

London Bunka Yochien School

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	307/6079
Unique Reference Number	131755
Inspection number	301649
Inspection dates	9-10 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Fry AI

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).

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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

The London Bunka Yochien School is situated in Ealing, West London. The school is accommodated in a church hall. It provides an education in Japanese that follows the Japanese National Curriculum. The school takes young children from 2 years old for half-day sessions and provides a full time education for older children. Typically, children stay in the school for one to two years. No child has a statement of special educational need. The school was established in 1996, with the aim of 'raising children who can adapt to international society'. The inspection occurred at the start of the Japanese school year.

Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of education and care is good. The school supports children's personal development effectively and enables them to make good progress in learning. Children have very good attitudes to work and their behaviour is also very good. The curriculum is good and meets the requirements of the Japanese National Curriculum. The school does not meet all regulations in the areas of written policies and procedures.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. It is based on a kindergarten approach to learning. The philosophy is one of settling younger children into the educational process during their time in school and providing a broad range of physical and artistic experiences rather than intensive academic learning.

The school teaches all the areas of the Japanese National Curriculum in a well coordinated manner. The annual planning provided by the school's central office in Japan translates into a well organised range of daily activities for children. Children gain the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that are expected at their next schools, either in London or at other Japanese schools around the world. The school provides good quality and regular English lessons and some children opt for extra lessons after school.

Good use is made of the spacious outdoor facilities which promote the children's curiosity and progress in a range of subjects. The work seen about Boys' Day celebrates Japanese culture well.

Teaching and learning are good. The children's good progress in lessons is due, for example, to good lesson preparation and their thirst for knowledge. The good teaching meant that last year children reached, and often exceeded, the standards appropriate to their ages. Standards in art and physical activities are good. Children also make good progress in learning English through song, rhymes and visual games.

Teachers explain ideas well, such as how to fold coloured paper to make a fish. Each child's fish was well crafted. The staff are experienced, confident practitioners. The small group sizes enable each child to receive much individual attention. There are suitable annual records kept of each child's progress. Their performance is compared with his or her previous efforts in order to judge whether they are making appropriate progress. The staff know the children very well and provide additional support where necessary. Pupils have fitting general targets, such as, 'to work well with others.'

There are occasions when the more able, older children could have more demanding work, such as counting and writing activities. Although this is the start of the academic year, some of the older children have settled well and are ready for more challenging tasks. Teaching made little use of the available white boards to make explanations easier for children to understand.

Resources support learning effectively. Outdoors there are plenty of bikes, scooters and skipping ropes which children use enthusiastically to gain a good level of fitness.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They reflect on their culture, for example, by making Samurai helmets and pictures ready for Boys' Day. They know what is right and wrong and this aspect is reinforced regularly in a good nurturing environment. Children learn about aspects of British life adequately by making visits to local places of interest. All children from different backgrounds get on very well together and their behaviour is good.

Staff know the children very well and the school works as an extended family. This aspect is particularly important as some children are just two years old when they start school. Teachers provide much positive support to help them build self-esteem and good work habits. Small group sizes and individual help from adults enable children to develop self-confidence and express their individuality, an aspect that many parents value.

As soon as children join the school, often from Japan, they are well cared for and soon settle into new routines away from their parents. They are skilfully guided in

their choices of things to do so that they experience the full range of activities. Children learn to become more independent, even at a young age, in a positive atmosphere of exciting activities and constructive attention from adults.

Children enjoy school very much and their attendance is good. Their attitudes to work are very good and they make the most of what is taught. They show spontaneous enjoyment in much of what they do. Children's awareness of and concern for others is outstanding. When younger children leave at lunchtime, enthusiastic farewells are exchanged. Children have a suitable variety of opportunities to take responsibility, such as moving their chairs when the hall is reorganised for the next lesson. The relationships between staff and children are very strong.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school makes satisfactory provision for children's welfare, health and safety. On a day to day basis children are safe and well cared for, but not all the required policies and procedures are in place.

The effective management of children's behaviour is implemented through clear rules and a positive reward system although there is no written policy. The completion of admission and attendance registers meets regulations. An accident book is in place and is completed properly. Children complete their individual registers with stickers. The Japanese government supplies the register booklets and this initiative gives children a good sense of responsibility and rewards their good attendance. The booklet also contains good advice for each child about staying safe, such as how to cross the road safely.

