

Froebel House School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	810/6000
Unique Reference Number	118123
Inspection number	320162
Inspection dates	27-28 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Harris 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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Froebel House is a co-educational independent preparatory school providing for pupils aged four to 11. It opened in 1906. There are currently 120 pupils on roll organised in six classes, a Reception class including 13 nursery age pupils, and classes for pupils in Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Year 4; there is a combined class for pupils in Years Five and Six. It is situated in the east of the City of Hull. It occupies a large three storey Victorian House and two floors of adjoining premises. It has a playground. Froebel House aims to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve; prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and to enable pupils to move on to their next educational stage with confidence.

Evaluation of the school

Froebel House provides a good quality of education and care for its pupils. Pupils make good progress. There is good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the behaviour of pupils is outstanding. There are a number of regulatory requirements that are not met by the school.

Quality of education

Overall the curriculum is good. It focuses very clearly on developing pupils' skills and knowledge in English and mathematics. This is also the case for the nursery children in Reception and for them it means the overall breadth of what is offered is restricted. Opportunities for them to learn through play activities are limited. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum is broad. Physical activities are important, there is an investigative approach in science, and a sound knowledge being built up in history and geography. The curriculum in art, design and technology and drama gives many opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. The design of the curriculum includes weekly swimming lessons and it is further enriched by the study of French from Year 4 onwards and the study of Latin for the oldest pupils. Teaching is based on recognised schemes and is well planned. Personal, social and health education is taught mainly through assemblies and contributes well to pupils' development. There are some well planned visits, for example to a museum, and to a centre for technology. Pupils' learning lacks the enrichment available from more visits to places linked to subjects and by visitors to school to enliven areas of study. Pupils make good progress, including those who need additional help with their learning, because they are well supported in their individual needs by their teachers and the teaching

assistants. Pupils develop good personal and social skills through the whole positive ethos of the school and the expectations of staff.

Teaching is good overall. It is effective in the teaching of English and mathematics where pupils make good progress because they are well motivated and have individual support. Lessons are well planned and teachers have good relationships with their pupils, and high expectations for them to behave well, pay attention and work hard. Pupils respond with outstandingly good behaviour; they are eager to answer questions and have wholly positive attitudes to their learning. Teachers are confident and run their lessons at a challenging pace, and use a good range of materials to aid their teaching. Sometimes the reliance on materials is restricting, for example in the range of imaginative writing attempted by pupils

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly in reading, problem-solving and mathematics. The information is used well to guide the planning of lessons for each class. Some test results, such as in reading, show how well pupils are attaining compared with the level normally expected for pupils of their age.

Pupils' attainment is well above that expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, and pupils are attaining above what is expected for their age at the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and problem-solving is good. They are confident and expressive readers, and can understand a range of complex texts and write for different purposes, such as writing instructions or telling a story. They are able to solve mathematical problems concerned with fractions, money and the time. In science pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their investigative skills and work well in pairs or groups; they have satisfactory skills in art and design and technology and drama adds a creative dimension to pupils' skills in speaking and listening and pupils make good progress in this area. They progress well in physical activities and in sports.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their behaviour is outstanding. Their spiritual development is nurtured mainly through the well delivered assemblies which provide daily worship, and an emphasis on their spiritual development. Care is given to ensure attention to a range of festivals and celebrations at the appropriate times of year, for example in celebrating the beauty of winter. Moral development is underpinned by the daily high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils respond to this in an exemplary manner. They understand rights and wrongs in different situations through the opportunities that staff illustrate for them. The social development of pupils is developed well by encouraging pupils to work together, to help each other, and to be kind and caring. Pupils follow these rules very well indeed, being considerate towards each other in lessons and although lively in the playground, being aware of the rules about kindness which apply there too. Pupils in the school

