

# Reflections Small School

Tudor Court, 52 Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1PS

## Inspection dates

22–24 May 2018

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>              |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>              |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b>              |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Outstanding</b>       |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>              |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>              |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Exceptionally strong leadership and a shared vision for the school's future have ensured a successful and promising start for this happy, hard-working school.
- The quality of teaching has developed rapidly since the school opened in September 2017. Effective teaching ensures that children make rapid progress during early years so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- Teaching in the older year groups builds well on children's success during early years. Pupils make strong progress in English, mathematics, science and a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils play an extremely active role in their education. Teachers make good use of pupils' interests, ideas and questions to shape the direction of learning.
- High expectations, clear routines and caring relationships ensure that pupils feel comfortable, valued and secure.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well throughout the school. They are kind, thoughtful and polite.
- One parent reflected the views of others when she commented, 'Reflections Small School prepares children for every aspect of life.'
- The school is highly successful in developing pupils' personal and social skills. Pupils express their thoughts and feelings articulately and sensitively. They become confident, responsible and successful learners.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards. Regular checks ensure that the school complies fully with the independent school standards.
- Increasingly confident teaching supports pupils' learning well. However, sometimes teaching does not deepen and extend pupils' learning fully enough.
- Leaders work constructively with parents and with members of staff to review, evaluate and improve the school's work. They recognise, however, that arrangements to ensure that leaders are consistently challenged and held to account for pupils' outcomes are at an early stage of development.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that teaching provides sufficient challenge for pupils in order to extend and deepen their learning fully.
- Develop more rigorous and systematic governance procedures to ensure that leaders are challenged and held to account for the school's performance.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Senior leaders provide clear direction for the school. Their open, honest and thoughtful approach to education inspires staff and pupils alike to learn through exploration, investigation, questioning and reflection.
- The work of school leaders has been effective in ensuring that the school fully meets all the requirements of the independent school standards. Leaders, teachers and parents work constructively together to support pupils' learning. Their shared commitment to establishing the school has been key to the school's success during its first year. Leaders expect the very best of pupils and of themselves. All members of staff share leaders' high expectations.
- Leaders have established robust and reliable procedures to support teaching and learning since the school opened in September 2017. For example, rigorous procedures for evaluating pupils' progress give leaders, teachers and parents an accurate view of pupils' learning.
- Leaders regularly evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and provide clear guidance to help teachers to develop their practice. Regular training and strong links with other schools, including with the neighbouring nursery, ensure that teachers are able to share good practice and are up to date with national developments in education.
- Teachers are keen to develop their practice and are quick to take advice on board. One said, 'I feel constantly motivated, inspired, challenged and appreciated.'
- The school promotes values such as democracy, mutual respect, tolerance and kindness effectively throughout its work. Leaders and all members of staff reflect the school's values in their positive attitudes, strong relationships and professional approach. They provide exceptionally strong role models for pupils, who are keen to follow their lead.
- The school's approach to learning successfully combines opportunities for pupils to be highly creative with a more structured approach to teaching subjects such as phonics, literacy and numeracy skills.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' thoughts and ideas are at the heart of the school's broad, balanced, stimulating and well enriched curriculum. For example, in a recent project on sea monsters, teachers used pupils' questions and suggestions to plan and shape subsequent activities. As a result, learning was meaningful and built well on pupils' understanding and experience.
- The school's approach to learning encourages pupils to become creative, confident and active learners. Thought-provoking discussions about issues such as spirituality and morality arise naturally from pupils' questions during project work. Recent discussions have included consideration of topics including life, death and resurrection, with references made to world religions such as Christianity and Hinduism. The development of debating skills and a questioning attitude prepare pupils very well for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders have rightly identified that teaching is still developing, as the school's curriculum becomes increasingly well established. They recognise that the next stage in the school's development is to ensure that teaching deepens and extends pupils' learning fully.

