

La Petite Ecole Bilingue

22 Vicar's Road, London NW5 4NL

Inspection dates

14–16 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders at all levels, including the proprietor, have a clear vision for the school. Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met and the school continues to improve.
- Staff and parents are supportive of the school's leadership. Staff morale is high. Parents think highly of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good in French and mostly so in English. Consequently, pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
- Children in the early years make good progress because the quality of teaching is good. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by a good range of additional activities, including visits.
- Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes towards their learning are strong features of the school.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils are successfully taught about tolerance and respect and gain appreciation of British values.
- There are sometimes insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in English and other subjects to improve their writing skills.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation of their work, including handwriting and spelling, are not consistently high in English.
- Pupils sometimes have insufficient access to information and communication technology (ICT) to further support their learning.
- Senior leaders are not consistently held to account for the work they do to improve the school.
- The school's improvement priorities lack clarity, and arrangements for checking the effectiveness of actions taken by leaders have not been specified.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to write at length in order to improve their writing in English
 - expectations of pupils' presentation of their work, including their handwriting and spelling, are consistently high in English
 - pupils have greater access to information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders are consistently held to account for the work they do to bring about continuous improvement
 - the school's plans have clear priorities for improvement and specify the arrangements for checking the impact of leaders' actions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is ambitious for pupils and her high expectations are shared by leaders, including the proprietor, and staff.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are met. Leaders have been effective in maintaining the good quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- Middle leaders for the English and the French curriculums are skilled and know their subjects' strengths and areas of weakness well. They monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and provide support for teachers to improve their classroom practice. The work of the middle leaders contributes well to the school's capacity to improve further.
- Leaders ensure that there are good training opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching skills and classroom practice. Staff appreciate opportunities for professional development, as well as to observe teaching, including in other schools. Consequently, they are able to reflect on and improve their own practice.
- Staff are supportive of the school's leadership and vision. Staff morale is high.
- Leaders and staff know individual pupils well and track their progress carefully. Those who fall behind are provided with timely support to ensure that they make good progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum promotes pupils' bilingual skills well in French and English and ensures that they make good progress. The curriculum includes all the areas of learning of the 'Education Nationale French program' and the English national curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by a range of activities, including ballet, theatre, yoga, choir shows and visits.
- The school's work promotes British values well. Pupils elect their classmates to the school council, and learn about elections, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils show respect for diversity, including for people with protected characteristics.
- The school marks different festivals, such as Diwali, Hanukah and the Chinese New Year. Additionally, leaders have plans to widen pupils' understanding further of how people from different faiths contribute to life in modern Britain.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are supportive of the school's leaders and would recommend the school to another parent. Some of the many supportive comments that parents made to describe the school included, 'a fantastic school', 'a happy and nurturing environment' and 'a really amazing school'.
- The headteacher meets the parent council regularly to listen to the views and concerns of the parents. Parents are able to ask searching questions of the headteacher about the work of the school.
- Senior leaders are not fully held to account for their work, including by the proprietor. The arrangements for the performance management of the headteacher are also not well established to ensure accountability.
- Leaders know the school's main strengths and weaknesses. However, the school development plan does not identify clear priorities for improvement or specify how the

actions taken will be evaluated. Consequently, leaders are not consistently targeting areas for improvement and taking timely action to bring about swift improvements.

Governance

- The arrangements for governance are fulfilled by the proprietor. The proprietor is ambitious for pupils and their outcomes.
- The proprietor meets the headteacher and middle leaders frequently and is generally well informed about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She routinely visits the school to find out for herself how well pupils are learning and cared for. The proprietor works well with senior leaders to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The proprietor has good links with parents, including the school's parent council, to listen to their views and concerns.
- The proprietor has worked effectively with leaders to ensure that the independent school standards are met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is readily available on the school's website and meets the current government requirements.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place to ensure pupils' safety, within the school and when attending visits and trips.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding records, documents, processes and procedures are fit for purpose. They have successfully created a vigilant and safe culture in the school.
- All staff have received training on safeguarding and child protection procedures, based on current statutory guidance. Staff know the correct procedures to follow if they have concerns in relation to a child's safety.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including in French, English and mathematics.
- A strong feature of teaching and learning is the positive relationships between staff and pupils, which give pupils confidence to achieve well. Staff know pupils as individuals and use this knowledge well to assess their learning needs.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge in French and English and across other subjects. They use their subject knowledge well to motivate pupils and reinforce learning.
- Teachers usually set challenging work for pupils, including for the most able pupils, to keep them engaged in their learning.

