

# Inspection of Finchley and Acton Yochien School

6 Hendon Avenue, Finchley, London N3 1UE

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Inspection dates: 15 to 17 July 2025

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**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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| The quality of education                               | <b>Good</b>        |
| Behaviour and attitudes                                | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Personal development                                   | <b>Good</b>        |
| Leadership and management                              | <b>Good</b>        |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection           | Inadequate         |
| Does the school meet the independent school standards? | <b>Yes</b>         |

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils arrive at school with a skip in their step. They enjoy coming to this school and are safe and well cared for. Staff have high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to these expectations and achieve well. In the early years, children grow in confidence and develop their language skills soon after joining both in Japanese and English.

Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite and respectful. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils know the routines and respond well to staff. Staff care about the pupils and build positive working relationships with each and every one. Pupils are taught to respect their own and others' bodies, build healthy relationships and take care of their physical health.

Children enjoy a range of activities, including cultural celebrations such as the Japanese tea ceremony, Children's Day, Chinese New Year and Christmas, which allow pupils to enjoy and learn about different traditions. Visits to local shops, the park and care homes help children build curiosity and confidence in the wider world. They can join after-school clubs and learn musical instruments such as the Kenban harmonica. Throughout, pupils are taught about kindness, boundaries and making good choices.

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

Since the previous inspection, the proprietor has rightly identified key staff to lead improvement. Leaders have ensured that all areas for development have been prioritised and addressed. As a result, the school now provides all pupils with a strong education. Pupils are well supported to develop their knowledge and skills. Staff know pupils well and adapt their teaching to meet individual needs. For example, the consistent use of the school's phonics programme supports pupils in developing strong decoding skills. While vocabulary can be a barrier for some pupils who speak English as an additional language, teachers address this through discussion and storytelling, which builds understanding over time. A love of reading is promoted through engaging reading areas, curriculum links and home reading. Pupils who fall behind receive additional support and quickly catch up.

The teaching of early mathematics is strong from Nursery to Year 1. Pupils build secure foundations through a mix of structured teaching and play. Teachers check understanding regularly and provide tailored support, including one-to-one help and greater challenge for more able learners. Staff develop pupils' confidence in mathematics. Staff also make sure that pupils develop their physical strength, coordination and emotional awareness.

The curriculum is well sequenced in most subjects and helps pupils build knowledge over time. However, in some wider areas of the curriculum, the key knowledge pupils should learn is not clearly defined. This means that teachers do not know

which knowledge to prioritise in their teaching and, as a result, this limits the depth of pupils' understanding in these areas.

The school has an effective process for identifying pupils' needs. Staff work well with the local authority and external professionals to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the right support. Teachers are supported to adapt the curriculum, and parents value the advice they receive to help their children at home.

From the start, pupils learn to be respectful, kind and focused. Routines are clear, behaviour is excellent and attendance is high. Leaders work closely with families to promote positive attendance and punctuality habits from the early years.

Safeguarding is now a key strength. Leaders have acted decisively to address past weaknesses. Staff are well trained, alert to concerns and follow robust systems. A strong culture of care and vigilance runs throughout the school.

Leadership is a driving force behind the school's success. Leaders are reflective, open about past issues and focused on improvement. Their inclusive ethos and commitment to staff development ensure that pupils are well prepared for their next stage. Staff and parents speak very positively about the support they receive.

The proprietor, supported by the local governing body, fulfils their statutory duties, for example by making sure that arrangements to promote pupils' safety are suitable. All of the requirements of the independent school standards are met. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- In some subjects, the school has not yet clearly identified the precise knowledge pupils need to know and remember. This means that staff are not supported to identify which components of knowledge need to be prioritised in teaching or checked when assessing pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils do not consistently develop the depth and security of understanding they should. The school should ensure it identifies the essential knowledge in all subjects so that pupils continue to build their knowledge over time.

## **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 information from Ofsted

Parent View 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.

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 131128   |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>             | 302/6107   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Barnet   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10391722   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Other independent school   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Independent day school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 6   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 47   |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                          | Katsutoshi Maeda   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Junko Tanabe   |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>            | £7,000 to £9,000   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 02083 432191   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.maedagroup.co.uk">www.maedagroup.co.uk</a>     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:admin@maedagroup.co.uk">admin@maedagroup.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 3 to 5 October 2023  |

## Information about this school

- This is an independent day school for boys and girls aged two to six years old. Most pupils attending the school are of Japanese heritage. The main language used in lessons is Japanese. Specialist teachers teach English as an additional language.
- The school operates from two premises. The addresses are: 6 Hendon Avenue, London, N3 1UE and Playing Field, Queens Drive, London, W3 0HT. Most children are educated at the site on Queens Drive.
- The previous standard inspection took place in October 2023. Following this, a monitoring inspection was carried out in May 2024 and another in October 2024.
- Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has significantly reduced.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical education, physical development and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, talked to pupils about their learning in these subjects and looked at their work.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to some pupils to discuss their views about the school, behaviour and safety. Inspectors met with some staff. Inspectors analysed the survey responses of staff and parents.
- Several meetings were held with the headteacher, the curriculum leader and subject leaders. The lead inspector also met with leaders representing the proprietor.

- The services of interpreters were used on this inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and documents. Inspectors checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

### **Inspection team**

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector      His Majesty's Inspector

Hannah Glossop      His Majesty's Inspector

Luke Stubbles      His Majesty's Inspector

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