

# Milbourne Lodge Senior School

Independent School

Inspection report

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DfES Registration Number	936/6034
Unique Reference Number	125335
Inspection number	316999
Inspection dates	4-5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley 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).

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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

Milbourne Lodge is an independent day preparatory school for boys and girls between the ages of eight and thirteen. The school takes up to 199 pupils. There are currently 189 on roll and the majority are boys. Occasionally, the school admits pupils below eight years of age and is aware of the need to clarify this irregularity with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The school was registered in its current form in 1951 having separated from the junior school following a change of ownership. The school's aim is to prepare children solely for Common Entrance and scholarships to public schools.

## Evaluation of the school

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Pupils achieve very high standards of academic work and some achieve national success in sport. The staff and proprietors are passionate in their commitment to pupils' academic attainment and achieve their primary aim of facilitating entry to public schools at the age of 13. Not enough attention has been given over recent years to ensuring that all regulations for registration are met. This is particularly the case in respect of policies and practices for the curriculum and pupils' personal development, which are satisfactory overall. There is significant work to be done to improve procedures for welfare, health and safety. This aspect of the schools' work is inadequate.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory and the headteacher recognises that it requires further development. The school provides a traditional, classical education with an emphasis on English, mathematics and Latin and fulfils its main purpose of enabling pupils to work through the required programmes for examinations. This works well to impart knowledge but does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply skills or develop analytic and creative thought. There is no overall curriculum plan and this requirement is not met. Curriculum policies and subject schemes of work are dependent on teachers' individual approaches to the delivery of their subject. There is no policy or systematic plan for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the curriculum to support pupils' personal development is inadequate. These factors

limit the opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills and to be more involved in their own learning.

Recent improvements to information and communication technology have helped to modernise resources and extend the range of learning experiences available to the pupils. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake research and personal study. A strength of the curriculum lies in the daily sports lessons for all. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' physical development and enjoyment of school.

Teaching and assessment are good overall. The quality of teaching is generally good and contributes well to pupils' good achievements. But there is too much variation in quality between and within different subjects. Many parents and pupils express concerns that not all teaching is of the highest standard. Where teaching is effective, lessons have a brisk pace and provide real challenge for the pupils because activities closely match their needs and interests. This results in secure learning for pupils, based on good acquisition of skills. In these lessons teachers engage pupils well and are quick to praise and encourage whenever pupils deserve it. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge. This was demonstrated in a mathematics lesson where the teacher's excellent knowledge of the subject, high expectations and good humour made the lesson enjoyable and enabled pupils to meet the challenges. Where teaching is less effective, it is too teacher directed, with insufficient input from pupils and little involvement through which to assess their understanding or to provide challenge. In some lessons there is an over-reliance on worksheets and a lack of practical activities that support and extend learning.

The use of assessment is satisfactory and ensures that teaching reflects pupils' current levels of understanding. Teachers use percentages and position in class to record assessments of pupils' work in all subjects. Whilst the school has systems in place for checking how well pupils are doing and identifying those who are not making expected progress, teachers' marking of work does not sufficiently support pupils' understanding of how to improve.

Pupils make good progress in their academic skills. Good teaching helps them to attain very high standards, as is evidenced by their success in public school entrance examinations and scholarships. The quality of their art work is exceptionally high with many pupils winning awards in national competitions.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

This aspect of pupils' development is satisfactory. Further development of pupils' personal skills, particularly cultural awareness, is limited by the narrowness of the provision for PSHE. Pupils are polite, articulate, self-assured and well motivated to learn. Their relationships with one another are generally satisfactory, as is their behaviour. They value their friendships, celebrate the successes of others and work and play well together. The schools' emphasis on team games and competitive sports

supports this. Pupils are very appreciative of how well the school prepares them for their future by gaining entry to public schools and reaching high standards in basic skills. Some pupils worry about keeping up with the work in lessons. They particularly enjoy art and science lessons and school trips. Their attendance is very good. However, there are issues that concern them and they are very clear about aspects of the schools work that they feel could be better. Inspectors agree with the pupils that there are limited opportunities for them to show initiative, take responsibility and contribute to decision making within the school.

