



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Woodlands School at Hutton Manor

May 2019



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School's Details

School	Woodlands School at Hutton Manor			
DfE number	881/6047			
Early Years registration number	EY336851			
Address	Woodlands School at Hutton Manor 428 Rayleigh Road Hutton Brentwood Essex CM13 1SD			
Telephone number	01277 245585			
Email address	info@woodlandshutton.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Hobbs			
Proprietor	Mr Ken Lewis			
Age range	3 months to 11 years			
Number of pupils on roll	230			
	Boys	131	Girls	99
	EYFS	119	Years 1 to 6	111
Inspection dates	9 to 10 May 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Woodlands School at Hutton Manor is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between three months and eleven years. Situated on a 30-acre site, the school was founded in 2001, and the nursery, Little Acorns, was added in 2010. Children enter the nursery from the age of three months. At the age of three years they may transfer to the main school or they may continue in the nursery. The school is divided into three sections: foundation stage for children aged three to five years; infants for those aged five to seven years; and juniors for those aged seven to eleven years.
- 1.2 The school is part of a family-owned company, where the proprietor has oversight of the school and is advised by a board of directors. Close links are maintained with a nearby sister school, including the sharing of good practice and policies.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The aim of the school is to foster curiosity, independence and a love of learning through challenge across all areas of the curriculum, whilst equipping pupils to become grounded and caring citizens who possess a true sense of responsibility.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils predominantly come from business and professional families in the local area and reflect the diverse range of cultural heritages to be found there. Data provided by the school show the ability profile of the school is above average. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. The school has identified twenty pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include speech and language difficulties and dyslexia, eighteen of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil has English as an additional language, and receives additional class support in class. Standardised data used by the school have identified 60 pupils as the most academically able in its population and extended differentiation supports their needs.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any pupils with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 2.19 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.20 All children under the age of two, including those with particular needs, progress rapidly from carefully documented starting points, which are informed by initial meetings with parents and accurate and focused observations by key people. Staff know the children for whom they take key responsibility exceptionally well and endow them with the confidence and skills to prepare them for their next stage in their learning. Systems to identify children with additional needs are effective. Carefully planned activities throughout the setting ensure that children's individual needs are met extremely well. Staff make very good use of the setting's resources.
- 2.21 Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority and as a result it is excellent. Babies and toddlers separate quickly from their parents and settle easily with their key person. Each child benefits from high quality individual time with adults who ensure that they are safe, happy and secure.
- 2.22 The requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare are fully met. All staff have up to date safeguarding training and paediatric first aid training. Overall, they are fully aware of their responsibilities to ensure the safety of children. Attention to children's personal needs is given high priority.
- 2.23 Leaders demonstrate high levels of commitment when evaluating practice. Self-evaluation is consistent and the setting's development plan highlights realistic targets for continuous improvement. All policies are implemented well and all necessary checks on staff have been undertaken which this ensure that all children receive the best possible support and care.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- 2.24 The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.25 All staff work well together and demonstrate a strong desire to provide high-quality provision and care for children. They have a clear vision for future development. Leaders seek the views of staff and parents when evaluating the effectiveness of the provision and these views are taken into consideration when devising the action plan for the EYFS.
- 2.26 A well-established cycle of appraisal and supervision meetings for staff is in place. These ensure that staff are extremely well supported in their roles as key people and that any training needs are identified and met. This impacts positively on children's learning and development.
- 2.27 In interviews, parents expressed positive views about the early years provision. They are very happy with the level of care their children receive and welcome the daily contact with staff, whom they find approachable and friendly.
- 2.28 Staff share good practice and are committed to working together to provide a welcoming, safe environment where children are happy. Well-established routines ensure that children are well cared for.
- 2.29 The curriculum is well planned and meets the relevant statutory requirements of the EYFS, as well as the needs and interests of the children. Staff use assessment of children's learning effectively to identify the next steps in their learning and development, which are fed into planning. Children's individual achievements, monitored against age-related expectations, ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. The leadership team are highly effective in overseeing the education plans, staff practice and children's records, ensuring that the curriculum is fully covered.

