

Rosemary Works School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	204/6408
Unique Reference Number	132791
Inspection number	317003
Inspection dates	18-19 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Rosemary Works is a small, inner city co-educational independent school located close to the City of London. The school occupies a former nursery built in 1927 and has recently been extended. There are currently 84 pupils on roll aged between 4–11 years. The school has close links with an Early Years Centre which runs its 'Big Playschool' class on the school site. The school provides before- and after-school facilities during term time and 'Play Week' activities during school holidays.

Most children live within three miles of the school. Although the majority are from white British origins, pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. A significant number of children are from homes where two European languages are spoken. The school provides a number of bursaries.

There is one class per year group, except for Years 4 and 5 which is a mixed-age class. Pupils usually move to selective schools at the age of 7 or 11.

The school aims to: *'Provide a high quality education in a happy and stimulating environment, recognising the needs of individual pupils and valuing the contributions of all those whom make up our school community.'*

Evaluation of the school

Rosemary Works provides a good quality of education and successfully fulfils its aims. Teaching and learning are good and pupils make good progress. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. Parents are very positive about the school's work. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic, and successfully develop confidence, independence, self-discipline and self-esteem. The school meets the majority of the regulations for independent schools.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school's values and approaches to teaching and learning are clearly illustrated in its curriculum policy. Planning is good and the provision reflects the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and the subjects of the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2.

The provision for children under five is good. There is a suitable balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities, with an emphasis on language and communication. In Years 1 to 6, the school makes good provision for pupils to acquire and develop their skills and knowledge in English and mathematics.

There are particular strengths in music, art and drama which make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. In science, pupils develop a good knowledge base but have a limited experience of investigative and experimental work. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted in subjects such as history and geography but there are not enough opportunities for them to develop and use their information and communication technology skills in different subjects. The curriculum is well enriched through a wide range of educational visits and visitors to the school. A good range of activities outside lessons are well supported by pupils.

Teaching and assessment are good. High quality planning provides well for pupils who learn at different rates. Boy and girls alike make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding and achieve well from their starting points. Work for pupils with learning difficulties is well matched to their needs and they are well supported by all staff so that they make good progress. In most lessons, the more able are sufficiently challenged but occasionally individual pupils require further stretching.

Teachers manage their classes well. Pupils enjoy their lessons and develop a positive attitude to work because relationships are very good. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and time is well used. Teachers' probing questions make pupils think but, occasionally, they do not give pupils sufficient time to work out the correct answer. The high quality contribution of the support staff to pupils' learning is a strength of the school.

The school employs a wide range of procedures to check what pupils know and can do. It has rightly identified improving the rigour of these systems as a priority so that teachers can use the information gained to strengthen their tracking of pupils' progress and improve their planning of the next steps in learning. New systems for recording children's achievements have recently been put in place for the under fives. In Years 1 to 6, pupils understand what they are learning in lessons. The school now has a more consistent, whole school approach to assessment.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school very successfully fosters pupils' independence, self-discipline, confidence and self-esteem. These qualities are particularly valued by parents, one of whom wrote to inspectors: *'This is a fantastic school where the children take responsibility and learn respect for themselves and each other.'*

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils have a keen understanding of right and wrong. They get on very well with adults and with each other; they are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils carefully reflect and consider the implications of their actions for others. They say how much they enjoy coming to school. Their high attendance rates and their eager participation in lessons and other activities reflect this. Pupils willingly take on responsibility and show initiative. Pupils take an active part in shaping events and planning for the future.

Visits and visitors help pupils to develop their understanding of local and national organisations and services. Older pupils visit local art galleries and the whole school benefits from the strong emphasis on the performing arts. Pupils gain an excellent first-hand understanding of different religious and cultural traditions. Pupils regularly participate in raising funds for charities. They have a well-developed awareness of the importance of respecting and safeguarding the environment.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school's overall provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is good. The staff know their pupils well and take very good care of them. Suitable written policies, some of which have been recently reviewed and revised, are in place and these reflect current requirements.

