

# School inspection report

11 to 13 June 2024

## **Ripley Court School**

Rose Lane

Ripley

Surrey

GU23 6NE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors have a clear understanding of where the school is most successful and what leaders need to do improve the school's work. They are skilled in supporting and holding leaders to account for the school's effectiveness. They work closely with leaders to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Standards are met.
2. Leaders provide a stimulating curriculum both within and beyond the classroom. Pupils benefit from the varied opportunities on offer to develop their self-confidence and to acquire new skills and interests.
3. Leadership in the early years is effective. Leaders provide a warm and welcoming learning environment for children to develop and thrive. Children take part in a range of physical activities, including enjoying music and movement and woodland studies sessions. Older pupils participate in a range of outdoor pursuits and engage in competitive sports. Pupils of all ages understand that participating in physical pursuits can have a beneficial effect on their mental and physical health and wellbeing.
4. Older pupils willingly take on leadership roles where they learn ways in which they can improve the wellbeing of others. They also develop valuable life skills such as perseverance and how to manage their time.
5. Teachers plan interesting activities and use questioning that enables pupils to achieve well and enjoy their learning. Teachers provide pupils with feedback about the strengths in their work. However, in some subjects across the school, pupils do not always receive feedback that helps them to improve their work.
6. Behaviour management is effective, and relationships are positive between pupils and staff. Pupils are taught the importance of showing kindness to each other as one of the school's key values. Staff and pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect.
7. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme helps pupils to gain an understanding of social and economic matters. Pupils develop their financial literacy by learning how to manage money as well as being taught to consider profit and loss when planning enterprise activities to make sound financial decisions.
8. The school site is suitably maintained and meets health and safety requirements. Risk assessment procedures are effective in promoting the welfare and safety of pupils in school and when on school trips.
9. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress because of the effective individual support they receive from staff. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive nurturing support that help them to quickly achieve proficiency in English so that they can confidently access all subject areas.
10. The well-trained safeguarding team ensures that staff are kept up to date with the latest statutory guidance. They follow the appropriate procedures to safeguard pupils effectively. Records of recruitment and pre-employment checks are meticulously kept. Staff are fastidious in carrying out the pre-employment checks in a timely and robust manner.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

## Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that marking and feedback in all subject areas consistently enable pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Governors bring a wealth of relevant experience to the role. This helps them ensure that leaders have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Governors visit the school regularly, are highly visible and engage in a range of monitoring activities to ensure that policies are implemented effectively in practice. They provide support and encouragement and hold leaders to account for the school's performance so that there is a focus on continuous improvement. This has resulted in the timely and effective implementation of new initiatives to improve the curriculum, teaching and mental health provision. Leaders work closely with governors and ensure that the Standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of the pupils is actively promoted.
12. Effective self-evaluation enables leaders to understand the quality of the school's work, including where it is most effective and areas for improvement. The outcomes of staff discussions are used to inform school development planning. Leaders gather a range of assessment data over time which enables them to form an accurate view of pupils' performance. Following detailed analysis, leaders use this information to target precise strategies to improve pupils' outcomes. Staff are supported well to deliver the curriculum in line with the school's aims to nurture each pupil's potential.
13. Subject leaders maintain an effective overview of their curriculum areas and adapt these to meet pupils' needs and enhance their outcomes. Leaders have developed a comprehensive training programme which has been effective in improving teaching. Success in this area has been achieved through lesson observations, feedback to teachers and targeted training to strengthen teachers' planning.
14. Systematic procedures are in place for assessing risk across all areas of school life. Staff are well trained to identify and mitigate risk, but especially for high-risk activities such as those that take place in sport, on water or trips overseas. Teachers carry out detailed assessments of risk associated with their teaching areas and the needs of individual pupils.
15. Suitable adjustments are made as required so that pupils can access their learning. There is an appropriate and well-reviewed accessibility plan which meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
16. All the required information for parents and prospective parents regarding policies and procedures is published on the school's website. Parents receive suitable reports and regular updates, regarding their child's progress and attainment across all subjects. Leaders liaise with a wide range of external agencies, to ensure that pupils' particular needs are identified and understood thoroughly.
17. Leaders provide the local authority with all the required information about how public money is used to support pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
18. Early years leaders promote children's safety and wellbeing through effective collaborative working with staff. They provide staff with suitable opportunities to discuss their own professional development and how to best support children's wellbeing.
19. A suitable three-stage complaints procedure is available on the school's website and is implemented effectively. Leaders respond appropriately to any concerns raised in a timely manner.

