

Cleve House School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	801/6005
Unique Reference Number	109339
Inspection number	330398
Inspection dates	29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley 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.

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

Cleve House is an independent non-selective school for boys and girls aged between three and eleven years. There are currently 116 pupils on roll. The majority of children join the Kindergarten just before their third birthday and stay until the end of Year 6. There are nine classes, one for each year group, including three classes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school was established during the 1930s and had several temporary homes during the war years. In 1948, the school moved to its present site, a very large Victorian house on a residential road ten minutes walk from Bristol city centre. The aim of the school is to create 'a stable, caring environment where every child is treated as an individual'. The current proprietors, who are joint headteachers, took over the running of the school in 1987. The last Ofsted inspection took place in October 2005. Supervised activities are available before school starts and after the clubs finish at the end of the day. This provision exceeds two hours each day and the school are mindful of the need to clarify with Ofsted whether or not they should register these arrangements as child care provision.

Evaluation of the school

Cleve House provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although improved since the last inspection, is inadequate overall. This is because, as in the rest of the school, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety do not meet the current Government requirements. Not enough account has been taken of changes to the regulations since the school's last inspection. Similarly, suggested improvements to the curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE) have been slow to take place. Nevertheless, the school has maintained its distinctive family atmosphere and traditional approach to education. The pupils are happy, well motivated and attain high standards. The majority of parents who responded to the pre inspection questionnaire reported that they are completely happy with the school.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory for all age ranges, providing sufficient plans to cover the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning. These plans are better developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where activities are closely linked to the children's interests and abilities. This ensures that the learning for the youngest pupils is fun, interesting and linked well from Kindergarten, through to the prep and pre prep classes. But the way that the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is extended during the after school provision is not well thought through. In the rest of the school, the schemes of work are insufficiently detailed to give the level of clarity required to help teachers plan work at different levels and to build upon what has been learned previously. In general, the schemes outline the work that will be covered, rather than what pupils will learn. In addition, a lack of subject policies has resulted in a disjointed approach to the aims and coverage of each curriculum area. This is most evident in the different arrangements across the school for teaching ICT, RE, citizenship, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). As a result, pupils have uneven access to these subjects. This has an impact on pupils' personal development because opportunities to consolidate learning and develop a greater awareness of cultural diversity and staying healthy, for example, are missed. Similarly, opportunities to link knowledge and skills across different subjects are limited, particularly in relation to ICT. The school has invested in a small bank of networked computers and is starting to look at how these can support learning and teaching. This is timely, as pupils expressed concern that they were not able to use computers enough during each week.

The curriculum has a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. This serves pupils well in preparation for tests and school entrance examinations. It helps them to hone their knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy to a high standard. Regular, well planned support for those with additional needs is carefully managed so that lost time in other lessons is kept to a sensible minimum. There is good provision for sports and music, which are taught by specialist teachers. These subjects are very popular, as are the range of associated clubs after school, to the extent that pupils would like even more! Homework is similarly appreciated, particularly by older pupils, who say that it helps them to improve their skills. Largely limited to comprehension exercises and mathematics, homework is regularly set, and carefully explained and marked. Pupils also enjoy the trips, which effectively help to contextualise learning, particularly for historical events and settings. Opportunities to explore community, cultural and faith dimensions through school trips are limited.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory. Teaching is sometimes good, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but not sufficiently and consistently good to ensure that pupils always make the good progress that they are capable of. Teachers provide a range of activities during each lesson and this helps to move the learning at a brisk pace and maintain pupils' motivation. There is sometimes too much reliance on teacher direction. Teaching is very effective in delivering knowledge but not always as effective in allowing pupils to actively explore and extend learning, according to their own abilities and prior learning. This is linked to

weaknesses in curriculum planning. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to assess for themselves how well they are doing, why they are learning the subject matter and how to apply what they have learned in different contexts. Pupils' work is always marked but does not usually give them anything to think about in order to improve their work the next time, or to learn from any mistakes or misconceptions.

Pupils attain high standards in English, mathematic and science throughout the school. This represents satisfactory progress from their starting points and enables all pupils to gain a place at the next independent school of their choice at age 11. Tests for spelling, English comprehension and verbal reasoning help teachers and pupils to know how well they are doing. National tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, together with entrance examinations for future schools, enable the school to say with confidence that pupils achieve standards that are above those seen nationally. Other forms of assessment are insufficient to help teachers pinpoint the next steps in pupils' learning so that they can adapt their teaching accordingly.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and their behaviour is good. In fact pupils' behaviour is even better when they are encouraged to use their own initiative. It is a delight for visitors to hold discussions with them because they are mature, confident, and their speaking and listening skills are well developed. Other areas of pupils' personal development are less well developed because the school does not always make the most of their ideas, skills and enthusiasm. For example, there are some opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school and for fundraising but they could do so much more and are very keen to do so. Their awareness and understanding of different faiths, beliefs, cultures and customs, while satisfactory, is limited by insufficient attention to curriculum planning for these aspects. The same applies to developing pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. Attendance is good. Throughout the school, from the youngest to the eldest, pupils have very good attitudes to learning, making a significant contribution to their high attainment. They are very supportive of their school and particularly appreciate the way that their achievements are celebrated.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