come from a range of ethnic heritage backgrounds; pupils respect each other and are a happy community. Pupils enjoy school; they have very good attendance and punctuality. Pupils' experience is also enriched by the exciting big events in the school calendar, the annual three day residential experience attended by older pupils, which includes activities such as archery and night exercises, and the involvement of all pupils in the school's annual drama production. Pupils make good progress in ensuring their own future economic well-being because they learn good skills in literacy and numeracy and learn to work well together as well as independently. They also enjoy the house system which creates another community in which they can take responsibility and their contribution can be valued.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school's procedures to ensure pupils are well cared for and kept healthy and safe are good. The majority of parents responded to the questionnaire sent to them before the inspection began and they were very clear that they regard the school as very successful in developing their children, and also in looking after them well. They are right to think this; the school has a well-ordered and calm atmosphere and takes its responsibilities of caring for pupils very seriously. The school's policies provide an effective guide to ensure good care of the pupils. There is a detailed policy on anti-bullying. There are no serious instances of bullying reported. Pupils feel safe and know where to go to get help. Risk assessments have been carried out for the range of activities in which pupils are involved. The school has a clear policy on how pupils will be rewarded and what sanctions apply for misdemeanours or for more serious offences. Pupils respond well to the rewards system. In this small school they are known and valued and know each other well. Fire risk assessments have been carried out properly by the school, with regular checks recorded fully. The staff are trained in first aid and child protection procedures are in place as required. Staff are deployed appropriately to assist pupils' safety, for example in the playground. Attendance is recorded properly and regularly. The admission register does not include all the required information. The school takes sport and physical health seriously and makes good use of a nearby sports centre. Pupils have access to water throughout the day. Meals are not cooked on the premises but the packed meals pupils bring are scrutinised to ensure they are healthy and the school has banned the consumption of less healthy food including crisps and sweets. Pupils understand the reasons for this and are well informed about what they should do to be healthy. The school has a three year plan to improve its accessibility for pupils with disabilities that is detailed and includes planning permission should it become necessary; in this way it fulfils its duty in respect of the Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school takes its responsibility to ensure staff are suitable to teach and be employed in the school seriously. It has ensured all staff employed at the school have undergone an enhanced check with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The school does not yet have in place the required Single Central Register. As a result the school does not meet a number of the regulations in this area.

School's premises and accommodation

The school uses its accommodation well. The classrooms are of adequate size for the number of pupils expected to use them and the premises allow for effective learning. The environment for learning is pleasant and purposeful, with a good range of resources and equipment, it is tidy, well organised and has useful and attractive displays of information. However, the school has grown in recent years and is at its maximum with its current number on roll. The school acknowledges this and does not seek to enrol more pupils than the current number. The school is kept very clean and is well maintained inside and outside. There is specialist accommodation for information technology and this is well equipped. The use of the playground is arranged well for use on a rota basis between older and younger pupils, to ensure space and safety, and play areas are well designated. The hall is used effectively and can accommodate the whole school for assembly. The school uses outside facilities including the nearby sports centre effectively to increase its provision for sport. There are insufficient washrooms for the current number of pupils.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides good information for parents, carers and others. There is one meeting a year with parents and carers to discuss their child's progress. Parents also receive termly reports, and twice a year a report on pupils' academic and personal development, which is helpful in its detailed evaluation of pupils' progress. The prospectus and the information pack for new parents provides sufficient guidance on the school and indicates clearly that full policies on a range of school matters can be asked for. Nearly all requirements are met in the information the school gives to parents and carers. However, they are not informed of the number of complaints under formal procedures for handling of complaints. The school does not provide a telephone number on which the proprietor can be contacted at all times.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a written complaints procedure which meets the requirements in relation to fairness, independence and clarity about timescales and the distinction between informal and formal complaints.

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:

- maintain an admissions register which includes all the required information 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:

- keep a register of all staff in post showing checks made in relation to identity, qualifications, enhanced CRB or where appropriate List 99 checks, the right to work in the UK and where relevant suitability to work in a school for those who have lived outside the UK (paragraph 4C(2 and 3))
- ensure the register constructed can be reproduced in legible form (paragraph 4C(9)).

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

- ensure there are sufficient washrooms for staff and pupils, including facilities for pupils with special needs, which take account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(k)).

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 a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted at all times (paragraph 6(2)(b))
- ensure parents and carers are informed of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

School details

Name of school	Froebel House School			
DCSF number	810/6000			
Unique reference number	118123			
Type of school	Preparatory			
Status	Independent			
Date school opened	1906			
Age range of pupils	4 to 11			
Gender of pupils	MI			
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 70	Girls: 50	Total: 120	
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0	
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0	
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 3438			
Address of school	5 Marlborough Avenue			
	Hull			
	North Humberside			
	HU5 3JP			
Telephone number	01482 342272			
Fax number				
Email address	lillyannroberts@yahoo.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs L Roberts			
Proprietor	Mrs L Roberts			
Reporting inspector	Peter Harris HMI			
Dates of inspection	27-28 November 2007			