

School inspection report

17 to 19 September 2024

The Roche School

11 Frogmore

London

SW18 1HW

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. Senior leaders are supported by the proprietors and members of the advisory board who monitor to ensure that they carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and that the Standards are met. Leaders and staff promote pupils' wellbeing throughout the school.
2. The emotional wellbeing of pupils is monitored closely by staff. Staff have positive relationships with pupils and encourage them to express their opinions while respecting others'. Pupils' physical health is promoted throughout the school day during playtimes and physical education (PE) lessons. Pupils' mental health and emotional wellbeing are promoted through an effective personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Pupils feel looked after and cared for.
3. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities are designed to enable pupils to gain knowledge and skills. Pupils are taught effectively so that they make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. However, schemes of work and teaching resources and tasks used in other subject areas are not always adapted to meet the learning needs or reflect the prior attainment of pupils as effectively as possible.
4. Leaders in the early years carefully plan experiences for children to develop and learn. Positive relationships between adults and children enable children to settle in quickly, follow routines and grow in independence. Resources are thoughtfully selected to promote children's development in all areas of learning and development.
5. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are given appropriate support for their English when required so that they can access the curriculum.
6. Pupils from the Nursery to Year 6 are prepared for life in British society. Pupils across the school take on a variety of roles of responsibility to develop leadership skills. Pupils gain an understanding of fundamental British Values through a carefully planned curriculum. Activities such as assemblies, extra-curricular activities, trips and visits support pupils' preparation for life beyond school.
7. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies are implemented effectively. Health and safety procedures ensure that pupils are well looked after, particularly as they move between school sites and use public spaces for sport and outdoor learning. Rigorous risk assessments are in place to support pupils.
8. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities work closely with external agencies to safeguard pupils. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern and staff are well trained to be vigilant. Staff are confident in when and how to raise low-level concerns. Leaders ensure that all staff are aware of any changes to statutory guidance. Leaders and staff monitor pupils closely and take appropriate action should any safeguarding concern arise.
9. At the start of the inspection, while practice was suitable, leaders had not updated the attendance policy to reflect current statutory guidance. This was rectified during the inspection.

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 all curriculum schemes of work and teaching resources and tasks meet the learning needs and reflect the prior attainment of all pupils as strongly as possible
- review and revise policies so that they always reflect current statutory guidance.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders and proprietors communicate the school's aims and ethos to parents, staff and pupils and these are evident across the school. Pupils' wellbeing is actively promoted to enable pupils to behave well, apply effort and feel secure at school. Leaders ensure that through the curriculum, pupils are taught to be respectful and inclusive.
11. The proprietor and advisory board ensure that leaders have the required knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Leaders meet regularly with members of the advisory board who offer support as well as appropriate challenge so that Standards are met. Policies are implemented effectively and are typically updated in line with statutory guidance. However, the attendance policy did not reflect current statutory guidance when the inspection commenced. Leaders put this right during the inspection.
12. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are aware of relevant policies so that pupils understand how the school looks after their wellbeing, as well as their own responsibilities towards the school community.
13. Leaders self-evaluate the school's provision effectively. They meet regularly with different groups of pupils to gain their views and take appropriate action, with the result that pupils feel listened to. Leaders gather the views of pupils and parents and use this information to inform their school development plans.
14. In the early years, leaders meet with early years staff regularly to ensure that children make good progress. Leaders in the early years ensure that staff work closely with parents and with the settings that children come from to promote their wellbeing. In addition, early years staff work with teachers in Year 1 so that transition is smooth.
15. Parents are provided with required information through the website, emails, newsletters and workshops. Staff communicate with parents about their child's progress through online platforms in the early years and through regular reports, emails and meetings. As a result, parents are well-informed about their child's progress. Leaders provide the local authority with required information relating to funded pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
16. Pupils' mental health and emotional wellbeing are actively promoted through a planned PSHE programme and effective pastoral care. The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND works closely with pupils, staff, parents and external professionals such as counsellors. Leaders liaise closely with the local authority to seek advice to inform their decision-making, and attend training provided by them.
17. Leaders ensure that the school fulfils its responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 by making the curriculum accessible to all pupils. The school has a written accessibility plan which is reviewed regularly.
18. Leaders identify potential risks posed to pupils and take effective steps to guard against these. Risk is well understood and managed across the school, including when pupils move from one part of the site to another and use public spaces for learning.