- 2.30 Staff show high expectations of children's behaviour. They demonstrate and praise excellent behaviour and gently distract children where necessary, encouraging them to share toys and be kind to one another. In this way, even the youngest children learn to respect one another.
- 2.31 The children's cultural awareness is deepened through the celebration of various cultural and religious festivals from around the world.
- 2.32 Equality, diversity and British values are actively promoted through everyday routines. Children have opportunities to make decisions in a variety of contexts, such as choosing a book to read, requesting a favourite song or rhyme and making choices with food at meal times.
- 2.33 Policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety and welfare. Staff undertake regular safeguarding training and they are highly aware of the actions to be followed if there is cause for concern. All staff are appropriately inducted when new to the school. Changes to the arrangements for nappy changing to enable babies to remain in the baby room during the process are planned.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- 2.34 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- 2.35 Staff have consistently high expectations for the children in their care. They have an excellent understanding of how babies and young children learn and develop and support them extremely well. This means that all children, make good and often better progress in relation to their ability. The staff know the children really well and sensitively engage with them to promote and extend their learning. Staff demonstrate language effectively for babies and toddlers, and use books creatively to increase vocabulary.
- 2.36 The staff apply their secure knowledge of age-appropriate goals for individual children extremely well. Assessment information is continually gathered through photographs and written observations of the children and is carefully documented in the child's record of learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's record by the sharing of next steps and by providing information from home.
- 2.37 Key people make use of assessment to plan the next steps in children's learning. They track individual children's progress against age-related expectations. This alerts staff to any emerging needs or gaps in learning which are effectively addressed.
- 2.38 Interactions between staff and children are timely and purposeful and help to extend children's understanding and development. For example, when a member of staff sensitively engaged with a group of children exploring foam, she was encouraging them to make and name shapes to extend their mathematical knowledge.
- 2.39 Practitioners praise and encourage children effectively so that they know when they are doing well and how to develop their learning skills. Key people demonstrate good behaviour, kindness and good manners.
- 2.40 Members of staff engage positively with children during routine daily activities such as at meal times and when attending to personal needs. As a result, children's social and language abilities develop strongly.
- 2.41 Excellent relationships with parents enable information about the children to be exchanged seamlessly at handover times. Daily feedback in communication books provides parents with food and sleep information. A comprehensive parent handbook provides clear information about the setting. Developmental summaries are shared with parents during twice-yearly parent evenings.
- 2.42 The curriculum is structured to provide all children with equal opportunities to develop into enthusiastic and independent learners.
- 2.43 Progress checks at age two highlight any potential concerns, while well-established links with local agencies ensure that advice can be swiftly obtained.

- 2.44 High quality teaching and support ensure that all children from the earliest age are equipped with excellent learning skills and are ready for the next stages in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- 2.45 The personal development behaviour and welfare of children are outstanding.
- 2.46 Managers and staff support and encourage children to develop their confidence and independence. They have created a secure and happy environment which enables children to be highly successful learners. Children are confident to take risks and seek new challenges. They enjoy a sense of achievement when they succeed, observed for example when a baby persevered to climb into a cardboard box independently, then clapped his hands in delight of his achievements.
- 2.47 Children have extremely well-developed social skills for their age and demonstrate that they feel emotionally secure within the setting. They are content to play co-operatively and happily alongside each other and they are beginning to engage in activities together. This was seen in toddlers taking turns when climbing on outdoor equipment and babies happily playing alongside each other when exploring colourful lights. They relish opportunities to use their imagination, such as a toddler in the home corner interacting with adults and making them sandwiches and cups of tea, thereby developing imagination, independence, social and physical skills.
- 2.48 Introductory taster visits help new children settle smoothly into the setting's routines and careful consideration is given to preparing children both socially and emotionally for the move to their next class. Detailed handovers between staff ensure that essential information about each child is passed on, enabling children to make the transition smoothly to the next room.
- 2.49 The strong key person system ensures warm relationships and close bonds with children and their families. Well-established routines enable children to feel safe and secure emotionally and physically. Staff effectively promote prompt and regular attendance, and detailed records are kept.
- 2.50 Excellent behaviour is encouraged by vigilant staff. Careful supervision ensures that children treat one another kindly and any incidences of challenging behaviour are quietly addressed.
- 2.51 Nutritious food at lunch and snack time ensures that children have a balanced and healthy diet, tailored to their needs. Regular time is spent outdoors, ensuring that children develop an understanding of the importance of fresh air and exercise.
- 2.52 The children's excellent personal development at this young age ensures that they respect others, for example when a child thoughtfully picked up an item that another child had dropped and returned it to him. This lays the foundations for their contribution to wider society and to life in Britain

Outcomes for children

- 2.53 Outcomes for children are outstanding.
- 2.54 The dedicated staff provide stimulating learning opportunities and outstanding care, which results in children being on course to meet or exceed the level of development that is typical for their age.
- 2.55 Children make rapid progress in their personal and emotional development due to the nurturing interactions with staff. Many group situations, such as snack times, meal times and song and story times, promote the development of good relationships and communication skills. Children explore their environment with determination and excitement in response to the personal encouragement and individual care given to each child. They are able to access independently a range of toys and resources.
- 2.56 Children under two display high levels of engagement in their environment. Babies respond to their familiar adults, turning towards them when their names are called. They enjoy choosing books and sharing them with adults. Toddlers count as part of their everyday activities and they are beginning to recognise and name basic shapes, developing early mathematical skills. They listen and respond to

ideas expressed by others in conversation and discussions, such as responding to questions from an adult about a book. They used toys appropriately to support the text, developing their confidence and speaking and listening skills.

- 2.57 All children demonstrate high levels of independence when eating, using cutlery and cups with increasing competence and communicating their needs effectively. Babies make their needs known with gestures, and toddlers use words as they increase their ability to communicate.
- 2.58 The excellent learning environment is effective in challenging and encouraging children to be confident learners. All children develop the key skills needed for their next stage of learning extremely well.

Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.59 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Ensure that planned changes to nappy-changing arrangements take into account the hygiene requirements of the children.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor and a director, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Julie Lowe	Reporting inspector
Mr Jonathan Dunn	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, ISA school)
Mrs Valerie Holloway	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of nursery & kindergarten, IAPS school)