

# The Villa Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery

Independent school inspection report

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DCSF registration number	210/6393
Unique Reference Number (URN)	134142
URN for registered childcare	EY286572/480468
Inspection number	301635
Inspection dates	25 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

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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<sup>1</sup>, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, 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. The inspection of registered provision<sup>3</sup> was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.<sup>4</sup>

This was a light touch inspection 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

The Villa Pre-preparatory School and Nursery is registered to provide education and childcare for children from the age of two years through to the end of Year 2. Since registering for childcare with seven children in 1997 and opening as a school in 2001, The Villa has steadily expanded to provide for the full Early Years Foundation Stage, including childcare, and Key Stage 1 for up to 110 pupils in total at any one time on a daily basis. There are currently 140 pupils on roll, including those attending part-time. There are 114 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which comprises a class for two- to three-year-olds, a class for three- to four-year-olds and a Reception class. Forty-one children are under the age of three. There are currently 72 children who receive nursery education funding. Day care is offered between the hours of 8am and 6pm for 50 weeks of the year for up to 62 children. Within this figure, after-school and holiday care can be provided for 20 pupils between the ages of five and eight years. A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The Villa occupies a large Victorian house on a residential street in the London borough of Southwark. As the numbers on roll have increased, the premises have been remodelled and expanded. Most recently, part of the second floor has been rebuilt to allow for the remodelling of teaching space and administrative areas. This is the first time that The Villa has had a single inspection for the combined provision of the school, the nursery and the childcare. The last inspection of the school was in June 2007 and for the childcare in June 2005. In both cases these were the first inspections of the provision. The Villa is owned by a single individual as proprietor

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

<sup>3</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.

<sup>4</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga\\_20060021\\_en\\_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga_20060021_en_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49)

and is run by a headteacher and a nursery manager. Their aim is 'to provide an environment that promotes self-esteem and confidence, giving praise for trying and not just success, while at the same time encouraging each individual's academic potential'.

## Evaluation of the school

The Villa provides a good standard of education and care for its pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables pupils to make good progress in their academic skills and to develop outstanding personal skills. Their behaviour is outstanding. At the time of the last education inspection, six regulations were not met. One of these remains unmet because the provision for pupils when they are ill still does not meet the requirements. Eight other regulations are not met currently and these relate to the first-aid policy, letting parents and others know of the information that they can request, and the arrangements for the appeals panel as part of the complaints procedures. At the time of the last inspection of childcare, there were three recommendations. Of these, two have been fully addressed and some issues relating to the administering of medication remain. All regulations for safeguarding pupils are met.

Staff work well together and share responsibility for the day-to-day welfare of all of the pupils but, traditionally, the provision in the Nursery and in the rest of the school has run in parallel rather than being formally linked through policies, practices and curricular schemes of work. This is now changing and the headteacher and nursery manager are bringing things together more formally to ensure greater consistency. Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the provision for their children at The Villa.

## Quality of education

The school provides a good standard of education and the curriculum for pupils across both key stages is good. It is designed with two purposes in mind: first, to enable pupils to leave the school with high academic standards so as to gain admission to the next school of their parents' choice; and second, to foster a wide range of personal skills, so that pupils are confident and independent learners. The curriculum provides for this well because while literacy and numeracy have high priority and are developed systematically through appropriate schemes of work, there is a good range of other opportunities that encourage pupils to be active and curious learners. Personal, social and health education (PSHE), taught through circle time, times when pupils of mixed ages work and play together and activities off site, makes a significant contribution to the pupils' highly developed social skills. Some subjects are taught by specialists, including drama, French, music and sport. Swimming is taught throughout the year at the local pool for Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils. Schemes of work, mostly commercially produced, are adapted well to provide a continuous progression through subjects between Reception and the end

of Key Stage 1 but the links between the Nursery curriculum and that of the Reception Year are not well developed.

Curricular schemes of work provide teachers with a good overview of the objectives and activities that they need to plan lessons for each year group and teachers are proficient in planning lively and interesting lessons. There is no learning by rote here! Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about mathematics and have good attitudes to work in all subjects. The way in which teachers promote the purpose of the learning activities to pupils is not consistent across the school and this is linked to the quality of lesson plans. Some teachers plan more carefully according to learning objectives and for different groups of ability than others. This affects the quality of the assessments that they make of what the pupils have learned. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and assessment is generally good across both key stages. Assessment is more coherently used for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery than in the rest of the school because here there are clear links between what has been learned and what still needs to be covered, both in relation to children's skills and in the range of learning opportunities each day. Academic and play resources are varied, plentiful and of good quality, with the exception of those for information and communication technology (ICT).

There are two areas of the school's work that are underdeveloped. As at the time of the last education inspection, the use of computers by pupils and staff is limited. This is due to a lack of resources and a lack of planning for pupils' development in ICT skills throughout the curriculum. The other area relates to assessment. The tracking of how well pupils have done across the whole of their time at The Villa, as well as in each key stage, is not easy to judge because assessments that take place during the year and at the end of each year, although shared internally, are not systematically collated. Pupils do well in the 7+ examinations for other independent schools, enabling them to gain entry to the next school of their choice. This represents good progress overall.

