



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION**

**NORFOLK HOUSE SCHOOL**

**JUNE 2017**



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## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

<b>School</b>	Norfolk House school			
<b>DfE number</b>	309/6053			
<b>Address</b>	Norfolk House School 10 Muswell Hill Muswell Hill London N10 2EG			
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8883 4584			
<b>Email address</b>	office@norfolkhouseschool.org			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Paul Jowett			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Steven Wade			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	230			
	<b>Boys</b>	126	<b>Girls</b>	104
	<b>Day pupils</b>	230		
	<b>EYFS</b>	81	<b>Juniors</b>	149
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14 to 15 June 2017			

## 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. Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates on behalf of the DfE, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest report on the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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 following their inspection 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.

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.

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 an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting on the quality of the school's work.** It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

**The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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 chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mrs Diane Gardiner	Reporting inspector
Mr Christopher Emmott	Team inspector (Head, IAPS and ISA school)
Mrs Emma Stanhope	Team inspector (Director of Lower School, GSA school)

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Norfolk House School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between two and eleven years of age. It was founded in 1896 as a boys' preparatory school and became co-educational in 1992. In September 2014, it merged with Montessori House Nursery and is owned and governed by the Bellevue Education Group.
- 1.2 The school is arranged across two sites. Nursery to Year 1, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), attend the Princes Avenue site and Years 2 to 6 attend the Muswell Avenue site which is a short walk away. Pre-prep consists of Reception and Year 1, junior prep provides for Years 2 and 3 and senior prep for Years 4 to 6. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a system of core values which underpin the way that the curriculum is delivered. It has introduced a programme of outdoor learning and developed a behaviour code in conjunction with the school council.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a stimulating and meaningful learning experience for all their pupils using the latest teaching techniques and resources. By working together, as a staff, they aim to provide their pupils with the opportunities to achieve their academic potential within an environment where they feel valued, fulfilled, confident and emotionally secure.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds. Many live locally, within a three-mile radius of the school. Most are of White British origin and others represent a mix of other ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the nature of the locality. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is above average. The school has identified 16 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include speech and language delays, dyslexia, dyspraxia, sensory processing and autistic spectrum disorder, all of whom receive additional support. Four have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Data used by the school have identified six pupils as the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them, and for a number of other pupils who have particular talents for music and sport.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. KEY FINDINGS**

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils have a highly positive attitude to their learning, enjoy extending and developing their own activities, independently or collaboratively, demonstrating clear leadership.
- Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils use higher-order questioning and reasoning extensively from an early age which has a positive impact on their overall progress.
- Pupils develop an extensive range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills which they apply across all areas of learning.

2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils of all ages enjoy working collaboratively, and are adept at problem solving, achieving excellent outcomes.
- Pupils have a sensitive appreciation of the needs of others, developing a genuine sense of mutual support and respect for all, including the wider world.
- Pupils display a strong moral awareness which is clearly demonstrated through the outstanding relationships they develop.
- Pupils are confident and self-reliant in all areas of school life, enjoy taking responsibility and show great resilience and self-awareness.

### **Recommendations**

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes the school might wish to consider:

- Ensuring a consistency of approach to learning and teaching across the EYFS.
- Review of the physical education (PE) curriculum, to provide a more structured provision that develops the key physical development skills for pupils of all ages.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The school meets its aims successfully. From the EYFS onwards, pupils make good progress across all areas of the curriculum, which results in excellent outcomes by the time they move on to their senior schools. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the data available, including the results of standardised tests in English and mathematics, scrutiny of books and lesson observations, shows attainment to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils achieve excellent results in selective entrance examinations, some winning awards and scholarships for academic success and music.
- 3.3 Currently, different learning approaches are taken in each group across the EYFS. Children have responded well to a recent broadening of learning styles in the EYFS, which matches the school's recently re-invigorated ethos. Co-ordination of the different learning styles that are promoted, to ensure maximum impact on children's progress, is not yet fully realised.
- 3.4 Pupils with a wide range of different learning needs are successful in achieving highly in relation to their starting points due to the careful monitoring of individual programmes of support. Their specific needs are identified at an early stage and an individual learning plan put in place, which successfully informs staff and parents of the next steps to take to improve their learning. A range of interventions including one-to-one support, specialist help with language difficulties and careful planning by class teachers enables pupils to access the full curriculum and make excellent progress. The most able pupils successfully develop the ability to hypothesise, analyse and synthesise the information they discover through a wide range of opportunities to take their own learning forward and undertake research projects of their own. In the EYFS, children enjoy their learning and they participate actively in a well-planned programme of engaging tasks which ensure that their individual interest and aptitudes are identified and developed. Provision for children in the EYFS, including the most able, is personalised and tracked carefully to ensure that any gaps in learning are identified at an early stage so that support can be put in place in a timely manner. This meets the recommendations of the previous inspection and ensures that every pupil develops rapidly to reach their full potential. Pupils of all abilities and ages demonstrate resilience for learning which is exceptionally well developed for their age. They enjoy taking risks with their learning, are not afraid to make mistakes and make better progress as a result. Pupils ability for synthesising information they have gathered and reasoning objectively was clearly demonstrated as older pupils analysed the manifestos of the three main political parties ahead of the last election or when they compared different political views.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages express their ideas confidently and enjoy sharing their knowledge and understanding with their peers. Younger children in EYFS communicate effectively as they explore their surroundings, for example when using magnifying glasses and explaining what changes they could see. Older pupils demonstrated exceptional expressive language as they shared their knowledge of linguistic devices to describe events and used imaginative language to interpret a soundtrack for a film. Skills for debate are extremely well honed. Opportunities to discuss a very wide range of topics encourage pupils to share their own opinions confidently as well as to listen and reflect upon the views of others. Pupils' creative and extended writing skills are extremely well developed at all levels and improve rapidly as the pupils move through the school. This results in older children using highly advanced language and structure when preparing presentations on people who inspire them, and writing poetry which demonstrates an exceptional ability to describe feelings and emotion. Notably, pupils have written book reviews for a national newspaper and for national websites. The pupils' public speaking and presentation skills are extremely well advanced for their ages. The many opportunities pupils



