

Lammas School

Independent school inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Mark Mumby HMI

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A¹ of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², 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

Lammas School is a co-educational independent day school providing education for pupils aged four to sixteen years of age. The school is registered for 175 pupils and there are currently 128 pupils on roll. There are 11 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, none of whom receives nursery funding from the government. The school is situated in Sutton-in-Ashfield and pupils come mostly from Sutton, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Alfreton and a wide range of villages further afield. The school aims to promote high moral and cultural values and to create a happy and secure environment where the needs of the individual are recognised and respected. It aims to develop the potential of all pupils, whether highly academic or less academically gifted. The school opened in 1981 and was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2007.

Evaluation of the school

Lammas School provides a satisfactory quality of education. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good and their behaviour is outstanding. However, the school has paid too little regard to statutory requirements and there are serious shortcomings with regard to safeguarding, health and safety and the education of the youngest children. Consequently, provision for welfare, health and safety throughout the school is inadequate, as is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has failed to meet nearly a quarter of the independent school regulations, a significant increase since the previous inspection.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory, despite some shortcomings in provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The brief curriculum statement on the school's website, supplemented with the aims of the school, comprises an adequate curriculum policy. However, schemes of work are inconsistent and incomplete. Consequently it is not possible to gain an effective overview of the school's curriculum map, or a view of how continuity and progression within individual subjects are guaranteed across the full age range of the school. A variety of medium term planning formats is in use, including some very appropriate templates.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Individual lesson planning is very variable and, in several lessons observed, no planning was seen. The curriculum reflects the National Curriculum in Key Stages 1 to 3. In addition, pupils benefit from lessons in religious education and citizenship. The core Key Stage 4 curriculum reflects the National Curriculum structure with English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education for all pupils. There is a limited option system with choices including history, art, psychology, and philosophy and ethics. Pupils are largely satisfied with the range of subjects available and value the emphasis on academic subjects leading to GCSE accreditation. Extra-curricular activities are limited. A garden and associated gardening club has recently been established – staff and pupils are proud of this. The provision of ICT at lunchtime and after school is a contributory factor to the improved provision for this subject since the last inspection. Pupils benefit from a suitable range of visits to museums, an art gallery and other places of interest. Older pupils receive appropriate careers advice through a Connexions adviser.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory, and pupils make satisfactory progress. However, there are shortcomings in the provision for children in Reception. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a high level of attention in small classes. Classroom routines and expectations are clearly established leading to a very good climate for learning. Pupils are enthusiastic to learn and have excellent attitudes in lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and sometimes very good. They use this to good effect to plan activities which enthuse the pupils and enable them to apply a high level of thinking skills. Learning is sometimes inhibited by the limitations in resources. For example, many of the textbooks are very old and some pupils have to rely on using their own laptop computers for GCSE coursework because the school does not have enough. On occasions, teaching is less effective because teachers miss opportunities to challenge pupils fully through open questioning or suitably difficult tasks. Occasionally, more able pupils are given insufficient opportunities to work independently and extend their learning. Teachers know the pupils well and understand their prior attainment. However, they do not always use this knowledge fully to plan work which is sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Consequently pupils do not always make as much progress as they are capable of.

Pupils' work is marked and there are some good examples of teachers writing informative comments to help pupils improve their work. However, this good practice is not consistent in all classes. Consequently pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to reach the next level. Assessment is in the process of development. Electronic records of assessment are kept, but mostly provide data covering only the current academic year. The school acknowledges that there is not a suitable framework of assessment in place which is used to plan teaching to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good and their behaviour is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and warm. Pupils of all ages take a willing, active part in their learning. They have a good understanding of right and wrong, reinforced by a variety of themes in the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are proud of their school. Several pupils who have transferred from other schools commented about the good relationships and positive atmosphere.

The citizenship curriculum contributes effectively to pupils' good understanding of public institutions and services in England, through themes such as 'the law' and 'your local community and your rights'. Pupils speak of their cultural awareness through multi-faith themes in religious education and through aspects of English and geography.

Pupils have good opportunities to make a positive contribution to both the school and wider communities. For example, younger pupils value responsibilities as prefects, form captains and school council representatives, whilst older pupils have prefect roles, including responsibility for supervising classes during wet breaktimes. Pupils collect for charities and take part in a range of fund raising activities. Success in GCSE examinations, including good achievement in English and mathematics, makes a positive contribution to the preparation of pupils for the next stage of their education.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the school has not paid sufficient attention to meeting several of the regulations with regard to health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils. The school has taken advice from a professional company with regard to health and safety, but has not used this information to formulate and implement its own health and safety policy.