## The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

**20. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

21. The stimulating and wide-ranging curriculum covers all the required areas of study. It is suitably adapted to meet pupils' needs and does not undermine any fundamental British values, such as showing respect and tolerance towards others. Pupils develop a range of skills, knowledge and understanding across all subject areas, particularly in English and mathematics in preparation for assessments for entry to selective senior and secondary schools. The curriculum helps develop pupils' life skills through subjects such as cooking and digital skills and in taking music and public speaking qualifications. This experience enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. By the time they leave the school, all pupils are successful in gaining places at senior schools, and several are awarded scholarships or exhibitions each year.
22. The curriculum in the early years is well balanced and is adapted to meet children's needs. Careful planning and effective teaching in the early years supports children's learning well, particularly with their reading. Children develop their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make so that they acquire secure early reading skills. Staff have detailed knowledge of every child and their individual needs and interests. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through sensitive questioning which encourages children to communicate together and elaborate on their initial response. In numeracy, children develop their understanding of mathematical concepts by participating in well-planned activities where they learn how to apply different problem-solving skills, such as identifying different repeated patterns. Almost all children achieve a good level of development.
23. Teachers plan lessons which are appropriate to pupils' needs and enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to make good progress. Staff are alert to any emerging misconceptions and skilfully adapt their knowledgeable teaching in response and make links to different subject areas. These strategies help pupils to make connections in their studies so that they can recall their learning. Interesting and well-planned activities, using resources of good quality, motivate pupils to engage in their learning with much effort and concentration.
24. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress using a variety of strategies. Overall, marking and feedback, including verbal feedback, focuses on praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement. However, the advice provided to pupils about next steps is not equally effective in all subjects. As a result, pupils do not always understand how they can improve their work.
25. A clear assessment framework is in place to carefully check pupils' progress. Leaders use a range of standardised tests to identify when pupils may need additional support. Using this information together with their detailed knowledge of pupils' skills and aptitudes, staff implement appropriate strategies to enable pupils to make good or better progress.
26. Provision for pupils who have SEND is effective. Pupils' needs are identified quickly through effective screening assessments. The learning support team uses this information effectively to implement a range of personalised support that helps pupils to keep up with their peers. Teachers use a range of stimulating resources to enable pupils to access the curriculum, such as fidget toys and carefully adapted worksheets using clear fonts that sign-post written tasks.
27. Pupils who speak EAL receive extra individual lessons to improve their speaking and understanding skills in English. Teachers deploy an effective range of strategies when required to help pupils quickly

become confident in their English skills so that they can access all areas of the curriculum. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress and achieve well.

28. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities which supports their personal development. Pupils engage in a variety of activities including, balloon club, court singers, engineering, graphic score workshop and magic club. Participation in these activities enables pupils to acquire new skills in these areas, develop their self-confidence and extend their range of interests.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 29. All the relevant Standards are met.**



## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

30. Leaders of the early years provision plan specific activities that develop children's gross and fine motor skills through dance, swimming, playground play and using pencils and scissors. These activities help children to progress in their physical development. Pupils learn that eating healthily and participating in games and physical pursuits can improve their personal and mental fitness. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to take up new sports and interests to gain additional skills and widen their horizons.
31. When children enter the early years, early years staff set up clear routines and expectations so that children settle in quickly and feel comfortable in the setting. They use praise effectively and encourage children to express their feelings. This builds their self-knowledge and helps them to develop their social and communication skills, such as when they meet visitors before participating in their activities. The creative curriculum helps older pupils gain a sense of fulfilment and increase their confidence and self-esteem to express their deeper emotions. Through the experience of performance in music and speaking in public, pupils develop both their self-confidence and self-control.
32. Teachers teach pupils about different religions and spiritual perspectives. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to reflect on their thoughts, beliefs, insights and values that influence them. These, and other opportunities, help pupils to develop an appreciation of the spiritual dimensions of life, particularly in art, dance, music and religious studies (RS).
33. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme meets statutory requirements and topics are delivered with sensitivity. Pupils are taught about the importance of respectful relationships and of respecting privacy and consent. They learn strategies that help them to maintain healthy friendships and ways in which to navigate new and unfamiliar social situations. As a result, older pupils understand the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries and keeping safe in personal relationships.
34. The PSHE programme effectively promotes pupils' personal development and mental health. From the Nursery onwards, staff's nurturing approach helps children to learn how to understand their feelings and to balance their emotions during the day. Teachers help pupils to learn a range of techniques to reduce anxiety and stress and to manage and recover from disappointments. For example, staff use reflection as a way of gauging how pupils are feeling and managing their emotions. Teachers deploy therapeutic resources such as plastic construction bricks and fidget toys to reduce anxiety. A wellbeing hut, known as 'the nest', is available for pupils to visit and discuss any worries or concerns with either their teachers or a specialist mental health professional.
35. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' conduct. Staff effectively use restorative approaches to encourage pupils to reflect on their behaviour to resolve disagreements, as set out in the behaviour policy. Staff deploy a range of rewards to motivate pupils to develop mature attitudes to their studies and to behave well. The PSHE programme helps pupils to recognise and understand the different types of bullying, including those that can occur verbally and online. It also helps them to learn about how the choices they make now may shape how successful they are in the future. Pupils meet the high expectations of their conduct with incidents of serious behaviour or bullying