## **Governance**

- There are no formal governance arrangements in place. Leaders are currently developing this aspect of the school's work.
- Leaders ensure that the school is an outward-looking community. They continually look for ways of developing the school's work and regularly evaluate the school's educational approach. Visits by headteachers from Great Britain and from other countries stimulate lively debate and contribute well to the school's self-review.
- Leaders and teachers continually evaluate, question and discuss the school's curriculum and adjust teaching to improve the quality of learning. They meet regularly to review the school's work and to identify the next steps in the school's development. Leaders are now keen to strengthen governance so that they are challenged and held to account for pupils' learning more rigorously.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders give the safeguarding of pupils a high priority and take their responsibility for ensuring that the independent school standards are met very seriously. For example, leaders follow rigorous recruitment and safeguarding checks to ensure that appointed members of staff are suitably qualified.
- Leaders have established a 'joined-up' whole-school approach to ensuring pupils' safety, so that all members of staff are clear about their roles and pupils are safe throughout the school.
- Leaders make sure that a copy of the school's safeguarding policy is available to parents on its website. The policy provides a secure framework for staff, parents and pupils. It provides contact details for the school's designated safeguarding leader and for agencies such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Ofsted.
- Adults pay close attention to safety and hygiene procedures. For example, they regularly remind pupils to wash their hands before eating their lunch and when completing forest school activities. As a result, pupils develop a sensible view of everyday risks and understand some of the steps they can take to stay safe and healthy.
- Leaders maintain high standards of cleanliness throughout the school. Classrooms and outdoor areas provide pupils with bright, airy and attractive spaces for pupils to learn and play.
- Adults successfully develop pupils' awareness of risk in a safe and carefully managed way. For example, they provide a range of carefully maintained and supervised play equipment in the outdoor areas, including a rope swing, trim-trail and climbing tree. As a result, pupils play, learn and explore confidently and securely.

- Leaders have established strong relationships with parents. They welcome parents into the school and value their views and suggestions. One parent commented: 'The school responds to any questions or concerns we may have promptly and competently.'
- Parents appreciate the lengths that adults go to to ensure that their children are happy and secure, with one parent referring to the 'total care' provided by the school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers are knowledgeable about teaching pupils of different ages and needs and prepare them well for the next stage of their education. One parent commented that: 'Teaching makes learning fun, relevant and interesting.'
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' starting points when they join the school and plan interesting activities which build effectively on pupils' prior learning. They provide parents with regular, detailed and comprehensive information about how well pupils are learning and about some of the steps parents can take to support their children at home.
- Teachers make good use of the local environment to ensure that learning is purposeful and meaningful. For example, pupils enjoyed learning about direction and compass points during the inspection while exploring the forest school environment.
- Well-structured and consistently effective teaching ensures that pupils develop secure phonics, reading, writing and numeracy skills. Teachers use practical equipment well, such as numbers, letters and counting materials, to support children's literacy and mathematical understanding.
- Teachers have a deep and perceptive understanding of pupils' needs. They give pupils many opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas throughout each day and make good use of pupils' responses to plan future learning. However, teaching does not always extend pupils' learning as fully as it could for pupils of all ages and stages of development.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Outstanding**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Strong relationships ensure that pupils feel safe and valued. Adults respond skilfully and perceptively to pupils' emotional needs. As a result, pupils rapidly grow in confidence and develop a real love of learning.
- Pupils are happy and very secure in school. They enjoy playing and learning with their classmates and get on very well with each other.
- Pupils use the school's equipment carefully and sensibly. For example, during the inspection pupils thoroughly enjoyed clambering in the 'climbing tree' and using the rope swing in the school's outdoor area, under the watchful eye of a member of staff. Adults' sensitive encouragement and guidance ensures that activities such as these contribute very well to pupils' social, personal and physical development.

- Adults make good use of games and activities to encourage pupils' social skills, such as sharing and taking turns, and to develop pupils' understanding of fair play.
- Adults look after pupils extremely well. However, they are also acutely aware of the need for children to develop confidence and independence and help children to take responsibility for their own well-being. For example, they encourage children to put on coats and hats for themselves and to opt to play in the shade when the weather is hot.
- All parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or who sent in letters, feel that children are happy, safe and well behaved. One parent commented, 'The children learn so much about life, friendship and themselves while in the school.'

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils get to know each other very well and develop close friendships in this small and welcoming school. They are kind to each other and treat adults with respect.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and attend school regularly. They behave extremely well throughout the school. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate exceptionally well during lessons.
- The school provides high-quality care outside the school's normal hours. Pupils attending the morning session during the inspection enjoyed a range of breakfast foods, such as cereal, yogurt and toast, while chatting with their friends. Warm relationships ensure that pupils are happy, settled and comfortable at the start of the school day.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- Pupils' individual records of progress illustrate the rapid gains they make in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating and appealing activities which capture pupils' interest and feed their curiosity. For example, activities such as making omelettes over the campfire in the forest school are skilfully used to develop pupils' language, mathematics, scientific and observational skills, while also contributing to their physical development and to their understanding of fire safety in a secure setting.
- Samples of pupils' work illustrate the strong progress they make in the development of writing skills, including phonics. Pupils learn how to write effectively for a wide range of audiences and purposes. For example, pupils' recent written work has included labelling and annotating maps of the local area appropriately and writing imaginatively about a sea monster.
- Pupils develop a secure mathematical understanding. They learn how to select and use different strategies to help them to tackle mathematics tasks successfully. For example, during the inspection, a group of pupils used place value sheets and cubes confidently to demonstrate and explore numbers bigger than a thousand.
- Teaching capitalises well on pupils' curiosity to support their progress in science. As a result, pupils develop a keen sense of the world around them and a good scientific understanding. For example, during the inspection, pupils used magnets and a selection

of materials to explore and develop their understanding of forces and magnetism. One pupil, successfully making links between her experiences of force when blowing bubbles and using magnets, commented, 'Force is the same thing as power – just a different word!'