Most pupils have an appropriate sense of what is right and wrong although some do not respect the property of others and this is a cause for concern for many of the pupils. Spiritual development is fostered through daily assemblies and appreciation of the world around them is developed through aspects of science and art. Pupils do not have sufficient understanding of the religious and cultural traditions other than their own and provision for this is inadequate.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

This aspect of the schools' work is inadequate. There is a lack of rigour in the schools' approach to welfare, health and safety. Policies for first aid, health and safety, behaviour and for educational visits are not in place and the policy for child protection does not reflect current requirements. These regulations are not met. The school does not have a written three-year plan which meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Procedures are partly in place for risk assessments and recording of accidents and incidents but they are insufficient to cover all the aspects required to ensure that pupils are safe. For example, there is no system for recording administration of medicines and there is not always a first aider on-site or on visits away from the school. The training, undertaken by staff, for first aid and handling of food is out-of-date.

Staff regularly discuss how well individual pupils are performing and give additional support to pupils to improve their academic achievement. This is much appreciated by pupils and their parents. However, their personal and social needs are not given as much attention. Pupils feel that not all teachers listen to their concerns or treat them with respect. They say that when bullying occurs it is not always dealt with quickly enough. This prevents some pupils from raising concerns with staff. Some pupils are particularly concerned that their property is not safe in school and inspectors agree that there are limited facilities for pupils to store their belongings securely. Almost all pupils feel strongly that the food in school does not help them to stay healthy. The set menu is limited and there are no opportunities for them to make choices about what they eat or drink in school.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Procedures to ensure the suitability of staff are not rigorous enough and are inadequate. There are no checks carried out to confirm the identity, qualifications, medical fitness and previous employment of staff. There are no appropriate checks with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm an individual's suitability to work with children and no references are sought. These regulations are not met and require immediate attention.

## School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory. There is no facility for those who are ill and this requirement is not met. Although there is a satisfactory standard of cleanliness and physical condition of the building, some classrooms are in need of repair and refurbishment. Not all classrooms present a stimulating environment for the pupils.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school brochure does not provide parents with all the required information. There are no details of the proprietor or the policies for admissions, discipline and exclusions. In addition, parents are not made aware that they can request policies relating to anti-bullying, child protection, health and safety, complaints, behaviour and sanctions, as well as details regarding the number and qualifications of staff, and the number of formal complaints each year. These regulations are not met.

Parents receive a report card each term giving details of their child's examination results, position in the class and how they have performed in each subject. Parents are encouraged to make individual appointments with the headteacher but some would like to have regular open evenings so that they can meet other staff.

Parents express mixed views of the school. Over a third of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and some wrote extensive comments. Many are very pleased with the quality of education at the school. Others have concerns about the ways in which staff converse with and respect their children and also about the variable quality of teaching. They feel that the school does not respond to their concerns well enough.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The procedure for handling complaints gives appropriate guidance and timescales to address concerns with the school informally and formally. It is not clear to parents how to access the policy and this regulation is not met.

## 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 the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- establish a curriculum policy set out in writing that is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work (paragraph 1(2))
- provide personal, social and health education (paragraph 1(2)(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (paragraph 2(e)).

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 DCSF 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 DCSF guidance *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits* (reference HSPV2) (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))
- prepare and implement policies with regard to the DCFS guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (DfES 0803/2001) (paragraph 3(4))
- prepare and implement a written policy on first aid (paragraph 3(6)).

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 appropriate enhanced checks are undertaken with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children (paragraph 4(b))
- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff carry out appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional

references and take this information into account when determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(c)).

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)).

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

- provide the full name and address of the proprietors for correspondence during both term time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which they may be contacted at all times (paragraph 6(2)(b))
- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e))
- ensure that policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving are available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 6(2)(h))
- ensure that 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 are available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 6(2)(j))
- ensure that details of the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications are available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 6(2)(k)).

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

- ensure that the complaints procedure is available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 7(b)).

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



## School details

Name of school	Milbourne Lodge Senior School
DfES number	936/6034
Unique reference number	125335
Type of school	Day preparatory
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1951
Age range of pupils	8-13
Gender of pupils	mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 169      Girls: 20      Total: 189
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,300 to £9,750
Address of school	43 Arbrook Lane Esher Surrey KT10 9EG
Telephone number	01372 462 737
Fax number	01372 471 164
Email address	admin@milbournelodge.co.uk
Headteacher	Mr Patrick MacLarnon
Proprietor	Mr and Mrs Hale
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI
Dates of inspection	4-5 July 2007