- Teaching assistants are skilled and committed and support pupils' learning effectively. They particularly provide strong support for pupils who speak English as an additional language to ensure that they make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to engage pupils and to test and deepen their understanding.
- The teaching of phonics is good overall. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to read difficult or unfamiliar words. Pupils said that they enjoy reading and most of them read at home.
- Staff focus well on extending pupils' vocabulary in French and English and provide them with ample opportunities for speaking and listening. This, and staff's bilingual skills, particularly help pupils who speak English as an additional language to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy improving their skills in yoga, theatre and dance through the specialised teaching they receive.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' written work in English are not consistently high. Consequently, some pupils continue to make spelling mistakes with poorly written and presented work.
- Sometimes, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in writing by writing at length in English and other subjects.
- Pupils sometimes do not have sufficient opportunities to use ICT to support and extend their learning. There is also a limited number of computers for pupils to extend their knowledge of and skills in computing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff have a strong focus on pupils' welfare and well-being and ensure that pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils are friendly and caring. They are highly respectful to each other and adults.
- Pupils have strong attitudes to their learning. Pupils want to do their best and enjoy seeing their achievements celebrated in assemblies. However, sometimes, pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work. Some pupils do not ensure that the mistakes they make are not repeated, particularly in English.
- Pupils are taught about unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know how to cross roads safely and how to keep safe when using the internet. Pupils, particularly the older pupils, know about the potential threats to their safety posed by cyber bullying. Pupils said they feel safe at school and have full confidence in adults to keep them safe.
- Pupils said that behaviour is good. They said that name-calling is rare and that bullying, racism or homophobia are not issues in the school.

- Pupils enjoy the healthy cooked food at school and know how to lead healthy lives. They have regular physical activities to keep themselves fit.
- Pupils have a range of responsibilities in the school to develop their confidence. For example, pupils are members of the school council and classroom monitors and older pupils 'buddy' younger pupils.
- All parents who responded to Parent View and all those who inspectors spoke with said that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are kind, courteous and well behaved in lessons and throughout the school. However, occasionally, they need to be reminded to listen, especially the younger children.
- Pupils know the school rules on behaviour and said that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Their views about behaviour are supported by the school's records, which show very few incidents of poor behaviour. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
- All parents who responded to Parent View and all those who inspectors spoke with said that pupils are well behaved. All staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agreed that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils' punctuality is good and their attendance is average. There is little persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils currently at the school are making good progress in a range of subjects, particularly in French. Overall, their progress in English is good but it is stronger in speaking and reading than in writing.
- The school's tracking information and the work in pupils' books show that pupils make good progress. Those who have been at the school for a prolonged length of time attain well. Pupils' attainment is particularly strong in the French curriculum, where pupils use their knowledge and skills in French well.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils enter and leave the school other than at normal times, most of whom are at early stages of learning English. These pupils generally make good progress from their starting points. However, their attainment is variable, especially that of pupils who start late in the year or have missed learning in prior year groups.
- There were very few pupils in the Year 6 cohort who left the school in 2017. All pupils who left at the end of Year 6 and applied to a French or bilingual secondary school have been granted a place. Families who chose to move to France successfully enrolled their children back into the French system (public or private).
- The most able pupils routinely receive work that challenges them and so make good progress.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the effective support they receive, either in small groups or one-to-one.
- All parents who responded to Parent View and all those who inspectors spoke with said that their children make good progress at school
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching is good and children make good progress from their starting points. There are no significant differences between the outcomes for boys and girls. Children are prepared well for their learning in Year 1.
- Adults use good questioning skills to help children think about their learning and extend their language. For example, in the Nursery class, strong questioning reinforced children's knowledge of shapes, colours and numbers when playing with playdough.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are provided with strong support to develop and improve their language skills. There are many opportunities for speaking and listening to help this group of children make good progress.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Children in the Reception class make good progress with their understanding of the sounds letters make and some are able to write simple words. However, pupils' attainment in writing is weaker than in other areas of learning. This is largely to do with children at the early stages of learning English, some of whom also join the Reception Year.
- Adults capture children's learning well in their 'learning journals'. However, occasionally, activities to address areas of weaknesses are not clearly identified. This can sometimes leave gaps in children's knowledge and understanding. However, there are plans in place to ensure that activities to address any weaknesses in learning are consistently highlighted.
- Parents complete 'wow' cards to capture what children have achieved at home. This contributes well to the school's assessment information on children's knowledge and skills. Parents have access to information on what their child achieved through the 'school blog'. Resources are also made available to parents to support their children's learning.
- Children have good attitudes to their learning. They are kind, willing to share resources and collaborate well with each other. For example, in the Reception class, children interacted well with each other in role-play activities, including a vet's surgery and a puppet show.
- The leadership of the early years is effective. The early years leader is highly skilled and knows the strengths and areas for improvement in the provision. Children's progress is tracked so that those falling behind are given the support they need to catch up. Staff are provided with effective training and support to improve the quality of teaching.
- Staff are trained well to keep children safe. Leaders and staff work together well to ensure that safeguarding is effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.
- The school meets the independent school standards in relation to the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	138777
DfE registration number	202/6002
Inspection number	10012786

