

# SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

*Independent professional inspection of schools belonging to the Cognita Group which are not members of the Independent Schools Council and its constituent associations*

# INSPECTION REPORT

## INSPECTION CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO SECTION 162A OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2002

<b>Name of school:</b>	Downsend School Pre-Prep Leatherhead
<b>DfE number:</b>	936/6199
<b>Inspection team:</b>	<b>Reporting Inspector:</b> Dr Martin Bradley  <b>Supporting Inspector:</b> Mrs Anne McConway
<b>Date of inspection:</b>	17 November 2014

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school: Downsend School Pre-Prep Leatherhead

Address of school: 13 Epsom Road,  
Leatherhead,  
Surrey, KT22 8ST

Telephone number: 01372 385437

Email address: leatherheadpre-prep@downsend.co.uk

Proprietor: Cognita Group of Schools

Name of the Headteacher: Mrs Gill Brooks

DfE number: 936/6435

Type of school: Independent school belonging to the  
Cognita group

Age range of pupils and students: 2 to 6

Gender of pupils: Male and female

Total number on roll: (Full-time) Boys: 39 Girls: 30  
(Part-time) Boys: 35 Girls: 31

Number of children under 5 Boys: 46 Girls: 27

Number of pupils with statements of  
special educational need: Boys: 0 Girls: 0

Annual fees: £2,610 to £9,705

Type of inspection: Section 162A of the Education Act 2002

Inspection Team: Reporting Inspector: Dr Martin Bradley  
Supporting Inspector: Mrs Anne McConway

Date of inspection: 17 November 2014

## **SECTION A: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service in accordance with Section 162(A) (1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, and it follows the inspection framework laid down by the School Inspection Service and agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). It was conducted by independent professional inspectors who looked at all aspects of the school's provision as required by the current regulations.

### **Information about the school:**

Downsend School Pre-Prep Leatherhead is one of three co-educational pre-preparatory schools for children aged from two to six years attached to Downsend Preparatory School. It was founded in 1985 and has its own headteacher. Some specialist staff are shared with the other pre-preparatory schools in the group. The school is open from 8.55 am to 3.30 pm and has before-school provision from 8.00 am and after-school provision up to 6.00 pm. It consists of First Steps, Rising Reception, Reception and Year 1 classes. The school aims to 'create a rich, colourful and stimulating environment where a child can experience success and develop a love of learning'. The present report refers to the classes for three to six year olds.

### **Summary of main findings:**

The quality of education provided at Downsend School Pre-Prep Leatherhead is good with some outstanding features. The quality of the curriculum is good, and it is significantly broad, being well supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The pupils' behaviour is particularly good and they develop strong speaking, listening and numeracy skills. They are confident and articulate. Teaching is good, and in some classes it is outstanding. At present assessment of the pupils' work varies and the school has rightly identified this as a development priority. The school is well resourced.

### **What the school does well:**

- The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features;
- the pupils' behaviour is particularly good and they show consideration towards one another;
- the staff have created an extremely good environment in which the children feel secure and able to voice their own views confidently;
- the quality and range of resources is particularly good;
- displays are of high quality and celebrate the pupil's achievements; and
- the quality of teaching music is outstanding.

### **What the school must do to comply with the regulations:**

- Provide accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a children's toilet.

### **What the school must do to comply with the Equality Act 2010**

- The school meets the requirements.

### **Next Steps**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Develop a more consistent and rigorous system for tracking individual pupils' progress throughout the school;
- provide more opportunities for the pupils to develop independence in their learning and social skills; and
- review the role of adults when supervising outdoor play at lunchtime, to support active learning through play.

## **SECTION B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

### **PART 1 - The quality of education provided by the school**

#### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is broad and varied. It provides the pupils with a good range of experiences, including specialist teachers for French, ICT and football skills. Reception and Year 1 classes have specialist swimming teaching at the Preparatory School. There is a strong emphasis on English and mathematical learning, as well as knowledge and understanding of the world for those in the EYFS and Year 1. Staff are highly skilled in providing explanations and vocabulary to enable the pupils to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively. Knowledge of numeracy and counting skills are well developed across the curriculum. Appropriately, the school links its curriculum with that of the Year 2 class in the Preparatory School.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features. It is inconsistent across the school and the children's progress is not monitored sufficiently across each year group. The best teaching makes very effective use of interactive whiteboards, providing relevant vocabulary and good descriptions which enable the pupils to develop their own ideas and questions. Relationships between the adult and the pupils are excellent and form the basis for the pupils' enthusiasm and effective learning. Evidence of planning and recording individual children's investigative learning is limited. Assessment is a current school development priority and has rightly been identified as requiring both a more rigorous approach and greater consistency across the school. At present, assessment varies between classes and year groups. At lunchtime, adults do not engage sufficiently with the pupils to extend the outdoor play.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

### **PART 2 - The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Downsend Pre-Prep Leatherhead supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils outstandingly well. It successfully encourages its pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. They are able to distinguish right from wrong and accept responsibility for their behaviour. The school encourages the pupils to develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

### **PART 3 - The welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school's provision for welfare, health and safety is good. Staff have up-to-date training in safeguarding, and policies and procedures have been reviewed to ensure

compliance with the requirements. Fire and other safety requirements are met. The school's caring ethos fully supports its detailed consideration of health and safety. The parents' survey indicated high levels of support for the school. Transitions within the school are supported by information and records being shared

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**PART 4 - Compliance with the regulatory requirements**

The school meets all the regulatory requirements except for those relating to premises and accommodation, where it needs to provide facilities for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which include a washing facility and proximity to a children's toilet. In all other respects, the premises and accommodation are of good quality.

The Single Central Register for the school, and for the other two pre-preparatory schools linked to Downsend Preparatory School, is kept centrally. The Register is in order and meets all the requirements.

The school meets the requirements of the EYFS.

**This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of schools belonging to the Cognita group. Further copies of the report are available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionservice.co.uk)**