

Le Hérisson

CONTENTS

[Introduction and summary](#)

[Purpose and scope of the inspection](#)

[Information about the school](#)

[Summary of main findings](#)

[What the school does well](#)

[What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations](#)

[Next steps](#)

[Compliance with the regulations for registration](#)

[1. The quality of education provided by the school](#)

[The quality of the curriculum](#)

[The quality of the teaching and assessment](#)

[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils](#)

[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils](#)

[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff](#)

[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation](#)

[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[6. The quality of information for parents and other partners](#)

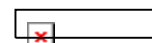
[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints](#)

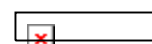
[Does the school meet the requirements for registration?](#)

[School details](#)

Introduction and summary

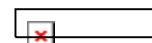


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

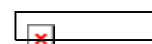
Information about the school



Le Hérisson School is an independent French nursery school which was set up in 1989 to cater mainly for the local community of French nationals. There are 66 pupils aged between two and six years. Nine are part-time pupils. The great majority come from French-speaking or English/French bi-lingual backgrounds. The school is subject to the authority of the French Ministry of Education, exercised through the Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Etranger (AEFE) and the French embassy in London. This includes annual visits from the French inspectorate and access to staff training. The school is situated in a quiet residential part of Hammersmith. It belongs to a cluster group in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It has links with other French schools in London and some parts of Europe.

The school aims to *'provide an education based on the French nursery school curriculum that includes some English teaching, in an environment that promotes the growth and development of each child'*. The language of instruction is French. The vast majority of pupils continue their education in the Lycée Français or other French independent primary schools in London.

Summary of main findings



broad and balanced curriculum, language, communication and literacy skills, and personal, social and emotional development are strengths. The school fosters a happy, caring, family atmosphere in which the staff nurture very good relationships with pupils. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic learners. The quality of teaching is very good and assessment is a particular strength. This enables pupils to achieve very well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and this is reflected in their very good behaviour. Their welfare, health and safety are very well promoted. The teaching accommodation is satisfactory. Resources are of good quality but just adequate in quantity. The quality of information provided to parents is very good.

What the school does well

☐

- it provides a broad and balanced curriculum appropriately and sensitively modified to accommodate the language needs of all pupils;
- its staff act as very good role models, foster very good relationships with the pupils, and successfully promote their very good behaviour;
- its very good quality of teaching and assessment enables pupils to make at least good progress in all areas of the curriculum;
- its provision for the spiritual, moral , social and cultural development of pupils is very good;
- it places a high priority on the welfare, health and safety of pupils; and
- it provides very good quality information to parents who are very supportive of the school.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations

☐

The school meets all the requirements for registration.

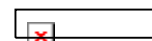
Next steps

☐

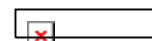
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- to extend the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across all areas of learning;
- to continue to provide a wider range of resources, especially those of a multicultural nature; and
- to continue to forge links with local schools with a view to further enrich the curriculum and share good practice.

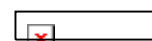
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the school



The quality of the curriculum



The curriculum is of good quality. It is broad and balanced and follows the French curriculum for nursery schools. It is very comparable to the early learning goals of the British Foundation Stage curriculum. The school adheres to curriculum policies and schemes of work published by the French Ministry of Education.

There is a very good programme of work for pupils below compulsory school age, with a sensitive balance of child-led and teacher-guided activities. In the upper classes, the curriculum demands a good deal of formal teaching, whilst maintaining provision of free play. The school is currently involved in a *projet d'école*, a research and development project on the place of play. It has planned appropriate resting time for the various age groups. Not all parents approve of the time allocated to sleep for the younger pupils and the school intends to review its arrangements for next academic year.

There is a strong emphasis on communication, language and literacy. Oracy is particularly well developed because the school plans numerous opportunities for speaking and listening which are well established in the school day. French education gives a prominent place to cursive handwriting skills and these are developed to a high standard. Early reading skills are promoted effectively and reinforced by the systematic labelling of the classroom environment.