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Anne Henderson-Stewart
Headteacher	Charlotte Beyazian
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,400
Telephone number	020 7284 2620
Website	www.sis-lpeblkt.com
Email address	education.kt@lpebl.com
Date of previous inspection	18–20 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school was registered in September 2012 and was first inspected in June 2013. La Petite Ecole Bilingue is an independent day school for pupils aged from three to 11 years. It is a bilingual school open to parents and carers who wish their children to have a secular, bilingual, French-English education. It is located in Kentish Town, London. The school aims to 'provide bilingual education and for pupils to be confident in both English and French.'
- In line with the requirements of the French education system, reading and writing are not formally taught in French until pupils reach the age of six years.
- The curriculum is taught in both English and French. The school uses the local park for physical education (PE).

- The school is registered for 165 pupils and there are 74 pupils currently on roll aged from three to 11 years. There is a full time Nursery class and a Reception class.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils with an education, health and care plan. There are no disadvantaged pupils. There are very few most-able pupils.
- About four fifths of pupils speak English as an additional language (mainly French speakers). The majority of these pupils are at early stages of speaking English.
- The mobility of pupils is well above average. There are very few pupils who start in the early years or key stage 1 and stay until the end of Year 6. There were very few pupils in the Year 6 cohort who left the school in 2016.
- The arrangements for governance are fulfilled by the sole proprietor.
- By the end of the inspection, the school met the statutory requirements for the publication of information on its website.
- The school was first inspected in June 2013, when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged as inadequate. This was mainly because some of the independent school standards were not met. The subsequent progress monitoring inspection in December 2013 found two regulations not fully met. These related to the provision of accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils. A progress monitoring inspection took place in June 2014 to check the school's progress in addressing the weaknesses. The monitoring inspection concluded that the school made good progress in tackling the weaknesses and met all regulatory requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school in all year groups, including in the early years. A few were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils in key stages 1 and 2 to discuss their learning and views about the school. The inspectors also heard pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 read and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspectors checked pupils' books and the school's own information on the achievement of pupils. Inspectors scrutinised the single central register of pre-employment checks on staff, and looked at pupils' attendance and behaviour records. They also examined documents and policies in relation to the independent school standards, including safety and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the proprietor, middle leaders, staff and parents.
- There were 37 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. All of the written comments that were included on Parent View were also taken into account. In addition, inspectors spoke to some parents during the inspection about their views. Inspectors also considered 13 responses to the survey for staff.

Inspection team

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