

# The London School for Children with Cerebral Palsy

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	3096070
Unique Reference Number	102172
Inspection number	330420
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Trevor Watts

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

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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, the purpose of which is 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

Opened in 1988, this school for pupils with cerebral palsy is part of 'The Peter Rigby Trust', and, until February 2009, was known as 'The Conductive Education Centre'. It was last inspected in February 2006. Pupils come from a wide area of London and all have a statement of special educational need. Currently, there are twelve full-time and four part-time pupils on roll. They are aged from 3 to 11 years, and many have additional medical and learning needs. Two thirds of the pupils are White British; other pupils are of several different ethnic origins. The school provides a specialist and very focused teaching method known as 'conductive education'. Through a holistic, fully integrated approach, the school's aim is to encourage pupils with cerebral palsy 'to achieve their potential and improve their quality of life'. After more than a term with no headteacher, a new headteacher took up post in January 2009.

## Evaluation of the school

This is a good school in which pupils who have cerebral palsy begin to learn to cope with, and overcome, their difficulties. This is done through very good matching of successful and highly focused teaching with a good curriculum that is especially designed around the principles of conductive education. As a result, the school successfully meets its stated aim. There is a very high ratio of staff to pupils and the quality of welfare, health and safety is good. Since the previous inspection an outdoor play and learning area has been developed. All of the regulations are met, including those concerned with child protection and safeguarding which were not fully in place at the time of the last inspection. The arrival of a new headteacher has created the opportunity to clarify her role within the organisation, as suggested previously.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good because it is very well matched to the individual needs of pupils. It comprises a very well integrated framework of 'task skills' designed to improve pupils' posture and mobility with speech and other communication skills such as recognition and use of signs and symbols. Self-help is also a particularly strong element of the curriculum, with pupils learning to eat and drink properly, dress and undress themselves and look after their personal hygiene. Other subjects

are well blended into the curriculum, including numeracy and basic literacy, as well as explorative play, creative work and learning about the environment around them. Although there are occasional visits to a local park and garden, trips further afield are rare, limiting pupils' awareness of the wider environment and community. Several pupils are taught in mainstream schools for part of the week with support from this school. These are either as a 'dual placement' for several different subjects, or for specific lessons such as music in a nearby primary school.

Many classroom staff are highly trained in the specialist methods of conductive education, often in Hungary where the method began. Known as conductors, they work in close-knit teams with fully trained teachers and other support staff. All staff work with great patience and a clear view of what they are attempting to teach at all times. As two parents said, 'The school is extremely well run by dedicated, motivated, skilled and hardworking staff.... who do a truly awe-inspiring job.'

Teaching and assessment are good. The good teaching is based on very positive relationships between staff and pupils, as well as the very good understanding that staff have of their pupils' needs. Lessons are extremely well planned and prepared, with very good use being made of a great range of resources to aid the learning. Staff employ a good variety of approaches to get the best out of each pupil, sometimes individually and sometimes as part of a select little group so that pupils can relate more to each other, as well as to staff. Often, staff use the outside space for wider teaching and explorative play activities, but the surface needs to be better cleaned in times of poor weather, and there is not a covered outside area.

Pupils make good progress overall, and their achievements are outstanding in developing their physical, language and communication skills. They may, for example, learn to sit up straight, grip properly, and walk across the room. In communication skills, they learn to recognise pictures and symbols, and use them to make their wishes known, and to understand what they will be doing for the rest of the day. Many learn to use computer equipment in simple ways to control lights, sounds or screen displays. The most able pupils use computers to, for instance, match words and pictures, or numbers and objects. The school is reviewing the curriculum for subjects like science, geography and history, which are explored as topics such as 'The Seaside' or 'Growing Things'.

Pupils' achievements are assessed thoroughly as part of their individual education plans. Their progress towards their targets is judged carefully and the information is used well in planning future lessons. Progress is also checked against nationally-recognised scales of development, including the 'P' scales. However, the school does not analyse the information about progress to see if some groups of pupils make better progress than others, such as between the different key stages, or in different subjects such as literacy and numeracy.

