. They provide clear explanations. They regularly check how well pupils are learning. Teachers pick up pupils' errors or misconceptions promptly and deal with them positively, boosting pupils' confidence. Teachers use information received when pupils join the school to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' individual needs. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to enable them to complete their work to the same high standards as others. Since the previous inspection, leaders have appointed staff with specific responsibilities for pupils with SEND. They are developing links with specialist therapists to develop this aspect of the school's work further.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) introduces pupils to a broad variety of topics that contribute strongly to their character development. Pupils learn about a wide range of current affairs and moral issues. They study cultures and faiths other than their own. Pupils understand and are sympathetic to the challenges faced by different people and communities, including those with protected characteristics. However, a few PSHE themes are not sequenced in a way that helps pupils to build

their understanding equally well. Leaders are adjusting the PSHE planning and the order in which key themes are taught.

Many pupils have had widely different experiences of learning English before joining the school. Leaders ensure that pupils learn to read and write in English as soon as they start at the school. They quickly gain the knowledge they need to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts in English, and English classics translated into Japanese. The rate of borrowing from the school's well-stocked library reflects pupils' love of reading books in English and Japanese.

Teachers' high expectations in lessons and pupils' strong commitment to learning mean that pupils are thoroughly attentive and work exceptionally well together. They discuss and debate issues maturely. All parents, carers and staff who responded to the online surveys for the inspection agreed that pupils behave consistently well. Pupils attend school very regularly.

Staff, pupils and parents establish a strong sense of community across the school. Parents felt well informed about their child's experience of school. In the survey, they confirmed that they rarely have any concerns. Staff are typically positive about working at the school.

The chair of the proprietor board has revised arrangements for when school leaders and members change so that there is improved continuity and handover of responsibilities. Since the previous inspection, board members have attended appropriate training for their roles. They receive regular progress reports from the headteacher.

The proprietor board has overseen the work needed to address un-met independent school standards from the previous inspection. Leaders have made improvements so that standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, PSHE, provision for pupils with SEND, the handling of complaints and safeguarding checks are now met.

School leaders, including the proprietor board, have not paid close enough attention to some matters relating to fire safety. School leaders have commissioned regular professional fire safety checks of the school site. However, they have not acted with urgency to arrange for recommended improvements to be made. They have not ensured that, in between professional contractors' monthly fire safety checks, school staff complete regular and frequent checks and maintenance of fire doors and fire safety equipment. During the inspection, once this was identified by inspectors, the proprietor board responded swiftly to shortfalls in the school's approach to site fire safety. The chair of the board has drawn up plans for the routine completion of recommended checks and clear lines of responsibility and accountability to ensure these are done routinely and regularly. However, this standard is not met and leadership and management require improvement.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Since the previous inspection, school leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy reflects up-to-date statutory requirements. All staff have received training so that they know and fulfil their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. Staff are alert to concerns about pupils and know the school's referral processes.

Leaders have developed reporting systems so that their follow up of safeguarding concerns is well documented. Staff work with outside agencies, including the local authority, to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need.

Pupils learn about risks to their safety, such as the impact of illegal drugs on their physical and emotional well-being. Guest speakers help pupils understand risks within the local area and how to keep themselves safe from harm.

Leaders make all the required pre-employment checks on staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not maintained effective oversight of some matters relating to the safety of the school site. They have not responded swiftly to recommendations for improvements in fire safety checks. Leaders have not ensured the maintenance of fire prevention resources and that regular and frequent routine checks are made of fire safety equipment. Leaders should ensure that routine recommended checks and clear lines of responsibility and accountability are established and maintained.
- The PSHE programme is not sequenced as logically as other subjects taught in the school. Pupils do not recall some content and concepts that they have learned previously because planning does not enable them to build on prior learning and prepare them to learn new knowledge. Subject leaders should adjust PSHE planning and the order in which key themes are taught to support pupils' learning further.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	101958
DfE registration number	307/6070
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10189010
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Japanese School Ltd
Chair	Keiichiro Nakamura
Headteacher	Hideki Ishiyama
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,475
Telephone number	020 8993 7145
Website	www.thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk/nihonjinga/kko/
Email address	ron-nichi@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 and 31 October 2018

Information about this school

- The Japanese School provides for the children of expatriates who are working in London for a temporary and limited period until they return to Japan. The school is partially funded by the Japanese government.
- The school follows the Japanese national curriculum and almost all teaching is in Japanese which is spoken by staff and pupils.
- The proprietor body comprises a group of Japanese companies. The proprietor board members are representatives of these companies who are currently working in the United Kingdom.
- The previous standard inspection was in October 2018. Since then, there has been one monitoring inspection in June 2019.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school does not have any early years provision or provision for two-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, including the chair and vice-chair of the proprietor board, groups of pupils and staff, a representative of the Japanese embassy and an independent education consultant who works with the school. They also held informal conversations with staff and pupils around the school.
- Inspectors reviewed school policies and other documents, including those relating to health and safety, curriculum plans, behaviour and minutes of meetings of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, science, mathematics and PSHE.
- The inspection of safeguarding included scrutiny of the single central record of pre-employment checks, the safeguarding policy, records relating to the identification and follow up of any safeguarding concerns and discussions with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors considered the response to surveys completed for the inspection by 34 members of staff and 187 parents. They also looked at analysis of the school's own surveys of staff views completed in recent years.
- An interpreter accompanied inspectors for some inspection activities.

- During the inspection, inspectors checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at a previous inspection.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Wright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nick Turvey	Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

- **The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards.**

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if -
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular attention to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will

be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;

- 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or 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 either such direction.
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person’s appointment;
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 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.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual (“MB”), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application enter the school in the register, if-
- 20(6)(a) MB-
 - 20(6)(a)(ii) does not carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or 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 either such direction.
 - 20(6)(c) subject to sub-paragraph (8), where the Secretary of State makes a request for an enhanced criminal record check relating to MB countersigned by the Secretary of State to be made, such a check is made.
- 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)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;

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)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
- 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
- 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.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;
 - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is-
 - 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
 - 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and-
 - 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
 - 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The school continues to not meet the following independent school standards.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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