Consequently, some important health and safety risks have gone unchecked. For example, there are unprotected fluorescent light tubes in place around the school and the storage of some of the pupils' lunchboxes is unhygienic. Risk assessments are not carried out systematically for the premises and activities. Consequently, not all risks are identified and, when they are, appropriate action to reduce the risk of harm to pupils is not always planned.

Recruitment procedures are not robust. The school's policy for the protection of children does not contain sufficient detail and has not been fully implemented. The designated member of staff for child protection has not received the required training. The school's anti-bullying policy has not been reviewed for over five years and, consequently, it does not take account of the latest guidance. The policy for educational visits away from the school site provides too little guidance for staff and the guidance that is included is not followed consistently. For example, a thorough risk assessment using the school's own pro-forma was not completed for a visit

taking place at the time of the inspection. The school maintains an admissions register, but it does not include all of the required information.

Where the school has made effective use of external advice, provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. For example, a rigorous fire risk assessment has been carried out. As a result, routine tests of equipment and evacuation procedures are robust. The testing of portable electrical appliances is carried out appropriately by an external company.

Despite the school's serious shortcomings in its health and safety procedures, pupils say that they feel safe. They are supervised well in lessons and during breaktimes. Pupils have a good understanding about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. However, many of them feel that the school does not support them in being healthy. For example, a tuck shop selling mainly unhealthy snacks and drinks operates at lunchtimes.

The school does not comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended because it has not devised a three-year accessibility plan.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

There are significant shortcomings in the checks the school makes when recruiting staff. Suitable procedures for the checking of professional and character references, and medical fitness are not in place. Although recently appointed members of staff have been checked with the criminal records bureau with regard to their suitability to work with children, the required checks to ensure that all long-standing members of staff and the proprietorial body are not barred from working with children have not been undertaken. The proprietor has taken immediate action to ensure that no pupils are ever left in a situation where they are not being supervised by an appropriately checked adult. The school does not maintain a single central register of staff, including members of the proprietorial body, which fulfils the requirements.

School's premises and accommodation

The school is housed in partially listed purpose-built school premises, some 150 years old. There are four additional classrooms contained within an annex. The accommodation provides adequate teaching spaces. However, much of the building is in a poor state of decorative order. The washroom facilities are inadequate because there are insufficient toilets for the numbers of pupils on roll and the hot water system is not suitably temperature-controlled. The school does not have an appropriate room to accommodate a pupil who may become ill during the school day.

Pupils benefit from local community facilities including the sports centre and library. The use of the sports facilities has enabled the school to significantly improve its physical education provision since the previous inspection.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has an informative website and a printed prospectus. As a result, parents and carers are able to access most of the information that is required. However, there are a few omissions. The school does not ensure that parents are able to access its policies with regard to health and safety, child protection and its policy on exclusions. Parents and carers are provided with three written reports each year. Although a few parents have expressed concern that they do not receive sufficient information about the progress their children are making, the written reports fulfil the requirements.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a clearly written complaints procedure which meets requirements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate because the school has not paid sufficient regard to the learning and development, and welfare requirements for children at this stage of their lives. For example, the school has not carried out a suitable risk assessment of the premises, appropriate staff checks have not been carried out and there is not a suitably qualified first-aider on site. This is the result of inadequate leadership and management. However, staff do endeavour to ensure that children in Reception participate in meaningful learning experiences. For example, the curriculum has been planned to cover all six areas of learning. Provision is inadequate because children do not have sufficient opportunities to learn independently through activities they initiate themselves. Opportunities for children to learn outside are limited by the current accommodation and children are not able to choose to work outside.

The classroom environment does not provide a sufficiently broad range of learning opportunities for the children. Consequently, outcomes for children are only satisfactory. Learning is assessed and reported on formally, but too little regard is taken of the requirement to assess against the statutory Early Learning Goals for this age range. Nevertheless, the children do make progress in their learning and there are some strengths in what the children can do. For example, children are very attentive and they listen well both to each other and to the adults who work with them. They are very considerate, waiting patiently for their turn. They have a very good understanding about how to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle. For example, several children explained why they wash their hands before lunch whilst others described the constituents of a healthy diet.

