

St John's Wood Pre- Preparatory School

Independent School

DCSF Registration Number	213/6333
Unique Reference Number	101174
Inspection number	329299
Inspection dates	15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Ronald Cohen

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.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

St John's Wood Pre-Preparatory School is an independent school for pupils aged from 3 to 7. It offers educational provision for children intending to enter public day school preparatory education. There are 69 pupils on roll, including 8 who attend part-time in the Nursery. The school was founded in 1982 and is located in St John's Wood Church, a Grade 2 listed building close to Lord's Cricket Ground and Regent's Park in London. The school community is a reflection of the larger St John's Wood community, which is multicultural and multi-ethnic. The school's aims reflect this and seek '*a nurturing and understanding environment representing a multilingual, multicultural school... in which the curriculum is structured to approach education as an holistic and dynamic process.*' The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2004.

Evaluation of the school

St John's Wood Pre-Preparatory School provides an outstanding quality of education, which leads to pupils making excellent progress. It makes outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and this is shown in pupils' exemplary behaviour and excellent relationships. The school has implemented all the recommendations of the last inspection report, and is continuing to build on its many strengths. The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. It also now meets all but one of the regulations.

Quality of education

The quality of education is outstanding overall. The quality of the curriculum is good, and some features are outstanding. The school bases its early years' curriculum on the six areas of learning set out in the guidelines of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Since the last report, the school has considerably developed the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world, and this is evident in classes observed, and in pupils' work. The school's curriculum for Years 1 and 2 is

based on the National Curriculum. This is augmented by provision to meet the entry requirements of the receiving schools to which the children go on leaving. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively on a daily basis. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance and support pupils' learning, and the school goes to great lengths to maintain the basic skills of handwriting and mathematical solutions without over-ready recourse to calculators. Science, history, geography, art, design and technology, French, music and physical education are also taught. The clearly written curriculum policies are supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work which ensure that all strands of the curriculum are implemented effectively.

Since the last inspection, the school has planned and implemented a programme of personal, social and health education. This is taught as a discrete subject but also in circle time and through the use of visitors to school. The main focus is on the development by pupils of the desirable personal traits of responsibility, modesty and consideration. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including chess and dance, augments the opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. These are limited by the restrictions on the building and by the geographical position of the school. Nevertheless, the school uses its proximity to the heart of London very effectively to offer a wide programme of enrichment which includes visits to art galleries, museums and theatres.

The quality of teaching is outstanding overall, and all lessons seen were at least good. In the outstanding lessons, pupils' learning is at the heart of all activities. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they plan challenges which are well matched to pupils' competencies. Their approach is lively and enthusiastic and maintains the interest and involvement of pupils. The consistently good, and often outstanding, teaching is augmented by excellent marking and assessment. Marking is regular and is undertaken conscientiously. In the vast majority of the marking, there are constructive comments which make clear to pupils why their work is good or how they can improve some aspects. Assessment procedures are similarly effective and the school effectively tracks and monitors pupils' progress, and intervenes accordingly to ensure their academic development. Consequently, pupils make outstanding progress in their learning and attain very high standards. Pupils whose first language is not English progress particularly well.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

This is an outstanding feature of the school. Central to its success is the development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of a moral code which permeates all aspects of the relationships between all people in the school, be they adults or children. Behaviour around the school is outstanding, following the high expectations of staff, who act as good role models in this respect. The school stresses to pupils the importance of being ambassadors for their school whether they are on outings, on educational visits or within the confines of school. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and they accept

responsibility for their own behaviour, both within and outside the community of the school. Throughout the school there are extensive opportunities for pupils to learn how to respond to others with kindness and consideration. Consequently, relations between pupils at all levels are excellent and the school is a well-ordered community that is characterised by friendliness and mutual concern. Pupils are taught, with empathy, about other cultures. The school uses well the wealth of diverse experiences arising from the multicultural constituency from which pupils come. Pupils have excellent attitudes to study and enjoy their learning. Their attendance is very good. In order to familiarise pupils with public services and institutions, visits are organised to places such as the local fire station and post office. Police officers visit the school to talk about their jobs. Cultural provision is very good. Music is a strength of the school and pupils learn and practise music from different cultures.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The overall provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The provision for their pastoral care is excellent. The staff know each pupil very well as an individual; small class sizes and effective supervision ensure that each feels valued within a warm, caring atmosphere. The school works very effectively with appropriate outside agencies to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding pupils' welfare. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and staff demonstrate care and concern for all. Pupils are happy, feel safe and they say that they have someone to turn to if they are worried or they have a problem. Parents also praise this feature of the school, which they believe underpins the outstanding progress of their children.

Pupils are encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles. At break time, they eat fruit and vegetables and drink milk. Regular exercise in their physical activity sessions encourages them to stay fit and to appreciate the benefits that staying active bring to a healthy lifestyle. In lessons such as science, they learn about looking after themselves by staying safe. Accidents and incidents are properly recorded. The school complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. Risk assessments are routinely completed for all aspects of school life and fire risk assessment has received the approval of the appropriate fire officers. Electrical equipment has been tested.

While the nominated child protection officer has had full training, it has not been updated and neither has the training of the remainder of the staff. The school has recently made application to address this.

The school has completed a refurbishing of wash-rooms and toilets to meet the requirement set out in the last inspection report that pupils and adults have separate facilities.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all but one of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

The school must

- ensure that the child protection officer receives updated training which is then cascaded down to all staff, in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* 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 point for development:

- Share good practice more widely to ensure that as much teaching as possible replicates the outstanding levels seen in some lessons.

School details

Name of school	St John's Wood Pre-Preparatory School		
DCSF number	213/6333		
Unique reference number	101174		
Type of school	Pre-preparatory school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1982		
Age range of pupils	3-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 35	Girls:26	Total:61
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 1	Total: 8
Number of boarders	Boys: 0	Girls:0	Total:0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls:0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,520-£10,800		
Annual fees (boarders)	£ N/A		
Address of school	Lord's Roundabout London NW8 7NE		
Telephone number	020 7722 7149		
Fax number	020 7586 6093		
Email address	info@sjwpre-prep.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs H Ellis		
Proprietor	Mr A Ellis and Mrs H Ellis		
Reporting inspector	Ronald Cohen		
Dates of inspection	15 May 2008		