



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT FOR MILBOURNE LODGE SCHOOL

DfE No: 936/6034

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

The quality of education	Outstanding	1
Pupils' personal development	Outstanding	1
Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership, management and governance	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the Early Years' provision	Outstanding	1

Compliance with the Independent School Standards:

The school meets the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

Compliance with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

The school meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Date of inspection: 20 - 22 June 2017

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Milbourne Lodge provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The consistently high expectations staff have for each pupil in their academic and personal development are realised through excellent teaching and learning. Teachers have a secure and well informed knowledge and understanding of pupils' capabilities and the progress they make which informs lesson plans. Pupils' intellectual curiosity is nurtured through the rich curriculum on offer. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils and prepares them well for senior school. The pupils' academic attainment is very high and their achievements are exceptional. Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. The headteacher is passionate about the school and its ethos. She has a deep understanding of what makes the school unique and works tirelessly to ensure systems meet these goals precisely. She sets an exacting standard for her teachers and leads by example. The headteacher is keenly developing staff capabilities and interests, through giving them more responsibility in curriculum delivery. There is still work to be done to develop their role in evaluating the effectiveness of their work on pupils' learning. The administration team help maintain the efficient channels of communication between school and parents. Safeguarding and all aspects of the welfare of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe is well developed as is their understanding of British values. The high quality physical education programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils are very confident and self-assured. The lively activities and high quality practical resources contribute to outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- Improve the involvement of all leaders in supporting school self-evaluation.

SECTION B: INFORMATION

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE). The school was given two days' notice of inspection.

At the request of the DfE the inspection considered the school's request to increase its number of pupils.

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed 25 lessons, playtimes, lunch times and the movement of pupils between lessons. The inspectors visited two assemblies and the swimming gala. They scrutinised a sample of three pupils' work from each class and heard pupils read in lessons. Two of the inspectors met with pupils from Years 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 to talk about their safety, well-being and learning. The inspectors held conversations with the headteacher, and school leaders including the designated safeguarding leaders. An inspector met with the assistant director of education from Cognita to discuss governance. Inspectors scrutinised the results of 121 parental questionnaires and sampled the views of 20 secondary aged pupils. The inspectors reviewed the school website and documentation pertaining to the leadership and management of the school. The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mr Jonathan Palk
Team inspectors:	Dr Christine Jones Dr Martin Bradley

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

Milbourne Lodge School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between four and thirteen years. The school was founded in 1912 and is set in over eight acres of land in Esher, Surrey. There are more boys than girls. The Pre-Prep has expanded from one class to two classes in each year group. An additional classroom block, science laboratory and changing rooms were opened in the spring term of 2016. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs, although a small number of pupils receive support for learning difficulties such as dyslexia. There are no pupils who currently require support for English as a second language.

The school has a strong academic and sporting tradition; selection by ability commences in Year 1 and streaming by ability starts in Year 4. The school was purchased by the Cognita Group of schools in July 2007. The school aims to promote quality, excellence and the highest standards of education for its pupils; intellectually, physically and spiritually. The former deputy headteacher was recruited as headteacher in January 2016. The school was last inspected in May 2014.

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding

Pupils' learning and achievement

Pupils at Milbourne Lodge School attain high academic results across the full range of subjects offered. All pupils are successful in reaching the standards required to enter their choice of independent senior school. All pupils in Year 8 achieve well in the Common Entrance examination, with a high proportion attaining the top grade. A significant proportion exceed these requirements and enter as scholars. Typically half the pupils in Year 8 are awarded scholarships by their chosen senior schools. The school enters Year 5, 6, 7 and 8 pupils for the United Kingdom mathematics trust challenges, with considerable success.

Annual test results illustrate pupils' high attainment in English and mathematics against national standardised scores. Pre-test results in science also reflect well above age related expectations. Analysis of these results demonstrates that progress exceeds expectations and is outstanding. Pupils' abilities are identified accurately, and those who may have entered with lower attainment than their peers similarly make excellent progress.

Pupils read fluently and widely. They devour books for the information they provide and as a stimulus to their imaginations. Written work in books is of high quality. Pupils learn to write fluently, with an impressive grasp of grammatical structures. Their choice of vocabulary is interesting and reflects their confidence in writing for a wide range of purposes. Spelling is accurate and presentation immaculate. High quality poetry is on display around the school and reflects the wide exposure to contemporary and classic texts. Pupils' literacy skills are equally good in all subjects. They talk with confidence and precision; using technical vocabulary as required. The pupils, studying classical languages, use their grasp of etymology to deepen their understanding of modern languages.