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.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- prepare and implement a written curriculum policy covering all aspects of the school's curriculum (paragraph 1(2))
- provide an adequate quantity, quality and range of classroom resources (paragraph 1(3)(f))
- put in place a framework to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use the 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 written policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the DCSF guidance Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DCSF-00656-2007) (paragraph 3(2)(a))
- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DCSF-04217-2006) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school which has regard to DCSF guidance Health and safety of pupils on educational visits (DCSF ref:HSPV2) (paragraph 3(2)(c))
- have regard to the DCSF guidance Health and Safety: responsibilities and powers (DCSF 0803/2001) (paragraph 3(4))
- maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

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 appropriate checks been carried out and completed to

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references (paragraph 4(2)(a))

- ensure that checks have been made on all members of the proprietorial body to confirm their identity, right to work in the UK, enhanced CRB check, and where such checks are insufficient because the person has lived outside the UK such additional checks to confirm suitability as the Chair considers appropriate having regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State and confirmation that his/her work or intended work would not contravene a direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act(a) (reference to list 99) or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which would have the same effect (paragraphs 4B(4) and (5))
- maintain a single central register of all staff which shows, for each member of staff in post on or after 1 September 2003, that the following checks were made: of his/her identity (and the date on which this check was made); of their qualifications (where required) (and the date of the check); whether an enhanced CRB certificate was obtained; if so, the date on which the check was completed or certificate obtained; whether she/he is subject to any direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (reference to List 99) or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which would have the same effect (and the date undertaken); and, for each member of staff in post on or after 1 May 2007, of his/her right to work in the UK and, where relevant for those who have lived outside the UK, additional checks as appropriate to ensure suitability to work in a school (and the date these checks were done) (paragraphs 4C(2) and (3))
- ensure that the single central register shows, in relation to staff not directly employed by the school, whether written notification has been received from the employment business that it has carried out the checks referred to in 4C(2): identity, List 99, qualifications where appropriate, appropriate checks if the person lived outside the UK and right to work in the UK where appropriate and that it or another employment business has carried out an enhanced CRB check and it has obtained an enhanced CRB certificate together with the date when the written notification that each check was completed or certificate obtained was received (paragraph 4C(4))
- ensure that the single central register shows, in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 September 2003, whether a check was made of: his/her identity; and whether an enhanced CRB check was carried out and certificate obtained. In relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 May 2007 the register must also show the checks made to confirm their right to work in the United Kingdom and, where someone had lived outside the UK, such additional enquiries which were made as were appropriate (paragraphs 4C(6) and (7)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide sufficient washrooms for pupils, including facilities for pupils with special needs, which take account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(k))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- ensure there a satisfactory standard and adequate maintenance of decoration throughout the school (paragraph 5(q)).

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 parents are aware they can request particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for exclusions (paragraph 6(3)(a))
- ensure that parents are aware they can request particulars of the school's policies relating to health and safety (paragraph 6(3)(d))
- publish on the school's website a copy of the school's safeguarding children policy as prepared under paragraph 3(2)(b) (paragraph 6(4)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.⁴

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- make arrangements for each child within the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage to be assessed throughout the year using the 13 scales, having regard to the scale points as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

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

- take necessary checks to safeguard children by ensuring that all of the required checks are made to confirm the suitability of all members of staff to work with children
- ensure that an effective safeguarding policy and procedure is implemented including the appointment of a suitably trained member of staff to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children

⁴ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga_19950050_en_1

- ensure that a risk assessment of the premises is carried out and is then reviewed at least once per year
- ensure that at least one person with a paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times when children are present.

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 good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?			✓	
What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?				✓
How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?				✓
Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS?				✓

School details

Name of school	Lammas School		
DCSF number	891/6016		
Unique reference number (URN)	122937		
Type of school	Primary and secondary day		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1981		
Age range of pupils	4–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 62	Girls: 66	Total: 128
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,400.00		
Address of school	Lammas Road Sutton-in-Ashfield Nottinghamshire NG17 2AD		
Telephone number	01623 516879		
Fax number	01623 516879		
Email address	information@lammas-school.co.uk		
Director of School	Rod Singleton		
Proprietor	David Coleshill		
Reporting inspector	Mark Mumby HMI		
Dates of inspection	17–18 March 2010		