

# Longwood School

## Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	919/6236
Unique Reference Number	117662
URN for registered childcare	280421
Inspection number	332453
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Marianick Ellender-Gelé HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended. The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 08456 404040

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, 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>1</sup> was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

## Information about the school

Longwood School and Nursery is a non-selective independent school situated in Bushey, Hertfordshire. The Nursery opened in 1990 and Longwood School opened in 1992.

Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. The school serves the local community although some children come from further afield. The school is open each weekday from 07:00 to 19:00 for children aged 3 months to 11 years. It also provides holiday care.

There are 153 full-time and 67 part-time pupils on roll; of these 54 pupils are funded under the Nursery Scheme.

The school's aim is to provide a happy, stimulating, healthy and safe environment where all children can attain high standards and develop into well-balanced citizens. The school was last inspected in May 2006.

## Evaluation of the school

Longwood School provides a good quality education for pupils throughout all years including in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Behaviour is good and pupils enjoy their learning. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere where children and adults form excellent working relationships. The school responded very well to the outcomes of its previous inspection and successfully addressed the weaknesses identified at that time. All current regulations are met.

Longwood School provides a safe learning environment where pupils are highly valued. Assessment practices are appropriate but these do not always result in pupils

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<sup>1</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.

being sufficiently challenged in their learning, particularly the more able. Pupils and parents quite justifiably express a good level of satisfaction with the school.

## **Quality of education**

The school has a good curriculum. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and now covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum as well as religious education (RE). Planning has improved and now provides good continuity across year groups. In Key Stages 1 and 2 there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the well-planned schemes of work provide good opportunities for these skills to be practised across relevant subjects. The curriculum is enriched by French, which is taught in all classes. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good. There is a strong awareness of the need to encourage pupils to take part in exercise. Generous time is allocated for physical education and good use is made of local facilities to provide a broad range of activities. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) is strongly underpinned by the school's caring ethos. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of educational visits and visiting experts as well as an extensive choice of after-school activities, which include dance, cookery and several sports.

The school's policy on special educational needs has regard to the national Code of Practice. There are good systems for the early identification of such needs but staff require further training to deal with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. Because of the extra support they receive in small groups and in lessons, pupils with learning difficulties are able to access the curriculum and make good progress.

The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Assessment practices ensure that teachers know how well pupils are doing. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is thorough and one-to-one support is effective. The good teaching and learning in the EYFS enables children to get a very good start to their education. Throughout the school, the best teaching ensures that lessons move on at a brisk pace, teachers use probing questions to extend learning and feedback ensures that pupils know how well they have achieved. Pupils respond well to this. Attitudes to learning and behaviour are good and pupils speak of their lessons with enthusiasm. Many confirm that 'That's why we work very hard because we enjoy our lessons.' Although still satisfactory, some learning is less effective when assessment is not used sufficiently well to match activities to the needs of high achievers. Some pupils are not given enough time to reflect on their own learning, set short-term targets and review their work in order to develop skills of independent learning.

The values and family ethos of the school permeate the good teaching and learning with much time provided in lessons for encouragement. The calm atmosphere and well organised planning in the EYFS maximise opportunities for children's development in communication and creative skills.

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

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Some features are outstanding. Pupils' cultural awareness is exemplary. The school greatly values its diverse population and all feel included and say that they are treated equally and fairly. Pupils accept and value difference as part of their everyday lives. Behaviour is good in class and around the school. Pupils show respect for each other and for all adults they work with. They work well together and feel confident to express their views. The school council is beginning to have an impact on making changes; for example to the quality of school lunches. However, opportunities for pupils to contribute to the wider development of the school are underdeveloped. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There is strong promotion of pupils' spirituality through the PSHE and RE programmes. Pupils have opportunities to consider the beliefs of a wide range of faith groups. Festivals from several faiths are celebrated with sensitivity and with support from parents.

Pupils enjoy their education and this is reflected in their very good attendance. They take an active role in raising money for a range of charities and the school is beginning to develop links with the local community. Pupils are confident and articulate. They use these skills to develop good levels of basic skills and self-awareness, which prepare them well for the next stage of their education and future economic well-being.