Pupils are numerate at an early age and apply their skills to a range of mathematical problems. Their work is set out neatly and mistakes in calculations are few. The systematic approach to learning mathematical skills is supplemented with the acquisition of a rapid mental recall. The pupils enjoy investigative work, which is instrumental in securing a deeper mathematical understanding. The pupils have a high level of intellectual curiosity and this is a major contributor to their rapid progress. They regularly challenge themselves in lessons and have high aspirations of what they wish to achieve from their education.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. Teaching is of high quality and in a large proportion of lessons observed during the inspection it was outstanding. Different work is provided for pupils of different abilities and this is well matched to the needs of the individual. As a consequence, lessons end on a positive note of success. The work the pupils are asked to do is challenging. Pupils have extremely high expectations of what they will achieve and respond to

the probing questioning from their teachers with enthusiasm. Teachers encourage them to take risks with their answers. The encouragement to speculate or hypothesise ensures pupils are always focussed on the objectives of the lesson. This was very obvious in a Year 7 English lesson when a pupil conjectured that Ted Hughes inclusion of submarine in his poem the Pike was a contemporary reference.

Teachers mark pupils' work diligently. Mistakes in pupils' work are corrected and helpful comments provided. The small class size ensures that immediate misunderstandings can be addressed during the lesson. However, teachers are always willing to go over work after lessons to ensure the main learning objectives are understood.

Teachers make the learning fun. Practical tasks such as the Year 6 investigation into Hooke's law, enthuse the learners. Topic work is very well planned to revise skills and deepen understanding through relevant application. A Year 3 to Year 8 project based on Swallows and Amazons typified this. Pupils embarked on a sailing adventure plotting their journeys across Lake Windermere and Coniston, onto a scaled map. They researched and produced illustrated recipe cards for the food they would take to the island; effectively linking their information and technology skills with art and historical knowledge.

Excellent knowledge both of the academic but also the pastoral needs of the pupils contributes to rapid progress in learning in lessons. The diligent tracking of pupils' achievements throughout the school, combine with teachers' perceptive understanding of how pupils are learning help to secure exactly the right work in lessons. Since the appointment of the headteacher and a deputy head for academic leadership, assessments have also been revised to ensure they are matched to the senior schools' selection process. Teachers consistently evaluate the progress pupils make in the lesson, and this is effectively used in the planning of the next lesson. Assessment data is used extremely well in lessons to challenge pupils.

The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is of outstanding quality. It is broad, balanced and innovative. It is designed to engage and stimulate the pupils by giving them access to a wide range of subjects. A significant aspect of the curriculum is the care the school takes to ensure that the provision meets specific pre-test selection procedures required by different senior schools. For example, the strong emphasis on a classical education provides subjects such as ancient Greek and Latin as well as modern foreign languages. While appropriate weight is placed on developing core literacy and numeracy skills as well as meeting the requirements of Common Entrance, staff work very hard to ensure that curriculum provision is much wider than this. Sport, philosophy, enterprise and critical thinking encourage a thirst for learning. Cross curricular themes, supported by high quality stimuli, help inspire pupils and provide a context in which to apply their skills.

Excellent planning for learning through a well-developed curriculum underpins the pupils' outstanding progress. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and modified to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils of all ages, abilities and aptitudes, including pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs

and/or disabilities, and those who are identified as gifted and talented. Where a pupil has very specific needs, for example dyslexia, outside help and support are put in place very promptly to successfully meet their needs. The curriculum has been developed to ensure the content in English, mathematics and science links precisely to the entry requirements for senior schools.

2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The quality of pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy learning and attend regularly. Attendance is well above national average. The quality of personal, health and economic education (PSHEE) is outstanding. Pupils clearly and with conviction say that the school fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect where everyone takes care to get on with each other. Pupils are very articulate, knowledgeable and confident young people who know it is 'cool' to learn at Milbourne Lodge. They express their views and feelings with consideration of others. Pupils are consistently polite and willingly engage in conversations with visitors. They show perseverance even where they find the tasks demanding and will keep trying to the best of their ability as they value their education highly. Their eagerness for lessons extends to their enthusiastic participation in the daily hour of physical education. Pupils told inspectors that joining in team activities greatly benefitted their understanding and appreciation of each other's talents.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils are assured and relaxed in school, reflecting the high quality pastoral care and guidance they receive. There are more boys than girls in the school but pupils do not see this as a problem. The girls say they are very comfortable with this situation, even where they might be the only girl in a class. This reflects the success of the school in instilling firm community values in all members of the school. Pupils say that any form of bullying is an extremely rare occurrence. They know exactly where to go to get help if needed.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively. They are able to form their own opinions and develop an understanding of moral issues when they discuss recent relevant topics. Pupils are very tolerant of each other's views and will listen to the opinions of their peers. British values of democracy and the rule of law, tolerance and individual liberty are promoted very effectively from an early age, through the personal social health curriculum. Staff model these values, always treating their pupils in a calm and respectful manner creating a very positive atmosphere in the school.

