

Grittleton House School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	865/6018
Unique Reference Number	126514
URN for registered childcare	EY519030
Inspection number	329741
Inspection dates	2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield 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). The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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.

The inspection of registered provision¹ was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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

Grittleton House School opened in 1951 and moved to its present site in 1967. It is a co-educational school for pupils between the ages of two and 16. The school is situated in an impressive mansion within spacious grounds in the village of Grittleton. There are 303 full time pupils. The school provides education for 25 children aged two to five who attend part time within three classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are seven pupils for whom English is not their first language. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school was last inspected in May 2004 and the Early Years provision was last inspected in June 2008.

The school aims to help each child achieve its fullest potential and to fulfil daily its motto 'to strive is to accomplish'.

Evaluation of the school

Grittleton House provides a good quality of education for its pupils in both the EYFS and the main school. It develops in pupils, courteous manners and good levels of self confidence. Pupils are articulate and achieve good standards in a range of subjects as well as in English, science and mathematics. The quality of teaching is good overall and this helps pupils to make good levels of progress. The vast majority of parents are quick to express their support and appreciation of the school. The school has a clear written and fair complaints procedure, however a significant proportion of parents report that they are unaware of these procedures and would appreciate improved levels of communication above and beyond the current arrangements. The

¹ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and meets all of the regulations with one exception.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. The great majority of pupils make good progress and are well served by a broad and balanced curriculum. The school places a strong emphasis on basic skills. By splitting pupils into ability groups in these subjects class sizes are kept to a minimum and teachers are able to set work that closely matches the needs of these pupils. The curriculum is broadened through good provision in foundation subjects leading to high quality work in art, drama, music and competitive sports teams. Pupils also reported their enthusiasm for the teaching of modern languages and Spanish, in particular. Thorough planning in all subjects across Key Stage 1 and 2 sets out clear routes of progress. Regular personal, social and health education contributes to pupils good levels of personal development. The school has been awarded a grant to develop a low level fitness trail for the benefit of younger pupils. Pupils are supported in their choice of GCSE options by a well resourced careers library and the school provides a suitable curriculum for these pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in EYFS and the junior school. Work is well matched to their needs and they make good progress. A recent appointment has overseen improvements for support to pupils in the senior school which is beginning to impact positively on their levels of confidence and progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and as a result the progress that pupils make across the school is good. In the most effective lessons the teacher's good subject knowledge and enthusiasm is transmitted to pupils and they show very positive attitudes. These lessons are also characterised by a careful match of work to the different abilities within the class. Class teachers were helping pupils to plan their revision more effectively through the use of imaginative strategies such as use of concept maps and talking partners. Strong relationships across the school and the small class sizes ensure that pupils are well supported and are able to seek and receive help when required. Teaching encourages generally good behaviour. In a small minority of classes with older pupils some low level disruption slows their progress. This was a concern voiced by pupils who reported that they were sometimes disrupted in these lessons. The school uses regular formal assessments to monitor the progress of pupils and to prepare them for future examination conditions. These results are shared with parents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils overall spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils enjoy school as shown by their generally good behaviour to adults and to each other. Their attendance is outstanding. Pupils play happily together and enjoy each others company. The school encourages pupils to develop their personal qualities well and they develop into sensible and thoughtful individuals as a result. Older pupils offer support and encouragement through their roles as prefects and team captains. Given the mature nature of pupils and their clarity of self-expression and confidence, the

school provides limited opportunities to harness their views. Many feel that their ideas and opinions are worthy of a wider audience. Moral development is good and pupils display a strong sense of right and wrong and respect each others property. Bullying is isolated and pupils reported that adults were there to help them when required. The emphasis on religious education and assemblies helps to promote good spiritual development. Pupils study other faiths and religions but opportunities for cultural development are more limited. Trips and visits help to develop a greater understanding of other cultures but several parents reported that pupils would benefit from further opportunities.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The safeguarding of pupils welfare, health and safety is good. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust, child protection procedures are clear and well organised. The school completes all appropriate checks on supply staff. However, it does not currently record on its single central register the dates of the receipt of the information about such staff as well as the date the checks were completed. Good systems are in place to ensure the suitability of new appointments. Procedures to minimise the risk of fire are completed regularly with appropriate emergency evacuation drills and annual checks on fire fighting equipment. The school is an inclusive community in which pupils feel safe and valued. The school has made adaptations to the building to suit the needs of individual pupils wherever possible, but has not drawn up a written three year plan to increase the accessibility of the school premises and curriculum within the resources the school can afford.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS provision is good and meets the needs of the children. Children enjoy their time at the school and are happily engaged in purposeful learning activities in an attractive learning environment. Children make good progress in their learning and development especially in communication, language and literacy. They play well on their own and with others and are able to take responsibility for choosing activities in the nursery class. In the Reception class several timetabled activities such as games, French, music, ballet and tennis limit the time available for children to initiate their own activities.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted; staff are kind and caring and take every necessary step to ensure that children are safe and secure. This is enhanced by effective links with parents who confirm that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. The leadership and management of the EYFS are good with strong support provided by the junior school headteacher. Staff make regular detailed observations on children's progress and compile individual 'Learning Journey' records. Opportunities for teachers to use these detailed assessments to jointly plan appropriate learning activities are limited and restricts children's access to the full EYFS curriculum. There is an attractive outdoor play area which, due to the nature of the building, is difficult for children to access independently. Staff make effective use of the very spacious school grounds for environmental activities and have appropriate plans to develop further opportunities for exploratory activities.

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 suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- ensure that the single central register records the date of receipt of written notification from the supply agency together with the dates on which the checks on supply staff were completed (paragraph 4C (4 and 5)).

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

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:

- consistently apply behaviour management strategies to eradicate the few instances of disruption so that all learners make maximum progress
- ensure that assessments in the EYFS are used to collaboratively plan suitable activities across all areas of learning.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		✓		
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		✓		
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		✓		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		✓		

School details

Name of school	Grittleton House School		
DCSF number	865/6018		
Unique reference number	126514		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY519030		
Type of school	Primary and Secondary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1951		
Age range of pupils	2-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 185	Girls: 118	Total: 303
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 10	Girls: 15	Total: 25
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 2	Girls: 3	Total: 5
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 5760 - £ 8805		
Address of school	Grittleton Chippenham Wiltshire SN14 6AP		
Telephone number	01249 782434		
Fax number	01249 782669		
Email address	secretary@grittletonhouseschool.org		
Headteacher	Mrs A Whitney		
Proprietors	J E Shipp, A F Shipp, J M Shipp and M D Shipp		
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI		
Dates of inspection	2 December 2008		