

School inspection report

11 to 13 June 2024

La Petite Ecole Bilingue

22 Vicar's Rd

Camden

London

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The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. The proprietor challenges leaders to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities for the wellbeing of pupils and staff. Leaders, including those who are new to the role, have worked hard to review all aspects of the school's work. They have a thorough understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Together, they ensure that the Standards are consistently met.
2. Leaders have ensured that staff in the early years are well trained to manage the learning and welfare needs of the children in their care. Children have a very positive learning experience and learn effectively. By the end of the Reception Year, children are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.
3. Pupils make good progress across the curriculum. Schemes of work lay out all the required areas of learning and are covered for both languages without repetition for pupils. Teachers plan adeptly in line with this curriculum. Pupils access a wide variety of opportunities to develop their language and independent learning skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunity available to pupils.
4. Pupils access an appropriate range of opportunities to develop their personal, physical, and emotional wellbeing. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships education support this well. Pupils' economic knowledge is less well developed, which leaders have begun to address.
5. Regular opportunities for the whole school to gather helps to promote the school values of caring for one another. Behaviour is generally good throughout the school. This is because leaders ensure that teaching instils positive values and consideration for others and is at the heart of all they do. They seek to ensure that everyone has a positive experience of the school. Pupils learn to be outward looking and treat others with kindness and empathy.
6. Pupils are appreciative of the lengths staff go to support them in every way in their time in the school. Pastoral care and provision for safeguarding support pupils effectively. The writing up of records is thorough but record-keeping is less well organised.
7. The school is an inclusive community. This is a school where pupils learn lessons for life and are enabled to contribute to whichever society they may find themselves in in later life. From the earliest years, mutual respect, equality and inclusion are instilled in pupils and evident in the positive attitudes throughout the school. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of important British values and in French, 'les droits de l'homme', the rights of the individual to respect and tolerance. They appreciate and value that everyone is different. Pupils are respectful and accepting of all, learning to understand that every person is unique.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

The proprietor should:

- develop more organised systems for recording all pastoral concerns so that information is more readily accessible, and any trends are easily identified
- develop pupils' economic understanding further.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. The proprietor liaises regularly with senior leaders and provides appropriate support and challenge. The work of the school is carefully discussed so that the school's academic aims and the wellbeing of pupils remain central to their core purpose. The proprietor challenges leaders, including those that are newer to the role, in their decision making and in taking the school forward so that high standards and high expectations are maintained.
9. Leaders have the appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities well. Oversight of all aspects of the school's provision is carried out effectively by the senior leaders. Leaders regularly research and use external specialist expertise and advice to analyse and develop the effectiveness of the school's provision including for safeguarding.
10. The school aims are known and understood by staff, parents and pupils. For example, curriculum planning is monitored to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between language learning and content. Staff are expertly trained to support the bilingual ethos to maximise the learning opportunities for the pupils and plan accordingly. Pupils move seamlessly from learning in English to French and vice versa. They appreciate the efforts of staff to support their learning and to care for them.
11. Staff are appropriately trained to carry out their work in the Nursery and Reception classes. They provide a rich and purposeful range of activities for children to develop their language and communication skills and cover all the required areas of learning. Staff liaise regularly with parents. Staff understand the needs and interests of their children which informs their planning and activities. As a result, children in the Reception and Nursery classes thrive within a positive and nurturing environment.
12. Leaders have a thorough and systematic approach to identifying and managing risk. They take appropriate action to mitigate any identified risks to support pupils' wellbeing and safety which they maintain at the forefront of their work. Leaders check risk assessments and update them as required and staff are kept informed of all relevant matters related to pupils' wellbeing.
13. Leaders responsible for safeguarding take appropriate action when required and work with outside agencies to support pupils. Pupils say that they are well looked after and feel safe in school. They know that they can talk to any member of staff. Record-keeping includes the required information for staff to support individual pupils' wellbeing. The recording is less efficiently ordered for staff to identify trends. Leaders have identified this as an area for further development.
14. The school ensures that policies and procedures are updated regularly in line with statutory guidance, and that they are understood by pupils, parents and staff. Appropriate information is provided to parents through the school website, and through fortnightly newsletters to parents.
15. Regular reporting through detailed, personalised reports, ensures parents know the progress of their children. Any concerns raised by parents are managed swiftly and effectively by leaders. Record-keeping for this aspect of the school's work is well managed. Leaders adhere to their complaints policy.

