

Instituto Español Vicente Cañada Blanch

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	207/6305
Unique Reference Number	100532
Inspection number	301538
Inspection dates	7-8 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi

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).

SIE ONLY:

This inspection of the funded nursery education was carried out under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and framework Act 1998.

This inspection of the day care was carried out under the Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where funded nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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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

El Instituto Español Vicente Cañada Blanch is an independent school providing full-time education to boys and girls aged 3 to 19 years. It was founded in 1972 to serve the Spanish community and is housed in a former Dominican foundation in Kensington. It provides bilingual education within the Spanish system of education. Admission is subject to an evaluation of pupils' compatibility with the bilingual programme of studies. Pupils are either bilingual or at various stages of learning English or Spanish as an additional language. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need. It aims to promote pupils' personal development in all its aspects and to ensure pupils *'develop linguistic competence in Spanish and in English and acquire an understanding of both cultures, so as to enable their complete integration as citizens in the UK and in Spain.'*

Evaluation of the school

El Instituto Español Vicente Cañada Blanch provides a satisfactory quality of education overall with good features in the primary phase and the sixth form. The curriculum is satisfactory. Parents appreciate the opportunity to provide their children with bilingual education and are happy with the quality of education in Spanish. Teaching and assessment are satisfactory, with strengths in teaching. Consequently, pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, provision for their welfare, health and safety is inadequate. The school is led by a new team of managers who are eager to make the necessary improvements. It complies with most of the regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and ensures that pupils are well prepared to further their education either in the UK or in Spain. Its main strength is its provision for bilingual education that gives almost equal time to subjects taught in Spanish and English by the beginning of the secondary phase. In the sixth form, pupils experience a reduced English curriculum to enable them to access the full Spanish curriculum in preparation for the baccalaureate examinations. There are booster classes for those who need to consolidate their Spanish language

skills. However, the bilingual project and pupils' education have been adversely affected by slow recruitment procedures which result in pupils being without English or supply teachers for several weeks.

In the primary section, the curriculum taught in Spanish is well planned and follows the Spanish government's guidance closely. The planning of the curriculum taught in English is not always sufficiently detailed to support the teaching. Pupils with specific difficulties have an individual educational plan that helps teachers meet their needs. The school is currently piloting a scheme involving bilingual team teaching that is led by an inspirational teacher. Pupils' linguistic experience is extended further with the introduction of French from the third year of the primary phase. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught through other subjects in the ICT suite. Art, music, English, French and physical education (PE) are taught by specialists. Galician is offered as an option after school hours. Pupils of secondary school age can choose options in addition to the standard curriculum. In the sixth form, pupils can follow the science baccalaureate course or the humanities and social sciences strand. The provision for music and art is particularly good, and pupils enjoy singing in the school choir. The provision for PE is good and includes swimming in the third year of the primary section. The programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education reflects the ethos of the school. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of educational visits including residential trips. It is also enhanced by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that enable pupils to extend their musical, linguistic, artistic and sports skills. However, some parents and pupils feel that the range of activities is not sufficient for all year groups.

Teaching across the school is typically satisfactory, although it is sometimes good and occasionally outstanding. In the best practice, the teaching stimulates and fully engages the pupils throughout the lesson. For example, in a session planned to develop pupils' bilingual reading, the lead teacher used a wide range of teaching styles that enabled the pupils to discuss what they had understood and solve problems in pairs and groups before feeding back to the whole class. Good use is also made of 'show and tell' where pupils talk about completed homework projects and then share them with the class. Most teachers use effective questioning to check pupils' understanding and learning and pupils readily offer answers confident that all contributions will be welcome. In some lessons there is little variation in teaching or learning style. These lessons are overly led by the teacher and there is little interaction with pupils. Occasionally, pupils appear bored but their overriding commitment to study ensures good behaviour is maintained. Some lessons also offer too little challenge for the most able pupils as the tasks provided are the same for all abilities. This has been noted by some parents and pupils. Although teachers manage their lesson time well, not all lessons begin on time. Resources and their use are generally adequate although opportunities to use ICT are missed, due in part to a lack of computers in classrooms.

Assessment of work is satisfactory overall. Teachers use a range of tests on a regular basis to assess progress following the Spanish system for tracking pupils' progress.

