

Collège Français Bilingue de Londres

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Flora Bean

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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, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

The Collège Français Bilingue de Londres is situated in Kentish Town, London. It originally opened in 1992 as a nursery and primary school, called *L'Ile aux Enfants*, at a location not far from the present collège. In September 2011, the collège, now renamed, opened as a much larger school with a permitted maximum of 640 pupils aged five to fifteen years. There are currently 569 pupils on roll, including 345 pupils in the primary section and 224 pupils in the secondary section. None of the pupils has a statement of educational needs.

There has been much recent construction and decoration work on the present premises and this was still underway during the inspection. The collège plans to include a nursery when this current programme of building is completed.

The majority of pupils are French and British, but other nationalities are represented. For 60% of pupils English is a second language, although most are fluent in English and French. The collège's aim is to provide a French education for French, British and other nationalities living in London. It also aims to incorporate aspects of English education into the curriculum and to ensure that pupils are bilingual in French and English. It seeks to do this in a safe, secure and pleasant environment.

The collège is *'conventionné'* (contracted) to the *Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Etranger*. *L'Ile aux Enfants* was last inspected in 2008 but this is the first inspection of the collège.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of education provided is satisfactory but the college only partially meets its aims. The curriculum is satisfactory as is the quality of teaching and assessment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, but there are behavioural issues linked to pupils sometimes being thoughtless, particularly outside of the classroom. The quality of the collège's welfare, health and safety arrangements, including aspects of safeguarding and security, is inadequate. Some of the accommodation is inadequate and the weaknesses have welfare implications. The collège is failing to meet a number of regulations.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory; it follows the French National Curriculum and is similar in subject coverage to the English National Curriculum. However, aspects are adapted to reflect both the collège's location in Britain and its bilingualism. The planning and implementation of the curriculum are satisfactory throughout the collège. Schemes of work are in place and are continuing to be developed appropriately as teachers get to know pupils better and the collège becomes established. In the junior phase, teachers have worked together to produce the schemes for classes which are taught in both French and English, depending on subject. In the senior phase, individual teachers plan schemes for their subject, based mainly on the '*socle commun*' (French curriculum guidelines) for each subject and year group. Art, music, sport and technology, including information and communication technology (ICT), are taught in English, while mathematics, the sciences, history, geography and civic education are taught in French. From Year 8, pupils have a choice of studying Spanish or German and Latin.

The curriculum is good in the sciences, which have a well-structured, integrated programme. Civic education is integrated into history and geography. While personal, social and health education (PSHE) is not taught as a discrete subject, pupils have lessons in '*vie scolaire*' ('academic life'), where life in college is discussed, giving pupils an opportunity to talk together on issues such as homework, social responsibilities, behaviour and broader issues of the day. This provision is satisfactory. There is no careers advice for pupils but teachers prepare pupils satisfactorily in Year 10 to transfer to other French and British schools to continue their education. Visits are just beginning to be organised, such as the Year 7 trip to the Imperial War Museum. There are clubs for sport and dance with two for chess and theatre being set up. Pupils also enjoy football and rowing as extra-curricular activities.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall and, as a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. In lessons where teaching and learning are good, pupils are encouraged through open-ended questioning to discuss their answers, or through practical tasks to explore their ideas. In language lessons where the target language is used throughout and activities and paired work keep pupils engaged, pupils make good progress. However, this good quality is not a consistent feature of all teaching. In some lessons, a relatively slow pace and too few opportunities for pupils to take initiatives result in pupils being passive and sometimes restless and disinterested.

Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is no opportunity to display pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and elsewhere because permission for this has not been granted by the owner of the building.

Assessment is satisfactory. On entry to the primary phase, pupils are assessed in English and this information is used well to provide appropriate teaching and support. Tests from the official French government website, *Eduscol*, will be used to assess pupils' progress annually in the senior phase and a similar facility, *Livgen*, will be used in the primary phase. Both are linked to teachers' initial assessments of pupils' abilities. Pupils' shorter-term progress in class is tracked through regular class tests and the information gained is used satisfactorily by teachers to inform teaching. However, in many lessons, opportunities were lost to adjust the teaching more precisely to the range of pupils' needs and so improve outcomes beyond satisfactory. Some teachers mark work regularly and provide helpful comments on how to improve but, in other instances, marking is less frequent and less helpful to pupils. When work is awarded only a numerical score, marking does not give pupils all of the information they need to evaluate their work to make better progress. When teachers indicate that corrections need to be made, pupils do not always do this and teachers do not always check that mistakes have been rectified.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils develop noticeably in confidence and maturity and in their ability to reflect. This is particularly encouraged in their discussions in '*vie scolaire*'. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and this is reflected in their good attendance. In class, there are good examples of pupils working well together, showing tolerance and understanding of each other.

Pupils are developing moral perspectives satisfactorily. An example of this is in civic education, where pupils cover topics such as safety, discrimination, equality and justice. The system of selecting class delegates to represent each class on the '*Conseil de Classe*', (a termly meeting of teachers and parent, carer and pupil representatives), offers an opportunity for each individual to campaign within a democratic process. Pupils explore their own and other societies satisfactorily in the subjects they study, in civic education and in other aspects of collège life. There are opportunities to develop an awareness of the institutions and culture of France and Britain as well as elsewhere.

The behaviour of most pupils is satisfactory. There are instances of restlessness and indifferent behaviour in class when the teaching fails to capture pupils' attention. Sometimes boys, particularly, are too boisterous around the building and in the playground and are unaware of the implications of their behaviour.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for welfare, health and safety is inadequate. Some safety arrangements are inadequate. In interviews and in pre-inspection questionnaires, a significant number of pupils reported that they did not always feel safe and they did not feel able to approach a member of staff should they need support. This indicates a lack of confidence in the collège's support and guidance procedures. Younger pupils in the collège reported feeling unsafe in the playground because of the number of pupils in the restricted space and the boisterousness.