- Pupils make substantial progress in developing creative and artistic skills. They learn how to observe the world around them carefully and frequently produce sensitive artwork which is full of character and individuality. High-quality, and often striking, artwork, such as minutely detailed paintings of plants, and black-and-white patterns created with pendulums and paint, displayed throughout the school, reflects the school's success in capturing pupils' interest and in fostering their creativity.
- All pupils learn well. However, teaching does not always deepen pupils' learning sufficiently.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Children make strong progress during early years and are well prepared for learning in the next stage of their education.
- Teachers achieve notable success in helping children to develop independence and confidence. They make full use of activities, such as growing vegetables in the school garden, to help children to develop an increasing understanding of the world around them while encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- Strong leadership underpins effective teaching and learning. Teaching provides a wide range of stimulating activities, both indoors and out, which promote numeracy skills very well, including forest school and beach school.
- Leaders successfully combine national early years learning and developmental guidelines with the school's particular educational approach, with a clear rationale for the school's approach to teaching and learning. They ensure that the independent school standards in relation to early years provision are met.
- Effective mathematics teaching equips children with practical skills which support learning very well. For example, children are reminded to take their time when counting objects and to touch each object as they do so to ensure accuracy.
- Teachers respond sensitively to children's needs and to their stages of learning. For example, they give children in the early stages of writing the time and space to experiment with different pen grips. However, they also provide timely encouragement to ensure that children develop an appropriate pen grip which enables them to write comfortably and clearly.
- Adults balance close attention to children's safety with opportunities for children to develop independence and confidence. This ensures that children can make choices about activities and are able to explore their environment safely.
- Children of all ages behave exceptionally well throughout the school. Adults help them to develop social skills, such as taking turns and sharing, very successfully. Children thoroughly enjoy school because they are happy, secure and engaged.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 143935   |
| DfE registration number | 938/6003 |
| Inspection number       | 10044150 |

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                      | Other independent school   |
| School category                     | Independent school   |
| Age range of pupils                 | 4–8  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 8  |
| Number of part-time pupils          | 0  |
| Proprietor                          | Reflections Nurseries Ltd  |
| Chair                               | N/A  |
| Headteacher                         | Martin Pace  |
| Annual fees (day pupils)            | £5,850   |
| Telephone number                    | 01903 208208   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.reflectionsnurseries.co.uk">www.reflectionsnurseries.co.uk</a>       |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:martin@reflectionsnurseries.co.uk">martin@reflectionsnurseries.co.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- Reflections Small School is an independent infant school for pupils between the ages of four and eight years.
- Reflections Small School was registered on 22 March 2017 and opened in September 2017. This inspection is the first standard inspection since the school's registration.
- The school operates from a large three-storey converted Georgian house in Worthing, West Sussex. It comprises of three rooms and two outdoor areas. The school shares the outdoor areas with Reflections Nursery and Forest School, which is owned by the same proprietor and is located next door to Reflections Small School.

- The school employs two qualified teachers, a forest school educator and a beach school teacher. The school works closely with Reflections Nursery and Forest School.
- The school's curriculum combines the educational philosophies of Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Danish forest schools.
- The school has places for 24 pupils across Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. There are currently eight pupils on roll, including six children in the early years age range. Pupils are taught in a mixed-age class.
- The school is open five days a week for 38 weeks of the year. It operates between the hours of 9am and 3.30pm.
- Pupils spend Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the school classrooms. On Thursdays, pupils spend the day in forest school, and on Fridays, they spend the day on the beach, with a follow-up session in the school classrooms in the afternoon.
- The school provides 'wrap-around' care for pupils before and after school.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning during four lessons. Three of these observations were carried out jointly with a senior leader.
- The inspector toured the school and its classrooms at different points during the inspection with the headteacher. She also visited the school's early morning care for pupils prior to the start of the school day.
- The inspector visited the school's outdoor areas during playtime and lunchtime. She also visited forest school during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of school documentation regarding the quality of education and the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- The inspector spoke with leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. She analysed seven responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and two responses to the staff questionnaire. She also took account of a letter received from a parent.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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