This aspect of the school's work is inadequate and the proprietors acknowledge that they have not kept up to date with current Government requirements to safeguard children. A single central record to show the checks made on staff was put in place during the inspection and now meets the regulations. However, it shows that insufficient checks have been made to ensure the suitability of all staff to work with children and urgent action was taken to address this during the inspection. The record also shows that not all staff have other required checks prior to the confirmation of their appointment, including references, identity checks and health checks. The Child Protection policy does not make sufficient reference to current guidelines. The training for the designated person is out of date and formal training for the rest of the staff has not been undertaken.

The school has a suitable plan as required by the Disability Discrimination Act and a range of suitable risk assessments are in place, including those for fire and activities out of school. Pupils respond well to high expectations on them to move around the numerous stairways and corridors safely. There is little for pupils to do at break times and this limits opportunities for them to develop constructive and cooperative play skills. Pupils acknowledge that bullying, in its various forms, sometimes takes place but feel sure that any unkindness will be sanctioned suitably. Pupils have positive relationships with staff and with one another, and say that they like coming to a small school where everybody knows them well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Although there are many satisfactory and some good elements, the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate. This is because aspects of the provision for children's welfare are inadequate. Not all safeguarding requirements are in place. Accordingly, although improving in other respects, leadership is inadequate overall. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator and her team have successfully improved the curriculum, ensuring that all six areas of learning are covered. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and mathematical skills. Children have access to a wide range of interesting and fun activities and clearly enjoy their learning. In one very imaginative session children were dressing up and one little girl pointed out; 'I'm a princess! I have a lovely dress and I'm going shopping.' Child initiated activities are mixed with periods of more formal teaching. Teachers guide learning and enhance children's skills well through careful questioning and intervention. Good quality activities are provided indoors but the external areas are not used effectively enough to ensure that outside learning opportunities match those provided indoors. Not all areas of the accommodation are accessible for those who may have a disability. Good links with the local authority advisor are generating an action plan for continuous improvement.

Links with parents are good and the staff feedback informally on a daily basis and formally every term. There is a seamless transition between the three classes and into Year 1, by which time children reach the expected goals for their age. Staff plan effectively and are beginning to develop assessment and baseline systems to drive this. These systems are not yet robust enough to assess the impact on the children and provision overall. Children's personal skills are satisfactory overall. Their social skills are good and they share and play together well. Their understanding of healthy lifestyles and hygiene is particularly well developed. As one little girl pointed out, 'If you eat too many chocolates you will blow up like a balloon and be fat.'

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 the curriculum and teaching (standard 1) and must:

- Establish and implement a written policy for the curriculum as a whole and for each subject, and improve the detail within the schemes of work (paragraph 1(2)).
- Provide sufficient detail within the personal, social and health education policy and scheme of work to ensure balanced coverage of each aspect for all year groups (paragraph 1(2)(f)).
- Provide a framework to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from such assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 1(3)(g)).

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

- Prepare and implement a revised policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school, and undertake the required level of training for the designated person for child protection and for all other staff in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- Prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (including volunteers), ensure that appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the United Kingdom, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and take this information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(2)(a)).
- Ensure that an enhanced criminal record check has been made by the proprietor in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school and that the enhanced criminal record certificate which is the subject of the application was obtained before or as soon as was practicable after his/her appointment (paragraph 4(2)(b)).
- Ensure that no member of staff or volunteer is able to carry out work, at the school in contravention of any direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act(a) or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction. This includes a List 99 check while CRB applications are being processed (paragraph 4(2)(d)).

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the school must:

- Ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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:

- Improve the use of the outdoor area to further enhance the curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Improve the disabled access in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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	Cleve House School		
DCSF number	801/6005		
Unique reference number	109339		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1930s		
Age range of pupils	3–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 54	Girls: 57	Total: 111
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 2	Total: 5
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,575		
Telephone number	01179 777218		
Fax number	01179 773915		
Email address	clevehouseschool@btconnect.com		
Headteachers	Mr D Lawson Mrs E Lawson		
Proprietors	Mr D Lawson Mrs E Lawson		
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI		
Dates of inspection	29 January 2009		