- are given to speak in front of a range of audiences from an early stage result in pupils who are naturally confident to express themselves and present their work in a wide variety of ways.
- 3.6 Number skills develop at a rapid pace throughout the school and pupils apply them effectively across a wide range of other subjects including science, geography and art. Pupils solve problems confidently from an early age. They enjoy coming to the front of the class to model their work using concise and effective mathematical language appropriate to their age. Younger children in EYFS displayed good knowledge of number and used partners to solve problems showing an excellent understanding of addition and subtraction. Older pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to solve abstract algebraic equations. They demonstrate good logical thinking skills and can evaluate their own progress against the stated success criteria. Pupils particularly enjoy applying their mathematical skill to real life when shopping on a set budget or working out whether or not they could afford the mortgage on a house, given their salary and other outgoings.
- 3.7 By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed exceptional skills in the use of ICT. They build their skills using a range of devices including tablet technology. Younger children created a comic strip digital story with confidence and older pupils have created their own website against clear criteria. They have used different scripts successfully, provided clear navigation of the site, created animations, used infographics and set up a blog with a clear purpose. The use of ICT for research is developed to a particularly high level at all stages. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions about the way they present their findings and as a result use presentation software successfully; they prepare posters, design fliers or use question and answer sessions to demonstrate the results of their work.
- 3.8 Good physical development occurs over time, promoted by both team and individual sporting events. All pupils are encouraged to take part in matches and have the opportunity to develop their individual skill for skating and swimming. As a result of the curriculum time allocated to physical endeavour, pupils develop a good level of fitness and a love of exercise. Particular success has been achieved in football, inter-school cross-country and swimming. Currently, the level of coaching provided, inconsistent expectations and restrictions of space can limit progress for some pupils.
- 3.9 Pupils develop their own interests and talents to a high level through a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. The daily programme of clubs and activities, provides pupils with a good range of opportunities through which they develop their own interests in music, individual and team sports, film making and chess with considerable success. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem blossom, as a result of pupils' participation in activities that help to identify their particular areas of interest or skill.
- 3.10 Exceptionally positive attitudes to learning are evident across the school. In the EYFS, children develop skills for making decisions about their learning and how to work together to solve problems. Children in Reception develop these skills well during outdoor learning opportunities in local woodland where they work together to explore the natural world, identify different plants and build shelters and camps. Pupils are quick to support each other, show extremely good leadership skills and demonstrate high levels of initiative when moving their own learning forward. They share their work and assess each other's performance, giving positive criticism and identifying areas for improvement in a very sensitive and open way which shows very well-developed collaboration skills. This was seen as the older pupils worked to write their own version of *Macbeth* to perform at the end of term. They showed a mature ability to assess their own work as well as helping others by identifying sections of work they liked and making positive suggestions for possible improvement.