19. Leaders implement a suitable complaints policy effectively and follow appropriate procedures when any concerns are received. They meet with complainants and, where possible, take appropriate action to resolve issues. Leaders maintain suitable records of any formal complaints submitted.

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 school offers a broad curriculum which covers all required subjects. In the early years, the curriculum covers all areas of learning. Curriculum plans and schemes of work explore age-appropriate subject matter and develop learning points methodically. Teaching across different subjects is planned so that pupils can make links between them. However, occasionally, schemes of work are not always adapted to meet the needs or reflect the prior attainment of pupils as effectively as they are typically.
22. Pupils from Nursery to Year 2 develop their linguistic knowledge through a carefully planned programme about the sounds that letters make. Staff in the early years engage in language-rich interactions with the children which help develop their communication and language skills. Rich and relevant texts used in English are adapted to support learning according to pupils' needs. Pupils listen to stories and have opportunities to read aloud to others. As a result, they develop their reading fluency and comprehension skills. When required, pupils who speak EAL receive targeted support and appropriate resources, such as word lists, to develop their English skills effectively and help them access the curriculum.
23. In mathematics, pupils learn new concepts and develop a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary. A focus on mental mathematics has resulted in pupils being more fluent in multiplication. Teaching enables pupils to apply what they know to solve problems and correct errors. Well-resourced lessons and a range of investigations allow pupils to acquire subject-specific terminology and practical skills in science.
24. Pupils in Reception to Year 2 have the option to learn subjects other than English and Mathematics in Spanish. Pupils who choose what the school terms the 'Spanish stream' develop their vocabulary. They can understand and apply subject-specific Spanish vocabulary in a variety of topics. They follow instructions, can ask questions and use simple phrases in Spanish. Pupils from Year 3 upwards develop conversational skills in French. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils learn French vocabulary and phrases appropriate for their age.
25. Pupils' aesthetic and creative aptitudes are nurtured through effective teaching in art. For instance, Year 5 pupils develop knowledge and skills related to screen printing. Music teachers plan well-structured lessons so that pupils make good progress in their singing with effective use of pitch and dynamics. Pupils learn to sing complex melodies.
26. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons collaboratively so that pupils are engaged in their learning and make good progress. Staff employ a range of teaching strategies to engage pupils and manage behaviour well. Good quality and thoughtfully selected resources in the early years enable children to develop a range of skills. Teachers typically make effective use of resources, including with technological devices which are used to enhance learning. However, teachers do not always adapt resources to suit the learning needs of all pupils as well as they do typically. For example, pictures or scenarios used are sometimes out of date or not relevant. There is also some inconsistency in ensuring that tasks in lessons build on the prior achievement of pupils, including those with high prior attainment, effectively.
27. In the early years, teachers plan activities that develop children's knowledge and skills effectively. Teachers use their understanding of how children learn to create opportunities for children to gain

and apply new knowledge to their learning. Staff follow children's interests and actively encourage them to express and refine their own ideas. As a result, children make good progress.

28. Leaders identify the needs of pupils who have SEND early and monitor their progress carefully. Teachers create learning plans for individual pupils who have SEND and provide them with effective support during lessons and additional support when required. This support enables pupils who have SEND to progress well.
29. Pupils' achievement is assessed regularly, including, in many subjects, through end of unit assessments. Leaders analyse this information rigorously and use it to provide targeted support to ensure that pupils make good progress. Regular progress reports and meetings inform parents about their child's progress.
30. The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Clubs such as football, ballet, judo and table tennis enable pupils to be physically active and develop their teamworking skills. Orchestra, woodwork and art clubs help pupils develop their creativity. Film-making and music technology allow pupils to improve their technological skills. Pupils develop their communication and social skills through language clubs in French and Spanish.

