

# **Inspection report**

## **Essendene Lodge School**

**Independent school**

**DfES ref no: 936/6528**

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

**Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 November 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**

Essendene Lodge was established as an independent school in 1966. It is situated in a quiet residential area close to Caterham Village in Surrey. The school is separated into three different departments: the pre-school (2 to 4 years), which was not the subject of this inspection; the infants (4 to 7 years); and the juniors (8 to 11 years). In the Infant Department all National Curriculum subjects are taught and children take part in Key Stage 1 national tests at the end of Year 2. In the Junior Department pupils are taught a wider range of subjects. They also have the opportunity to attend residential trips involving activities such as abseiling, rock climbing, quad biking and field studies.

There are currently 125 children aged from 5 to 11 years on roll. Pupils attend the school from the local area and wider community. There are a few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school also supports a small number of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue, although most of them are advanced bilingual learners.

### **Summary of main findings**

Essendene Lodge is a good school that has many outstanding features. The school's ethos engenders a family atmosphere in a professional learning environment. The school has a strong culture for promoting and celebrating the achievement and progress made by its pupils. The high standards set and clear vision for the school's continued development are assured by the effective partnership between the principal and headteacher, supported by a strong management team. One of the parents wrote that the '*school is run with passion and children are top priority*'. The school provides high quality education and support for its pupils. The curriculum which incorporates all subjects of the National Curriculum is enriched and enhanced by extra-curricular activities, educational trips and visits. An emphasis on the development of reflective skills results in pupils having consideration and regard for each other. Pupils are well aware of their responsibilities and older pupils have opportunities to take responsibility within the school in order to promote independence and self-discipline.

### **What the school does well:**

- the staff work together effectively as a team, along with other visitors, providing high quality teaching and support, which enable pupils to learn effectively and fulfil their potential;

- there are very good relationships between the staff and pupils based on mutual respect, and the behaviour and the attitudes of pupils are exemplary;
- all staff have high expectations of the pupils, which are based on good knowledge of their needs, abilities and progress;
- communication within the school and throughout its wider community are very good;
- the school incorporates innovative teaching techniques and resources with the more established methods to make learning interactive, enjoyable and meaningful; and
- the senior leadership team provides excellent leadership and management that enable the school to provide very effectively for the pupils and to be able to develop the provision so that the quality of education continues to improve.

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

- maintain attendance registers in accordance with the regulations.

**Next Steps**

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

- identify and plan for a programme of continuous professional development and training for subject co-ordinators who are new to the school or to the post;
- ensure greater consistency in the application of the school's policies, particularly in relation to assessment and marking of pupils work; and
- devise structured ways of sharing the outstanding learning and curriculum work developed in numeracy, which is one of the main strengths of the school.

# **COMPLIANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

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

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The school's curriculum, which incorporates all aspects of the National Curriculum, is good and has a number of outstanding features. The approaches taken to develop and cater for pupils' social and academic skills are well balanced and highly effective. Appropriate time is allocated to cover the demands of the different subject areas, including physical education and a modern foreign language which are made available to all the pupils in the school. The school makes effective use of external artists and visitors. This contributes to the development of a very high standard of questioning skills amongst the pupils and raises their enthusiasm and self-esteem.

The school's curriculum policy documents are well supported by relevant published schemes of work. The use and adaptation of these schemes by the headteacher has resulted in outstanding achievements by pupils in mathematics. Pupils' achievement in English and science are good.

The school makes very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The principal has a good understanding of the special educational needs code of practice, and is skilled at brokering appropriate support from various external agencies and providers. Established systems aim for an early identification of pupils' individual needs, the establishment of a strong partnership between home and school along with a personalised curriculum.

Subject leaders are enthusiastic and have a passion for their work, however, continuous professional development and training to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and understanding to guide and support others is not as effective.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and often better. This helps pupils make outstanding progress across the school. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and provide appropriate challenge and support to cater for the individual needs of pupils in their classes. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported very well. They are able to progress at their own pace due to the high quality of support that they receive. All pupils have challenging targets that are discussed and agreed on a termly basis, which has helped foster a healthy competitiveness and raise the level of motivation.

Well established routines and very high expectations lead to exceptional behaviour by pupils both during and outside lessons. They emulate the adults around them and are extremely polite and courteous to each other. They work with sustained concentration and are fully focused in their tasks.

Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning and understanding in other areas of the curriculum. The use of appropriate resources and apparatus results in the lessons having a very good pace. A high level of questioning by the teachers helps pupils to acquire the necessary confidence and to effectively express and explain their ideas to others.

The school has an appropriate marking policy and marking codes. When used effectively, this results in very good diagnostic marking which helps the pupils to identify their strengths and areas for further improvement. However, the application of the policy and the codes is not consistent across the school. The school is aware of this and is already working to address this variation.

