



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Material Change Inspection Report**

**North Bridge House Prep School**

**September 2022**

## School's details

|                                 |  |    |                |     |
|---------------------------------|--|----|----------------|-----|
| <b>School</b>                   | North Bridge House Prep School   |    |                |     |
| <b>DfE number</b>               | 202/6400   |    |                |     |
| <b>Address</b>                  | North Bridge House Prep School<br>Gloucester Avenue<br>London<br>NW1 7AB |    |                |     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>         | 02072 676266   |    |                |     |
| <b>Email address</b>            | prep.reception@northbridgehouse.com                                      |    |                |     |
| <b>Headmaster</b>               | Mr Tom Le Tissier  |    |                |     |
| <b>Proprietor</b>               | Cognita Schools Ltd.   |    |                |     |
| <b>Age range</b>                | 7 to 13  |    |                |     |
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b> | 386  |    |                |     |
|                                 | <b>EYFS</b>  | 8  | <b>Juniors</b> | 333 |
|                                 | <b>Seniors</b>   | 45 |                |     |
| <b>Date of visit</b>            | 12 September 2022  |    |                |     |

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 North Bridge House Prep School is an independent co-educational day school. It is one of five schools in the North Bridge House School group that is owned and administered by Cognita Ltd. Founded in 1939, it moved to its current location near Regents Park, London in 1987. The school is currently completing a building project to provide accommodation for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Until this is ready, the 8 children currently in the EYFS are accommodated on the site of one of the other schools in the group, in Hampstead. The school transports them to this site daily. The school has 63 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 5 of whom have an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for 108 pupils. The current headmaster took up his appointment in September 2022. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in December 2018.

### Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to change its age range from 7 to 13 to 4 to 13. This includes the introduction of an EYFS setting and classes for Year 1 and 2 pupils. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standard) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

| Regulations which were the focus of the inspection  | Team judgements |
|---|-----------------|
| Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)  | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)  | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupil performance)   | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils)                       | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)  | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 5, paragraphs 25 and 29 (maintenance of premises and accommodation and provision of outdoor space) | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)   | <b>Met</b>      |
| Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)  | <b>Met</b>      |

## 2. Inspection findings

### Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 Senior leaders have prepared a suitable written policy on the curriculum to meet the needs of children in the EYFS and pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work which cover all required areas of learning. The planned curriculum for children in Reception pays due regard to the Early Years Statutory Requirements. Personal, social, health and economic education is set out in detailed schemes of work. These indicate that pupils will receive specific and suitable lessons on relationships education, details of which are published on the school's website.
- 2.3 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

### Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

- 2.4 The school meets the standard.
- 2.5 Scrutiny of documents and performance data indicate that teachers enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability. Pupils with SEND are swiftly identified and well supported through targeted one-to-one or small group lessons. Policies include guidance for teachers in how to use effective strategies for managing pupils' behaviour. They outline the importance of not undermining fundamental British values and are implemented effectively. These policies make suitable provision for the teaching of children in the EYFS and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Staff who have already been assigned to teaching these age groups are suitably experienced and qualified.
- 2.6 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

### Quality of education provided – framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the school's learning and development process and teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and effectively. Following its current practice, which is embedded successfully in the existing junior-age classes, the school intends to use its own assessment systems in the teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 to record and monitor pupils' potential, progress and attainment. Children in the EYFS will be assessed appropriately against the early learning goals and the EYFS profile will be completed for each child.
- 2.9 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. In discussions, pupils' responses when asked about staff and their peers indicated appropriate relationships within the school. Pupils also showed an acceptance for the views and beliefs of others, both within the school community and the wider world.

Provision to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the youngest pupils newly introduced to the school is appropriate.

- 2.12 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3]**

#### **Safeguarding policy**

- 2.13 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.14 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

#### **Safeguarding implementation**

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.
- 2.16 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022. Senior leaders have implemented required arrangements to safeguard children in the EYFS effectively. They have assessed effectively any risks associated with children in the EYFS currently being educated on a different site. Records of regular meetings indicate that the safeguarding team works closely together to promote pupils' well-being effectively. The team ensures that safeguarding information is regularly shared with staff, parents and pupils and that safeguarding procedures are monitored appropriately. In discussions, pupils reported that they can raise any concerns freely and that they feel they are listened to by staff when they do so. Safeguarding records confirm this, and that action is taken when pupils' specific needs are identified. The safeguarding team has dealt with any incidents of sexual harassment since the previous inspection efficiently. This has included seeking external advice when necessary. Members of staff are clear about whether pupils are respectively in need or at risk. They understand that if any pupils are victims of harmful sexual behaviour or potentially so, safeguarding partners and the police should be contacted promptly. Pupils are given suitable guidance regarding online safety. The school maintains appropriate safeguards for the use of technology and these are overseen by the proprietors.
- 2.17 Senior leaders monitor detailed school records of all safeguarding concerns regularly to identify patterns so that any early signs of abuse can be acted upon. Regular safeguarding training for all staff includes identification of such behaviours. In discussions, staff demonstrated a full awareness of their training and their safeguarding responsibilities. This includes understanding whistleblowing procedures and the staff code of conduct. Staff confirmed that they would know how to respond if a situation of child-on-child abuse arose. Staff receive suitable training when new to the school and, from thereon, update training about the most recent statutory guidance is regularly provided. Staff have completed training in the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified and training arranged.
- 2.18 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures. In discussions, staff showed an appropriate awareness of what may constitute a low-level concern. The school safeguarding team works together with the proprietors to produce a suitable annual review of safeguarding. A scrutiny of the minutes of board meetings where safeguarding was discussed confirms that there is an appropriate depth and breadth of oversight. This includes provision for appropriate recruitment checks on staff. Proprietors have all received effective safeguarding training and they receive regular updates. Discussions with the proprietor and staff demonstrated that they have given appropriate thought to the proposed intake of children into EYFS and pupils in Years 1 and 2. They have considered with suitable care related safeguarding arrangements and procedures.

- 2.19 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

**Premises and accommodation – maintenance and outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 25 and 29]**

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 The existing accommodation and facilities provided for pupils are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils is ensured. The accommodation and facilities are in an appropriate state of repair and are monitored regularly for safety. Furnishings and resources are of a suitable quality. Plans and architectural drawings demonstrate that the new accommodation and facilities planned for children in the EYFS and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is likely to meet their needs. Planned arrangements are suitable to enable maintenance to a standard sufficient to ensure the pupils' health, safety and welfare.
- 2.22 Although outside space on the school site is limited, the school ensures that suitable recreation and physical education is provided to all pupils by making regular use of local sports centres and the nearby Regent's Park. Children in the EYFS will also benefit from their own dedicated outdoor space which is being created on the roof adjacent to their new setting. The enclosed outdoor area will form an integral part of the EYFS classroom enabling the children to flow freely between inside and outside activities.
- 2.23 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2.

**Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]**

- 2.24 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

**Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]**

- 2.25 The school meets the standard.
- 2.26 Those with leadership and management positions demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the other standards are met consistently and the well-being of the pupils is ensured. The proprietors and the senior leaders have considered with suitable care what measures are necessary to introduce children into the EYFS and pupils into Years 1 and 2. The school is suitably prepared for the proposed material change.

### **3. Recommendation with regard to material change request**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's proposal to admit children into the EYFS and pupils into Year 1 be approved. The school has effectively considered and planned for their educational, safeguarding and accommodation needs.

## **4. Summary of evidence**

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the headmaster, senior leaders, other members of staff and with proprietors. She visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.