The supervision of pupils outside the classroom by a small team of non-teaching staff, known as *'surveillants'*, is inadequate because of the manner in which supervision is done. In questionnaires from pupils, parents and carers, there was criticism of the brusqueness and insensitivity of *'surveillants'* and the adverse impact this has on relationships with the pupils. Moreover, the supervision is not always effective given the exuberant behaviour of some pupils and lapses in security.

Apart from the absence of guidance on risk assessments for educational visits, suitable policies are in place including those for child protection, bullying and behaviour. Staff have completed the required training in safeguarding. With the exception of the safety and supervision arrangements, other policies are understood by staff and are applied appropriately. Appropriate measures for fire safety and fire drills are in place, as are measures for first aid. There is an *'infirmerie'* (medical room) where the trained nurse is always on duty in collège hours. Admission and daily registers are in good order. The collège has an equal opportunities policy which meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Health issues such as healthy eating, dangers of smoking and drugs are covered in science and in *'vie scolaire'*. The meals served in the canteen are of a high standard with a healthy choice of hot dishes, a vegetarian dish, a salad bar and fruit. This is a welcome replacement for the sandwiches which have been served on a temporary basis at lunchtimes since the start of term due to the lack of canteen. Many pupils, parents and carers complained of the recent arrangements in their questionnaires.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment of staff and for the appointment of trustees. All of the required checks are carried out on staff to confirm their suitability to work with children, including checks on non-teaching staff employed by outside companies. The collège keeps an accurate single central record of the checks.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The collège is based in a Victorian listed building which has been extensively renovated. The current phase of the building project is behind schedule and is still being completed. This has meant some rearranging of classes within the existing building, but pupils have not suffered as a result. The building is light and airy with suitable access for all, including a lift. Classrooms are spacious with ergonomic chairs and other suitable furniture. The collège has acquired playing fields within a short distance of the building. The art room has only just opened but the library is still closed. However, there are significant weaknesses. A gap at the side of a staircase presents a safety hazard. The playground surface is bumpy, uneven and therefore unsafe. There have been a number of accidents as a result of its poor quality. It is not planned to be resurfaced until the completion of the second phase of rebuilding. Temporary arrangements have been put in place but the space to play in is too limited. There are some inadequate security arrangements.

Provision of information

All of the required information is provided, or made available, to parents, carers, local authority and others. The collège's website provides regular weekly letters from the principal. Reports are sent home at the end of each term and there are opportunities for parents and carers to attend parental consultation evenings and to be representatives on the '*Conseil de Classe*'. Parents and carers are currently being invited to volunteer to help with collège visits.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The collège's complaints procedure meets the regulatory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that provision is made for appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education (paragraph 2(2)(g))
- ensure that the teaching involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and appropriate management of class time (paragraph 3(c))

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uk/si/2010/1997/contents/made.

- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- ensure that there is a framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 3(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (standards in part 2) and must:

- ensure that pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and understand how they can contribute to community life (paragraph 5(c)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the collège and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- ensure there is a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving, and that this policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9)
- ensure there are effective measures to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfE guidance⁴ (paragraph 11)
- ensure there are effective procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety on educational visits which have regard to DfE guidance (paragraph 12)
- ensure collège staff are deployed in such a way as to ensure the proper supervision of pupils (paragraph 15).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure that adequate security arrangements are in place for the grounds and buildings (paragraph 23(d))
- ensure that having regard to the number, age and needs (including any special needs and disability) of pupils, are all classrooms appropriate in size to allow effective teaching, and no areas of the school compromise health or safety (paragraph 23(i))
- ensure there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 23(s)).

⁴ www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety/f00191759/departmental-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools.

Inspection judgements

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

School status	Independent
Type of school	French school with bilingual education
Date school opened	September 2011
Age range of pupils	5–15 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	Boys: 299 Girls: 270 Total: 569
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0 <i>Girls: 0</i> Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	Maternelle/Junior £6,000; Senior £5,400
Address of school	87 Holmes Rd London NW5 3AX
Telephone number	020 7933 7400
Email address	info@cfbl.org.uk
Headteacher	M. Francois Xavier Gabet

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

12 December 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Collège Francais Bilingue de Londres, London NW5 3AX

It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to spend time in your collège and to see you at work in lessons and at play. Being a pupil in a new collège gives you a special role as you have the possibility of helping to create it and establish its role in the local and national community. Inspectors judge that your collège is satisfactory but welfare, health and safety procedures, including safeguarding arrangements and some aspects of accommodation, are not good enough.

In lessons we saw many of you engaged and keen to do well. It was a particular pleasure to listen to you using English and French in lessons and in your everyday conversations with your friends. We enjoyed visiting other classes such as science. We were very pleased with the way in which you are learning about France, Britain and the people of other countries. We saw that in your '*vie scolaire*' lessons you have opportunities to discuss life in college and in your class as well as other things.

There are a few things that we would like the collège to improve. Firstly, we do think that many of you could do better and we would like your teachers to ensure that work is properly matched to your capabilities. You need to take more responsibility for your own learning so that you and your teachers know that you understand what you are studying and what must be improved. Secondly, we would like some of you to be more considerate in the way you move around the college, in the playground at breaktimes and in the corridors. You need to consider that if you rush around then someone else may be hurt. Already there have been a number of playground accidents. Thirdly, we want supervisory staff to keep a more sensitive and effective check on your behaviour. Finally, there are some health and safety weaknesses that require attention, particularly in helping all of you to feel safe and having a member of staff to talk to if you need help.

Work hard and take the many opportunities that your college is making available to you.

Yours sincerely
Flora Bean
Lead inspector