Staff are deployed well to supervise children. Each teacher is responsible for a small group and each child receives good quality attention, such as when teachers advise children how to stay safe and eat healthily. Teachers take great care of individuals and groups and know their children very well. Any minor accident is dealt with very quickly. Emergency evacuation drills take place each term.

Training for staff about the English procedures for child protection has not taken place. The school undertakes adequate risk assessments prior to any out of school visit although there is no written policy statement. Children are supervised carefully at break times, but the school does not have a suitable written first aid policy. No staff member has an up to date first aid qualification. The owners of the building have good regard for the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. A toilet suitable for wheel chair users has been fitted and the hall floor has been renewed. The owners maintain safety equipment efficiently.

There are no written policies to counter bullying or persistent teasing, or for the safeguarding of children.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The procedures for the appointment of staff and checks on their suitability are incomplete and inadequate. Checks on staff suitability by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) have not been carried out. The school is unable to provide evidence that staff have been checked for their suitability by the Japanese Police or that the Embassy has been contacted in this respect. A single central record incorporating these details, including teachers' qualifications, has not been created.

School's premises and accommodation

The accommodation is satisfactory. The main teaching space is large and is sufficient for the size of the groups using it. Attractive displays and imaginative use of space create an effective learning environment. Teachers rearrange furniture regularly to make the best use of the space. Outdoor play space is good.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school's written information for parents is inadequate because it is incomplete. There are no sections about, for example, policies for discipline and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour and sanctions, pupils' academic performances and details of the complaints procedure. Parents are not informed that they can request the school's written policies.

The statements about how the school works and its aims are written clearly. Teachers keep parents well informed about their child's progress at termly meetings. The prospectus includes interesting photographs of activities in which children have taken part.

Procedures for handling complaints

The procedures for handling complaints are inadequate as listed below.

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 a written policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the DfES guidance *Bullying: don't suffer in silence* (paragraph 3(2)(a))

- 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))
- prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school which has regard to DfES guidance *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits* (paragraph 3(2)(c))
- prepare and implement a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 3(2)(d))
- have regard to the DfES guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (paragraph 3(4))
- prepare a satisfactory written policy on first aid and implement it (paragraph 3(6))
- keep written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious disciplinary offences (paragraph 3(8)).

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

- ensure staff at the school and the person named as the proprietor are subject to a check with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children (paragraph 4(b))
- ensure 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, that the person is subject to checks for overseas teachers set out in DfES guidance (paragraph 4(f)).

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

- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e))
- ensure parents are aware of the existence of the following information and that they may request it:
 - particulars of the curriculum offered by the school (paragraph 6(2)(g))
 - particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h))
 - particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i))
 - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j))

- details of the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(2)(k)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- provide a written complaints procedure (paragraph 7(a))
- ensure the procedure is available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 7(b))
- ensure there are clear timescales for the management of the complaint (paragraph 7(c))
- ensure that complaints may be made and considered initially on an informal basis (paragraph 7(d))
- ensure that the procedure provides for a formal complaint to be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint (paragraph 7(e))
- ensure that if the parents are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint (paragraph 7(f))
- ensure that where there is a panel hearing of a complaint there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g))
- ensure that the procedure allows for parents to attend the panel hearing, and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h))
- ensure that the complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and the procedure stipulates that the complainant, proprietors and headteacher, and, where relevant, the person complained about, be given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i))
- ensure that the procedure provides for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j))
- ensure that the procedure provides that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are kept confidential (paragraph 7(k)).

School details

Name of school	London Bunka Yochien School		
DfES number	307/6079		
Unique reference number	131755		
Type of school	Nursery and Infant		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1996		
Age range of pupils	2 – 6		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 12	Total: 24
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 5	Girls: 2	Total: 7
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4440		
Address of school	Church of the Holy Family Vale Lane London W3 0DY		
Telephone number	020 8992 9822		
Email address	home@londonbunka.com		
Headteacher	Mrs Y Asato		
Proprietor	Mrs Y Asato		
Reporting inspector	Roger Fry AI		
Dates of inspection	9–10 May 2007		