This data is routinely analysed but not sufficiently to provide whole school evaluations about the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum. The marking of pupils' work varies in quality. The best gives good guidance for improvement to the pupil, yet frequently pupils' books show little evidence of teachers' monitoring.

As a result of the satisfactory curriculum, teaching and assessment, pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school. However, results in the 2006 GCSE English examination were low and this is a concern to parents. Pupils make good progress in the sixth form where there is a strong drive to prepare them for the external examinations. Results in the '*bachillerato*' indicate high achievement and pupils enjoy a high level of success in the entrance examinations to Spanish universities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a sense of community in the school which helps pupils develop confidence and self-esteem. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. The majority of parents and pupils indicate that the '*instituto*' is a good place to be and the attendance figures also support this view. In lessons the vast majority of pupils enjoy their learning, show good bilingual abilities and have positive attitudes to study. In discussion, pupils speak well of their school and of the bilingual environment which it provides. The older pupils feel they receive good careers advice and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils show respect to their teachers and to their peers. They cheerfully greet each other, interact positively and are helpful to visitors. They respect the opinions of others. Their good behaviour shows that they have a good understanding of right from wrong. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. They feel their school is a safe place despite some concern about their property.

Opportunities for reflection are provided in lessons where for example, pupils of primary age considered the wonder of nature. Assemblies provide welcome opportunities to celebrate the achievements of others and consider issues of the day. Through effective teaching in subjects such as religious education, ethics, philosophy and social sciences, pupils develop empathy and the need for tolerance, respect and understanding of the values and beliefs of others. Art and music also contribute greatly to developing pupils' good knowledge of their own and others' cultures. Regular visits to Spain and planned lessons ensure that they deepen their appreciation of their own Spanish culture. Some pupils will contribute to the restoration of an abandoned Spanish village this summer. Through several subjects and an assembly programme, pupils also learn about British institutions and history. Visits to the Houses of Parliament and membership of the '*consejo escolar*' (governing body), assist their understanding of democracy and of their decision-making role.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for welfare, health and safety is inadequate. The school creates a happy family atmosphere and has basic policies to promote good behaviour. Although instances of bullying are rare, not all pupils and parents feel that the school deals effectively with bullying or bad behaviour. First aid procedures are not thorough. Some parents have concerns about the level of supervision throughout the day, although supervision was mostly satisfactory during the inspection. The school has requested a budget from the Spanish authorities to address the outstanding recommendations made by the fire officer. It also needs to carry out the regulatory fire safety checks to comply with fire safety regulations. There is no systematic procedure to assess risk across the whole site and carry out regular maintenance. There are no procedures in place relating to child protection and safeguarding. There is no admission register.

The school promotes healthy living effectively. Pupils are well informed of how to remain healthy, feel they have sufficient physical exercise and appreciate the well balanced and nutritious Spanish meals provided by the canteen. The school demonstrates its care by taking into account the dietary requirements of individual pupils. The school has yet to fulfil its obligations under the Disability Discrimination (DDA) Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Staff are recruited through the recruitment procedure of the Spanish Ministry of Education and most of the checks required by the regulations are carried out to ensure the staff's suitability to work with children. However, the school also needs to ensure that all staff are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) at an enhanced level. It also needs to record evidence that, where CRB checks are not appropriate, the relevant checks are carried out.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises offer adequate accommodation for general and specialist teaching. However, some parts of the school, such as some windows, compromise pupils' health and safety, as identified by a recent report commissioned by the Parents' Association. There is sufficient space to provide safe outdoor play for pupils of all ages.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a good range of information to parents and others. Parents have weekly opportunities to meet class tutors and can meet any teacher on request. The school sends out termly reports on pupils' progress but these sometimes provide insufficient information, which has been noted by many parents. Once a child

protection policy is in place, parents will need to be informed of its availability. Parents have a strong voice in the school, as they are represented on the '*consejo escolar*' and there is an active parents' association. Despite the high level of concern expressed through pre-inspection questionnaires, parents make it clear that they love the school and are keen to support it. Staff representation on the '*consejo escolar*' ensures they are well informed of school affairs. However, the induction of new staff is not always sufficiently detailed to give them all the guidance they need.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has recently reviewed its procedures to ensure that complaints are handled fairly and promptly. These procedures are available on the school website.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DfES guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- have regard to DfES guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* and deal with the issues raised during the inspection (paragraph 3(4))
- demonstrate that it has a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by any report from the Fire Authority (paragraph 3(5))
- have a satisfactory written policy on first aid and ensure that it implements this (paragraph 3(6))
- maintain an admissions register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, ensure that they have all been subject to appropriate checks by the CRB to confirm their suitability to work with children (paragraph 4(b))
- where a foreign national is either the proprietor of the school, or is employed as a member of staff, and for whom a CRB check is inappropriate, ensure that

