



The Lyceum

Independent School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

DfES registration number 204/6401
Unique reference number 131343
Inspection number 296888
Inspection dates 7-8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Jill Bainton

Inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Inspection of funded nursery education was carried out under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Age group 3-11	Published 30 March 2007	Reference no. 296888
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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 by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

The Lyceum is an independent, non-selective, co-educational day school for pupils aged 3 to 11. It was opened in 1997 by the joint proprietors. There are currently 107 pupils on roll. The school is located in a former warehouse, which has been adapted for school use. It is very close to Liverpool Street Station in the City of London. Provision for the 25 funded nursery pupils was inspected at the same time by a childcare inspector as part of a combined inspection.

The school aims to *'provide children with an educational atmosphere and experiences that stimulate, motivate and encourage them.'*

Evaluation of the school

The Lyceum is a good school, with some outstanding features. During the past 10 years the joint proprietors have successfully built a school where the quality of care and teaching are consistently good. With the support of committed parents, pupils make at least good progress to attain high academic and social standards by the time they leave. The school meets all but one of the regulations.

Quality of education

The school is successful in fulfilling its aims. The curriculum is good and has some exemplary elements. There is a careful balance between subjects taught individually and an integrated topic approach. Subjects taught discretely include mathematics, French, Latin and verbal and non-verbal reasoning. The topics are carefully chosen to reflect a good balance within a two-year planned cycle. The current topics are World War 2, The Vikings and Ancient Egypt. The staff are experts at interweaving the other National Curriculum subjects into these topics. For example, handwriting for Years 5 and 6 focused on quotes from Winston Churchill, in Years 3 and 4 creative writing was based on a Viking Saga and Years 1 and 2 held an Ancient Egyptian day, complete with food and costumes, including wigs, which one pupil reported as 'very itchy'.

The curriculum is thoughtfully and thoroughly planned and ensures clear progression of learning through each subject. It prepares pupils very well for independent selective schools' entry examinations. There is an outstanding programme of creative arts, especially music, which is of an outstanding standard and much enjoyed by pupils.

Throughout the school, a strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and the older pupils become confident, mature young people, ready for the next stage of their education. Information and communication technology is taught effectively through the integrated topic work and older pupils also follow a typing programme. Older pupils confidently access the Internet for research purposes. Personal, social, and health education is carefully integrated throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum is greatly enriched by a very wide range of related visits, including residential experiences., with older pupils currently anticipating a residential visit as 'evacuees', complete with authentic costumes, which the school has amassed. School clubs, such as Big Band, sport and Spanish further enhance pupils' experience.

Inspectors received a very high number of responses to the pre-inspection parental questionnaire. These demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of parents believe that teaching is good, and they are correct to do so. Teaching is at least good in all classes, and has some outstanding aspects. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson on decimal places for a Year 5 class, the teacher used pupils as a practical demonstration to explain the concept. Pupils' misconceptions were easily addressed, and recording was used effectively to clarify the next steps in their learning. The teacher targeted questions to challenge pupils and thus extend the learning of pupils of all abilities. As a result, they worked with zest and made good progress. In an outstanding Year 5 and 6 music lesson the teacher checked assiduously to ensure that every pupil was breathing correctly, and that they used appropriate warm up activities which prepared them very well for singing their World War 2 songs, which they did with expertise and gusto. This provides the very best foundation for the excellent standards reached in music throughout the school, with all pupils learning to play an instrument.

The staff are well qualified, committed and enthusiastic. Their classroom assistants support them very ably. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons; they concentrate and try hard. They join in enthusiastically in lessons they particularly enjoy, for example music and topic work. They report that learning is fun at the school and older ones especially like the residential visits. The pupils' work is generally of a high standard. Handwriting is taught effectively and is given appropriate priority, so that pupils develop a good cursive style from an early age.

Assessment of pupils' progress is thorough. The progress and attainment of pupils during each school year are carefully charted through questioning, marking, and standardised testing. Parents receive a written report at the end of the summer term. These reports do not always explain to parents and pupils how pupils have been successful and the next steps that they need to take to improve their work. Pupils' work is regularly marked but not all staff include comments on how they could improve their work. The school has identified areas for future development through its development plan, although these are not yet prioritised.