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

Pupils enjoy their learning, as seen in their smiles, willingness to try hard and good attendance – there is virtually no unauthorised absence. Their behaviour is outstanding: they could choose to be uncooperative, to refuse to join in activities, or not to help themselves, but they do not. Almost invariably, they are very highly motivated.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because conductive education is at the heart of the school and is very much concerned with the development of pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. The very well thought-out curriculum for personal and social education and for religious education strongly supports the development of respect for other cultures and promotes tolerance and harmony. The new headteacher has introduced a programme for assemblies which have a more clearly spiritual element. Pupils are encouraged to help themselves as much as possible, and to become as independent as they can be. Much of the signing work is aimed at giving pupils a choice of activities, especially at certain times each week.

Although there are good displays that enliven the classrooms, and are produced by pupils and staff together, they do not celebrate pupils' individuality and achievements as much as they could. There is no school council through which some pupils could be encouraged to have a say in some decisions about the school, or their own class. This limits their opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility and being part of the school community, and eventually developing more understanding of the wider community.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good and all of the regulations are met. There are thorough procedures for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection policies are followed. There is also a three-year plan to improve access to the premises. High levels of staffing and good deployment of staff enable pupils to feel safe and supported at all times. Pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that they feel safe and happy in school. Staff know individual pupils very well and can thus provide appropriate guidance about health and personal matters whenever necessary. This might be in what they eat and drink, for instance, and the amount of bodily movement and mobility that is possible and desired.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The proprietary trust meets all of the regulations. Staff are thoroughly checked for suitability and qualifications where appropriate. Good records are kept securely.

## School's premises and accommodation

All of the regulations are met. The premises are adequate and are well adapted for their present purpose, creating a bright and stimulating learning environment in each class. An extensive outdoor play space has been created since the last inspection, although in the absence of a caretaker, it is not maintained and cleaned as well as it might be.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

All of the regulations are met, with very frequent and informative progress reports being shared with parents and carers, and regular reports going to the various local authorities concerned.

## Procedures for handling complaints

All of the regulations are met, with the procedures fully in place and understood by staff.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It is well led and managed. The curriculum is a very good balance of opportunities and activities to develop children's physical, mobility and self-help skills. There is also a strong emphasis on the development of different communication skills. Lessons are taught in a variety of interesting and often exciting ways, but keeping the overall balance of calmness that is needed. Teaching and other classroom staff have very good relationships with children. Children enjoy their activities and are well motivated to listen to staff, and do as they are asked and shown. They make good progress, especially in the areas that are most focused on, their physical and communication skills.

The effective leadership and management ensure that staff are all well up to date on the required and recommended aspects of training in, for example, the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and practices, conductive education and health and safety matters. All of the regulations are met for the suitability of staff and premises, as well as the procedures for dealing with complaints and informing parents about their children's progress. Assessments of children's progress are carried out almost all the time, with notes being made and added together into summary reports ready for full reviews each half term. There are very good arrangements for bringing children into the unit, often from the on-site 'parent and child' facility run by the trust, and also for transferring out into the Key Stage 1 class.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- take pupils on more visits into the wider community to enhance their community awareness
- make use of comparative information about the progress made by groups of pupils, and in different subjects or areas of learning, in order to see where the teaching and learning are most, or least, effective.

## 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	The London School for Children with Cerebral Palsy		
DCSF number	3096070		
Unique reference number	102172		
Type of school	Special School for Children with Cerebral Palsy		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1988		
Age range of pupils	3-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 5	Total: 12
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 1	Total: 4
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 10	Girls: 6	Total: 16
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 40,000		
Address of school	54 Muswell Hill London N10 3ST		
Telephone number	020 8444 7242		
Fax number	020 8444 7241		
Email address	info@hornseytrust.org.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Donna Billington		
Proprietor	Ms Deepa Korea		
Reporting inspector	Trevor Watts		
Dates of inspection	11–12 February 2009		