that person is subject to checks for overseas teachers set out in DfES guidance *Child protection: preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young persons in the education service* (paragraph 4(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure that none of the areas of the school compromise pupils' health and safety (paragraph 5(j)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- make a child protection policy available to parents and others (paragraph 6(2)(h)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

Inspection of day care registered by Ofsted

Effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality of the care is good.

Children settle well into the session and are very happy in the calm, harmonious atmosphere. They have fun, as they play enthusiastically with a good range of toys and resources that are well maintained, offer challenge and enhance learning. Warm relationships and respect are evident between staff and children. Children are kind and considerate to each other and really enjoy playing together. The emphasis on respect for others helps to create an environment, where children develop confidence and self esteem.

Children's vocabulary is extended in both Spanish and English as staff encourage younger children to think and talk. Children are valued and listened to by staff, who ensure their individual needs are met.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment, where they can move around safely and want to learn. The setting has shown good improvement since the last inspection. Electrical sockets are now safe and appropriate arrangements have been made to access the setting. Routines and procedures in the setting protect children from illness and infection.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet where their dietary needs are respected and considered. Meal times are a social occasion; however, children are unable to help

themselves to food, meaning they are not independent at meal times.

Parents are kept well informed about the provision and activities; an effective key worker system is in place meaning parents know who to talk to about their child's progress. There have been no complaints about the day care made to Ofsted since the last inspection, that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend. Overall the outcomes for being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and for organisation are good.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

To improve the quality and standards of the care the registered person should take account of the following recommendations:

- improve meal time arrangements to enhance children's independence.

Inspection of funded nursery education

Effectiveness of the funded nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

The children have a positive attitude to learning and they spend extended periods concentrating on their chosen activities. The children's individual progress is observed and information recorded is used to plan for the next steps in the children's development. Staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage enables them to provide activities that are stimulating, challenging, fun and give good coverage to all areas of learning. Staff are well organised, meaning children are confident and happy as they learn. Staff and children enjoy good relationships with each other; staff listen intently to the children and respond to their needs and choices.

Children are curious as they explore the varied methods of learning. They enjoy their meal times as a social occasion, however, they are unable to serve themselves, meaning they are not independent at meal times. Mathematical and language skills are promoted, as the children count and talk confidently in both Spanish and English as part of daily routines.

The children play well together, they are kind and considerate to each other as they share and take turns. Children's behaviour is good; staff encourage children to

respect and care for each other. Children show great delight as they play outside. This strong emphasis means children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through discussion and well planned topics. Children's individual needs are recorded and respected by all staff, meaning their welfare is promoted.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. The management and staff work very well together meaning children learn and develop in a harmonious atmosphere.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are clearly comfortable in the environment; they receive good information about the setting and the Foundation Stage. Staff exchange daily information with parents and carers. Children's progress is recorded and shared with parents at open days.

Recommendations or actions to improve the funded nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of the nursery education the registered person should take account of the following recommendations:

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

School details

Name of school	Instituto Español Vicente Cañada Blanch		
DfES number	207/6305		
Unique reference number	100532		
Unique reference number (funded nursery education)	105734		
Type of school	Day School		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1972		
Age range of pupils	5-19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 220	Girls: 238	Total: 458
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of children receiving day care	Boys: 34	Girls: 30	Total: 64
Number of children receiving funded nursery education	Boys: 34	Girls: 30	Total: 64
Annual fees (day pupils)	£85.00 Spanish nationals £1990 (Primary) £2605 (secondary) other nationalities		
Address of school	317 Portobello Road London W10 5SY		
Telephone number	0208969 2664		
Fax number	0208969 9432		
Email address	canada.blanch.uk@mec.es		
Headteacher	Mr Santiago Santos		
Proprietor	Spanish government		
Childcare inspector	Julie Biddle		
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi AI		
Dates of inspection	7-8 June 2007		