Pupils learn to respect their own and other cultural traditions in lessons where they study in detail different cultures and traditions from around the world. They are given many other excellent opportunities for cultural development.

Considerable efforts are made to ensure the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of all pupils and to develop them as well-rounded learners and citizens. Older pupils receive helpful advice on their career aspirations, and this helps them make choices about their senior schools. All pupils are encouraged to develop their own talents in drama, music and artistic areas through participation in external competitions, such as Code Kingdoms and Rotary Youth Speaks.

Older pupils are involved enthusiastically in the current production of Twelfth Night. They are particularly proud of the unique traditional Milbourne games such as 'Puttocks' and 'Ambush'.

Pupils engage keenly in charitable fund raising through House events. Charities supported include for example, the Haller Foundation and Disability Challengers.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

The quality of safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding and the relevant standards are fully met. The school successfully implements its safeguarding policy and associated policies for promoting good behaviour and preventing bullying. A significant feature of this work is the consistency with which the policies and procedures are applied. There is a strong culture of vigilance which promotes safeguarding and which enables the pupils to feel safe. Staff are well-trained to identify any possible issues and the reporting systems enable quick responses to issues, generally before these become significant. Pupils are also involved in helping to prevent bullying and good behaviour is accepted as the norm for the school.

Pupils are closely involved with aspects of safeguarding, particularly e-safety where the older ones have held assemblies for the younger ones to identify possible issues related to social networking and the use of mobile phones and other technology. This includes awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The detailed and excellent consideration of e-safety is promoted to parents, and pupils receive termly e-safety updates reminding them of relevant issues. This excellent practice matches the school's promotion of pupils' confidence in staying safe from abuse and exploitation and ensures that pupils feel valued.

Healthy eating and personal fitness are focussed on throughout the school. Pupils bring healthy snacks from home for mid-mornings and the school catering staff provide particularly good well-balanced nutritious meals. Pupils are aware of healthy living. In one dance session with Reception, a pupil responded to the question "why should we drink water after dancing for a while?" with "because otherwise you'd get dehydrated".

The excellent staff: pupil ratios fully support pupils' welfare, health and safety both in school and on trips. Supervision is outstanding. Risk assessments are a particular strength. They are countersigned by senior staff. The school premises are well-maintained, safe, secure and clean. They are regularly monitored.

Procedures for safe recruitment and vetting of staff are thorough. The relevant information is complete and secure, whilst being readily accessible when needed.

Admission and attendance registers are well-maintained and attendance is above national averages.

Fire precautions and the associated regulations are fully met. There are regular fire drills and fire risk assessments. Medical arrangements are good, with a

significant number of staff being trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid where appropriate.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The headteacher is an impressive leader of the school; unwavering in her commitment to the pupils' academic futures. She is skilled in managing change; retaining the core values of the school whilst pursuing excellence in all the school does. School improvement and development is managed very effectively. It is based on extensive monitoring by the headteacher and ably supported by the deputy headteacher. There is an honest dialogue with staff about their performance. Staff are developing their leadership roles under the headteacher's guidance. Currently their role in supporting the monitoring of school effectiveness is under developed.

The deputy head, alongside school leaders from the Pre-Prep has further developed assessment systems in school, making it easier for staff to track progress. Reliable academic profiles are generated through school testing. Weekly leadership meetings and half termly staff meetings to discuss pupils' achievement help ensure staff are well briefed on the academic progress and pastoral needs of individual pupils and can plan how they can support this. This work is developing a culture of wider staff accountability for each pupil's progress. Subject leaders are beginning to work across the whole school, sharing best practice and hence improving their involvement in school improvement.

Effective operational management is maintained through excellent communications amongst the staff team and with parents. The administrative team plays an important role in keeping this information flow running smoothly for the benefit of pupils' academic and personal wellbeing. This is a strength of the school that is recognised by many of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The quality of information provided to parents is excellent. Parental concerns and or complaints are managed correctly, with all resolved before reaching the threshold for the more formal process. Communications that parents receive about the daily life of the school are regular and comprehensive. The information on pupils' attainment and progress is shared with parents and pupils; helping them make the right decisions about their next schools. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, its ethos and leadership.

