

# Highfields Private School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	908/6093
Unique Reference Number	132096
Inspection number	333851
Inspection dates	11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI

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).

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## 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.

This was a light touch educational 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

Highfields Private School in Redruth is an independent day school for boys and girls aged four and a half to 16 years. There are currently 58 pupils on roll. The school was opened in 1999 and occupies a building leased from Cornwall County Council. The school is non-selective and pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. The school aims to encourage the development of the creative, emotional and moral potential of every individual child within a small, friendly, family environment. The last inspection was in October 2006. There are currently no pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the inspection took place during a planned week of school examinations.

## Evaluation of the school

The school provides a good quality of education and successfully meets its aims. The commitment of staff to the needs of all pupils underpins the good quality of care which, together with the good curriculum, ensures pupils make good progress. Its provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teaching is good. The school meets all the educational and organisational regulations and has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good and meets the learning needs of pupils of all abilities effectively. It has adjusted well to meet pupils' needs and is highly flexible in providing examination and vocational courses for those in Years 10 and 11. There is good subject expertise and adequate resources. The quality of the curriculum in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology ensures that pupils do well in these subjects. Art, physical education and music are not neglected and despite small numbers the school makes every effort to respond to the demands of pupils. In the relatively short time since the last inspection the school has made good efforts to improve the outdoor provision by leasing a small field that has enhanced the games programme. Medium-and long-term planning are sound in quality and supported by adequate short-term planning. Provision to stretch

and challenge more able pupils is impressive, whilst the adjustments made for meeting the needs of less able pupils ensures their good progress.

Whilst the curriculum provides a strong focus on pupils' academic development, their emotional and social development is not neglected. The curriculum encourages good personal development, through its personal, social, health and citizenship education and work placements programme, ensuring pupils are confident when facing new challenges. There is no planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education beyond Year 9. The school recognises this gap and that the good work done through the tutorial groups needs to be systematically planned to ensure coverage. The curriculum is enhanced by a good number of additional activities, trips and visitors. Inspectors agree with a few parents that more opportunities could be created to enrich course work and support the learning for older pupils. For example, there are at present no links with other schools, although efforts have been made in the past.

The curriculum helps pupils to have a good insight into the local community. Pupils in Years 1 to 7 learn French and in Years 8 to 9 Spanish which contributes well to their appreciation of other cultures. However, provision for developing a good understanding of global communities is insufficient.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good, enabling all pupils to make good progress. There is a good balance between individual learning, group and whole-class work. Planning sets out objectives for the main subject and when the learning is to be evaluated. Specific planning for different ability groups varies between classes, although modifications are made during lessons to ensure good learning by all pupils. The small teaching groups and frequent individual instruction contribute to good progress in lessons. The emphasis given to reading and writing for a purpose and on speaking and listening skills, ensures they have a secure grounding in literacy skills. Project work gives pupils practical experiences in applying their reading and writing skills and allows them to make good progress in observation and investigative skills. There is good, additional provision for those with learning difficulties. Whilst there are no individual education plans, pupils with learning difficulties are set realistic and achievable targets that are regularly discussed with parents and teachers. Teachers are skilful at combining good instruction with pupils' natural enthusiasm for learning and exploring ideas. The excellent relationships pupils have with their teachers encourages them to develop independence in their thinking. Pupils too are pleased with support they get from their teachers. Teachers take time to explain clearly and they question and probe to ensure that pupils fully understand what they are doing. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils' very well, and adapt their teaching effectively to meet their needs. The teachers record the results of various termly and annual tests and this ensures they maintain an overview of what pupils have learnt. The school has plans to develop a system to bring this information together in order to monitor challenging targets and help identify better the gaps in pupils' learning.

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

Pupils' moral, social and cultural and spiritual development is good and the school provides a range of opportunities in these areas. Pupils generally behave exceptionally well and act very safely, demonstrating that the school is one close-knit community. Older pupils assist and support younger ones and all have a good sense of right and wrong. Pupils' attendance is above average; they enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their knowledge of themselves and their self-esteem and confidence are developed effectively. They demonstrate a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, both through their healthy eating choices at lunch time and their enjoyment of physical activity. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and religions, linking these aspects across the curriculum in areas such as geography. However, the pupils lack a broader global perspective and there is not enough well planned provision to draw out pupil's knowledge. The older pupils make a very positive contribution to their own school community through their roles as house captains and playtime buddies. Their willingness to help each other is impressive. In spite of the small numbers they have formed a school band and a school choir that contributes to local community events. Whilst the pupils participate in a range of charity and fund-raising activities they would relish the challenge of being more involved in assisting to develop the school as a whole. Pupils' basic skills, including their personal skills, together with their awareness of public services and institutions, prepare them well for their future working lives.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school makes good provision for safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. As one pupil commented, 'I really like it here because I feel safe. The teachers are always around and look after us'. Safeguarding procedures are now of a good standard. The safeguarding officers are trained to meet current guidelines and all staff have subsequently received training. The school has checked all staff for their suitability to work with children and holds the information on a single central register. All regulations are now met, however, not all information retained by the school on matters relating to welfare, health and safety is dated. The staff create a happy family atmosphere that engenders a positive sense of well-being amongst the pupils and they exercise vigilant supervision throughout the day. They have devised and implemented a carefully thought out range of policies which are fully supported by thorough risk assessments of all activities both within school and on visits outside school. There are a good number of staff trained in first aid, and all accidents are recorded meticulously. The school is alert as to fire safety; all systems are under constant monitoring and regular fire drills are held and recorded. The school has planned well to increase accessibility and will be drawing up a further plan to review the possibility of continuing to improve the access under its obligations to implement the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

## 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:

- Find ways to improve pupils' awareness of the global community.
- Devise a method for systematically tracking pupils' progress and ensure this information is taken into account in the planning of lessons.
- Provide sustainable opportunities for pupils to have voice in how the school can improve further.

# 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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## School details

Name of school	Highfields Private School		
DCSF number	908/6093		
Unique reference number	132096		
Type of school	Private		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1 September 1999		
Age range of pupils	4-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 36	Girls: 22	Total: 58
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,400		
Address of school	Lower Cardrew Lane Redruth Cornwall TR15 1SY		
Telephone number	01209 210665		
Fax number	01209 210667		
Email address	HIGHFIELDSCHOOL@aol.com		
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Haddy		
Proprietor	Mrs Mary Haddy		
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI		
Dates of inspection	11 June 2009		