16. Leaders maintain a detailed accessibility plan and adjust when required to ensure that buildings and the curriculum meet the requirements for visitors, staff and pupils and for any who are disabled. The school meets the requirements for the Equality Act 2010.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. The school provides a broad curriculum that includes all the appropriate areas of learning, including a good range of creative and aesthetic learning opportunities. Leaders oversee and monitor the curriculum, teaching and assessment to check that pupils are learning the intended curriculum. The curriculum is carefully planned and delivered to develop a broad range of skills and delivered equally in French and in English.
19. The aims of the school to provide a bilingual curriculum work well in practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan carefully from the schemes of work. They deliver well-structured lessons with a range of tasks and appropriate resources. They know their pupils well. Teachers match their teaching to the needs of the pupils. Pupils readily acquire new language and develop effective speaking, reading and writing skills in French and in English. Pupils make good progress.
20. Pupils apply their language knowledge and skills across subjects. For example, in the Reception class children effectively describe mathematical shapes in French and in English. In Year 1 French lessons, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills on the topic of the sea and accurately use gender, adjectival agreements and plurals. In Year 4, pupils use a range of skills in creating explanations and illustrations of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. They also produce good work writing about natural habitats.
21. Teachers manage class time well and typically pupils behave well. Pupils listen attentively in lessons. They encourage each other through their communication and positive interactions. Their work is well presented, demonstrating the pride they take in their books and in their progress.
22. Pupils are focused and tenacious in their learning, including in their independent learning and in their approach to working in two languages. For example, in their daily French dictation, pupils across year groups demonstrate increased capacity to write complex sentences accurately using accents, adjectival endings and agreements correctly. In their individual workbooks, pupils extend their learning through working independently through their personalised aims and tasks across subjects. As a result, pupils learn to manage their time and to be independent learners.
23. Well organised assessment procedures are used to monitor and track pupils' progress at regular intervals. Analysis of the assessments is used to address any identified gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers take the individual needs of pupils into account in their planning and teaching so that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
24. Leaders ensure that teachers have individual learning plans for pupils with SEND. Teachers and teaching assistants make sure that pupils' individual needs in lessons are well supported, in a range of ways such as additional resources, small group guidance, or individualised support. Pupils with SEND make good progress from their individual starting points. Over time there is little difference across groups in the achievement of pupils. Pupils with SEND enjoy their learning and effectively manage their learning in two languages alongside their peers.
25. Almost all pupils come from international families and most hold dual nationality. Currently one third of the pupils are bilingual from birth. A minority arrive with less English or French and some pupils are trilingual or more. Pupils are supportive of one another, explaining something misunderstood or providing an unknown word. For those who arrive in the very early stages of learning French or English, an intensive programme is in place with individual work for pupils. Pupils

are well supported to catch up with their peers and make good progress in matching the language levels of their class, normally within two terms. Pupils' books demonstrate a wide range of written work across subjects.

26. Adults in the early years use their subject knowledge effectively to plan and create rich opportunities for children to develop and use new vocabulary and concepts in both French and English. Children are confident in their use of subject specific language, such as the children in Reception class who used new scientific language such as float, sink, cloudy and evaporate with confidence and accuracy. Teachers use time and activities effectively to keep children engaged and on task. By the end of Reception, most children meet the early learning goals.
27. A range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils to develop their skills and talents further. Many take part in the weekly football club, developing their sporting techniques and team-building skills. Others focus on developing their musical knowledge and talents through individual music lessons. Weekly choir lessons, for all ages, ensure that pupils develop their musical knowledge of rhythm and a range of musical styles and songs. Pupils choose from activities such as kung fu, drama, yoga and chess, and Spanish, while others learn to play the ukulele, or take part in arts and crafts or the engineering club. These activities enhance pupils' learning and team-building skills.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

