

# Heathland Private School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	888/6024
Unique Reference Number	119851
URN for registered childcare and social care	EY287706 / EY266733
Inspection number	330040
Inspection dates	23 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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 provision<sup>1</sup> 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 pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since the last inspection.

## Information about the school

Heathland Private School is an expanding school that over the last three years has grown in size although class sizes remain small. There are currently 183 pupils on roll. The school is open to children between the ages of 3 months and 16 years. It was opened by the principal in 1994 and is housed in a large Victorian house set in extensive grounds in Accrington, in Lancashire. Additional accommodation is utilised to educate children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Building work is about to start on a new senior block with classrooms, a hall and science laboratory. The school aims to provide a happy, caring atmosphere allied to high standards and a structured and disciplined approach to education. The school was last inspected in 2004.

## Evaluation of the school

Heathland Private School provides a good quality of education that enables children and pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, to make good progress and prepare successfully for the next stages of their educational lives. Learning takes place in a caring, vibrant family atmosphere where pupils play their part to the full through their excellent behaviour, enjoyment of school and desire to do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and together with good teaching and a good curriculum it is plain to see why pupils of all ages achieve well. The school is led well by a strong and effective senior management team who ensure its continued development. The recommendations of the last report have been acted upon and the school complies fully with the regulations for independent schools. Pupils and their parents rightly express a high level of satisfaction with the school.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good and adds much to pupils' achievements as well as their enjoyment of school. The school makes good provision for children in the EYFS, ensuring they achieve well in their learning. For pupils of infant and junior age, the mornings are mainly devoted to the teaching of English and mathematics, while the afternoons provide greater variety with humanities, science, information and communication technology (ICT) art and physical education (PE). Pupils also have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language and play musical instruments. The senior department is expanding and in 2009 pupils will be able to take a range of subjects to GCSE level. In keeping with the school's continued development and expansion it is seeking to further broaden the number and range of GCSE subjects and also to offer vocational courses for pupils who may not reach GCSE level. This is helped by good links with other local schools and colleges. Detailed schemes of work for all subjects ensure that pupils' previous skills and knowledge are built on and developed. The school is rightly seeking to computerise these schemes to provide a more consistent planning format and to ease access for teachers.

A strength of the curriculum lies in the range of enrichment activities. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to bring learning to life and these are much appreciated by pupils. The local community is viewed as a learning resource and residential trips to places such as London, Paris and Edinburgh bring other dimensions to pupils' experiences as well as adding to their personal and cultural development. After-school clubs and homework clubs provide further evidence of the school's commitment to expanding pupils' learning and enjoyment outside the classroom and plans shortly to offer older pupils access to the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

The quality of teaching and assessment overall, including in the EYFS, is good and is a key feature in pupils' good progress and standards. Much of the teaching is based on strong subject knowledge which is put to good effect to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Relationships across the school are excellent. Lessons regularly have a sense of purpose and are a hub of focused activity. Expectations are generally high both in terms of behaviour and in the quality and quantity of work generated. Just occasionally these high expectations slip, but this is the exception rather than the norm. At times teaching is outstanding because the pace of the lesson is excellent, questioning is incisive and work is very well matched to the differing ability levels of the pupils. Conversely, when teaching does not reach these heights it is because work lacks a cutting edge challenge for the more able pupils. Teachers go the extra mile in building up pupils' confidence and self-esteem and when pupils ask for additional help or clarification they know their requests will be dealt with quickly and sensitively. Teaching is monitored through the scrutiny of planning and pupils' work and some informal lesson observations. The school has rightly identified the need to formalise this process in order to further improve the quality of teaching and to disseminate good practice.

