

Westbury House School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	314/6066
Unique Reference Number	102618
Inspection number	322016
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Westbury House School is a non-selective independent school for pupils aged three to 11 years, located in the London Borough of Kingston. It was founded in 1966 by the current proprietor and principal. There are 123 pupils on roll, 14 of whom are in Kindergarten (Reception) and 15 are in the Nursery. Eight Nursery children attend part-time. Pupils are of diverse heritages and 32 have English as an additional language. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school prepares pupils for entrance examinations to independent secondary schools at the age of 11. It seeks to '*provide an education with enrichment and extension beyond the National Curriculum. Every child is encouraged to fulfil his or her potential by teachers identifying needs and giving individual attention when necessary.*' It aims to '*give the children confidence, independence, security and a love of learning.*' The school was last inspected in February 2004.

Evaluation of the school

Westbury House School provides its pupils with a good quality of education. It makes outstanding provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and meets its aims. Its success owes much to the dedication of the cohesive team of staff who strive to maintain high standards in accordance with the tradition established by the principal. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. It complies with all but one of the regulations for independent schools.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and is enriched by a wide range of educational visits and daily extra-curricular activities. In the Nursery, the curriculum is planned following the Foundation Stage guidance. It focuses on children's personal, social and emotional development. It ensures that children develop very good speaking, listening, creative and mathematical skills. Physical activities are taught weekly in a local sports centre, in addition to swimming. However, children do not have access to bicycles. In Kindergarten (Reception), the curriculum is taught in a more formal way, with an emphasis on reading and writing. However, pupils do not have sufficient access to spontaneous play using large equipment. This issue

was already highlighted in the last inspection report. The school has not yet planned how it will meet all the statutory requirements of the new Foundation Stage curriculum by September 2008. The primary curriculum has many strengths, including its breadth, which encompasses academic, creative and sports activities, the small size of classes, the effective deployment of specialist teachers, the planning of cross-curricular links and the enrichment programme. By the end of Form I (Year 2), pupils' standards of reading, writing and mathematics are exceptionally high. However, the school has rightly identified that the satisfactory provision for science in Key Stage 1 is an area for improvement. Pupils have French from Kindergarten, verbal reasoning from Form 1 (Year 2) and Latin from Form III (Year 4). From Form IV (Year 5), the curriculum follows the Independent Schools Examinations Board closely to prepare pupils for selective entrance examinations. In Key Stage 2, provision for academic subjects, art, drama and music is very good. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good and ICT is used very effectively in most subjects. Provision for physical education (PE) is very good, including weekly PE lessons, swimming and participation in many sports competitions. The specialist one-to-one support given to pupils who have English as an additional language is good. However, the school has recognised that more inclusive strategies must be developed to support these pupils in class. The procedures in place to provide for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties are satisfactory and the school has taken steps to formalise a consistent approach to planning for their needs.

Teaching and assessment are good. The staff work collaboratively to maintain very high standards and there is a shared understanding of what constitutes good practice. Teachers have very high and consistent expectations of pupils' work and they foster in pupils an excellent attitude to learning. Consequently, pupils' handwriting, presentational and organisational skills are high and the quality and quantity of work they produce is at least good. There is a wide range of assessments of pupils' learning and the progress of individual pupils is monitored effectively. The information from these assessments is used to plan work that is suitable for pupils. The good teaching is characterised by good knowledge of the subject matter and of pupils' prior attainment, needs and aptitudes which is effectively applied to the planning of challenging work. However, on occasion, the teaching is satisfactory rather than good when the tasks planned do not match the learning needs of pupils sufficiently closely, particularly pupils learning English as an additional language and more able pupils. In such cases, these pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Where the teaching is outstanding, a high level of challenge is maintained throughout the lessons and learning is made very exciting. Whilst staff make effective use of resources to support learning, there is an excessive use of worksheets in some classes and in some subjects, which hinders the development of pupils' independent learning skills. Pupils gain a good understanding of how to improve through constructive verbal feedback. Although some teachers also write useful comments that show pupils their next learning steps, this practice is not consistent across the staff and different subjects.