The school is a calm and friendly place where pupils feel safe and valued. Staff provide individuals with high quality of pastoral support and guidance. One pupil comments: *'My teacher made me feel very welcome when I started here and I soon made lots of friends.'* The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils try hard to aspire to these. The school's policies for behaviour and the prevention of bullying reflect national guidelines. They help staff to ensure consistency and clearly outline procedures and sanctions. The standard of supervision in and around the school is very good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are confident that there is always an adult to turn to if they need help or advice. The school has suitable procedures for formally recording any serious incidents of misbehaviour, bullying and racism together with its response.

The school works closely with parents and outside agencies. Pupils make well-informed choices about healthy eating and follow a healthy lifestyle, with regular opportunities to take part in physical activities. The school has an appropriate first aid policy and designated staff are suitably trained. Appropriate risk assessment procedures are established and prompt attention given to matters of health and safety.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets some but not all of the regulations. Occasionally, the school confirms the appointment of new staff whilst still awaiting checks about previous employment history, references or checks with the criminal records bureau (CRB).

This is contrary to requirements. The school has implemented appropriate systems and procedures, including a central register of checks, to meet the current regulations for safeguarding pupils. Enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) checks are not yet complete on one of the proprietors and a member of staff. The school is unable to provide written confirmation of dates on which some checks have been made on a small number of other staff.

School's premises and accommodation

The school is housed in a cloister-style building constructed around a courtyard. A two storey extension, providing a hall and three classrooms, is nearing completion. A pre-school group closely associated with the school uses one of the rooms and has timetabled access to the playground. Activities are organised in such a way to effectively safeguard the welfare and safety of pupils.

The school is in a satisfactory state of decoration and repair. It is clean and tidy. There are six classrooms, a resources store, a large hall, a library, offices and a suitably equipped kitchen. Outside there is a pond and gardens. There are sufficient toilets for pupils and staff but the nursery toilets are not properly ventilated. The school does not have appropriate accommodation for pupils who are ill. There are suitable outside play areas which are used by the youngest pupils for outdoor learning activities and by pupils at break times. The school uses the local pool for swimming and a nearby park for games and other activities.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The information in the prospectus gives parents a clear picture of the school's ethos and the methods it uses to achieve its aims. Supplementary pages, which are updated on a regular basis, provide details of the staff and their qualifications and other information. The school makes information about its policies and procedures available to parents.

Twice yearly reports inform parents about the topics covered by pupils in subjects and areas of learning during the academic year. Pupils' attainment and progress is clearly reported and targets for improvement set. Parents receive regular newsletters which keep them up-to-date with what is going on in school and informs them about what their children are doing in each class. These are also on display on notice boards in the school and are available by email.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has recently revised its written procedures for handling complaints and these now meet all regulatory requirements. There were no formal complaints in the last school year.

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 suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (including volunteers), carry out appropriate checks to confirm their previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references, and take such information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- ensure that an enhanced criminal record check has been made by the proprietor in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school and that the enhanced criminal record certificate which is the subject of the application is obtained before or as soon as is practicable after his/her appointment (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- in relation to each member of staff in post on or after 1 August 2007, ensure that the register shows the date on which each check was completed or the certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(2 and 3))
- in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 August 2007, ensure that the register shows whether an enhanced CRB check was carried out and certificate obtained. Further ensure that the central register of checks shows the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraphs 4B and 4C(6 and 7)).

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

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- improve the ventilation in the nursery toilets in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(p)).

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:

- develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology skills and their application of these in different subjects
- improve teachers' use of information about what pupils know and can do to better inform their planning and increase pupils' involvement in setting and achieving targets for improving their work.

School details

Name of school	Rosemary Works School		
DCSF number	204/6408		
Unique reference number	132791		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2001		
Age range of pupils	4-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 45	Girls: 39	Total: 84
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,504		
Address of school	1 Branch Place London N1 5PH		
Telephone number	0207739 3950		
Fax number	0207739 3950		
Email address	jacqueline@rosemaryworks.com/ kate.jennings@freeuk.com		
Director of Teaching Services	Ms Dorothy Davey		
Director of Administration and Customer Services	Ms Jacqueline Logue		
Proprietors	Ms Kate Jennings & Ms Lea Wadge		
Reporting inspector	Michael Best		
Dates of inspection	18-19 October 2007		