

The Japanese School

87 Creffield Road, Acton, London W3 9PU

Inspection date

4 June 2019

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the time of the previous inspection in October 2018, curriculum planning did not specifically make adaptations to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- This inspection found that the school's curriculum, summarised in the Japanese government's overarching primary and secondary programmes of study, explains how pupils with SEND would be supported. However, leaders and teachers are unable to express a coherent understanding of what SEND actually means. There is a lack of clarity as to whether or not there are pupils on the school's roll with SEND, and if there are, what their needs are, what support they require and how the curriculum is adapted to support them appropriately.
- The independent school standard remains unmet.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(vi)

- At the time of the previous inspection, it was judged that leaders failed to teach pupils and help them to understand, tolerate and respect people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. In particular, it was reported that the school's curriculum did not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about people with disabilities or who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). This limited pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain.
- This inspection found some minor improvements to curriculum plans to ensure that pupils understand and respect all the protected characteristics. There is a greater focus on morals, ethics and health sessions around difference, and some relevant posters around the school. Leaders and teachers told the inspector about an increased focus on, for example, people who identify as LGBT, and showed some examples of pupils' work on people with disabilities who have achieved great things.
- However, a group of the oldest and most articulate pupils in the school were unable to say anything relevant on the matter; they could vaguely recall an assembly on a related

topic, and their most pertinent example of difference was the fact that pupils of different ages speak with each other and get along in the school. Pupils' understanding of life in modern British society remains weak.

- The independent school standards remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, arrangements for safeguarding pupils were ineffective. There was a poor safeguarding culture, leaders were unable to demonstrate how concerns were dealt with and pupils did not learn how to avoid some of the prevalent dangers in London, such as gang culture. The child protection policy published on the school's website did not have regard to the latest statutory guidance and the school's arrangements for checking and recording the suitability of staff and proprietors did not meet requirements.
- This inspection found there still to be a poor safeguarding culture. Pupils' understanding of risk remains weak, especially in terms of gang culture, exploitation, knife crime and online safety.
- Leaders say that they have had no concerns to deal with since the previous inspection. There is no system for recording concerns and any action taken as a result. The designated safeguarding leaders say that concerns would be referred to parents, senior leaders and the school's external consultant. Leaders' understanding of the importance of consulting social care services and working with external agencies is negligible.
- Leaders rely too heavily on policy updates sent by consultants. They have not read, understood and reviewed the statutory guidance themselves. As a result, the school's policy, staff training and practice relating to the welfare of pupils are not fit for purpose.
- The school's child protection policy is available online and is now mostly written in line with the latest statutory guidance. However, it does not refer to some pertinent safeguarding issues from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', such as child criminal exploitation. Consequently, staff are unable to speak with any confidence or authority on the risks of, as examples, gang membership, exploitation and 'county lines'.
- The arrangements for checking and recording the suitability of staff and proprietors remain inadequate, as identified in Part 4.
- The standard remains unmet.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

All paragraphs

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school's new leaders were not aware of the requirement to maintain a single central record (SCR) of employment checks. An old version was found during the inspection, but this did not include a record of all the required checks. The school was also in breach of its statutory duty to ensure that the chair of the proprietors had an enhanced criminal record check, countersigned by the Secretary of State, because the Department for Education had not been informed of a change in the chair of the proprietorial board.