The premises are safe and provide a highly stimulating environment in which to learn. The grounds are beautiful and provide many quiet safe places for pupils to rest and reflect. There are well maintained areas for games and sports, including outdoor swimming and tennis. The play spaces for the youngest children are secure and inviting. Resources for lessons are in good order and sufficient to meet the needs of a demanding curriculum. There are sufficient classrooms and specialist teaching rooms. This inspection approved the school's request to the DfE to increase its pupil numbers to 260.

Governance

The quality and effectiveness of governance are outstanding. Cognita directors provide the school with excellent support and challenge and are instrumental in

ensuring all the independent school standards are compliant. The directors recognise the strengths of the school; best practice at Milbourne is shared within the group of Cognita schools. However they are not complacent. The assistant education director regularly visits to review all aspects of performance to ensure that the school's view of itself is rigorously challenged. Reports are underpinned with good quality action plans. Support for the school is aligned to these reviews and the feedback from the 'voice of the parent'; an annual satisfaction survey made available to all parents. The directors of Cognita provide a number of beneficial professional development programmes to help develop leadership and teaching.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS' PROVISION

The early years provision is of outstanding quality and highly effective. The two Reception Year (YR) classes form part of the Pre-Prep group of six classes which includes Year 1 and 2 classes. Admission to the YR classes is non-selective, although the school ensures that parents are aware of its expectations. The YR classes provide an exciting and consistent approach to the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The promotion of literacy, communication and numeracy combines with excellent cross curricular themes and some specialist teaching. The provision for physical development is outstanding. There is an excellent balance of teacher led sessions and rich opportunities for children to follow their own interests. This enables the children to become effective and enthusiastic learners. The children's needs are very well met; they feel safe and are secure and happy.

The leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding. The manager of the EYFS ensures that all the staff have high expectations of what the children can achieve. The provision is consistently and effectively evaluated by the manager with her team to ensure that there is continuous improvement in the provision for and care of the children. Professional development, linked to performance management, is tailored to ensure that all staff successfully promote a consistent approach within and across the EYFS. Staff reflect on what is working for different children and adjust their planning accordingly. Equality, diversity and British values are very well promoted, and good behaviour is expected and consistently achieved. The requirements for safeguarding and welfare are fully met and the consistent approach promotes a shared understanding of and responsibility for protecting children, including e-safety.

Children receive a well-balanced and broad education and the excellent adult-child ratios support each child in developing their potential. The children know what they have to do in order to develop accuracy in reading, writing and number work. The staff provide plenty of encouragement to help children improve their work. Children's emotional development is outstanding and they acquire confidence in expressing their feelings and ideas. The positive view they have of themselves and others promotes harmony in class and outdoors.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. All staff have high and consistent expectations. Staff involve children in meaningful conversations and are attuned to what the children have to say. They encourage

the children to stick at tasks, encouraging them without doing the task for them. They know their children extremely well and work is accurately matched to each individual. The specialist teaching of games is outstanding. During a tennis lesson, the specialist teachers engaged well with the children ensuring that no one was ever left out. The skills were broken down so that each child built on what they had already achieved. The tasks were fun to do and consequently the children rose to the challenge of improving their performance. Assessment information is particularly well-used to plan future work and the 'Learning Journey' files provide not only a detailed analytical record of achievement but also the 'next steps' to promote further learning and development. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and how they can contribute to this.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. There is a positive learning atmosphere and consequently the children become confident and successful independent learners, well prepared socially and emotionally for later work in school. They relate well to each other; taking turns during lessons and at playtime. Children attend regularly. They have a good knowledge of healthy eating and life styles. Good use is made of ICT, including iPads, to promote art, for example, as well as to record the children's work. A good range of cultural experiences enables the children to respect others and potentially to contribute to wider society and life in Britain today.

The outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding. The children make exceptional progress from their different starting points and most exceed the level of expected development for their age. They are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education in the Pre-Prep classes.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Milbourne Lodge School			
Address of school:	43 Arbrook Lane Esher Surrey, KT10 9EG			
Telephone number:	01372 462737			
Email address:	admin@milbournelodge.co.uk			
Web address	www.milbournelodge.co.uk			
Proprietor:	Cognita Schools Limited			
Person registered with DfE as proprietor under paragraph 20 of Part 4:	Chris Jansen			
Head Teacher:	Judy Waite			
Early Years Manager	Sarah Jones			
DfE Number	936/6034			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	£11,325 - £14,085			
Age range of pupils	4 – 13			
Gender of pupils	Co-educational			
Total number on roll	full-time	258	part-time	
Number of children in registered nursery				
Number of children under-5	Boys:	7	Girls:	2
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	207	Girls:	42
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:		Girls:	
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need	Boys:		Girls:	
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Boys:		Girls:	
Type of inspection	Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk.