



Streatham House School

Independent School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

DfES Registration Number 343/6001
Unique Reference Number 104966
Inspection number 296876
Inspection dates 6-7 March 2007
Reporting inspector Mr John Coleman HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Age group 2-16	Published 23 March 2007	Reference no. 296876
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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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

Streatham House is a co-educational school for pupils from 2-11 years and provides for girls from 11-16 years. There are 131 pupils on roll in total, of whom 70 are senior girls. The school began in 1925 and is situated in a listed building in a residential area. The school aims to, *'help each child fulfil his or her potential and achieve the best results possible for that child, at the same time as giving an all round education which will enable the child to take his or her place in society as a good citizen of the future. To this end the school strives towards high standards of work and behaviour, which are firmly rooted in a morally sound and caring environment, where all children are encouraged to do their best, on an equal basis, regardless of race, ability or gender'*.

Evaluation of the school

This is a good school with some outstanding features. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's education and they are right to feel so. The headteacher and her staff are strongly committed and provide a broad curriculum which serves pupils well. Teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress and achieve high standards. Outstanding provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils become confident and articulate learners who have high self esteem. Provision for their care is good. The school complies with all of the independent school regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good with some strong features. All subjects have suitable policies and schemes of work which provide well for pupils' needs. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes follow the Birth to Three Matters and Foundation Stage curriculum. Pupils in the lower school (Years 1-6) follow the National Curriculum. This continues for students in the senior school (Years 7-11) culminating in GCSE courses mainly in Years 10 and 11. French is taught from the age of 3 years and remains an option for GCSE; Spanish is introduced in Year 8 and may continue to GCSE. This suitably broad experience is extended by all students having the opportunity to take English Speaking Board examinations in Years 9 and 11. Additionally students undertake the European

Computer Driving Licence in information technology (IT) skills. Extra art classes are provided after school for pupils from this and nearby schools including GCSE, AS and A2 level courses. Opportunities for PE are somewhat limited by the lack of a playing field, though a local sports club is used for sports day, and a fitness club is utilised to encourage the older students to develop healthy lifestyles. The school does not currently offer any vocational courses and has advanced plans to improve this. A member of staff has recently been trained to manage the vocational options.

The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and visitors. Students in the senior school recently visited Spain and inspectors witnessed the impact of this experience across many curriculum areas. A residential visit to Winmarleigh takes place annually for students in Years 6, 7, and 8 and provides opportunities for outdoor pursuits. Pupils have also been to Chester, Albert Dock, Snowdonia, Peak District and a number of local places such as the library. Parents and friends of the school are welcomed to share their knowledge and experience, as illustrated during the inspection when one such visitor talked to the pupils about Judaism. A wide range of extra curricular activities is provided. Activities are available to all ages though pupils spoke to inspectors about being unable to take part in some clubs.

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. The majority of teaching is good and better. As a result pupils make good progress. There is a whole school commitment to planning which ensures a clear focus on the objectives for pupils' learning. Small numbers in each class enable teachers to get to know their pupils very well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding; pupils who spoke to inspectors confirmed this. In most lessons work is pitched at the right level with appropriate attention paid to individual pupil's needs. Teachers are able to assess pupils' progress well against the intended learning outcomes. In some pupils' books the work which they are expected to complete is the same for all. Where this occurs there is a lack of challenge for the highest attaining pupils and their progress is hindered. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified and individual education plans prioritise their learning well.

Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach. In the lower school where it is mostly one teacher delivering a range of the curriculum, teaching is characterised by a good understanding of how young children learn. They get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage where teachers successfully develop children's social and communication skills through practical speaking and listening activities. High expectations of behaviour and learning mean that, as pupils move through the school, they develop as increasingly mature and well-rounded individuals. Pupils' learning is assessed well by teachers and they are made aware if their efforts fall short of expectations. It is much more difficult for pupils in Years 1 to 9 to measure the extent of their progress and consequently there is a lack of pupil or parent knowledge about

what to do to get to a higher level of attainment. In Year 10 and 11 students progress more rapidly because of rigorous attention to targeting their learning. Expectations of grades for GCSE examinations are high and students are well informed about what they need to achieve to move to the next grade. Results in recent years show standards at GCSE to be above the national average. National comparisons for value added data made available by the Local Authority, show the school to be in the highest 5% of schools in the most recently available figures.

