

Inspection of La Chouette School

17 The Mall, London W5 2PJ

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Children enjoy coming to this small and nurturing school. They have warm and trusting working relationships with their teachers and other adults. Staff look after children well and make sure that children feel secure.

Children settle happily when they arrive each day. Clear routines help them to become increasingly independent. For example, children know to put their coats and shoes by their named clothes peg.

Staff expect the best from children. They encourage children to be polite and to try their hardest, even if a task is difficult. Children behave well. They like getting stickers as rewards, as well as lots of praise from staff.

Staff do not tolerate bullying or unkind behaviour. They encourage children to think of others and to reflect on any behaviour that could upset someone.

The bilingual approach helps children to immerse themselves in French and English. Children quickly get used to hearing and speaking both languages and they move between the two naturally.

The school mascot, 'Le Petit Loup', plays an important role in school life. Children enjoy taking him home and telling their class about the adventures they have had with him.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders offer and deliver an ambitious curriculum. Staff plan children's learning carefully so that children develop and succeed in all areas of learning. They make sure that children build their knowledge and skills in a logical order. Teachers divide the curriculum into French and English learning. The many overlaps between the two programmes help to reinforce children's learning. For example, children learn to count to 10 in French and English and to recognise different representations of numbers.

The small classes help teachers get to know the children well. They check what children know and can do through regular observations. Teachers adapt and tailor learning to suit each child's needs. Leaders and teachers work together to identify children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work with parents, carers and external specialists to make sure that these children get the right support. Children with SEND learn as well as their classmates.

Staff consider and select the vocabulary that they want children to know in English and French. They plan learning around this. For example, children in the 'moyenne' section learned about Egypt. They learned words such as 'pharaoh', 'desert' and 'sarcophagus'. Children used their knowledge to design and build their own pyramids. They took care with cutting out 'bricks' and made colourful designs.

Staff use lots of rhymes and songs to help build children's language skills. Children enjoyed learning 'I'm a Little Teapot', for example. They sequenced the story and decorated their own teapots. They have great fun at the weekly musical play session, dancing to different songs and nursery rhymes. 'Circuits' in the garden and sessions with a sports coach help children's physical development. The indoor learning environment is bright and purposeful. However, the outdoor environment is not as well organised to support children's learning and development across all areas of the curriculum.

Story time sessions help children to develop a love of reading. Children sat rapt with attention as they listened to a story. Children are used to hearing the sounds in words before starting phonics lessons in English. The training that leaders organise, particularly in phonics, is limited. Staff follow a structured programme and give individual support to help children keep up. On occasion, staff do not reinforce children's phonics learning and recall as well as they could.

Children know when they need to pay attention and not to disturb learning. Staff remind children to use their 'listening ears'. Staff help children to resolve any disagreements, such as when they want to use the same toy or resource that another child has already selected. Children learn to share and wait their turn. They use the 'colour monster' each day to talk about their feelings. Children are taught to work as a team, for example during 'tidy-up time' or when completing a jigsaw puzzle together. Leaders have a suitable policy in place for relationships education and are in the process of consulting parents. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils' wider development. Children celebrate different religious festivals and events. For example, they enjoyed making their own poppies for Remembrance Day.

Staff said that they feel well supported by leaders and that leaders are considerate of workload. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and feel fully involved in their children's learning. Leaders ensure that policies are kept up to date and that the school meets the statutory requirements for the early years and the independent school standards. Leaders have ensured that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and paediatric first aid. They are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of a child being at risk of abuse or neglect, for example. Staff report to leaders if they have any concerns about children and these are followed up appropriately.

Leaders make sure that the learning environment is a safe place for children. Staff teach children how to stay safe, such as when using the different play equipment and resources.

The safeguarding policy is available on the school website and complies with statutory guidance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Occasionally, staff do not maximise opportunities to support pupils' phonic knowledge as effectively as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the support and training they need, particularly in phonics.
- The outdoor area is used for learning but does not support children's learning in all areas as well as it could. Leaders should ensure that learning in the outdoor area is an integrated and purposeful part of the curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	137802
DfE registration number	307/6004
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10242775
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 6
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Julien Amar and Magali Amar
Headteacher	Magali Amar
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,800
Telephone number	020 8567 5323
Website	www.lachouetteschool.co.uk
Email address	office@lachouetteschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 to 24 May 2018

Information about this school

- La Chouette School offers a bilingual education to children aged two to six. The curriculum combines the early years foundation stage and the French national curriculum for early years. Each classroom has a teacher of French and one of English.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds. Currently the school has three classes: the 'toute petite' section, for children aged two to three years, is based in one classroom. The 'petite' section, for children aged three to four years, shares a classroom with the 'moyenne' section, for children aged four to five years. There are currently no children aged five to six in the 'grande' section.
- Leaders provide before- and after-school childcare for children who attend the school.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- Leaders run provision for children aged 12 to 18 months at the same setting. This has a separate registration and was therefore not part of this inspection.
- The headteacher is also the joint proprietor of the school. There is no governing body.
- The school's previous standard inspection was 22 to 24 May 2018, when it was judged good for overall effectiveness.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff and the school business manager.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, communication and language, mathematics, and personal, social and emotional development. The inspector discussed the curriculum in each area with teachers, visited indoor and outdoor learning spaces, spoke with staff and children and looked at children's work. The inspector also considered other areas of learning.

- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies and procedures related to safeguarding and health and safety, the admissions and attendance register, leaders' evaluation of the school and other information provided by leaders.
- The inspector spoke to some parents to gather their views of the school. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and responses to the online staff survey.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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