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

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

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

32. Leaders utilise the curriculum to promote mutual respect and appreciation of diversity. Pupils are taught about kindness and the importance of being respectful of people's cultural traditions. This starts in the Nursery, with a kindness tree to help children to recognise and celebrate acts of kindness. PSHE lessons help pupils learn about friendship and relate what they learn to their own experiences in school. Pupils are taught to listen to one another's ideas and how they can work collaboratively towards a common goal during group work.
33. Pupils throughout the school behave well. This is because staff ensure that the school's behaviour policy is followed by recognising and rewarding good behaviour and implementing clearly communicated sanctions. Any incidents are logged so that leaders can spot for patterns in behaviour so as to minimise incidents. Leaders and teachers share expectations of behaviour through assemblies and PSHE lessons. The anti-bullying policy is shared with pupils so that pupils recognise bullying and know how incidents are dealt with at school, while the PSHE programme explains the harm that bullying can do. Staff with responsibility for pastoral care liaise closely with pupils and their families to foster their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
34. Premises and accommodation are well maintained and all required health and safety checks and servicing of equipment are carried out. The kitchen where food is prepared is clean and hygienic. Fire safety regulations are met, including through regular fire evacuation drills. Medical accommodation is appropriate, and any required first aid is delivered by suitably trained staff, including during sport and on field trips.
35. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times, including as they move between the different sites of the school. Staff are deployed in high ratios to pupils during all activities in school as well as trips. In the early years, staff have suitable qualifications, and a key person is assigned to each child to ensure their needs are met. Leaders maintain required staff to child ratios in the early years at all times.
36. The schools' attendance and admission registers are well maintained and leaders promote good attendance effectively. The school informs the local authority when pupils join or leave at non-standard transition times.
37. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to support their own fitness and health and develop an understanding of why these matter. Pupils have regular physical education (PE) and games lessons which help them to keep physically fit. Leaders make effective use of local parks and games facilities in the local area to promote physical fitness. The school teaches pupils about the benefits of a balanced diet. Pupils understand how to look after their own physical and mental health. For instance, through PSHE lessons, pupils understand that actions they take to improve their physical health often improves their mental health too.
38. The school takes steps to develop pupils' spiritual understanding. Pupils learn about world religions and other perspectives, such as Humanism, and how these explore particular spiritual themes.
39. The relationships and sex education (RSE) programme contains appropriate content in line with statutory requirements and meets pupils' needs. For example, pupils in the school are taught in age-

appropriate ways about consent, healthy relationships and how to protect themselves. Leaders consult parents appropriately about the RSE policy and programme.

40. In lessons, pupils are taught how to take risks in their learning and develop resilience when encountering any difficulties. Staff treat pupils with respect and appreciation. These measures help pupils to become more confident and develop their self-esteem.

