

Bhaktivedanta Manor School

Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Aldenham, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 8EZ

Inspection dates

13–15 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils make progress in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, but achievement is not yet better than this.
- The school does not know how well pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieve in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching for the most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not planned sufficiently well to challenge them to make best use of what they know and can do.
- Activities in the Reception Year are not tailored specifically for what the children need to achieve next or to enable them to move on fast enough to accelerate their learning.
- Monitoring and evaluation by senior staff and the governing body are not rigorous enough to get to the heart of what needs to improve for teaching or to raise pupils' outcomes.
- The roles of the governing body, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders are not well developed.
- The school does not meet two of the independent school standards because pupils do not yet make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The religious character of the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The school is a close, but not closed, community and is very much part of the day-to-day activities around the temple.
- Almost all parents are extremely positive about the school's work, especially the relationships between parents and staff, and between staff and children.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teaching and assessments challenge pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils start and complete tasks at a sufficiently high level
 - giving low-attaining pupils the support they need to start and finish tasks efficiently without too much help from adults
 - improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of best teaching practice for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - providing a good range of opportunities for children in the Reception Year so that their learning is challenged sufficiently.
- Analyse assessment information thoroughly to:
 - identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, especially for different groups of pupils, across a range of subjects
 - set challenging targets for pupils' performance for the end of each year group and key stage
 - make sure that tracking information matches pupils' work and is compared closely with the progress and achievement of pupils nationally with the same starting points.
- Make sure that all those with leadership and management responsibilities make a significant contribution to school improvement by providing:
 - strong governance through effective challenge and support to senior leaders
 - teaching staff with good opportunities for professional development
 - strong leadership of special educational needs provision
 - responsibilities for subject leadership
 - up-to-date written curriculum policies that reflect and drive provision.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(d), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that those persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher holds almost all areas of leadership and management responsibility, which worked well when there were fewer pupils than there are now, but not so well now that the school has expanded to its current size. As a result, some roles are underdeveloped, such as subject leadership and the coordination of special educational needs. Nevertheless, the headteacher and the governing body have a strong commitment for the school to be the best that it can be. This ambition is shared by staff.
- Teaching staff have limited opportunities to develop their practice through training, scrutiny of pupils' work or formal performance management. As a result, there are some gaps in teachers' knowledge of the new national curriculum and how to plan effectively for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, with written policies and commercial schemes providing the backbone for curriculum plans and lesson plans.
 - The school follows the new national curriculum.
 - Some of the written policies are out of date, particularly those for the foundation subjects, so they do not fully reflect the curriculum currently taught, particularly the changes made in the new national curriculum.
 - Computing is taught through other subjects but not systematically enough to make sure that all pupils get a coherent approach to develop their computing skills.
- Although the school has made good improvements to assess and track pupils' progress (a point for improvement at the previous inspection), the strategic overview is not rigorous enough to identify clearly how well pupils are doing.
 - There are no formal or ongoing assessments of subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
 - Assessments and tracking are not moderated or scrutinised carefully enough to identify precisely strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievements.
 - Achievements are tracked throughout the year but not targeted for what pupils should achieve by the end of each year or key stage.
 - Measures of pupils' progress are not included in action plans and self-evaluations to gauge the effectiveness of teaching or the impact of planned improvements.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well throughout the curriculum and teaching. Pupils benefit from a range of educational visits within the locality. They experience religious festivals from their own and others' cultures, and are encouraged to debate current affairs at home and abroad, difference, fairness, rights and responsibilities.

Governance

- The governing body acknowledges that it does not yet provide the rigorous level of challenge and support that senior leaders need and deserve. Having debated the issue, plans are in place for governors to play a fuller part in checking and evaluating the school's performance.
- The governing body and the headteacher have a common understanding of how well staff perform their responsibilities.

