

Eden Independent School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	307/6084
Unique Reference Number	101964
Inspection number	330448
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Elisabeth Linley HMI

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

Eden Independent School was opened in 1995 by a group of Seventh-day Adventist educationalists who run the school as a charitable trust. Pupils are admitted from 3 to 18 years of age and there are 55 pupils currently on roll. The local authority places a small number of looked after children in the school. A larger than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of special educational needs which relate mostly to moderate learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties. The school's Mission Statement supports the development of pupils' mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being through a practical and creative education. The school's main aim is to 'help each child to do their personal best and to enjoy a full and satisfying education at each stage of their development'.

The school has recently undergone a period of great change. In October 2008 it moved to its current premises in Northolt and is based in what was previously a local authority school for pupils with special educational needs. A number of staff left Eden School; new teachers have recently joined and more appointments are soon to be made. The school was last inspected in February 2006.

Evaluation of the school

Eden School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils and meets its stated aims and most of the regulations. It has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection. There are strengths in the school's work, notably in its provision for pupils' spiritual development which is outstanding. Similarly, pupils' awareness of how to lead a healthy life style is excellent. The curriculum, teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall. Good provision is made for children who attend the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Welfare, health and safety are also satisfactory.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. All pupils have access to the National Curriculum which is planned to be broad and balanced; a particular strength of the curriculum is the performing arts. Commercially produced schemes of work are used to aid planning in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, although their implementation is not consistent in quality. This remains an issue in Key Stage 2 and was similarly reported at the last inspection. In Years 10 and 11, pupils study English, mathematics and science in addition to a suitable range of other optional subjects. In Years 12 and 13, pupils

choose to complete a Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) course, AS and A levels in a range of subjects. In Key Stage 4 and for post 16 pupils, the curriculum reflects the syllabus of the external examination boards. Opportunities for work experience, and effective careers advice, are available so that pupils can make the right choices for their further education or the work place. Links with Connexions have been set up and local authority staff give their support on a regular basis for those pupils with specific needs.

Pupils who have special educational needs are provided with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Through their IEP and Personal Education Plan (PEP) pupils are set appropriate targets that are matched to their individual needs. A specific programme is run for the students in Years 10 and 11 whose emotional and behavioural needs restrict their learning in mainstream school. In addition to studying National Curriculum subjects, pupils receive one-to-one support through personal, social and health education, counselling and mentoring. Over time, this provision has a positive impact on their learning. Currently, these pupils attend the Sanctuary Learning Centre (SLC); resources in the SLC, however, are limited. Other pupils in school with specific learning needs receive support from mentors and counsellors, plus one-to-one support in class to aid the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. Pupils are taught in small groups and staff know their pupils well. Although good teaching is evident in school, it is not consistent. Where lessons are good, teachers plan well to meet pupils' individual needs. The teachers' questioning is also effective so that pupils have to think carefully and apply previously learnt skills to new tasks. However, not all lessons are planned well enough to challenge pupils who are more able. Another issue for the school is that not all teachers have the subject expertise that they need. Although the afternoon sessions are given over to more creative subjects, some staff teach as many as four or five different National Curriculum subjects in Key Stages 3 or 4.

Assessments are carried out regularly and half termly tests are taken by all pupils. The results are kept by the teachers and provide a way of tracking pupils' progress. However, results are not routinely collated by managers and the tracking of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough. Although managers are aware that accurate assessment underpins effective planning, it is clear from pupils' work, and the corresponding recorded assessments, that teachers' assessments are not always accurate. As a result, work is not consistently challenging in lessons and some pupils underachieve. Pupils' work in Key Stage 2 shows clearly that they have not achieved as well as they should have done given their starting points.

Pupils sit national assessment tests at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Given the small numbers of pupils the outcomes of these tests fluctuate as do the results of GCSE, AS and A level examinations. Nonetheless, a significant minority of Year 10 pupils take GCSEs early and by the end of Year 11 many have attained between three and eight GCSEs at grades A* to C. Many pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 are seen to achieve well and the local authority reports that pupils with particular social and

emotional difficulties often go on to attain qualifications beyond expectations. Pupils' progress overall is satisfactory, reflecting an uneven picture throughout the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The quality of provision for pupils' moral social and cultural development is good; it is outstanding for pupils' spiritual development. Prayer, self-reliance, thoughtfulness and respect for others are held to be important aspects of school life. Pupils say that school is like a big family where each person looks after the other. The vast majority of them enjoy school; their behaviour is good and their attendance is satisfactory. A key focus of the school's work is to equip pupils with the skills required for the next stages of their life and to enable them to make a positive contribution to their local community. An example of this is in a recent joint community health awareness day when pupils participated in teaching the general public about a healthy lifestyle.

Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities within school demonstrating their positive attitudes to school and learning. They include being prefects, mentors and members of the school council, although the council has not been active since the school moved premises. In keeping with the requirements of their faith, pupils engage in daily 'manual labour'; in this way they share responsibility for the care of the premises. Through religious education, assemblies and visits of cultural interest, pupils develop an understanding of different cultures and faiths. Performing arts lessons help them to share their experiences. An example of this is in the whole school performance of 'Motherland', which has been well received.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the implementation of some essential policies lack rigour, principally connected to the recruitment of staff. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently and instances of bullying are rare. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe around the school. The safeguarding arrangements comply fully with the latest guidance but do not result in rigorous recruitment procedures. Staff receive appropriate child protection training and a sufficient number of staff have received first aid training. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage staff have not yet attended the required training to include paediatric qualifications. The recording of accidents is not centralised and this leads to a certain degree of inconsistency in the range of information provided.

Further to the school's recent fire safety inspection, a satisfactory fire risk assessment is now in place and required action to change and relocate the alarm system is planned. However, weekly alarm tests and monthly emergency lighting tests are not carried out, fire drills are not recorded in sufficient detail and fire safety equipment is not consistently maintained. Registers are satisfactory and the school records authorised and unauthorised absence appropriately. Pupils develop an excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles through the curriculum and assemblies that are dedicated to health topics. The school encourages healthy eating by providing

well balanced vegetarian meals and pupils have free access to water throughout the day. Opportunities for physical activities, however, are limited.

The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school's procedures for recruitment do not reflect the latest guidance in all respects. Prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, the school's practice to carry out appropriate checks to confirm their medical fitness and previous employment history are inconsistent; checks are completed for some staff and not for others. An enhanced criminal record check has not been made for some members of staff; for example, where a previous check has been completed by the church. These are issues that remain from the school's last inspection. In addition, an overseas check on members of staff who have lived abroad has not been completed. As a result, the school's single central record is not completed fully.

School's premises and accommodation

All the required regulations are met in respect of premises and accommodation. The building is large, semi-detached and one storey and provides appropriately for pupils' needs. It comprises a large hall, a kitchen where hot meals are prepared and a swimming pool which is not in use. The number of classrooms is adequate for pupils' needs and there are a suitable number of toilet and washroom facilities to cater for staff and pupils. The outside play area is large and there is a good range of play equipment permanently fixed for pupils' use. However, this equipment is not appropriate for children in the Foundation Stage. There is no grassed area for pupils.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a range of useful information for parents. A school prospectus is supported by fliers and on line newsletters that provide up to date information on the work of the school. The school website has not been updated for several years. Parents have been recently informed of the availability upon request of the school's policies and other information, for example in relation to complaints and pupils' examination results. For pupils with statements of special educational needs, the school sets annual reviews and invites local authority personnel to attend to keep them fully updated about pupils' progress. However, the school does not currently provide an annual account of income and expenditure for pupils whose places are fully funded by the placing local authority. Parental questionnaires received by inspectors reflected equally positive and negative views of the school and its work. The response from the placing local authority, however, was positive in all respects.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school's procedures meet all the regulations.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the Nursery class. They settle quickly into school life because of the close partnership between staff and parents. Their eagerness to communicate with other children and adults shows the good progress they make in their personal development. The curriculum is good and is well planned to develop children's skills and knowledge in each of the six areas of learning. Teaching is good, particularly of communication and literacy skills, numeracy and creative skills. Reading is taught well because a good reading method is in place, supported by a wide range of story books. Language development is fostered effectively through frequent role play. Children enjoyed, for example, a whole range of creative activities based on the story of 'Handah's Surprise'. Children have access to computers and they enjoy using a painting computer programme.

The school has recently changed premises and so has not yet put in place outdoor play equipment which children can access freely. The teaching of the curriculum in the outdoor area is under-developed and is not used sufficiently to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Provision for their welfare, healthy and safety is satisfactory overall, with strengths as noted in the main school. For example, children learn to adopt healthy lifestyles by eating a balanced diet, washing their hands after messy activities and taking regular exercise. Children behave and play together well. Assessment activities are carried out satisfactorily. Books record children's learning journeys and development in all areas of the curriculum using photographic evidence that can be shared immediately with parents. The next steps that children will need to make are recorded and shared with parents. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good as is the overall effectiveness of the provision. The staff have an accurate picture of their strengths and key priorities for development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations"), with the exception of those listed below

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

- address the outstanding issues highlighted in the fire officer's report which is: to replace and relocate the alarm system; carry out weekly alarm tests and monthly emergency lighting tests; record the fire drills in more detail and ensure that all fire safety equipment will be serviced annually and maintained properly (paragraph 3(5)).

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 all appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their medical fitness and previous employment history (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff ensure that a criminal record check has been made by the proprietor in respect of members of staff appointed to a position at the school (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff ensure that an overseas check has been completed for any members of staff that have lived overseas (paragraph 4(2)(c))
- ensure that the single central record shows that overseas checks have been completed (paragraph 4C(2) and (3)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- ensure that an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred in respect of pupils funded by the local authority is submitted to the local authority (paragraph 6(7)).

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Improve teachers' expertise to assess pupils' work accurately.
- Use assessment information to ensure that planned work challenges more able pupils effectively.
- Ensure that pupils' progress is tracked effectively.
- Implement welfare, health and safety policies with more rigour.
- Develop the use of the outdoor area to ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage experience the curriculum outdoors.

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	Eden Independent School		
DCSF number	307/6084		
Unique reference number	101964		
Type of school	Seventh Day Adventist		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1995		
Age range of pupils	3–18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 36	Girls: 18	Total: 54
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 12	Girls: 1	Total: 13
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Total: 3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2000 – £4000		
Address of school	Eden Independent School Eastcote Lane Northolt Middlesex UB54HW		
Telephone number	020 842 37455		
Fax number	020 842 37455		
Email address	info@theedenschool.com; lauraasei@yahoo.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Laura Osei		
Proprietor	Independent SDA School		
Reporting inspector	Elisabeth Linley HMI		
Dates of inspection	10–11 February 2009		