#### **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils are confident and self-reliant in all areas of school life. They enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning and show great resilience and self-awareness. They have confidence in themselves, understand where their strengths and areas for development lie and seek to improve in consequence. A new, well structured, personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, a wide-ranging assembly programme and tutor times help to build this excellent level of confidence and flexibility. The core values, introduced this year by the new management team, ably supported by the governors who provide an excellent level of monitoring, support and challenge, have resulted in a significant improvement in the way that pupils approach their learning. Pupils are mature for their age. They engage in warm, open and supportive relationships. This reflects the promotion of the schools' core values by caring and committed staff. All pupils who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that teachers are supportive and helpful if they have any problems with their work. A small minority of pupils felt that they did not always know how well they were doing in their work. Inspectors scrutinised the system and spoke to pupils and staff and agreed that this was as a result of the introduction of a new system of feedback and marking, which is positive but not yet fully embedded. Pupils take an active role within the school by taking on a broad range of responsibilities with success, such as heads of school, prefects, school councillors and heads of subjects.
- 4.3 From the earliest ages, pupils have confidence to take responsibility for the decisions they make and demonstrate an open-minded approach to challenge by both staff and their peers. In the EYFS, children make effective decisions on a daily basis about which activities to choose, who to work with and in identifying the success criteria for their own learning. Older pupils have a strong voice within the school. They feel that their views are valued, respected and listened to. By taking on increased responsibility as they move through the school pupils develop an excellent awareness of the impact of their decisions on themselves and those around them in the community.
- 4.4 Pupils develop a deep spiritual understanding of other faith values and the appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. They are naturally curious and are encouraged in this by the underlying ethos of the school. At each stage pupils reflect upon the spiritual aspects of life as they learn in the forest or take on bush craft activities. They express their thoughts on faith and spirituality articulately and enjoy sharing their ideas with their peers. They enjoy opportunities for quiet and reflection in assemblies or in lessons and experiencing the positive impact of yoga and meditation on their overall well-being. Pupils demonstrate strong use of non-verbal communication to express the non-material aspects of life as they imagine the scene as Banquo's ghost appears and the impact that the natural world has on people.
- 4.5 Pupils have a strong moral awareness which is clearly demonstrated through the outstanding relationships they develop. They understand the need to abide by a set of simple rules in a community to ensure that everyone stays safe and feels secure. As a result, behaviour in all sections of the school is extremely good. Pupils demonstrate a sensitive awareness of the needs of others and are extremely supportive of their friends and of the younger children. Their input into the behaviour, and sanction and rewards system has ensured that they respect the procedures and work with staff to provide a happy and safe environment.
- 4.6 Throughout the age range pupils enjoy working collaboratively to share their thinking and knowledge. Children are adept at problem solving and achieve excellent outcomes. They take their responsibilities very seriously and make an excellent contribution to the school community. They develop a strong understanding of how collaboration results in the best

outcomes through working together on drama productions, taking part in the Young Enterprise competition and considering different aspects of school life through the school council. The 'buddy' system which pairs pupils in Years 3 to 6 with pupils from the EYFS and Years 1 and 2, allows pupils to undertake joint projects and share and celebrate each others' learning.

- 4.7 Pupils' developing organisational skills are used to good effect in gathering ideas from their friends for school council meetings. In the three groupings of the school council, pupils make decisions that have a positive impact upon the school as well as local and international communities. In one group, pupils concentrate on health and well-being within the school where they have had a significant impact upon the school lunch menus. Another group researches different suggestions for the charities pupils support and present their ideas to the school prior to a vote. Once a decision is made this group decides what events to hold to raise funds, such as a current charity which supports children and families in rural South Africa. Individual pupils also raise funds for local charities, such as the local soup kitchen, and take full responsibility for arranging special events with their friends.
- 4.8 Pupils embrace the diversity within the school and are pro-active in sharing the detail of their own cultures and traditions. For example, pupils speak to their peers about their faith, such as describing their mosque and how it contributes to the local community. Question and answer sessions demonstrate the interest and respect pupils develop for such presentations. Pupils of all faiths and traditions enjoy sharing the special features of their religions and lives. A recent international evening gave pupils of all backgrounds the opportunity to learn more about the different religions represented in the school community. All parents, in their questionnaire responses, agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour, and values of democracy, tolerance and respect for those with different faiths or beliefs. All pupils who responded agreed that the school encourages them to be tolerant of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.9 Pupils demonstrate a strong awareness of what constitutes healthy eating and exercise is an important and enjoyable part of their lives. In the EYFS children are happy to try different fruits at snack time, exploring texture, taste and smell and at lunchtime others explained that there was salad on the table to encourage healthy eating. Pupils develop an enjoyment of exercise in ways that particularly appeal to them through a programme of varied and regular exercise opportunities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of internet safety and are aware of the need to approach communications with care. They know who to approach if they need to share their concerns about the internet. All those who responded to questionnaires agreed that they understand how to keep safe on-line. The school ensures that care is taken to prepare pupils for the specific needs of city life, ensuring that they know how to move around safely as they walk to school. The newly introduced PSHE curriculum, which includes elements on emotional and mental health, is a significant contributory factor to these excellent outcomes, further aided by regular and comprehensive communication between staff on pastoral care matters.
- 4.10 As they leave the school, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. They are capable, confident, well-rounded young people who are ready to meet their next set of challenges.