

## **Inspection report**

### **Prins Willem-Alexander School**

**Independent school**

**DfES ref no: 936/6559**

**Inspection under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002**

**Dates of inspection: 30 January – 2 February 2006**

## **INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 162A 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**

The Prins Willem-Alexander School offers a Dutch education for children aged three to twelve years, whose parents are employed in the United Kingdom. The main language of instruction is Dutch except for the significant amount of time devoted to the teaching of English. '*Centraal Instituut Voor Toets Ontwikkeling*' (CITO) tests are conducted three times a year. As well as following the Dutch National Curriculum it has recently adopted the International Primary Curriculum (IPC).

The school is owned by Shell International Petroleum Company (Shell) and managed by 'De Nederlandse Basis School Company Limited'. The school was founded to cater for the needs of Shell employees, but it also accepts children from a significant number of parents who do not work for Shell. The average stay at the school varies greatly: a few pupils stay for the full period of their education, but most stay for three to four years and some for only one year. There are many departures and arrivals during the course of the year.

The majority of teaching staff gained their teaching qualifications in The Netherlands and have previous teaching experience. Those teachers who teach subjects through the medium of English are also suitably qualified.

The school is subject to the authority of the Dutch Ministry of Education, exercised through the Dutch embassy in London. This includes visits from the Dutch inspectorate and the monitoring of education provided through school reviews commissioned by Shell People Services via the Fieldwork Education and '*Stichting Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland*' (Foundation for Dutch Education Abroad).

The school was founded in 1981 and moved to its current purpose-built premises, standing in extensive grounds, in 1992. It is situated in a wooded setting on the outskirts of Woking, Surrey

### **Summary of main findings**

This is an outstanding school. Pupils are happy, confident learners, well prepared for their next stage of education. They make excellent progress in their bilingual skills. In the CITO tests almost all pupils' scores are above or well above average despite their mobility and the fact that some of them spend a short time at the school. The dynamic and rigorous leadership of the school has driven a rise in standards and an holistic approach to the development of pupils' learning. Staff are well-qualified, committed, and enthusiastic about their work. The school is a unified community and the involvement of parents is integral to its success. The stimulating

and wide-ranging curriculum succeeds in developing learning and making it enjoyable. Work is increasingly pitched so that it is challenging for all learners. Pupils thrive as result of the very good and often outstanding teaching and care that they receive at the school.

**What the school does well:**

- the relationships and communication within the school and throughout its wider community are very good;
- assessment systems are robust, informative and effectively shared with parents. They are catalysts for raising standards and for school improvement;
- teacher expectation, expertise and role modelling are outstanding;
- the behaviour of pupils is excellent;
- music and physical education are used very effectively to enhance pupils' physical and creative development but also their understanding of English; and
- excellent use is made of the high quality facilities.

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

- draw together the documented school protocols for dealing with First Aid into one document;
- provide the address and telephone number of the registered or principal office of the proprietor for parents, prospective parents, and other interested parties; and
- make more explicit to parents the school's policy on the appropriate sanctions to be adopted for all breaches of discipline.

**What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002**

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA, the school should:

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

# COMPLIANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION

## 1. The quality of education provided by the school

### The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum provides a wide range of stimulating and interesting subjects, activities and projects. Through the integration of the Dutch curriculum and the IPC, the school ensures that there is smooth transition to and from other Dutch schools, international schools and English schools. Most lessons are taught in Dutch. English is taught highly effectively as a subject in its own right and is used by staff and pupils during physical education, swimming and music lessons. The curriculum is further enhanced by a broad-range of after-school activities, outings and excursions which pupils said they appreciated and enjoyed.

### The quality of teaching and assessment

The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Some teaching is outstanding. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In the best lessons, teaching follows the principles of the IPC, using its thematic approach in imaginative, stimulating ways that ensure pupils increasingly modify the resources provided by teachers to demonstrate what they have learned.

Lessons are thoroughly planned. Teachers make effective use of time and resources. As a result, lessons generally progress at a brisk pace and pupils work enthusiastically and conscientiously. Teachers are well matched to support and develop the curriculum and to meet the age range and needs of pupils.

Assessment and testing procedures are very robust. The results of the CITO tests, held two or three times a year, are carefully analysed to assess and record individual pupils' and groups' achievements. This process clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses in learning and teaching. The school not only shares this information effectively with parents but also uses it to drive improvements and raise standards. Pupils who attain below a level C in CITO tests are given extra support and individual educational plans (IEPs); those with a level C are monitored or receive extra help; and those who get the highest level of A are also given IEPs to ensure that they are sufficiently challenged. Parents appreciate this.

The rich data that the school holds is not used in isolation. Triangulation is made between test results, teacher assessments and the pupils' *'Historisch Overzicht'* (historical overview) along with other available evidence. A good example of this is the way in which the school identified the need to raise awareness and increase inputs of Dutch vocabulary as a result of information that has come from questionnaires collected from parents and schools of its past pupils.

### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

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

The outstanding promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is a key feature of the school. The school is rightly proud of the provision and the way in which pupils respond.

Opportunities for spiritual development are provided, for example, through music and the arts. Different faiths are explored through religious education, external visits and through the contributions of visitors. Before pupils start to eat their snacks or lunch the teachers ensure that there is a quiet moment for those who want to pray.