- 28. All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

29. Leaders encourage pupils to be reflective and to consider their attitudes to each other for the wellbeing of everyone. Pupils demonstrate a mature approach in how they treat each other and are confident to give their views. For example, in the transition assembly, older pupils discuss their feelings about transferring to secondary school. In response, other pupils give contributions as to how to deal with feelings of uncertainty, such as drawing, listening to music, adopting a yoga position, or 'snail breathing' which they have recently learned about in lessons. Pupils develop good social skills, kindness and respect of others.
30. Relationships education is well planned and in line with statutory guidance. Teaching provides age-appropriate lessons on themes such as family and positive relationships and personal safety. The wider PSHE curriculum includes appropriately well-planned topics on health and wellbeing, feelings and emotions, friendships and reconciliation which encourages pupils to discuss and to form ideas for themselves. Pupils access other opportunities to develop their understanding of safety and wellbeing, for example, Years 4 to Year 6 complete a first aid course.
31. In Nursery and Reception classes, children's secure relationships with each other and with their teachers make them unafraid to have a go at new tasks and activities. Younger children enjoy the ample opportunities to play together with older pupils. They demonstrate independence and resilience in their learning. Children are not afraid to answer questions or to get things wrong and develop self-confidence.
32. Behaviour is generally good. The school is calm and purposeful. If behavioural standards fall short, which is rare, it is effectively managed. Pupils understand the anti-bullying strategy and say that there is virtually no bullying in the school. They understand the difference between bullying and unkindness and are aware of the need to be respectful of others. They readily apologise if they inadvertently say something unkind.
33. Arrangements to support pupils' understanding of physical health and fitness are effective. Pupils have regular weekly sessions to develop sporting and teamwork skills through a wide variety of tasks and games opportunities with a professional coach. The sports coach plans well to ensure that pupils build on prior learning and develop further skill and are enabled to use their learning for recreation purposes. All pupils take part which supports their physical wellbeing and health. They say that they find the sessions inspirational and look forward to them.
34. Children in Nursery and Reception classes have lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills and stay healthy. In lessons, they access a range of activities that develop their fine and gross motor skills, such as racquet and ball skills. These children have separate playtimes and space, where they learn to use small play equipment safely and skilfully. Their curriculum includes regular visits to a local farm and nature walks to develop their physical development and wellbeing.
35. Pupils are well supervised throughout the school day, including in the outdoor areas, where there is plenty of space for learning and recreation. Staff are effectively deployed to supervise the pupils, including the youngest children in the early years.

36. The premises are well maintained and monitored on a daily basis. Leaders undertake appropriate health and safety checks, including those related to fire precaution and risk management, and use external specialist support when needed. Suitable provision for pupils' medical and first aid needs is in place and medicines are stored securely.
37. Attendance and admission records are maintained appropriately. Leaders know to inform the local authority wherever they have concerns about a pupils' attendance and when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard transition points.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

38. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

39. Pupils are confident and communicate well with adults and with each other. They understand British values and why they are important. These values are embedded in their school. Staff and leaders model respectful relationships with one another and encourage pupils to do likewise. Pupils are regularly reminded to treat others as they would like to be treated. In line with the school's aims, pupils learn about 'les droits de l'homme', the rights of individuals and acceptance of difference.
40. Pupils understand the need for rules in school and in society and learn about the importance of this through their lessons. For example, older pupils learn how laws are created, and through their visit to the Houses of Parliament, have a clear understanding of the importance of democracy and the rule of law. The school council helps pupils to understand democracy in their own school.
41. Pupils engage with local projects, learning that giving is part of being a community. They take part in services in the local church at Harvest and Christmas times. They raise funds for a local charity for Reading in a hospital scheme. The school council have begun to raise initiatives from discussion with their classmates. They are raising funds for both the school and local community, such as funds for the library for more French books, as well as raising money for local foodbanks through bake sales.
42. Pupils understand right from wrong because they are taught that rules matter for a harmonious community. When their behaviour falls short, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the way they behave towards others and to make amends. Assemblies to develop pupils' social understanding have included Remembrance Day, a visit from the local community police officer, Easter celebration in the local church and giving to others.
43. Pupils visit a range of places such as the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British museum, London transport museum, the Natural History Museum, the British Library and the Royal Courts of Justice, to learn about British institutions. Visits from services such as the fire brigade and the police in the Nursery and Reception classes promote respect for institutions and services with the very youngest children. A programme of themed weeks and a thoughtfully planned programme of assemblies focusing on giving, other cultures and festivals ensure all children including the very youngest understand respect for others.
44. Pupils' economic understanding is less well developed than their learning in other areas. Leaders have begun to develop the curriculum and opportunities available to pupils. This work is ongoing.
45. The bilingual environment promotes pupils' understanding of the world. Pupils celebrate festivals and special days, different faiths and cultural differences such as Hanukkah, Ramadan, Sikhism and Christianity. Pupils learn about those who are less fortunate or wider worldwide issues through studying Black History Month or the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) rights of the child. This learning deepens their understanding of others and encourages them to develop empathy. Leaders encourage pupils to see themselves clearly as both English and French citizens, functioning as both. The curriculum supports pupils' developing understanding of others and how they live and communicate.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

46. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

47. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils are implemented effectively. The proprietor is appropriately trained. The proprietor has effective oversight of safeguarding and the work of the designated safeguarding lead.
48. The designated safeguarding lead and deputies are suitably qualified and trained. They receive appropriate advanced level training to carry out their work. The safeguarding policy is routinely updated to include the required guidance for staff and parents. It is published on the school website.
49. Staff are well trained and understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive detailed training when they join the school. Training is updated at regular intervals and in staff meetings. They understand and act in line with related policies and the code of conduct. Staff understand how to report any concerns to the designated lead or deputies.
50. The safeguarding leaders and pastoral team work closely to follow up any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead contacts the relevant local external agencies to ask for advice or make referrals when required to support pupils in their care. Pupils are regularly reminded that a number of staff are available, should they wish to talk.
51. Staff understand the importance of teaching pupils how to stay safe, including online safety. They ensure that pupils know how to be safe through regular lessons, assemblies and other activities. Pupils have an age-related understanding of different types of risks and how to report any concerns. They say online safety lessons are useful, and they know how to be safe online.
52. Filtering arrangements are in place to ensure pupils' safety in the school. Pupils have weekly computer lessons and regular lessons as part of the PSHE programme to remind them how to be safe online. Leaders communicate regularly with parents as a key part of their safeguarding culture and provide opportunities for parents to attend talks on ways to help keep their child safe, including online safety.
53. Pre-employment recruitment checks are completed as required for all staff. A record of all checks is kept. The record is checked by leaders regularly to ensure that all required checks are carried out appropriately.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 54. All the relevant Standards are met.**

School details

School	La Petite Ecole Bilingue
Department for Education number	202/6002
Address	La Petite Ecole Bilingue 22 Vicar's Rd London NW5 4NL
Phone number	020 7284 2620
Email address	office@lpebl-kt.com
Website	www.sis-lpeblkt.com
Proprietor	Lady Anne Henderson-Stewart
Headteacher	Mrs Natasha Henderson-Stewart
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	97
Date of previous inspection	First ISI inspection

Information about the school

55. La Petite Ecole Bilingue is an independent, co-educational day school for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years old based in Kentish town, London. It is one of a group of three schools, two of which are in London and one in Paris. The Proprietor opened the Kentish Town school in its current building in 2012. The headteacher has been in role since September 2022. The school follows the National Curriculum of England and the French Education Nationale Programme with equal time given to lessons in French and English.
56. This is the school's first inspection conducted by the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI). The school was previously inspected by Ofsted. When the school was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2020, the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good.
57. There is one Reception class with 15 children and one Nursery class with 10 children. Children in the EYFS follow a bilingual curriculum with equal time for learning in French and English.
58. The school has identified six pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
59. A large minority of pupils are bilingual in English and French. A small minority are more proficient in English or French and a few pupils speak an additional or additional languages to French and English.
60. The school states that its aims are to offer an ambitious and inclusive bilingual curriculum in a happy, caring and intellectually stimulating environment. Leaders aim for every pupil to feel a valued member of the school community and to have a sense of being personally nurtured.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

11 to 13 June 2024

61. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

62. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the proprietor
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

63. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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