In the senior school there is specialist subject teaching. Art and science teaching is also supported by extra facilities. Teaching is outstanding. In art the level of creativity is highly motivating for pupils and displays of their work adorn the whole school. The impact of this can be felt across the curriculum. In a Year 7 lesson seen during the inspection, pupils designed and made T-shirts making excellent use of their IT skills at the planning stage. To a background of African and Indian music, they worked diligently under the skilful guidance of the teacher who inspired their ideas by her passion and enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils in recent years have a 100% pass rate in Art at grade B and above for GCSE. In a Year 7 Science lesson pupils worked enthusiastically to separate the colours of ink samples as they learned about chromatography. They were then captivated as the teacher asked them to 'hunt the murderer' using ink samples from a fictitious note left on a victim. This application of scientific skills in a forensic way, led to very high levels of interest and learning was outstanding as a result. In 2006 pupils taking dual award GCSE Science achieved a 100% pass rate at grade C and above.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

A high priority is given by the school to pupils' personal development and the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The parent questionnaires, returned to inspectors, were overwhelmingly praiseworthy of the school. Parents particularly appreciate how pupils gain confidence, have high self esteem, behave in outstanding ways, develop social skills and receive good teaching which leads to high standards. Inspectors agree. As one parent said, *'The professionalism of the team is outstanding. Together my daughter and I look forward to each session, knowing she will enjoy the activities and socialising in such a stimulating, warm and loving environment'*.

The school enables pupils to develop into mature young people who can stand tall in the world. Their enjoyment of school leads to a positive attitude to learning. Pupils confidently express their opinion about the school. Pupils say there are ways to let the school know their feelings, such as through the prefect system and via the school council. They can explain how some small

ideas have been acted upon, as when they suggested a different kind of soap was needed in the senior girls' toilets. However they do not think that their ideas are always taken up or that they are well informed about the schools' plans for the future.

Pupils are helped to develop moral principles through the curriculum for citizenship, in assemblies and in the debating society. Much voluntary work takes place with pupils supporting and raising money for causes such as Operation Christmas Child and the Tsunami appeal. Pupils study a wide range of faiths and religions including work on festivals and celebrations such as Divali and the Chinese New Year. Cultural education is strong and the study of art and culture is given a high profile in the school. A good example of this is a cross curricular assembly focused on the Mexican Day of the Dead. Children in the Kindergarten studied England and told other classes about it.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Arrangements for child protection are in place. The school has a full range of appropriate policies and meets all the independent school regulations. The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Pupils are confident that the school deals speedily and effectively if there is any misbehaviour or bullying. Parents and pupils agree that this is a very caring school. Pupils feel safe and appreciate the consideration which staff make for their welfare and well-being. One parent summed it up by saying, 'lovely school, lovely teachers'. Although the school provides well for pupils through its Personal Health Education programme, some parents and pupils expressed a view that more should be done to encourage healthy lifestyles. The school evaluation provided to inspectors acknowledges a need to develop the range of physical activities available to pupils. The school does provide curriculum opportunities for health education. For example a cross curricular 'heart day' emphasised the importance of healthy living.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school undertakes the required checks to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children and pupils.

School's premises and accommodation

The school premises and accommodation serve the pupils' needs well. Classrooms are of adequate size for the numbers involved. Outdoor facilities are satisfactory though the absence of a larger surface restricts team sports.

Specialist rooms include a science laboratory, art room, technology room, 2 IT suites and an assembly hall/gym. These make a good and sometimes outstanding contribution to the provision for pupils' learning.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information available to parents is good. All the appropriate information is provided to parents. Some parents expressed the view that they are unaware of the availability of the school's policy for complaints. Information about this is contained in the school's prospectus. Reports about pupils' progress are sent home annually in lower school and more frequently in senior school. Newsletters regularly give information about school events.

Procedures for handling complaints

The policy meets all the regulatory requirements including the specified timescales and procedures.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

What the school could do to improve further

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

- extend to the younger pupils, the outstanding practice in Years 10 and 11, of setting targets for attainment
- improve the range of vocational courses available to students in Years 10 and 11.

School details

Name of school	Streatham House School		
DfES number	343/6001		
Unique reference number	104966		
Type of school	Co-educational day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1925		
Age range of pupils	2-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 19	Girls:112	Total:131
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total:2
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total:1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800 - £5,355		
Address of school	Victoria Road West Blundellsands Liverpool Merseyside L23 8UQ		
Telephone number	01519 241514		
Fax number	01519 312780		
Email address	enquiries@streathamhouse.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Baxter		
Proprietor	Mrs Clare Baxter		
Reporting inspector	Mr John Coleman HMI		
Dates of inspection	6-7 March 2007		