- This inspection found the school's SCR remains non-compliant. Many of the required checks, such as barred list checks, prohibition from teaching and management checks, and additional checks for those who have lived and worked overseas, were not known about until this inspection. A staff member has started work without a barred list check nor a completed enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Leaders with responsibility for the SCR, who are again new since the previous inspection, do not know or understand the statutory requirements.
- Leaders began bringing the SCR up to the required standards during the inspection.
- Since the previous inspection, the chair of the proprietors has again changed. The Department for Education has been informed of this change and an enhanced criminal record check, countersigned by the Secretary of State, is currently being processed.
- The vast majority of the independent school standards identified as unmet at the previous inspection remain unmet. Some additional standards are also judged as unmet, as identified in the annex to this report.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(f), 33(g), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(j), 33(j)(i) and 33(j)(ii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that the school's complaints policy met the regulatory requirements. The failings related to the requirement for provision of panel hearings should a parent not be satisfied with the school's response to a written complaint, and the written records of formal complaints.
- This inspection found the policy unchanged. Though a panel hearing of sorts is referenced, it is described as discretionary and there is no mention of at least one panel member being independent of the management of the school. Leaders have still not made arrangements to provide findings and recommendations, and to maintain written records of formal complaints, their stage of resolution and any action taken as a result.
- Leaders began refining the complaints policy during the inspection.
- The independent school standard in this part remains unmet.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous inspection the processes for handing over information and inducting new leaders to the requirements of the English school system, including the independent school standards, were ineffective. Leaders, including proprietors, had not ensured that the school met all the standards relating to safeguarding, welfare, the curriculum, and complaints procedures.
- This inspection found that, overall, very little has changed. The current leaders are again new to the school since the October 2018 inspection, and do not have a secure understanding of the independent school standards.
- This is the fifth consecutive inspection judging many independent school standards as unmet.
- The independent school standard in this part remains unmet.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders do not know what an accessibility plan is, nor have they produced one.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	101958
DfE registration number	307/6070
Inspection number	10102210

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

Type of school	Japanese day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Japanese School Ltd
Chair	Yuichi Ishizuka
Headteacher	Hideki Ishiyama
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,475
Telephone number	020 8993 7145
Website	www.thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk
Email address	nishihara-k@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	30–31 October 2018

Information about this school

- The Japanese School is an independent day school. It is a Japanese-speaking school that follows the Japanese national curriculum and receives some of its funding from the Japanese government.
- The school is registered for up to 400 pupils, who are typically the children of expatriates on secondment from their employers in Japan.
- Most staff are seconded from Japan. There is a high staff turnover. The headteacher, secretary general and chair of the proprietorial board have all joined the school since the previous inspection.

- Proprietors representing the companies in Japan who own the school and board members of the school change according to who is living in the United Kingdom at the time.
- The Department for Education's 'Get information about schools' (GIAS) website incorrectly names a single proprietor. In fact, the proprietor remains The Japanese School Ltd. However, the chair of the proprietorial board changed in April 2019.
- The school's most recent full standard inspection was in October 2018, when the school was judged to be inadequate with a significant number of unmet independent school standards.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced progress monitoring inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The school's previous inspection was a full standard inspection in October 2018. The inspection again judged many independent school standards to be not met. As a result, the school was asked to submit an action plan. The plan was judged to be not acceptable and was subsequently rejected by the Department for Education.
- This was the school's third progress monitoring inspection, and the fifth consecutive inspection in which multiple independent school standards are judged to be unmet.
- The inspection focused on the school's compliance with particular requirements within Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 of the independent school standards.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders, including the secretary general, the designated safeguarding leader and the deputy headteacher. He also met with two teachers and a group of the oldest pupils.
- The inspector toured the premises and visited all classrooms. He also scrutinised a range of documentation related to the independent school standards, including those related to the curriculum, safeguarding and complaints.
- The inspection considered the 26 recent responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The headteacher was not available during the inspection, as he was away with pupils on a residential trip.
- The inspection was supported by an interpreter.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made

under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.

- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if-
 - 20(6)(a) MB-
 - 20(6)(a)(ii) does not carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
 - 20(6)(c) subject to sub-paragraph (8), where the Secretary of State makes a request for an enhanced criminal record check relating to MB countersigned by the Secretary of State to be made, such a check is made.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel

appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;

- 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;
- 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is-
- 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
- 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and-
- 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
- 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
- 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;

- 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e).

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
 - 18(2)(c)(i) the person's identity;
 - 18(2)(c)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if-
 - 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB-
 - 20(6)(b)(ii) checks confirming MB's identity and MB's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-

- 21(3)(a)(i) S's identity was checked;
- 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made.

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