

Broomfield House School

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	318/6050
Unique Reference Number	102938
Inspection number	302903
Inspection dates	21-22 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).

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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

Broomfield House School is an independent co-educational preparatory school situated in the Royal Borough of Richmond. It was founded in 1876 and it has been owned and run by the same family since 1969. At the time of the inspection, there were 135 pupils in total, including 24 pupils under compulsory school age, taught in the pre-kindergarten class, who attend morning sessions only. There were no pupils with a statement of special educational need. There were 23 pupils identified as having English as an additional language (EAL). The school also provides after-school care. The nursery provision was last inspected in 2005.

The school teaches a curriculum aimed at preparing pupils for the local selective independent schools and at developing all-round skills. Its key values and achievements are to provide: *'a close and supportive family atmosphere, effective and established teaching providing individual attention and encouraging excellence, and a balanced curriculum offering opportunities to explore a broad range of information and activities'*.

Evaluation of the school

The parents of pupils at Broomfield House School are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, and rightly so as it provides an outstanding quality of education. Pupils make at least good progress and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education by an outstanding curriculum and good teaching and assessment. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, and so is the provision for their welfare, health and safety. The school is led by a thoughtful headteacher and a cohesive team of committed staff. It fully meets its aims and complies with all of the regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. It is very broad and well balanced so as to offer each pupil a well-rounded education. In the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes, the school follows the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and a recent Early Years inspection found the curricular provision to be very good. From the kindergarten upwards, the school plans the curriculum with references to the National Curriculum documentation. The curriculum is deliberately centred on the

core academic disciplines alongside a broad mix of extended activities in the arts, sciences and sports. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught to a very high standard. Pupils' speaking skills are very well developed through drama activities, as well as through direct teaching. French, art, music, drama and sports are taught by specialist teachers and provision in these subjects ranges from good to outstanding. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is exceptionally good and pupils benefit from the school's very useful links with the BBC.

The curriculum is very well planned and implemented and is further improved through close monitoring and regular reviews. For example, the school has identified provision for gifted and talented pupils as a priority for development. This year, various schemes have been trialled to enable all pupils to experience an area they can excel in. The school also provides very good support to individual pupils who have specific learning difficulties or who have EAL. Consequently, these pupils can access the curriculum and make at least as much progress as their peers. The programmes of personal, health and social education and religious education (RE) are strengths of the curriculum and reflect the school's emphasis on pupils' personal development. The curriculum is enriched by termly educational visits and enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. It is well supported by a good range of resources. The current priority is to extend the use of interactive whiteboards to all classes.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good, and the teaching has outstanding features. All teachers have very good subject knowledge and very effective class management skills. They establish excellent working relationships in their classes. They have very high expectations of work and behaviour, and they praise pupils' achievements. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated. Their behaviour is outstanding and they work hard. Teachers know their pupils very well and are prompt to respond to their needs. Their knowledge of these needs is based on their evaluation of previous lessons and on their assessment of pupils' learning throughout the lesson. Where the teaching is outstanding, it communicates enthusiasm for the subject, provides consistent challenge and stimulation through a wide range of methods and approaches, encourages pupils to think independently and plans activities that match the needs of individual pupils closely. However, there are insufficient opportunities for independent work throughout the school. Where the teaching is satisfactory, it is mainly because the pace of learning is too slow. There is a good range of assessment to check on pupils' learning and an effective system to track the progress of individual pupils. Marking is regular but varies in quality. In the best practice, it shows pupils exactly what they need to do to improve. The school is planning a more structured approach to target setting and involving pupils in assessment. All parents feel that homework builds well on what their children learn in school.

As a result of the outstanding curriculum they experience and of the good teaching and assessment, pupils make at least good progress. They achieve very highly in the

entrance examinations to the local selective secondary schools and the vast majority of pupils receive several offers of places.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very confident and welcoming. Their behaviour is outstanding, both in and out of lessons. They are mature, thoughtful and show high levels of self-discipline. They enjoy school immensely and they have very positive attitudes to learning, as reflected in their high achievement, in the pride with which they talk about their work and in the good care they take to present it. One pupil said, *'I like school because there is challenge for all pupils.'*

Pupils respond positively to the excellent provision for their personal development. Their self-knowledge, self-esteem and confidence are fostered very effectively. All pupils, including the very young, develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and show consideration for one another. They have very positive relationships with each other and with adults. Pupils appreciate the excellent provision for sport and performing arts. They show respect for different cultures and work and play in harmony with each other. However, although the RE curriculum prepares pupils very well for life in a multicultural society, there are missed opportunities to reflect more deeply on the experiences and values of others.

Pupils make very positive contributions to their own school community through their roles as prefects, captains and 'buddies'. They actively participate in local team sports and public performances in which they sing and play musical instruments. They gain an excellent understanding of their roles as citizens through the citizenship programme and through visits, for example, to the Greater London Assembly. However, the older pupils feel that they are ready to take on more responsibilities and show personal initiative. Pupils contribute to the wider community by raising funds for different charities. Their basic skills and personal development are outstanding and prepare them extremely well for their future work lives.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school makes outstanding provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety through its effective pastoral system and its rigorous implementation of all the procedures aiming at safeguarding pupils in all circumstances. It is a well-ordered, happy community in which all feel safe, included and valued. Pupils behave very responsibly; consequently, the need for serious sanctions is very rare and so are instances of bullying. Pupils and the vast majority of parents have full confidence in the school's ability to deal with unacceptable behaviour appropriately and promptly. The school's work to ensure pupils' smooth transition to the next stage of their education is excellent. Parents fully support the policy to provide well-balanced, nutritious meals for all, including organic milk and fresh fruit. Although some pupils would like to have the option to bring packed lunches, the oldest approve the

intention to teach good eating habits to all. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities for physical exercise. The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The proprietor has put in place a rigorous procedure to ensure that all the required checks are carried out on staff prior to confirmation of their employment.

School's premises and accommodation

The school's accommodation is well suited to its purpose. The site has been developed in recent years to provide larger and brighter classrooms, a science laboratory, an ICT suite, an art and technology studio, a well equipped kitchen and a dining room. The playgrounds have a soft rubber surface and they are designed to allow for a wide range of safe play.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides accurate information on all aspects of school life, mainly through its website, its prospectus and regular newsletters. It has recently improved the format of its annual reports to include comments on pupils' progress in all subjects. The best of these comments state what pupils can do, cannot do and need to do to improve. Parents have the opportunity to meet their children's teachers on request, and also formally twice a year to discuss their education and welfare. Most parents feel well informed of their children's progress. The parents' and teachers' association raises funds for such projects as 'artists in residence' to enrich pupils' experience.

Procedures for handling complaints

There is a suitable procedure for handling complaints fairly and promptly.

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:

- disseminate the best marking practice throughout the school

- involve pupils more in assessment so that they become full, active partners in the learning process
- provide more planned opportunities for independent learning
- give the older pupils more responsibility.

School details

Name of school	Broomfield House School
DfES number	6050
Unique reference number	102938
Type of school	Day preparatory school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1876
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 53 Girls: 82 Total: 135
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 14 Girls: 10 Total: 24
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,872 (kindergarten), £8,208 (Year 6)
Address of school	Broomfield Road Kew Gardens Richmond Surrey TW9 3HS
Telephone number	0208940 3884
Fax number	0208332 6297
Email address	office@broomfieldhouse.com
Headteacher	Mr Norton York
Proprietor	Mr Norton York
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi
Dates of inspection	21-22 June 2007