

# L'Ile aux Enfants

## Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	202/6385
Unique Reference Number	100082
Inspection number	322011
Inspection dates	4-5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

This 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).

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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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

Located in London Borough Camden, L'Île aux Enfants is a French nursery and primary school. It is registered as an independent school with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. There are currently 195 pupils, the great majority of whom come from French speaking or English/French bi-lingual backgrounds. The school is une école homologuée and conventionnée subject to the authority of the French Ministry of Education, exercised through the Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger and the French embassy in London. The French inspectorate inspects the school. The headteacher and full-time teaching staff are appointed directly by the French education authorities. The school teaches the French National Curriculum in French. A substantial amount of time is devoted to the teaching of English. Currently 17% of the pupils receive a study grant. Most of the pupils continue their education in the Lycée Français in London or in France. The school was last inspected in 2003 when several regulations concerning health and safety were not met.

The school aims to *'provide a French education similar to that of a public school in France while at the same time ensuring the children are able to integrate into their British surroundings.'*

## Evaluation of the school

L'Île aux Enfants is a welcoming, happy school, which is successful in meeting its aims. It provides a good standard of education. Due to good teaching using both the French and English curriculum, pupils make good progress. The school meets most of the regulations for registration. It has improved well since its last inspection, especially in the aspects of welfare, health and safety.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good. The school follows the French National Curriculum and has well formulated policies and guidance for teachers that provide a good, broad curriculum for all pupils. The provision for English is good and supports the school's aim that all pupils should be bi-lingual with an emphasis on pupils' speaking and listening skills. The French National Curriculum is effectively taught, as was confirmed by the inspection in 2007 by the education services of the French embassy in London. The French curriculum is divided into three key stages called 'Cycles'. Personal, social and health education is integrated successfully throughout the

curriculum. There is one sports session using local sports facilities for the older pupils, who also have lessons in Kung Fu and the younger pupils learn dance. A wide range of visits outside school to theatres, museums and galleries in London further enhance the curriculum. Older pupils have the chance to visit France for a residential activity holiday; the most recent theme was the circus where they were taught circus skills.

The teaching and assessment are good. These are effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress in their learning. The staff are well prepared, know exactly what it is pupils will learn and deliver their lessons in a confident style. Pupils work productively and respond well to the teachers, who encourage them to work hard at their tasks and complete them in the time allowed. This was particularly in evidence in a French literacy lesson for older pupils where they were encouraged to help each other analyse grammar and spellings, prompted by effective questioning by the teacher. This helped pupils to make good progress. The lessons are mostly conducted at a brisk pace according to French methods where pupils are encouraged to listen carefully, concentrate and then settle to their allotted task. There is a good combination of structured lessons for subjects such as French and mathematics, with more investigative learning, for example in science. Teaching of the younger pupils' is good with a well-planned and interesting range of appropriate activities. The teachers of these younger pupils are skilled at including all members of the group in the activities for example, singing and dancing, encouraging them to try things for themselves and increase their independence. The less able pupils receive more help with their work from staff, although on occasions there is not always enough simplification of the tasks for those who need it. Resources are adequate and are used effectively. The teaching of English is lively and made interesting for the pupils. Work is matched well to pupils' differing abilities in the lessons, so that all make good progress through the tasks they have to complete.

The assessment processes for both the French and English curriculum are effective. Parents are kept very well informed about the progress and attainment of their children. The school provides very detailed assessment information. The subjects taught in French are assessed and recorded regularly using French methods, which are very detailed and specific. The assessment of the English curriculum is effective and based on continuous assessment.

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

The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. It is a friendly community where all the individuals are known very well by the staff and nurtured with care. The school is non-denominational. In line with French education, which is secular, there is no collective worship and no religious education taught. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about and reflect upon ideas through the weekly *Education Civique* programme and through philosophy debates.

Pupils are confident and articulate, lively and friendly. They say that they are happy; one pupil commented *'It's cool here, I like it'*. Throughout the school, behaviour is good, they move around the difficult building with care. Attendance is good. Pupils attend regularly and approach lessons with good levels of independence, interest and concentration. They value their teachers' praise and support and co-operate well with them and with one another. They enjoy their learning and take pride in their work.

Pupils make a good contribution to their own community through the many opportunities for them to take responsibility in school, including the school council. A good programme of visits and visitors also contributes well to pupils' personal development. Pupils have many opportunities to visit British institutions such as the National Portrait Gallery, the British Library and the Science Museum. Pupils are currently exhibiting some of their artwork in a local gallery.

Pupils' cultural development is promoted well through art and singing. There is a high degree of racial harmony as some pupils come from different cultures and the school tries to ensure that each pupil's cultural background is celebrated through a range of activities.

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

The school makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils; this judgement agrees with that made by the school. The school have devised and implemented a range of policies for anti-bullying, child protection, and health and safety on educational visits. Younger pupils confirm that there is no bullying at the school. The school has implemented effective procedures to promote the pupils' welfare through fire prevention, first aid and their general safety around the premises. Many staff are first aid trained and accidents are recorded. The school has an appropriate admission register but does not keep attendance registers in a manner, which meets the current regulations. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. Pupils are well supervised when engaged in lessons but there is inadequate supervision during the lunchtime break because not enough staff interact sufficiently with pupils. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and many enjoy the wholesome lunch cooked on the premises. Pupils take regular exercise through the planned sports provision.

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

The school has made appropriate checks on staff to ensure their suitability to work with children and holds the appropriate information on a single central register. However, it has checked the required information on staff but has not retained sufficient evidence of this to meet current regulations. The school has confirmation from its supply staff agency that all appropriate checks have been carried out but has not carried out its own checks on the identity of such staff.

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

The premises and accommodation generally support effective learning. The school is held in a Victorian church building which has been adapted over the years to provide classrooms which have now reached maximum capacity for the number of pupils. The cramped conditions in some rooms limit the range of practical work the pupils can undertake. Most of the classrooms are attractive environments and are decorated with examples of pupils' work. There are no outdoor play facilities at the school although the school does make use of a local playground. There are no appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill. The school uses a local sports centre for weekly games and has occasional visits to Hampstead Heath.

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

The school provides a good range of information for parents, carers and others through the prospectus, website and the daily *cahier de correspondance*. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school. They confirmed that their children are happy at school and make good progress but some feel that they do not have sufficient exercise. Parents receive three written reports each year, which gives them a clear idea of their children's progress and they have regular opportunities to meet with staff.

### **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 those listed below.

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

- improve supervision during lunchtime play (paragraph 3(7))
- maintain attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- ensure that all checks are retained to confirm the identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, qualifications, character and professional references on all staff (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- ensure that the identity of all persons supplied by any employment business have been checked (paragraph 4A(6)).

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

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

### **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:

- continue to search for suitable premises.



## School details

Name of school	L'Ile aux Enfants		
DCSF number	202/6385		
Unique reference number	100082		
Type of school	French nursery and primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1992		
Age range of pupils	3-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll	Boys: 107	Girls: 88	Total: 195
Annual fees	£4,200-£4,500		
Address of school	22 Vicars Road London NW5 4NL		
Telephone number	0207 267 7119		
Fax number	0207 267 0578		
Email address	<a href="mailto:Info@ileauxenfants.co.uk">Info@ileauxenfants.co.uk</a>		
Headteacher	Francoise Chailleux		
Proprietor	L'Ile aux Enfants Ltd.		
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton AI		
Dates of inspection	4-5 June 2008		