

# The Roche School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	212/6351
Unique Reference Number	101075
URN for registered childcare and social care	EY316602 EY316604 EY316609
Inspection number	329570
Inspection dates	11 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi

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). The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 08456 404040

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## 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.

The inspection of registered provision<sup>1</sup> was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## Information about the school

The Roche School is a non-selective independent nursery and primary school for boys and girls aged from two and a half to 11 years of age. It opened in 1983 and moved to Wandsworth in 1988. It was last inspected in February 2005. It also comprises two nursery settings situated on two separate sites in the London Boroughs of Fulham and Wandsworth. Altogether, there are 300 pupils on roll. There are a number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and seven pupils with a statement of special educational need. A few pupils are bilingual or have English as an additional language. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there are 145 children of whom 35 attend full-time and 112 have publicly funded nursery places. Children under four have the opportunity to attend all day or part-time if they wish. The school is on the Early Years register for childcare. The Early Years were last inspected in September 2006.

The primary school teaches a curriculum that includes all the National Curriculum subjects with the addition of French and drama, and is designed to prepare the older pupils for the entrance examinations to selective secondary schools. The EYFS curriculum is taught through a Montessori approach. The school aims to 'help all pupils to reach good standards in spoken and written English, in mathematics and in their understanding of the physical and human context of their lives. Children's learning environment should be such that, whatever their talents, they take pride in their own achievements and are patient and buoyant where they find their studies difficult or prosaic.'

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<sup>1</sup> Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

## Evaluation of the school

The Roche School provides an outstanding quality of education and meets its aims fully. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in addressing the issues related to the teaching of mathematics in lower Key Stage 2. Its curriculum is now outstanding as it enables pupils to make outstanding progress and prepares them extremely well for their future. The provision for pupils' personal development, welfare, health and safety is outstanding in both the preparatory school and EYFS. The EYFS managers have successfully addressed the issues of further promoting children's understanding of other languages, and ensuring that healthy habits are taught consistently well across the three settings. The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good, enabling most children to make good progress. Understandably, parents express a very high level of satisfaction with the school. The school complies with all the regulations for independent schools.

## Quality of education

The school is led by a thoughtful principal, experienced senior leaders and dedicated staff. The accuracy and depth of their self-review reflect their excellent capacity to make further improvements. As a result, the curriculum is outstanding. Its breadth enables all pupils to gain a broad base of general knowledge and key skills across a wide variety of subjects and develop interests that they can pursue to a high level. Pupils make outstanding progress in their learning. There is a great emphasis on reading and pupils develop exceptionally high level reading skills. Creative writing is a strength and pupils from Year 2 write at length in a good range of contexts. In response to parental demand, provision for sport and French has increased and the range of extra-curricular activities has broadened to include more art, drama, music and cookery. Art is taught by a practising artist and this provision is exemplary, including drawing, ceramics, animation and film-making. Music and singing are taught by subject specialists from the Nursery and individual instrumental tuition is available on request. French is also taught by a specialist and by the end of Year 6, pupils have a good command of elementary oral and written French.

The curriculum is very well planned, well resourced and constantly reviewed to meet the needs of all pupils closely and raise standards further. For example, the teaching of Key Stage 2 pupils in ability sets in English and mathematics has improved their achievement significantly. The schemes of work for information and communication technology (ICT) are being reviewed to enhance presentation skills and data handling, and to introduce programming skills. ICT is used effectively as a learning and teaching tool across subjects. The provision for pupils who have learning difficulties is exemplary, owing to staff expertise and a strong commitment to inclusion. Pupils who have learning or linguistic needs make as much progress as their peers owing to very good planning and support. The curriculum is monitored very effectively by the senior managers and newly appointed subject leaders.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. There is a good structure in place to ensure the retention and professional development of staff. The key strength of teaching is the positive impact of a core of inspirational and experienced staff on the quality of learning. There is a shared understanding of what makes good teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and, owing to the small size groups, they have a good understanding of pupils' prior attainments, aptitudes and needs. They have high expectations and plan tasks that provide a good level of challenge. Staff ask open questions that make pupils think. They employ a variety of methods that match pupils' various learning styles and make excellent use of time, and good use of resources. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support individuals well. Staff foster excellent relationships that enable pupils to work in a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere in which they can flourish. All staff seek to develop high standards of literacy and oracy in most subjects and promote independent learning. Some staff model a very high level of language consistently. However, the over-use of worksheets in some subjects does not support the very good promotion of independent writing seen in others. The school has correctly identified as areas for improvement the need to involve pupils more directly in managing the progress of their own learning and to develop more rigorous systems to track their individual progress. Whilst pupils gain a good understanding of how to improve through verbal feedback, the quality of marking is inconsistent.

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

The school makes outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Every care is taken to provide each pupil with an opportunity to find something they can excel at. Consequently, pupils enjoy school life and their attendance and behaviour are good. In the words of a Year 6 pupil, 'there are lots of clubs so we can find our hobbies and talents. I'm coming up to my entrance examinations and the school really helps me.' The excellent promotion of pupils' personal development is underpinned by a strong belief in 'dialogue as a means of developing pupils' understanding and discrimination and to investigate working assumptions.' This is promoted very effectively by most staff, who foster perseverance and plan opportunities for reflection. Pupils make lively contributions in class in the confidence that their views are heard and valued. Pupils are encouraged to explore ideas and concepts at a deeper level through discussion and project work undertaken every term on global issues. This is also enhanced by drama, as every pupil is involved in the production of their year-group play. They learn to develop a good understanding of how the various characters interact with each other. Drama also makes a strong contribution to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The provision for pupils' cultural and social development is exceptional and the breadth of multicultural education is exemplary from the Nursery onwards. Through the religious education curriculum, pupils gain a very good awareness of diversity, which is enhanced by other subjects. They demonstrate understanding and

appreciation of each other's cultural, physical and intellectual differences. Children in the EYFS and Key Stage 1 learn about public institutions through the 'people who help us' topic. However, this area is not sufficiently structured in Key Stage 2 and a significant minority of older pupils feels that they do not contribute sufficiently to school improvements. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to their school and local community. For example, they can join the junior or senior choir and the school orchestra. Pupils of all musical abilities are encouraged to participate in annual Eisteddfod competitions. Links with schools in Africa are at an early stage.

Pupils are very confident, resilient, friendly and have excellent key and teamwork skills that prepare them extremely well for their future. They can aspire to management roles in Year 6. All Year 6 pupils succeed in gaining entrance to selective secondary schools.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding, supported by robust policies and procedures that are implemented consistently and reviewed annually. The safeguarding policies and procedures comply fully with the latest guidance. A suitable number of staff have appropriate first aid training including paediatric qualifications for EYFS staff. Detailed records are kept of any injuries, accidents or medical needs and the required range of health and safety checks and risk assessments are regularly carried out. The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 and currently provides good access to the curriculum for pupils with hearing impairment and dyslexia.

The school creates a happy and relaxed family atmosphere that engenders a positive sense of well-being amongst the pupils, in the confidence that their individuality is respected. Pupils are well supervised, feel safe, secure and well cared for, and instances of bullying are rare. They show a very good awareness of how to keep themselves and each other safe and move carefully around the school. Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is promoted very effectively by the curriculum, the expansion of the provision for sports and a school ban on fizzy drinks, chocolate bars and sweets. There is also access to fresh water throughout the day. The school provides facilities to park bicycles in response to a significant number of parents who wish to cycle to school with their children.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good and the provision fully meets the requirements set out for this age group and those who are under three. The leadership and management of the EYFS are good because those in charge are focused on enabling children to make good progress in their learning and development. The detailed self evaluation accurately identifies the key priorities for improvement, such as the wider use of ICT in the Nursery and the development of activity zones in the outdoor areas.

The EYFS places a great emphasis on children's personal development and well-being which are outstanding. Children form exceptionally positive and respectful relationships with others. They settle in and behave well, and are very keen to learn. They develop independence by being able to choose activities as they can gain ready access to resources, and by helping themselves to water, for example. Children contribute to the organisation by setting the table for lunch and helping to tidy up. They know how to stay safe and use tools carefully. They adopt good hygiene practices. The parent of a Nursery child says, 'My child was 'special person of the week' who helped with extra jobs and loved it; she told her whole family about it.' However, some activities are unnecessarily dominated by the adults and there are missed opportunities to develop a higher level of independence in children's learning.

Every child is recognised as unique and planning is strongly related to their starting points and abilities. The care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and these children make good progress throughout the EYFS. The learning environment is well prepared to provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and a rich variety of practical experiences that integrate several areas of learning. For example, in one Nursery class, where the children made Russian dolls using plastic cups of different sizes, their teacher made links with the mathematical concept of enlargement. In Reception, there are more teacher-led activities but children have daily opportunities for free play. Reading skills are very well taught through the same system in Nursery and Reception and children progress rapidly in reading. Children's language development and awareness of cultural diversity is enhanced by the introduction of Spanish in the Nursery in addition to French which is also taught in Reception. Consequently, children make at least good progress across all areas of learning in relation to their varying starting points. By the end of Reception, they achieve levels that above those expected for their age. The school has identified as an area for development, the need to share with parents information about children's individual learning journeys.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

## 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:

- implement strategies to involve pupils more directly in managing the progress of their own learning and further develop tracking systems to monitor their individual progress rigorously
- further develop independent learning in all aspects of the EYFS children's activities and the use of ICT in the Nursery
- as acknowledged by the school, continue to improve the use of all outdoor areas in the EYFS and develop records of children's individual 'learning journeys.'

## Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education	✓			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	✓			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning	✓			

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		✓		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		✓		

## School details

Name of school	The Roche School		
DCSF number	212/6351		
Unique reference number	101075		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY316602, EY316604, EY316609		
Type of school	Primary and nursery		
Status	Independent day school		
Date school opened	1983		
Age range of pupils	2-11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils) (includes all provisions)	Boys: 95	Girls: 70	Total: 165
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 62	Girls: 49	Total: 111
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 11	Girls: 13	Total: 24
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 6	Girls: 1	Total: 7
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,020		
Annual fees (childcare)	£9,150		
Address of school	11 Frogmore Wandsworth London SW18 1HW		
Telephone number	0208877 0823		
Fax number	0208875 1156		
Email address	office@therocheschool.co.uk		
Principal	Dr James Roche		
Proprietor	Mrs Carmen Roche, Dr James Roche		
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi		
Dates of inspection	11 November 2008		