As a result of the good curriculum and teaching, pupils make at least good progress over the time they spend at Westbury House. Those who have moderate learning difficulties make good progress owing to the good support they receive. Those who have English as an additional language make good and sometimes outstanding progress, depending on when they joined the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils succeed in gaining entry to the school of their parents' first or second choice.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school is successful in creating a happy family atmosphere in which each pupil can flourish. The caring ethos is promoted very effectively by the staff who are excellent role models. Pupils say '*what makes this school special is that it is friendly, cosy and welcoming, teachers are kind and helpful*' and '*this school is good for all kinds of people.*' Pupils' enjoyment of learning is reflected in their very high attendance levels, their outstanding behaviour and their lively class contributions. They form positive and harmonious relationships with adults and peers in a multicultural environment based on mutual respect. They are confident, friendly, polite and articulate.

The religious education curriculum is designed to promote the school's broadly Christian ethos and to nurture pupils' spirituality whatever their faith. Pupils experience daily moments of reflection and prayer. They learn about the values and cultures of the major world faiths in a way that deepens their understanding and inspires respect for cultures other than their own. For example, the older pupils reflect on such questions as 'how do beliefs influence actions?' and 'how does art or music help people worship?' from a multifaith perspective. This prepares them exceptionally well for life in a multicultural society. Music, art, drama and sports make a strong contribution to raising pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. The very good enrichment programme further enhances their cultural awareness and gives them ample opportunities to contribute to the life of their school and of the local community. Pupils give an annual concert in a local church and Year 6 pupils have adapted for drama a series of Korean folk tales which they will perform in a local theatre.

Pupils acquire a wide range of academic, creative and physical skills that prepare them well for their future lives. Independent learning and research skills are promoted effectively in most subjects. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility and initiative by fulfilling duties in class and around the school. They gain a good understanding of British institutions and environmental issues through several areas of the curriculum, personal, social and health education, and educational visits.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Although provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory, their day-to-day care is good. The school is successful in creating a calm and happy environment in which pupils feel very safe and free from bullying. Supervision of pupils' activities is vigilant throughout the day and when accidents do occur, they are recorded conscientiously and managed effectively through good first aid procedures. The school has a satisfactory level of fire safety. Essential policies and procedures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all in all circumstances. Their implementation is satisfactory. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils comply with the latest guidance. However, whilst the nominated person has received the required training, the staff have not refreshed theirs.

Pupils gain a good understanding of what constitutes healthy eating, mainly through their science lessons. They have access to water at any time and they are encouraged to eat fruit. The school promotes physical activities very effectively.

The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The proprietor has updated the recruitment procedures to comply with the latest guidance and compiled a single central register that enables the school to monitor the implementation of these procedures.

School's premises and accommodation

The detached, two-storied Edwardian property provides suitable teaching accommodation that is well maintained and decorated. It includes a good range of specialist rooms that enhance learning. Staggered break times ensure that pupils can enjoy safe play on the securely fenced playground. The school also makes effective use of the local swimming pool and leisure centre.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Parents and others are informed mainly through the prospectus, website and newsletters. Parents have three formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers each year. They also receive two full reports. However, the teachers' comments are not always subject-specific and do not always indicate the child's next learning steps. Consequently, not all parents feel sufficiently well informed of their children's progress.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has suitable procedures for handling complaints fairly and promptly. However, not all parents say they understand them.

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 one listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure that all the members of staff receive the required level of training in child protection (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

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:

- prepare to meet the statutory requirements of the new Foundation Stage curriculum from September 2008
- improve the quality of marking across the age range and subjects, as well as the quality of reporting to parents, to ensure that pupils know exactly how to improve and that parents feel better informed of their children's progress
- as identified by the school, improve the provision for science in Key Stage 1
- broaden the provision for pupils who have English as an additional language to ensure that their specific needs are met more fully through the planning of daily lessons; ensure that the needs of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties and those who are very able are reflected consistently in the planning of lessons.

School details

Name of school	Westbury House School
DCSF number	314/6066
Unique reference number	102618
Type of school	Day nursery and primary school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1966
Age range of pupils	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 64 Girls: 59 Total: 123
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 4 Girls: 4 Total: 8
Annual fees	£3,060 (morning sessions in the nursery) to £7,045 (upper school)
Address of school	80 Westbury Road New Malden Surrey KT3 5AS
Telephone number	020 8942 5885
Fax number	020 8942 5885
Email address	info@westburyhouse.surrey.sch.uk
Principal	Mrs Mary Morton
Proprietor	Mrs Mary Morton
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi
Dates of inspection	25–26 June 2008