

Clarendon Cottage School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	355/6023
Unique Reference Number	106001
Inspection number	321818
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster 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

Clarendon Cottage School is an independent day school and nursery with 108 pupils on roll on this site. It is part of Clarendon Cottage School Ltd which occupies accommodation on three sites in the Eccles area of Salford. The school was opened in 1991 as a day nursery and expanded to include pupils up to the age of 11 years at the request of parents. There is a baby unit which is housed in a purpose built unit to the rear of the Cottage Kindergarten, located at the opposite end of Clarendon Road to the school. The unit and the Cottage Kindergarten are not part of this inspection. However, some pupils of nursery age are housed in the main school building and the provision for these pupils was included in the inspection. The school was previously inspected in July 2004. The school aims to *'help all children to achieve high standards and to reach their potential'* as well as *'encourage self-confidence and positive self-image through achievement'*.

Evaluation of the school

Clarendon Cottage School is a good school that is successful in fulfilling its aims. The quality of the curriculum is good and is enhanced well through a range of visits, visitors and extra curricular activities. The quality of teaching and assessment is good, enabling pupils to make good progress. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as are arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in its last inspection in respect of the school premises and information for parents. There are a number of regulations that are not met, mainly related to the premises and accommodation as well as the completion of admission and attendance registers.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good. Pupils are taught a good, broad curriculum based on the full range of National Curriculum subjects with the addition of drama and French. Pupils make good progress in developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and are well-prepared for the next stage of their education. The curriculum is regularly enriched through trips and visits and a range of visitors into school, for example, 'Lucy the Tudor' during a recent history topic or a residential visit in Derbyshire. Such visits

make a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment and personal development. Pupils' personal and social development is also well supported through the regular personal, social, health and citizenship (PSHCE) lessons. Extra-curricular opportunities are wide ranging and cover areas that successfully meet the interests and aptitudes of the pupils. There is a high degree of participation in both sporting and arts related activities and some very popular options such as drama involve the vast majority of pupils.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and consequently pupils make good progress. Work is planned very well for pupils in the Nursery and provides a good balance of child initiated and teacher directed activities. There is a stimulating learning environment and many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening. Although continuous outdoor provision is not always available throughout the day, staff make good use of the outdoor environment and plan a wide variety of activities to promote pupils' physical development. Pupils enter the Nursery with skills and abilities which are above those typical of pupils their age and by the end of the Nursery most achieve the early learning goals a year in advance. There is continuity of learning into the Reception class and once they have achieved the early learning goals, mainly in the first term, pupils are introduced to the National Curriculum programmes of study.

The philosophy of the school is that pupils should be taught in whole class lessons with extension activities for more able pupils and additional individual support for those who need it. The leadership of the school have high expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve and challenging targets are set for pupils. Pupils are taught the curriculum one year in advance of pupils of the same age. However, in some lessons seen during the inspection, the curriculum was not always closely matched to the individual needs of all pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and ask good, probing questions. Pupils give confident and articulate answers and are keen and enthusiastic to participate. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils and pupils respond well to shared jokes and teachers' sense of humour. Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn and what they need to do to achieve. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and teachers give pupils praise for what they have done well and suggest points for improvement where appropriate. Pupils have individual curricular targets which motivate them to work hard to achieve them. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across the school as work is sometimes too challenging or too easy for pupils in some lessons and the learning styles of all pupils are not always addressed. In addition, there are not enough opportunities to share good practice across the school.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points. The school has recently set up a very effective tracking system enabling school leaders and staff to monitor the progress of all pupils in the school. They are already using this information to identify any areas of underachievement. For example, the school have identified that the quality of writing needs to improve throughout the school. The school have