The vast majority of lessons are taught in French and there is provision for the teaching of English to non English-speakers once a week. In addition, physical education (PE) is taught in English. The school has developed a lot of expertise on bilingualism and supports the learning of bilingual pupils very effectively, whatever their mother tongue. It has put in place suitable procedures to diagnose and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

The personal, social and emotional development of pupils is promoted very well through all aspects of the curriculum and pupils' very good relationships with the staff and other pupils. The oldest pupils have worthwhile opportunities for active citizenship, in particular through the recycling programme. Partnership with parents is emphasised through the *cahier de vie*, a home/school book in which weekend or holiday events and activities are recorded. This provides useful continuity between home and school as the pupils can share these notes with their classmates and the teachers receive useful information to which they can respond appropriately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world focuses mainly on mathematical development. Pupils in the *'grande section'* (Year 1) are expected to count at least up to 30 and add and subtract within 15. Some pupils exceed these expectations. The curriculum also provides termly experiences of natural sciences, geography and history.

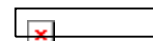
The school promotes pupils' physical development well, through gymnastics, games and dance. The provision includes a specialist teacher for PE which is the only subject taught in English.

The pupils' development and achievement in aesthetics and the creative arts is very good. From a young age, pupils explore a wide range of materials and techniques. By the time pupils reach the

`grande section', they are taught drawing, painting, composing skills and have the opportunity to make initial sketches. Well-planned motor and vocal activities aim at mastering rhythm and tempo but there are missed opportunities for teaching musical skills when singing.

The curriculum is enriched by visits to farms, local art galleries, nature reserves and theatres. The school provides extra-curricular activities on a Wednesday afternoon. The most popular activity is baking and pupils enjoy eating the cakes they have made together.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is very good and, as a result, the pupils make at least good progress over time. A small minority is judged to be satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection.

Assessment is a strength of teaching. The school has a very good assessment framework in place, closely monitored by the headteacher. After an initial baseline assessment, teachers' continuous observations of pupils result in monthly reviews of each individual's progress. This means that teachers know their pupils really well. Parents are invited to receive daily feedback on their children's welfare and development. Furthermore, the school provides parents with two very detailed and informative annual reports. In the *`moyenne'* and *`grande'* sections, teachers involve pupils in assessment and explain to them what they need to do to improve. For example, pupils were observed making their first presentation on the chronology of the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly and spontaneously engaged themselves in peer assessment in a constructive way. Assessment informs planning on a day-to-day basis although teachers' written records vary in their level of detail.

The French inspector provides the school with data that enables it to measure its own performance against French national data.

A good variety of teaching methods and approaches are used effectively to match pupils' individual learning styles. For example, teachers are highly skilled in consistently asking questions that promote pupils' thinking. They provide appropriate support for slower learners and extension work for the more able pupils. However, on some occasions, not enough thought is given to the link between the extension work given and the focus of the lesson.

Teachers are highly skilled in consistently asking questions that promote thinking, often by asking 'what if...?' For instance, during the introduction stage, they often ask the pupils to work out what the task involves just looking at the worksheet. Consequently pupils have many opportunities for problem-solving and creative thinking and are given time to arrive at their own conclusions.

Teachers encourage pupils to develop their skills in the six areas of learning on a daily basis. As a result, pupils' development and progress in all these areas is very good. There is a strong emphasis on communication and language skills and personal, social and emotional development. The support given to pupils whose mother tongue is not French is particularly effective. These pupils feel included and make spectacular progress in French.

In the *`petites sections'* (2-4 year-olds), the staff are attentive to pupils' needs and provide a very nurturing ethos. Pupils' skills are well developed in all areas because there is a balanced programme offered and teaching focuses on skill development. Teachers provide plenty of activities for independent learning, which is central to the French nursery school philosophy. In the older groups, teachers strike a sensible balance between very focussed learning activities and free play. In the few satisfactory lessons observed, opportunities for independent learning were missed. For instance, at lunch time, pupils were not asked to help lay the table, pour drinks and they were not

given knives to cut their food. Consequently, they were too reliant on staff unnecessarily.