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

These aspects of pupils' personal development, including their behaviour, are outstanding. Staff and pupils enjoy mutual respect. Older pupils provide good role models for younger ones and the enjoyment of learning and of one another's company is clear to see. The pupils are lively at work and at play, and attendance rates are high. Pupils of all ages make good use of the opportunities that the staff provide for them to work and play together; accordingly, they are keen to play their part in the life of the school. For example, public speaking, as in school performances, is mentioned by pupils and their families as something that they enjoy highly and value. The staff ensure that all have an equal opportunity to perform and the pupils rise to the challenge with confidence. In their social relationships and PSHE activities, pupils throughout the age-range show an appreciation of one another's differences as well as a respect for rules.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Attention to these aspects of the school's work is good. Regulations not met at the last inspection are now met with the exception of the provision for those who are ill. The single central register of checks on staff now meets requirements and evidence to support these checks is suitably kept. There is a three-year access development plan in place to meet the requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act. In addition, risk assessments are thorough and there are good procedures for fire safety. There is no specific policy for first aid.

The supervision by staff is appropriately vigilant in relation to the nature of the building and the age of the children, without being overprotective or controlling. As a result, pupils of all ages conduct themselves safely around the building, especially on the stairs and between indoors and outdoors, and they become increasingly independent and responsible as they grow older. The pupils trust the staff to help them sort out any squabbles that they might have. The youngest children have their afternoon nap in a relaxed atmosphere for as long as they want while others get on with the business of play. Healthy snacks are provided for all pupils and much enjoyed, although adults could take a stronger lead in teaching the correct method of holding and using cutlery when eating meals.

Differing practice between the Nursery and the rest of the school has led to some inconsistencies, such as in the system for recording when medication is given. Policies are being reviewed to ensure that they cover the whole of the provision from day care in the Nursery to older pupils in Key Stage 1.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

All aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are shared between the nursery manager for the childcare in the Nursery and the headteacher for the Reception Year. Although the quality of their leadership and management of their respective parts is good, there is an unnecessary division of the provision. This leads to some inconsistencies and missed opportunities for seamless progression throughout the key stage and then into Year 1. For example, the needs of individuals are generally well met through the curriculum but plans are not well linked between the Nursery and the Reception class. Nevertheless, the work of the nursery manager and the headteacher is highly valued by parents and they have established a good rapport. The nursery manager and headteacher are strongly committed to continuous improvement and welcome constructive comments about their practice. The capacity for improvement is good as demonstrated by their response to the previous inspection of the childcare. However, as in the rest of the school, action has not been taken to address the fact that ICT provision is weak in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children enter the Nursery from the age of two years typically with skills appropriate for their age, or slightly higher. They make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals with most attaining above national averages by the end of the Reception Year. Many children have developed a sophisticated degree of vocabulary by the time they enter Year 1. One Reception girl told the inspector that he 'sounded like someone from the North!' Similarly, a three year old said, when dressed in a long silk dress, that she was going to a ball, a 'Mama Mia' ball, and proceeded to sing one of the songs with great accuracy.

In the Nursery, children quickly develop an independent approach to exploration in their learning and are able to make preferential choices about what activity they will do. Levels of enjoyment throughout the Nursery are high due to a stimulating and well-planned range of activities. Their confidence continues through the Reception Year and this prepares them well for increased opportunities and responsibilities in Key Stage 1. Opportunities for access to outdoor as well as indoor learning are limited, particularly for the Reception class and older children in the Nursery. Nevertheless, the indoor and outdoor learning is well organised and designed to adhere tightly to the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. In addition, a beautifully appointed hall enables children to take part in physical activities such as dance and gymnastics.

The children's welfare and safety in classrooms are high on staff's priorities and parents agree that this is the case. Differing arrangements between the Nursery classes and the Reception class mean that there are inconsistencies and inadequacies in some welfare arrangements, such as parents' access to their child's records and the recording of any medication given. Movement around the premises on three separate floors is well managed for those in Nursery and Reception. For example, there is a clear and well-supervised routine for ensuring that there is no crowding in cloakroom areas. The toilets in the nursery have been improved since the last childcare inspection by providing children with a private cubicle if they so choose. Good facilities are provided for the youngest children who may choose to have a nap after lunch. After-school care is well staffed and resourced, including a range of activities to interest the different age groups.

## 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 provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement a specific written policy on first aid (paragraph 3(6)).

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

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill (paragraph 5(l)).

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 academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(e))
- ensure that parents are aware they can request the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- ensure that where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g))
- ensure that the procedure allows for parents to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h))
- ensure that the complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of the findings and recommendations are: (1) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and (2) available for inspection on the premises by the proprietor and the headteacher (paragraph 7(i))
- ensure that the procedure provides for written records to be kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j))
- ensure that the procedure provides that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential (paragraph 7(k)).

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

- implement an effective policy for administering medicines.

## 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 provision for ICT
- improve systems that track pupils' progress over time, for groups over time and for individuals from their starting points
- ensure that all policies and practice, including the monitoring and evaluation of them, are approached from a whole-school point of view in order to improve continuity of learning and well-being across the two key stages.



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?		✓		

The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

Evaluation of boarding provision				
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## School details

Name of school	The Villa Pre-preparatory School and Nursery		
DCSF number	210/6393		
Unique Reference Number (URN)	134142		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY286572		
Type of school	Pre-preparatory		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1997 childcare and nursery 2001 as a school		
Age range of pupils	2–7 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 20	Girls: 24	Total: 44
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 47	Girls: 49	Total: 96
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 17	Girls: 24	Total: 41
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,205		
Annual fees (childcare)	£4,430 to £12,675		
Address of school	54 Lyndhurst Grove London SE15 5AH		
Telephone number	020 7703 6216		
Fax number	020 7252 6356		
Email address	<a href="mailto:Enquiries@thevillaschoolandnursery.com">Enquiries@thevillaschoolandnursery.com</a>		
Headteacher	Ms Gillian Quinn		
Proprietor	Dr Ivan Stoyanov		
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI		
Dates of inspection	25 February 2010		