- Since the material change inspection in March 2016, when some of the independent school standards evaluated at that time were unlikely to be met, the governing body has developed its understanding of the requirements of the standards. As a result, during this inspection, all of the independent school standards are met, with the exception of those that refer to pupils making good progress. The standards that are not met do not impact negatively on pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- The proprietor has notified the Department for Education (DfE) that there are more pupils on roll than the number the school is registered to admit. The material change inspection by Ofsted in March 2016 was commissioned by the DfE to provide information about the suitability of the provision to admit up to 60 pupils. The DfE has not yet made a decision to increase the number of pupils.
- The school publishes a suitable policy on its website to outline the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective.
- The school is situated within the temple complex. This presents particular considerations for pupils' safety and well-being because the temple receives numerous visitors throughout each school day. Risk assessments, training, supervision, signage and heightened vigilance make sure that pupils feel safe and are protected from potential harm.
 - Pupils are trained to keep themselves safe and are reminded frequently of the rules and what to do if they are not sure about something.
 - Pupils are very clear about what they can and cannot do around the site. They know where they can and cannot go and what visitors must and must not do. They are very quick to report any infringements of the rules, and any concerns are dealt with quickly by staff.
 - Supervision of pupils is well thought through, and agreed arrangements are carried out effectively.
 - Staff are suitably trained and well informed about signs of child abuse and how to respond if concerns are raised about pupils' welfare. They know about information that can and cannot be shared when the appropriate authorities conduct investigations.
- A recent incident that occurred outside school time, which did not involve school staff, was investigated by the appropriate authorities and prompted staff to reflect on their practice in school. The incident highlighted some inconsistencies in the approaches to safeguarding children between the school and the temple. Some issues are not yet resolved, but the school revised its safeguarding policy appropriately to make clear the responsibilities of schools as set out in the government's statutory guidance for keeping children safe in education. The revised policy and information about why the changes were made were sent to parents, which helped to reassure them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching and assessment provide pupils with opportunities to make the progress expected for their age but are not sharp enough to provide enhanced opportunities for

different groups of pupils to do well according to their starting points. This is because pupils often all start at the same point without moving on quickly enough, resulting in work that is too easy for some and too hard for others.

- The most able pupils often start work at the same level as others, picking up extension work only when they have covered the same task as others. The extension work is often more of the same and does not deepen their knowledge sufficiently. Some pupils lose interest and do not complete tasks as well as they can.
 - Recently, the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had extra support to deepen their mathematical knowledge and understanding. It is too early to determine the effectiveness of this work but pupils are well motivated by the initiative.
 - Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are often well supported for their pastoral needs but do not have specific support for their academic performance because staff are not well trained to know how to remove the barriers to their learning, such as those for pupils with autism.
 - Lower-attaining pupils without special educational needs sometimes struggle to start tasks or complete them fully. Although adult support is often close at hand, pupils are not given the additional resources needed to help them understand the task at their own level.
- Pupils of all abilities read well because they have secure knowledge of phonics for reading and spelling, and can apply what they know accurately and confidently. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to read across a range of subjects, helping to develop pupils' love of reading. Parents support well their children's reading at home.
 - Staff are good role models. This successfully establishes pupils' good attitudes to work, respectful relationships between friends, and well-organised learning environments.
 - There is a suitable range of equipment, and pupils take good care of the resources.
 - Staff at all levels are highly motivated to do well for the pupils. Parents are extremely appreciative of their dedication and their availability to talk through concerns or queries. Parents are well informed about what children learn.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well prepared for the social and emotional challenges of mainstream secondary education, even when they are the only pupil transferring from this small school to their much larger new school. This is because pupils know how to get on with others from all walks of life. They have developed high regard for teachers, want to do well in their education, know what it takes to be a good learner and have high ambitions for their professional careers.
- As they move from one year to the next, pupils develop a deep understanding of the rights and responsibilities expected of good British citizens. They understand the complexities of homelessness and poverty, the limitations of the planet's resources, and the beliefs and practices different to their own family and/or religious life.
- An understanding of what is like to be a child from a Jewish, Christian or Islamic background is developed well through visits to different places of worship or from visits

by families from the school community. Active promotion and acceptance of difference is clear, but there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge and some muddled thinking about the specific differences in religious or family life.