rarely occurring. Leaders respond appropriately in these instances, including using suitable sanctions and providing effective support to pupils affected.

36. Throughout the school day pupils are supervised appropriately, including at break and lunchtimes and when they are away from the school site. Suitable staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times in the early years. Staff ensure that they are always available to listen to pupils and to support their wellbeing.
37. The school's buildings and grounds are suitably well maintained. All necessary health and safety checks and servicing are implemented regularly. There are appropriate fire safety arrangements. Regular fire drills are undertaken, exit routes and fire safety equipment are signposted effectively and fire safety equipment is well maintained.
38. Pupils who are ill or injured are cared for by suitably trained staff in a dedicated space. Medical staff inform parents of any administration of first aid or medication in a timely manner.
39. Attendance and admissions registers are suitably maintained and meet requirements. Leaders follow up any non-attendance effectively. They inform the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard times.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- 40. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

41. Pupils develop their understanding of economic matters through the carefully planned curriculum. For example, younger pupils develop their understanding of economic matters through raising money for charity. Children decide on the most appropriate price to sell various products in order to raise the most money. Older pupils develop their financial literacy skills and the benefits of making careful financial decisions by learning about profit and loss in mathematics and by taking part in entrepreneurial projects. Through visiting local village shops, the youngest children begin to learn how to exchange money for goods. Participation in these and other activities enables pupils to develop important life skills that help prepare them for adult life in British society.
42. Through carefully planned activities, children in the early years learn a range of social skills. Early years staff use a range of effective strategies to ensure that the children learn to regulate their own behaviour with consideration for others. For example, Nursery children learn how to wait their turn and control their immediate impulses.
43. In PSHE, staff teach pupils to appreciate and understand the need for rules, as well as rewards and consequences, to protect individual interests and promote a well-ordered society. Staff model appropriate social behaviour that enables pupils to distinguish between right and wrong and promotes the school's aims and ethos. Listening to their teacher reading stories aloud, children in the early years learn about moral themes, such as fairness and telling the truth. Older pupils explore ethical considerations relating to the treatment of different groups of people throughout history. Pupils learn that building respectful relationships is central to British values. They develop an understanding of the benefits to society when citizens respect democracy and abide by the law.
44. Pupils gain an understanding of British institutions and learn the importance of the law in modern society. For example, the youngest children learn about British institutions by visiting places such as the bakery, library and post office. Older pupils visit the Houses of Parliament and study legislation concerning consent and equalities. They participate in the 'Citizen Award' programme. Whenever political issues are considered or referred to, staff take care to present a balanced range of views, as set out in the staff code of conduct.
45. The curriculum provides a range of activities, both in and outside of lessons which nurture pupils' appreciation and understanding of people from diverse faiths and cultures. Children in the early years explore the different cultures and backgrounds of their friends. Older pupils learn about how people live in different parts of the world in their geography lessons and about different faiths in RS lessons.
46. The PSHE curriculum enables pupils to learn to respect and celebrate peoples' uniqueness and diversity, particularly regarding characteristics such as age, disability, gender and race. Pupils learn not to base their judgements of people on stereotypes through exploration of themes such as the representation and abilities of people with disabilities in sports. Pupils listen to one another and are understanding, tolerant and respectful of the differences between people. They learn to appreciate that not everyone thinks or acts as they do, and that everybody is entitled to a point of view.
47. Despite it not being a statutory requirement for primary aged pupils, leaders and governors have made the decision to provide a careers programme. This age-appropriate programme makes

effective use of visiting speakers, and the completion of a skills audit to enable older pupils to identify their strengths and enthusiasms and begin to relate these to potential career paths.