The school assesses pupils' learning and achievements in a number of ways. As well as national tests, the younger pupils are given weekly spelling, mathematics and tables tests. Older pupils are regularly tested at the end of topics and modules. Pupils' work is marked on a regular basis and is at its best when it makes crystal clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. There is some good practice, for example in English and mathematics, where pupils are made aware of the National Curriculum levels they are working at and what they need to do to reach the next level. This good practice is not yet embedded throughout all year groups and subjects. The school has recently set up a very good system for tracking pupils' progress in different subjects and for setting end-of-year and interim targets. This is a good move forward as over time it is intended to demonstrate the 'value added' as pupils move through the school and so provide further evidence that pupils make good progress at Heathland. At present, the system is populated with limited data and only with data for the senior pupils. However, plans are in hand to refine the system to include data from EYFS to Year 11 in order to provide a detailed overview of the progress made by each individual pupil.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in the above average attendance rates. The atmosphere of mutual respect between teachers and pupils contributes to an excellent learning environment where pupils thrive. Pupils' personal development combines effectively with their academic development so that when they leave school they are more than ready to face the next educational challenges in their lives and to work towards their economic well-being.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are polite and courteous and show a genuine care and concern for others. Pupils are confident and articulate but do not overstep the mark. Relationships are excellent and the inclusive nature of the school enables the individuality of pupils to be both recognised and celebrated. Pupils have a good knowledge of UK public services and institutions. In addition, pupils gain a good understanding of race and equality issues and the pervading atmosphere in the school is one of tolerance, respect and cross-cultural harmony. The school promotes this tolerance and ingrained respect through providing for pupils' religious needs in an open and sustained manner and through the celebration of festivals of different faiths. This shared commitment is reflected in the fact that older pupils have requested that they be given the opportunity to study religious education to GCSE level and the school has indicated it will be happy to accommodate this.

Pupils have an excellent grasp of what good citizenship means. They make a telling contribution to school life through their roles as prefects, participation in the school council, drama productions and simply being excellent role models for younger pupils. There is a generous spirit of celebrating everyone's success that is evident in the house system, the merits and 'Student of the Week' awards. Pupils' contribution to fund raising, charitable events and their participation in inter-school events and local happenings all help to set their sense of community in a context beyond the school gates.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school takes all appropriate steps to minimise risks to pupils' welfare, health and safety and provides good care for them. All the required policies and records are in place. Procedures for recruiting staff and safeguarding pupils are compliant and a single central record is in place which confirms that all the necessary checks have been carried out. Good links with outside support agencies, together with the school's own internal mechanisms, ensure that help is always on hand for any vulnerable pupils. The school has very good awareness of procedures relating to child protection and staff follow them assiduously.

Within lessons and at break and lunch times supervision levels are good and discussions with pupils indicate that they feel safe and secure in school, that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to follow fit and healthy lifestyles although they would like more PE lessons.

The school has appropriate awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 and fulfils its obligations in full.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for the EYFS is good with some outstanding aspects. The good and at times outstanding teaching in the EYFS contributes greatly to how well children develop. Learning activities are well planned and stimulating and matched well to the very different needs of the children who are aged between 3 months and 5 years. Teaching is particularly good at developing children's communication skills, their self-expression and their personal development. This is because of the considerable skills staff have in doing just enough to enable all children to do something for themselves and because of the excellent support for language development in all classes. As a result children are set up extremely well for the next stage of learning. The quality of care, relationships and communication with families and outside agencies as well as the excellent commitment to healthy eating and keeping safe indicate that the care for the welfare of children is outstanding. Across the EYFS staff work very well together in providing a vibrant learning environment for all children. The accommodation is rich in colour and resources and good use is made of the outdoor accommodation. The provision is well led and managed and there is a continuous and ongoing commitment to making provision even better. With this in mind leaders are already seeking to make arrangements for assessing and tracking children's progress more rigorous, formalising procedures for monitoring teaching and further refining planning to more closely match the new EYFS guidance and framework.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

## 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:

- embed the recently introduced pupil tracking systems and extend them to include all pupils, including EYFS children
- provide more formal opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout, including EYFS sessions, to tackle any weaknesses and share good practice.

## 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	Heathland Private School		
DCSF number	888/6024		
Unique reference number	119851		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY287706 / EY266733		
Type of school	Primary and secondary, with EYFS		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1994		
Age range of pupils	0-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 96	Girls: 87	Total: 183
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 30	Girls: 25	Total: 55
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)	£4515 - £5700		
Address of school	Broadoak Sandy Lane Accrington Lancashire BB5 2AN		
Telephone number	01254 234284		
Fax number	01254 235398		
Email address	bursar@heathlandcollege.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs J Harrison		
Proprietor	Mrs J Harrison		
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell		
Dates of inspection	23 September 2008		