Pupils' attainment and progress are tracked well by managers to ensure that their needs are met. School leaders now have sufficient data to be able to monitor, evaluate and review pupils' attainment in the school and develop systems for further support. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and special educational needs have individual education plans that are suited to their needs. Parents and appropriate external agencies are fully involved in the review of these plans which is carried out at least twice each academic year.

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

Yes.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge and appreciation of music and the arts. They have more limited understanding of the cultural diversities in their local and the wider community.

The school provides extremely well-structured routines, which provide a high degree of emotional security. This helps pupils to settle quickly into the school and to experience success. Pupils are articulate, self-confident and clearly enjoy their lessons. They particularly appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular and after-school activities.

Pupils' spiritual development reflects the school's ethos which is grounded in the Christian faith, but ensures an appreciation for other faiths too. The school actively encourages pupils to reflect on a range of spiritual and moral issues, for example, the impact of bullying on people's confidence and feelings. Pupils are encouraged to support good causes and offer a helping hand when there is a need. Funds are raised and pupils are given the opportunity to discuss and decide the best usage in terms of support for charities in which the school council plays a key role.

The school is a highly caring environment. The conduct and relationship between the adults creates and fosters a sense of community with a shared vision and expectations. Pupils are provided with choices and responsibilities which help develop a mature attitude towards life. The strong emphasis on caring and sharing is evident in the ways in which pupils and adults make use of the spaces available in

the school building, and particularly in the sharing of certain spaces with the local community.

The school is proactive at reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviour. Pupils report that there is almost no bullying in the school and are eager to share features of the school which they feel are remarkable. For example, a Year 1 pupil wanted the school to be in the newspaper because it had '*nice learning, nice rules and good and caring teachers*'.

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

Yes.

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

The school 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. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times and are safeguarded around the school and on educational trips and visits. Child protection procedures are robust and all staff have recently undertaken relevant training.

Fire drills and checks on fire-fighting equipment are regularly carried out. Suitable health and safety policies and practices are in place and these have due regard to relevant guidance. The admission register is adequately kept. Several of the daily attendance registers are not maintained in accordance with regulations due to the use of inappropriate symbols and use of correction fluid.

The ethos of the school, shared expectations and exemplary behaviour of pupils have minimised any events of serious misbehaviour. A record book for sanctions is kept in line with regulations. The school has a very effective anti-bullying policy.

The school meets its responsibilities to provide access to the school and the curriculum for pupils who have disabilities

***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 with the regulations?***

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

- *ensure that all attendance registers are completed in accordance with the regulations (paragraph 3(9)).*

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

The school has a well qualified headteacher, teachers and a generous number of well-qualified support staff. Prior to appointment all staff are subject to checks with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children.

Procedures are established for other sensible and appropriate checks to be made on employment history and references before appointment.

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

Yes.

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

The school has good facilities which allow pupils to learn in an environment that is conducive to learning and safe. The premises and accommodation are immaculately clean and very well-maintained. Rooms are light, bright and welcoming. Furnishings and decoration are in very good order. There is good specialist accommodation for information and communication technology and a music practice room. Classrooms are appropriate in size for the activities which take place in them. There is good access to the buildings for those with disabilities. The site includes reasonably-sized hard outdoor play areas. School facilities are supplemented well by the use of community facilities, such as grassy recreational areas and two spacious halls.

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

Yes.

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

The school makes a wide range of information available to parents and meets all of the regulations. Responses to the parents' questionnaire indicated that parents consider that they are well informed about their children's progress at school and feel welcome to contact the school if they wish to discuss any matter. This was further illustrated by a parent who wrote '*Essendene Lodge goes beyond their call of duty for what any family would expect for their children and should be commended for this*'.

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

Yes.

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

The school's complaints procedure meets all the requirements for registration. The complaints procedures are clear, fair and understood by the school community.

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

Yes.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Essendene Lodge School		
DfES Number:	936/6528		
Type of school:	Independent primary and nursery school		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	2 – 11 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys: 58	Girls: 67	Total: 125
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys: 11	Girls: 10	Total: 21
Number of boarders:	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils):	£1260 - £1450		
Address of school:	Essendene Lodge School Essendene Road Caterham CR3 5PB		
Telephone number:	01883 348 349		
Fax number:	01883 348 349		
Email address:	headteacher@essendenelodge.surrey.sch.uk		
Headteacher:	Mr S J Haydock		
Proprietor:	Mrs S A Haydock and Mr S J Haydock		
Reporting Inspector:	Steffi Penny HMI		
Date of inspection:	20 - 24 November 2006		

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