The school pays very good attention to promoting good behaviour and eliminating any forms of bullying, prejudice or harassment. The '*Pestprotocol*' (bullying policy) provides lessons in social skills and links well with other units within the school curriculum.

Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Teachers provide good role models demonstrating by example good manners, courtesy and care for others. Pupils play well together and when new to the school quickly learn to enjoy each others' company. Throughout the school, pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities and tasks that serve the common good. They respond well to this and relish being selected as the class helper. They are also confident at making decisions about their own learning, such as the order in which they will tackle tasks, and self-selection of books from both of the libraries. Excellent examples of this were seen in the 'fashion show' and 'book review' presentation.

The school aims to provide pupils with a sense of 'homeland' coupled with international empathy. It does this very well. Pupils are given opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of their own culture and language. They also develop an understanding of England and international cultures. The school makes excellent use of local resources such as the mosque. There are also frequent external speakers for instance from the fire brigade, the police, Railtrack; and outings, for example to the Houses of Parliament.

### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils**

The school carefully safeguards and effectively promotes the welfare of all its pupils. It has a full range of policies and practices that minimise the health and safety risks to pupils. Routines for dealing with First Aid, medicines and accidents are well established and staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. However, the school needs to draw the documented protocols into one policy document to comply with the regulations.

The effects of international mobility on the children are closely monitored. A key feature is to ensure that the children feel secure and happy at school. The school formally deals with this through a structured programme of social and emotional

education and informally through its interaction as a community. The use of the 'Historisch Overzicht' effectively records and aids the monitoring by teachers of the needs of individual pupils.

The school has identified access for the disabled and has adapted facilities so that people in wheelchairs can join the school and take part in school activities. Whilst careful records have been kept on the decisions and actions taken, the school does not currently have a detailed three year plan to improve levels of accessibility for the disabled.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

*The school complies with all but one of the requirements.*

***What does the school need to do to comply fully with the regulations?***

*In order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:*

- *draw together the documented school protocols for dealing with First Aid into one document (paragraph 3(6)).*

***What does the school need to do to comply with the DDA?***

*In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA the school should:*

- *devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.*

#### **4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**

There are effective procedures to ensure that all staff are checked with the appropriate authority for their suitability to work with children.

Staff are suitably qualified, and have a good range of experience and specialist knowledge.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

*Yes.*

#### **5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation**

The school has excellent facilities which allow pupils to learn in an environment that is conducive to learning and safe. The school buildings have been very thoughtfully designed to create a light and welcoming working atmosphere. They are well-maintained. Specialist facilities are used for music, physical education, dance, cooking and drama. Pupils also make highly effective use of the extensive Dutch and English libraries and the computer area.

Much thought has also been given to furniture and furnishing to help facilitate learning activities. All the facilities are respected by pupils who help to keep them clean and tidy.

The school has spacious grounds including its own sports field.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **6. The quality of information for parents and other partners**

The quality of the liaison with parents and other partners is very good and the vast majority of parents feel well informed. Parents are actively encouraged to be part of the daily life of the school, and they are increasingly taking advantage of the opportunities that the school provides.

The school provides very clear and wide-ranging information. The '*Schoolgids*' (the school guide) is issued to all parents along with the prospectus. These are comprehensive documents that also contain directions for gaining further information and guidance, including telephone numbers, addresses and web-sites. The current prospectus and guide do not include the proprietor's address and telephone number, but the school intends these to be included in the next editions.

A fundamental strength of the school is its use of computer technologies to share information with its community. There is a weekly newsletter and all parents have access to the '*Historisch Overzicht*' of their child and the '*Leerling Volg Systeem*' (the pupils' progress system). The records that may go with pupils to their next school are lucid and accurate. They contain up-to-date information on their progress and development academically and as a young person.

The ethos of the school, shared expectations and exemplary behaviour of pupils have minimised any events of serious misbehaviour. There is a sanctions book, but no sanctions have been needed to be recorded. The school has a very effective anti-bullying policy. Whilst there are detailed school and Shell School policies that promote good behaviour the school needs to make more explicit to parents what actions will be taken for all breaches of discipline.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

*The school meets most but not all of the requirements*

***What does the school need to do to comply fully with the regulations?***

*In order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:*

- *provide the address and telephone number of the registered or principal office of the proprietor for parents, prospective parents, and other interested parties (paragraph 6(2)(b)); and*

- *make more explicit to parents the school's policy on the sanctions to be adopted for all breaches of discipline (paragraph 6(2)(e)).*

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

The complaints procedures are clear, fair and understood by the school community. The school complies fully with these regulations.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.



## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Prins Willem-Alexander School		
DfES Number:	936/6559		
Type of school:	Primary		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	4 – 12 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys: 69	Girls: 84	Total: 153
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils):	£6,960 - £10,920		
Address of school:	Old Woking Road Woking Surrey GU22 8HY		
Telephone number:	04183 750 409		
Fax number:	01483 730 962		
Email address:	pwas@prinswillem-alexander.surrey.sch.uk		
Headteacher:	Mr M Meines		
Proprietor:	De Nederlandse Basis School Company Limited		
Reporting Inspector:	Steffi Penny (Her Majesty's Inspector)		
Date of inspection:	30 January - 2 February 2006		

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