

School: Lewes New School	DCSF Number:	845/6047
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## Comments Form

We disagree with the factual content of the report:

We wish to make the following comments:

### Quality of Education

#### - para 4

Re: 'Teachers are not assessing pupil's academic achievements well enough and concentrate their observations on the pupils' personal development . . . lack of good on-going pupil assessment means that teaching is not rigorous enough . . .'

***We operate our own holistic assessment framework for which evidence was provided during the inspection. This framework includes literacy and numeracy diaries which make detailed formative assessment of children's progress; tick sheets that monitor individual progress in literacy and maths; reading and writing samples that are taken twice yearly for all children; and holistic portfolios that detail development in all other areas of the curriculum. This is a comprehensive and sophisticated system which as stated in SIEF we intend to further refine and develop. It is seriously misleading not to acknowledged this existing framework for assessment anywhere in the report.***

Re: 'The school does not assess pupil's achievements against agreed standards . . . and as a result teachers are unclear how well pupils are doing against national norms.'

***This statement demonstrates a misunderstanding of our ethos and our choice to monitor and ensure high achievement without reference to national standards or norms. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 states that . . .***

***'1(4) The school shall have in place a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference either to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both.'***

#### - para 5

Re: 'In all classes there is a lack of urgency or drive to get work done quickly or to a high standard if pupils chose not to . . .'

***During the inspection the inspectors reported positive pace in 3 of the 4 classes (Class 1 during a project session; Class 2 during a writing session and Class 3 during a reading session) and I was present when the 4<sup>th</sup> class was being observed during a dance session which had excellent pace. To suggest that a lack of urgency or drive characterises all classes is false and wholly misleading. The implication that our model of education is permissive and that the children set the pace and are allowed to opt out of their learning is also false and suggests a failure to appreciate the school's educational philosophy and practice.***

Re: 'Information and communication technology skills are not developed well, partly because the school does not have enough good computers and partly because the teachers do not have enough knowledge to develop skills outside word processing . . . '

***The teaching staff were not asked at any point during the inspection about their technical skills and so this statement is unfounded. In fact the teachers' have broad technical skills which include the following: desktop publishing; spreadsheets; powerpoint presentation; internet communication; website design; statistical analysis, animation and video production. Evidence of children's work with some of the above was shown to the inspectors.***

Re: 'The school is not preparing pupils well for future academic studies in mathematics, science and technology'

***The inspection did not consider sufficient evidence to support this false statement. Only one mathematics session was observed – for a period of around 20 minutes. Evidence was given to the inspector of extended mathematical investigation work. Evidence was also made available and listed in the SIEF of detailed assessment of individual progress in maths. The observed science session was not representative of the range of science projects that take place in the school and for which evidence of children's work was provided. Evidence of a good range of technology projects was also given to the inspectors.***

#### **Suitability of the proprietor and staff - para 2**

Re: 'The school employs volunteers working at the school who are foreign nationals '

***The school has arranged one placement for one foreign secondary school pupil on work experience. Appropriate checks were made in correspondence with a founding parent of the school who is a long term family friend of the pupil. There were clearly no grounds for concern. The school has no general policy to employ foreign national volunteers. The guidance on foreign nationals is not relevant in this case since the 2004 Amendment's requirements for schools to carry out checks for foreign national are explicitly intended for adults. Please see ref below for confirmation of this:***

#### **Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Appendix 9:**

***page 97 'Pupils who undertake short periods of work experience that involve contact with children in other schools or education establishments need not apply for disclosure.'***

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

Re: ensure there is a system for accurately judging how well each individual pupil acquires knowledge and skills

***Such a system is already in place – please see ref to this above***

Re: 'ensure that the list and qualifications, including appropriate details of medical checks are all up to date for all staff currently at the school. (Paragraph 4 (2) (a))'

***Paragraph 4(2)(a) applies to appointments at the school from 1st May 2007 and does not appear to create a legal obligation for medical checks of existing staff. This is confirmed in paragraph 6(1), " the amendments made by these Regulations do not affect the suitability of any staff, supply staff or proprietor appointed before 1st May 2007." The school undertakes to make all necessary checks and would appreciate accurate and clear advice on which medical checks, if any, are legally obliged for staff appointed before 1st May 2007.***

Re: 'ensure that appropriate checks are made of any person working in the school (including volunteers) who has lived outside the UK (paragraph 4(2)(c))'

***The school already does this. Please see earlier correction of draft statement about foreign nationals.***

Re: 'ensure that the register shows that checks have been made, and certificates obtained of the identity, qualifications, enhanced CRB checks and the right to work in the UK in relation to each person named as a member of staff and proprietor and that these checks are dated and completed. (paragraph 4C(6) and 4(7)).'

***Paragraph 4C(7) of the Regulations require the school to show on our register whether and when checks are made of proprietors who were appointed before 1st May 2007. This paragraph does not create a legal obligation for the school to make such checks, which is confirmed in paragraph 6(1) of the Regulations, " the amendments made by these Regulations do not affect the suitability of any staff, supply staff or proprietor appointed before 1st May 2007". The school notes that the principal Regulations created a legal obligation for the Secretary of State to CRB check the proprietors (paragraph 4a 2003). The government has not demonstrated that this was done at the time however the school undertakes to complete all necessary checks and would appreciate accurate and clear advice on which checks are legally obliged for proprietors appointed before 1st May 2007.***

***Paragraph 4C(6) refers only to proprietors so the reference in the draft statement to staff appears misplaced. Please consider adding a reference to 4(C)2 and 4C(3) and noting that the school already undertakes to fulfill the obligation of these paragraphs.***

## What the school could do to improve further

Re: 'Take steps to devise rigorous assessment'

***This statement is misleading in its implication that we have not begun to devise such systems. Please see comments above.***

Signed: Lizzie Overton

- Please attach report with the requested amendments (if any).
- Please attach further sheets for comments if necessary.

Once the final report has been agreed and is published a copy will be sent to you via e-mail. Please let us know if you would like a hard copy version sent to you.

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Reply received: \_\_\_\_\_

Action Required: \_\_\_\_\_