## **Welfare, health and safety of the pupils**

The school takes all steps to minimise risks to pupils' welfare, health and safety and provides a good level of care for them. Safeguarding procedures are robust. All essential risk assessments, policies and records are in place. Staff demonstrate vigilance in ensuring pupils' safety and security around the building. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through nutritious eating choices and a wide range of physical activities.

The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

## **Suitability of the proprietor and staff**

All procedures for recruiting staff and safeguarding children comply with the latest guidance. A single central register is in place and all necessary checks have been carried out. Staff are well aware of child protection duties and apply policies effectively.

## **School's premises and accommodation**

The building provides a good standard of accommodation. Access to resources and specialist facilities, such as ICT equipment and the local sport centre, is good. There is access to swimming facilities nearby and the school is currently considering offering swimming in the near future.

## **Provision of information for parents, carers and others**

A wide range of information for parents is available and all regulations are met. A few parents indicated they would like to know more about the curriculum and progress made by their child but inspectors found that there are many opportunities for parents to know about provision at the school. Staff are highly committed and approachable. Reports on progress and newsletters are detailed and there are regular meetings with staff.

## **Procedures for handling complaints**

There is a clear and fair policy for handling complaints, copies of which are included in the prospectus and available to existing parents at all times.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The provision for children aged 3 months to 5 years is good. There is a high level of stability and most children who enter the Nursery as 3 month old babies remain in the setting for several years. Consequently, staff know them and their families very well. Children's skills and personal development on entry are broadly average and typical of children of that age. As a result of effective planning and assessment children make good progress across all the areas of learning. The majority reach levels above those expected by the time they leave Reception at age 5.

Consistently good teaching contributes well to children's good learning and development. Children are cared for very well and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their personal and developmental needs. Teaching is particularly effective in developing each child's social and language skills. The support for language and communication skills, including the development of children's phonic awareness, has had very positive benefits. Children are articulate and assured. Their speaking skills are a particular strength. In addition, the expectation that children will take responsibility for their own needs contributes significantly to their outstanding personal development - a key strength of the provision. The curriculum is good and enriched, for the older children, by specialist provision in music, dance and French. Activities are planned well to stimulate learning and these are matched appropriately to the needs of the children. Occasionally, and particularly in the nursery classes, the opportunities for children to make choices are underdeveloped and activities are overly directed by the teachers.

The school has made good progress recently in the development of facilities to support children's outdoor learning. However, the school recognises that this is an area where further work is needed. There is a cohesive assessment system and detailed records are now in place. However, available data is not yet analysed with sufficient rigour to monitor the extent of the progress which children make.

Leadership and management are good. The effective communication between all staff ensures continuity in children's learning. The quality of care, relationships and engagement with families and the commitment to pupils' enjoyment, safety and healthy eating are significant strengths. Parents meet staff regularly and are kept well informed about practices at the school.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations").

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Improve systems for analysing and tracking pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, understand their short-term targets and become more independent in their learning in order to accelerate their rate of progress.
- Integrate opportunities for outdoor learning more effectively in the EYFS curriculum, particularly for the 3 to 5 year olds.

## 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 effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		√		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		√		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	√			
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		√		
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		√		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		√		

## School details

Name of school	Longwood School		
DCSF number	919/6236		
Unique reference number	117662		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY280421		
Type of school	Nursery and primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1992		
Age range of pupils	3 months–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 76	Girls: 77	Total: 153
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 29	Girls: 38	Total: 67
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 54	Girls: 53	Total: 107
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 4590-5490		
Annual fees (childcare)	£ 11520 full time £55 per day		
Address of school	Bushey Hall Drive Bushey Hertfordshire WD23 2QG		
Telephone number	01923 253715		
Fax number	01923 222760		
Email address	info@longwoodschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Muriel Garman		
Proprietor	Mr M Livesey		
Reporting inspector	Marianick Ellender-Gelé HMI		
Dates of inspection	20–21 January 2008		