Pupils enter the school with attainment levels that are above those expected nationally. The strong teaching they receive, together with consistent support from home, ensures that pupils make good, and often outstanding, progress as they move through the school. By the time they leave they are achieving very high standards and this is reflected in the high numbers of pupils who are accepted for entry at selective independent secondary schools.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. All pupils have wonderful chances to develop spiritually through discussion, music and history topics where they can reflect about peoples' feelings in a variety of situations. The provision for the moral development of the pupils is outstanding and project work allows them to learn about many moral issues. For example, Year 6 pupils write about dilemmas people face during wartime. Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop socially. This is mostly because the school ensures that they have opportunities to work together in project work and raise money for many charities and appeals. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their attendance is very good and many report that they love school. They make a very good contribution to the school and local community. They sing at various concerts and enter local art competitions. All this extra-curricular activity helps prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education. Music and topic work give pupils a wealth of chances to find out about our own and other cultures, so that their multicultural awareness is good, for example through opportunities provided in religious education and other project work.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. It is a safe place in which to work and learn. It encourages pupils to be aware of their own safety and well-being. Health and safety and behaviour policies are implemented effectively. Pupils from different year groups are adamant that there is no bullying at this school. The school is aware of the latest guidance for safeguarding children but not all staff have yet received up-

to-date training in safeguarding matters. This is currently being remedied. All pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and take regular exercise, and the vast majority does so. The school is vigilant with regard to fire safety. All areas of the school have been risk assessed and detailed risk assessments are carried out before each visit outside school. Staff are trained in first aid, well-stocked First aid boxes are located where needed, and accidents are diligently recorded. Pupils are very well supervised at all times. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Procedures for checking the suitability of staff to work with children are robust, and meet all current requirements.

School's premises and accommodation

The school is located in former warehouse premises, which have been thoughtfully adapted for use as a school. The open plan layout with adjacent classrooms enables different year groups to work closely together. The level of noise is acceptable and does not disturb other classes. The classrooms are welcoming working environments, attractively decorated with examples of pupils' work, celebrating their achievement. There is limited natural light in the building but the artificial lighting is adequate. The younger pupils have their own area on the ground floor. The school does not have an outdoor play area but the area known as the courtyard is sufficient for the number of pupils who use it at one time as playtimes are staggered. The large attractive hall area is in constant use for music and physical education. The small café is used at lunchtimes. The school makes very effective use of local facilities for games, skating and swimming.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school gives parents a good range of information through the brochure, the parents' pack and the website. Parents are very keen on The Lyceum. One noted *'I cannot praise the staff and head teachers enough'*. Another wrote *'The Lyceum gives each child confidence in their own abilities and a great deal of praise'*. Parents are given a written report at the end of the summer term and have a consultation evening each term. The school makes parents welcome and is happy to arrange a meeting at a convenient time.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a set of procedures which meets the regulations.

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 the one listed below.

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

- ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training in line with Department for Education and Skills guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

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:

- include additional comments on pupils' work and in reports to parents, which explain to them how they have been successful and the next steps that they need to take to improve their work
- prioritise the school development plan to identify areas for further development.

Inspection of funded nursery education

Effectiveness of the funded nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff promote all aspects of children's learning and development successfully. They are well-informed about the children's individual skills and interests. They have high expectations for children's achievements. Staff are secure in their knowledge and implementation of the Foundation Stage. Children's profiles are completed regularly, this means that their individual learning is well planned and they make good progress. The strong emphasis on learning through project work and practical activities means that children are well motivated to learn. Children have fewer opportunities to develop an awareness of religious and cultural

differences. Children with learning difficulties receive effective support from staff, who work closely with professionals and parents to provide a fully inclusive curriculum. However, individual plans do not contain sufficient strategies to help children achieve the next steps.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. Consequently children behave very well which has a significant impact on their learning. Good coverage is given to all areas of learning. However, children have fewer opportunities to engage in spontaneous imaginative play based on their first hand experiences. Children in the reception class and younger children are grouped together for some parts of the day. The impact of this is that occasionally, younger children are less involved in the activities provided to support their learning and concentration. Because of the way that the setting is organised children do not access books independently.

The leadership and management of the nursery are good. Teaching is carefully monitored to meet the needs of children. This has ensured that the nursery has made good progress since the last inspection. The management and staff work effectively together and strive to achieve the best for the children in their care. The partnership with parents and carers is good. The nursery is committed to working in partnership and actively keeps them informed about their child's progress through the use of a 'home book' and formally at parent's evenings. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Recommendations or actions to improve the funded nursery education

- ensure that younger children are grouped appropriately to ensure that they are able to be involved, concentrate and learn effectively
- provide more opportunities for the children to have an awareness of and show an interest in cultural and religious events.

School details

Name of school	The Lyceum		
DfES number	204/6401		
Unique reference number	131343		
Unique reference number (funded nursery education)	240942		
Type of school	Primary school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1997		
Age range of pupils	3-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 50	Girls: 51	Total: 101
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Number of children receiving funded nursery education	Boys: 14	Girls: 11	Total: 25
Annual fees	£ 9,000		
Address of school	6 Paul Street London EC2A 4JH		
Telephone number	0207 2471588		
Fax number	0207 6550951		
Email address	Lyceumschool@aol.com		
Headteachers	Mrs Lynn Hannay, Mr Jeremy Rowe.		
Proprietors	The Hannay-Rowe Education Company Limited		
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton		
Childcare inspector	Vivienne Rose		
Dates of inspection	7-8 March 2007		