48. Pupils willingly take on positions of responsibility, such as heads of school, house captains, prefects and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils learn ways in which to influence and improve the wellbeing of others as well as learning useful life skills such as perseverance and effective time management. Pupils also learn about how to provide care to animals. As they move through the school, pupils take on roles of responsibility, such as supporting younger pupils with their reading.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society**

- 49. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

50. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive, reflects current statutory guidance and is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly. The staff code of conduct and staff handbook clearly set out leaders' expectations about how staff should conduct and present themselves. Staff understand these well, alongside their responsibility to share any safeguarding concerns about pupils or adults working with them. Whistleblowing procedures have been recently reviewed and staff are aware of how to report low level concerns. Leaders take appropriate action when handling any allegations against adults, liaising with external agencies, including the local authority's designated officer, as required.
51. The safeguarding team, including those in the early years, regularly undertake training to equip them for their role. Throughout the year, the safeguarding team provide training for all staff. This ensures that staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and understand their roles in identifying concerns and protecting pupils.
52. Regular communication between pastoral and safeguarding staff ensures that any concerns or issues are picked up quickly. Any pastoral matters which could be considered safeguarding issues are identified and appropriate actions implemented in a timely manner, including with regard to any concerns about child-on-child abuse. Safeguarding leaders have formed suitable partnerships working with external agencies. They seek advice and, when required, make timely referrals to relevant agencies, such as children's services and the local authority. These professional relationships enable the safeguarding leaders to identify risks and put in place appropriate measures to support pupils affected by safeguarding issues.
53. Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding. They undertake a range of monitoring activities, including weekly onsite visits, discussions with the safeguarding team and regular reviews of safeguarding policy and practice.
54. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including through information and communication technology (ICT) lessons. Children and pupils from the early years upwards are taught how to stay safe while navigating online platforms. A secure filtering and monitoring system on the school's network helps to reduce the risk of pupils accessing inappropriate material while using internet technology.
55. Pupils feel safe in school. Leaders and staff encourage them effectively to raise any worries or concerns, either face-to-face to a trusted adult or anonymously via worry boxes.
56. Records of recruitment and pre-employment checks are meticulously kept. Staff are fastidious in carrying out these checks in a timely and robust manner. Safeguarding leaders are closely involved at all stages of the recruitment process. This helps to ensure that all adults are clear about the expectations regarding their conduct before they commence their employment at the school.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 57. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Ripley Court School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	936/6307
<b>Registered charity number</b>	312008
<b>Address</b>	Ripley Court School Rose Lane Ripley Surrey GU23 6NE
<b>Phone number</b>	01483 225217
<b>Email address</b>	admin@ripleycourt.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.ripleycourt.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	London Orphan Asylum (trading as Reed's School)
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Chris Taylor
<b>Headmistress</b>	Mrs Aislinn Capindale
<b>Acting headteacher</b>	Mr Gavin Ryan
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Hoskins
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	192
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 to 27 February 2020

## Information about the school

58. Ripley Court School is an independent day school located in Ripley, Surrey. It is a registered charity overseen by a board of governors. Founded in 1893 as a school for male pupils, it became co-educational in 1979. The school comprises three sections: a Nursery department for children aged 3 to 4 years, a pre-preparatory department for pupils aged 4 to 7 years and a preparatory department for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. The acting headteacher took up his position in April 2024.
59. In October 2019, the school merged with Reed's School, Cobham and came under the auspices of the charity London Orphan Asylum. The board of governors of Ripley Court School all sit as trustees on the board of the London Orphan Asylum.
60. There are currently 85 children in the early years in one Nursery class and three Reception classes.
61. The school has identified 43 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Very few pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
62. English is an additional language for nine pupils.
63. The school states its aims are to provide a nurturing environment, to find the best in every pupil, to promote academic curiosity and to prepare pupils for their future.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

11 to 13 June 2024

64. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

65. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons
- observation of registration periods and a sample of extra-curricular activities
- discussions with the chair and three other governors
- discussions with the acting headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils and examination of samples of pupils' work, some in conjunction with subject leaders
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- examination of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

66. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.



**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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