All teachers are suitably qualified for Early Years and are aware of the Early Learning Goals. They benefit from a coherent training programme offered by the French government, as well as from ongoing training delivered in-house. They also share good practice with local nursery schools. All staff all are at least bilingual French/English and some speak other languages. Some have qualifications in teaching French as a foreign language. Teachers are ably supported by classroom assistants who use their own initiative and manage their time wisely. The staff are very well led by a very well qualified headteacher who has specialist expertise in children's psychological development. They work effectively as a team and some members have been with the school for several years. This has contributed in maintaining standards as well as stability for the pupils.

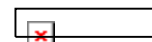
Resources are good in quality but just adequate in quantity. Most staff use the available resources effectively and organise them well to encourage pupils' independence. Not all staff make regular and productive use of ICT. The school is aware of the importance of exposing pupils to multicultural resources on a daily basis to promote respect for and understanding of other cultures. However, some of the existing resources are used for a particular purpose such as topic work rather than daily.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The clearly-established routines help pupils to move from one activity to the next calmly and sensibly because they know what is expected of them. Pupils respond well to these expectations because the teachers are very good role models and foster mutual respect. Minor disputes are dealt with effectively, quickly and calmly.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. As in other French schools, pupils do not receive religious education. However, teachers seize the opportunities when pupils spontaneously ask questions of a spiritual nature to initiate a conversation with the class and take the pupils' thinking further. There are philosophy workshops for the older pupils which successfully promote their speaking, listening and thinking skills. Pupils also develop self-knowledge through personal and social education (PSE), as evidenced by entries in their 'cahiers de vie' and displays of their work. Furthermore, the school has devised very thoughtful strategies to develop pupils' emotional intelligence, for instance the introduction of Marco, the classroom teddy bear which each pupil can take home for the weekend.

Pupils develop strong self-esteem because the staff listen to them and praise them appropriately, which makes them feel valued. The numerous speaking and listening opportunities they have develop their self-confidence. From an early age, they are confident to express their wants, likes, dislikes, views, in lessons and at meal times.

All members of staff are visibly sensitive and caring in their attitude towards the pupils and play a crucial role in their social and moral development. They are very good role models which the pupils want to emulate. There is a purposeful but relaxed atmosphere where pupils feel free to offer comments and views to their peers and their teachers, as well as to enjoy jokes without misusing their time. Pupils clearly distinguish between right and wrong and understand the reasons for having rules.

Pupils develop a sense of responsibility through a number of planned opportunities. They show

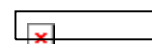
initiative and care by fulfilling one of the numerous roles the teachers have devised for them, for instance leading the class into the playground or taking the registers back to the office. They are given ownership for their environment, and so they value it. In the *`moyenne section'*, they learn to take responsibility for pets and for Marco. In the *`grande section'*, they choose their own topic for the 'show and tell' sessions. The recycling programme introduces them to active citizenship. Pupils were very proud to explain to the inspectors how they can play a role in 'saving trees' and keeping the environment clean.

Pupils experience many opportunities for cultural development. The school encourages bilingualism and fosters respect for and appreciation of the wide range of languages and cultures represented in the school. Pupils in the 'grande section' have learnt about Africa, life in the Middle Ages and the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers. Pupils in the *`moyenne section'* have practised Chinese calligraphy, learnt French folk dances and listened to Indian and Moroccan music, as well as jazz. In music, pupils are exposed to a wide range of genres and cultural traditions.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school makes very good provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety. All appropriate policies are in place, implemented effectively and reviewed annually. The designated person for Child Protection is very well qualified and in touch with the local Area Child Protection Committee. All staff have received appropriate training on recognising signs of abuse and on anti-bullying strategies. The school has a suitable policy to promote good behaviour that lists a wide range of strategies and appropriate sanctions in case of misbehaviour.

There is a comprehensive health and safety policy in place and thorough risk assessments are carried out. There are clear guidelines relating to the safety of pupils on school visits. Routines for dealing with First Aid, medicines and accidents are well established. All staff are First Aiders and have recently refreshed their training. There are annual safety checks and fire equipment is tested regularly. Fire drills take place each term and these are recorded appropriately.

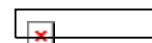
The school provides good quality meals cooked on the premises and makes suitable arrangements with families to ensure a good variety of nutritious snacks for mid morning. It does its utmost to promote sensible, healthy eating habits and has appropriate procedures for pupils' resting time in the afternoon.

The school maintains admission and attendance registers correctly, and fully meets its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

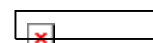


There are effective procedures in place to ensure that all staff are checked with the appropriate authority for their suitability to work with children. French staff have their records checked by the French Ministry of Justice. British staff are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). A robust and consistent recruitment procedure ensures that the identity, qualifications, professional experience and medical fitness of staff are confirmed.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The teaching accommodation is satisfactory. The school is housed in the basement of a church which provides adequate space for the number of pupils on roll. The building is in a good state of repair and decoration.

The two most spacious classrooms are used by the youngest age groups and are organised effectively for the various areas of learning. The smallest classroom is used by the oldest pupils and its immediate proximity to a larger class room enables the two teachers to use the available space flexibly. Three classrooms are equipped with mattresses that are laid out on the floor after lunch to enable the youngest pupils to have a comfortable nap. The corridor also functions as a dining room and as a play room. A small library has been equipped with computers. The well-equipped and hygienic kitchen is suitable for the preparation of school meals. PE lessons take place in a spacious rented room situated within the upper floors of the church.

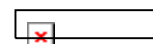
The washing and toilet facilities are adequate and the disabled toilet is conveniently fitted to allow easy and hygienic toilet care of the youngest pupils. It also contains First Aid equipment and stores mobile equipment to accommodate sick pupils.

There is a well-fenced small playground at the back of the building that provides safe outdoor play, including soft surfacing and an appropriate range of equipment for varied activities. Break times are staggered so that the smallest possible number of children is on the playground at any one time. The school has taken steps to make permanent arrangements to improve the safety of a small, raised area of the playground around a drain hole. A refurbished space outside one classroom provides an additional play area. The two upper classes use a nearby park in good weather.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



The provision of information is very good. A brochure outlines the main policies and procedures and particulars of the curriculum. It is sent to parents as part of a comprehensive information pack which has been recently updated. This information is reinforced when parents are invited to meet the class teacher at the start of the school year when curriculum, assessment and daily routines are

document is also available to prospective parents who are informed of it when they make telephone enquiries. The school organises a 'visit day' in the last week in November when parents can see pupils' work and have informal discussions with staff.

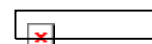
The school practices an 'open door' policy and parents are encouraged to come in and talk to staff in the afternoons when they collect their children. Parents also have the option of making an appointment to meet teachers. The *cahier de liaison*, a school/home book is a very effective communication tool between the class teachers and parents. The latter are informed of their children's progress through reports compiled twice a year and presented in a format that enables them to monitor this carefully throughout the year.

The headteacher runs monthly discussion groups with parents on a range of educational topics. The school also provides an informative handbook for staff that includes policies, procedures, training course handouts and very useful articles on anti-discriminatory practices, emotional intelligence and bilingualism for instance.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints

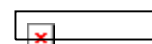


The school complies fully with these regulations. It has updated its procedures over this academic year and parents will receive the policy at the end of this month as part of the information pack prepared for them for the next academic year.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	Le Hérison		
DfES ref number:	205/6387		
Type of school:	French Foreign National School		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	2 - 6 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 28,	Girls 29,	Total 57
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 4,	Girls 5,	Total 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 0,	Girls 0,	Total 0
Annual fees (day pupils):	£3,750 - £5,010		
Address of school:	c/o Lower Ground Floor		
	Rivercourt Methodist Church		
	King Street		
	London		

E-mail address:	W6 9JT administration@leherissonschooll.co.uk
Telephone number:	020 8563 7664
Fax number:	020 8563 7664
Headteacher:	Ms Béatrice Rios
Proprietor:	Ms Béatrice Rios
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi
Dates of inspection:	9 - 12 May 2005

© Crown copyright 2005. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced verbatim without adaptation, and the source and date of publication are stated.
Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