- School policies and the good role models of staff make sure that pupils are protected well from extreme views. As a result, pupils have a well-developed understanding of what is right and wrong, lawful and unlawful.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Almost all pupils attend at least as well as pupils nationally, and exclusions from school are very rare. Many parents say that their children cannot wait to get back to school after the weekends and holidays.
- Pupils are often very supportive of one another's needs or worries and understand that some of their friends struggle to behave well. Bullying is rare and is tackled head-on by staff when it does occur. This includes specific work to address issues such as friendship disputes. Parents are very appreciative of this and pupils often develop long-lasting friendships.
- Pupils are lively, keen to express their views, and respectful even when they lose interest in learning. They usually work hard, and are quick to respond to adult reminders about any inappropriate behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- From starting points that are generally at least in line with national averages, most pupils make progress similar to pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment information shows that this is typical across year groups and is a consistent trend since the previous inspection.
- Pupils achieve standards of work that prepare them appropriately for secondary mainstream education.
- The most able pupils sometimes achieve higher standards of work than other pupils but this is usually because their initial starting points were higher. Teaching does not stretch the most able pupils to apply their learning consistently.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not do as well as they should academically because their learning needs are not well addressed.
- It is not possible to evaluate pupils' progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics because the school does not have this information. Staff know what pupils can do by the end of each year but do not track or check whether the achievements represent sufficient progress.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children start in the Reception Year with skills and aptitudes that are expected for their age. Most children transfer from the adjacent, separately registered pre-school. The close working relationships between the two provisions mean that the children settle quickly, parents know what to expect and staff know what the children can do as soon as they start school.

- Most children speak English as an additional language. They soon become fully fluent in English as a result of the good-quality opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills.
- Resources are of good quality and children have plenty of space to learn indoors and outdoors. Activities are organised around the areas of learning and development but are not linked specifically to what is known about the children's current achievements. Some of the assessment records are incomplete.
- When children come together for activities, some lose interest because they wait for too long before they can join in or move to the next activity.
- The partnership with parents is very strong and sets the tone for the very positive relationships between home and school that develop into Year 1 and beyond.
- Relationships between staff and children are good. Children settle quickly to routines and know how to behave well. They enjoy learning and playing together.
- By the time they finish the Reception Year, children are curious and confident learners. Most achieve the expected early learning goals across most of the areas of learning.

School details

Unique reference number	117654
DfE registration number	919/6228
Inspection number	10020392

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Proprietor	ISKON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)
Chair	Kamlesh Patel
Headteacher	Wendy Harrison (also known as Padma dasi)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,400
Telephone number	01923 851000
Website	http://school.bhaktivedantamanor.co.uk
Email address	bvmanorschool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	28–29 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school is registered as a school with a religious character and a Hindu ethos. The school occupies part of the large site of the Hare Krishna temple at Bhaktivedanta Manor. Most pupils are from families practising the Hindu faith.
- At the 2012 standard inspection, the quality of education and the welfare, health and safety of pupils were judged good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged as outstanding.
- The school is registered to admit a maximum of 30 pupils. There are 57 pupils currently on roll. The registered age range is 4 to 11 years. Pupils currently at the school are aged 4 to rising-12 years.

- In March 2016, Ofsted conducted a material change inspection at the request of the DfE. This was to consider the proprietor's request to increase the number of registered pupils from 30 to 60 because, for the past four years, the school has admitted almost twice the number of pupils that it is permitted to admit. At the time of that inspection, the school was found to be unlikely to meet the independent school standards relating to the school's arrangements to safeguarding pupils, the recording of sanctions and the suitability of staff and proprietors.
- The proprietorial body owns and runs an early years provision on the same site as the school. The Manor Pre-School (URN 130503) is registered with Ofsted and is inspected separately. The school and pre-school are run separately, although some members of the governing body are governors of the pre-school and the school.

Information about this inspection

- This standard inspection was commissioned by the DfE to take place ahead of the scheduled time. This was to enable the inspector to follow up the findings from the material change inspection that took place in March 2016 and to consider a concern received by the DfE about the religious ethos of the school.
- The school was informed of this inspection on the day before the inspection started.
- The inspector observed lessons, scrutinised books, looked at the single central register of employment checks on staff, and examined policies and procedures for the curriculum and welfare, health and safety.
- The inspector met with pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- The inspector considered the 33 responses from parents on Parent View, 26 written comments from parents and the seven responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Heather Yaxley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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