recently set up systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more closely. The school's results in national tests are high. Pupils in Year 6 are prepared very well for the entrance examinations in selective secondary schools and the vast majority gain a place at the school of their choice.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils generally behave very well and are polite, friendly and helpful towards one another. They relish opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, as playground 'buddies', librarians or school councillors. Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attitudes to learning and their good attendance. Pupils say there is very little bullying and they are confident that if any concerns arise they can always approach a member of staff for help. Pupils' interpersonal and communication skills are promoted well through drama performances and class debates. Pupils respond very positively to the systems of rewards within the school including house points, merit certificates and gold stars. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community through fundraising events for a wide variety of charities, singing in the community and collecting harvest produce for a local homeless shelter. They learn how to be responsible citizens and about local and national institutions, for example, pupils were involved in the Bishop of Manchester's visit. This experience together with the good basic skills which pupils develop, prepare them well for their future economic well-being. A variety of world religions are taught within the religious education (RE) curriculum and festivals and cultural traditions are celebrated and this prepares pupils well for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils are respectful towards others from different cultures and faiths. Assemblies and RE lessons promote pupils' spiritual development through opportunities for prayer and reflection.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and the school meets all, but one of the regulations. This is particularly in respect of the omission of some names, addresses and telephone numbers of parents in the admissions register and codes to indicate reasons for absence in the attendance registers. The school is, however, in the process of constructing a single electronic admissions register containing all the required information. The school has implemented the most recent guidance on safeguarding pupils and there are rigorous procedures in place to ensure they are kept safe. There are good systems in place and consistent adherence to policies related to supervision, first aid, behaviour, bullying and access to the school site. A large number of staff are first aid trained and accidents and incidents are recorded appropriately. Pupils learn in a safe environment where they are well known and well cared for by the staff. They are supervised effectively at all times. The school meal and snacks policy ensures that pupils have a healthy diet in school and many are involved in a broad range of sporting activities, including extra-curricular activities that help them to stay fit and healthy. The school complies with

the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 and has a three-year accessibility plan in place, which is currently being revised and updated.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Effective safeguards are in place to ensure that pupils do not encounter unsuitable adults. Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) have been completed for all staff and volunteers in regular contact with pupils and are kept on a single central record.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises provide a safe environment for learners. The accommodation is maintained to a good standard and is bright and well decorated. The classrooms and other parts of the school are clean, tidy and hygienic which is recognised in the school's 4* award from Salford Environmental Health department. The school has successfully addressed the issues identified in the previous inspection in respect of the water supply, the cleaning of dining tables appropriately, the cleanliness of the building and has replaced furniture to ensure it is now suitable for pupils. However, the school does not currently meet three of the regulations as the space in the Nursery classroom is not large enough for the number of pupils, there are not quite sufficient washroom facilities for pupils under the age of five and there is no specific medical room for pupils who are ill.

Outdoor play areas are available and pupils can choose between an active games area or a quieter section of playground for breaks and lunchtimes. Staggered break times maximise this resource and help to ensure pupils safety.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers and others with a very comprehensive range of information through the school prospectus, attractive website, a detailed guide for the parents of nursery pupils and regular newsletters. There is a clear statement of the aims and curriculum of the school and arrangements for discipline. The school welcomes parents to meet staff informally and staff are available before school and at the end of the school day. There is a parent teacher association (PTA) which is very active in raising funds for the school and arranging social events for pupils and parents. The vast majority of parents are very pleased with the quality of education and care provided by the school and have indicated that their children are happy and making good progress.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a complaints policy and a set of procedures which meet all of the regulations. The school has taken steps to ensure that all parents are aware of these. There have been no complaints in recent years.

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 admission registers and attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9))

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

- ensure that the number of pupils in the nursery class does not impede the learning of pupils due to the size of the classroom (paragraph 5 (j))
- provide sufficient washroom facilities for pupils under the age of five (paragraph 5 (k))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill (paragraph 5 (l)).

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:

- ensure that the individual needs of pupils are addressed more closely in all lessons
- ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning and provide more opportunities to share good practice.

School details

Name of school	Clarendon Cottage School		
DCSF number	355/6023		
Unique reference number	106001		
Type of school	Independent Day School and Nursery		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1991		
Age range of pupils	3–11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 61	Girls: 38	Total: 99
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 3	Total: 9
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 3090 - £3,720		
Address of school	Ivy Bank House Half Edge Lane Eccles Manchester Lancashire M30 9BJ		
Telephone number	01619507868		
Fax number	01616613822		
Email address	clarendon.cottage@dial.pipex.com		
Headteacher	Mrs E Howard		
Proprietors	Mrs E Bagnall, Mr L J Bagnall, Mrs K McWilliams		
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI		
Dates of inspection	2–3 July 2008		