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

41. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

42. Pupils are taught about respect and demonstrate this value in their relationships with one another and with adults. Books used in lessons and in the library are carefully chosen to help pupils understand diversity. Pupils learn about the concepts of human rights and the rights of the child. This helps them to understand that everyone should have equal rights, and be accepted without any discrimination against their protected characteristics, such as religion, gender or disability. Older pupils learn about different forms of prejudice and the harm that they can cause. These measures contribute to pupils' development of understanding about the importance of respecting peoples' rights and identity and of treating people equally. Teachers ensure that pupils feel confident to express their own thoughts and views respectfully while being appreciative of others'.
43. Pupils understand right from wrong and the importance and purpose of rules in the school and beyond, through PSHE lessons. In the early years, children learn about the importance of adhering to school rules and sharing well, such as when choosing resources and activities to engage with. Older pupils are taught about rules and laws in PSHE lessons and how these help to keep them safe. In Year 6, pupils visit the Royal Courts of Justice to support their developing understanding of how laws are upheld in Britain and the principles of fairness and equal treatment that lie behind this.
44. Pupils learn about democracy through PSHE lessons and through planned experiences such as their own school council elections. Younger pupils choose their representatives through discussions. Older pupils write manifestos and present these to other pupils so they can make informed votes. Pupils watch and discuss age-appropriate news programmes and older pupils analyse newspaper articles. This helps them to understand world events and current political matters whilst developing their own views. Teachers ensure that any discussion or exploration of political matters is conducted impartially and respectfully.
45. The curriculum develops pupils' sense of responsibility towards the environment. In the early years, children learn how to care for nature through outdoor learning activities, including litter picking in the local park. Humanities lessons expand pupils' understanding of the importance of sustainability.
46. The school develops pupils' sense of social responsibility effectively. Throughout the school, pupils are given opportunities to take on duties and responsibilities. In the early years, children help each other with simple tasks such as putting on their shoes. Older pupils take on roles to help at lunch times. Pupils contribute to local and international charities, such as by raising money to support a school in Ghana. They correspond with pupils there to understand the similarities and differences in their lives. Older pupils volunteer in the local food bank helping to unpack deliveries and pack boxes.
47. The school provides effective economic education, including through PSHE lessons. Children in the early years learn about the exchange of goods and money through creative roleplay. Pupils in Year 1 learn about where money comes from and its usage. Older pupils deepen their knowledge about how to manage money from visiting banking professionals.
48. In the early years, children begin to learn about possible careers through well-chosen books and stories which give them an understanding about a range of jobs. Older pupils explore gender stereotyping in careers which supports their learning about the importance of equality and fairness.

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. Leaders ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures comply with current statutory guidance. Those with designated safeguarding responsibilities work closely with the local authority to attend training, seek advice and when necessary, make referrals. The school follows up on advice and takes appropriate action to protect pupils from harm. Leaders with safeguarding responsibilities maintain a secure record of concerns, actions taken, and the rationale for decisions made. The proprietor maintains effective oversight of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
51. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to share any concerns that they might have. Pupils learn that they can use the worry box or speak to a trusted adult. The safeguarding team is well known to pupils, staff and parents. They are present during arrival and departure times and make themselves accessible. As a result, pupils, staff and parents are aware of who they can go to if they have a concern.
52. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding. Regular updates and weekly meetings ensure that all staff are aware and vigilant and know how to identify a concern. Staff understand the procedure to follow should they have a concern about any personnel working in the school.
53. Leaders maintain awareness of any contextual risks posed to pupils in the local area and online and take proactive steps to mitigate these. Pupils are taught how to respond to situations that may arise as they move around the local area. Leaders ensure that effective filtering and monitoring procedures are in place. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online, at home and in school. Staff and pupils follow clear rules to minimise the potential for harm online in school.
54. Those with designated safeguarding responsibilities work in partnership with parents. They also work closely with other staff in the school to ensure that any incidents that occur are managed well and that any pupils affected receive appropriate support.
55. Leaders ensure that all required safer recruitment checks are carried out. They record these checks in a suitable single central record of appointments.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

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

School details

School	The Roche School
Department for Education number	212/6351
Address	The Roche School 11 Frogmore London SW18 1HW
Phone number	020 8877 0823
Email address	office@therocheschool.com
Website	www.therocheschool.com
Proprietor	Dr James Roche and Mrs Carmen Roche
Chair	Mrs Carmen Roche
Headmaster	Mr Jonathan Gilbert
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	263
Date of previous inspection	29 September to 1 October 2021

Information about the school

57. The Roche School is a co-educational, independent preparatory school located in the London borough of Wandsworth, set across three separate buildings. The school has a Spanish bilingual stream for pupils from Reception to Year 2. The school is overseen by the proprietors, supported by an advisory board. Most senior leaders, including the headmaster, are new to their roles from September 2024.
58. There are 14 children in the Nursery and 27 in Reception.
59. The school has identified 54 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Seven pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
60. English is an additional language for 43 pupils.
61. The school states its aims are to produce: intelligent, open-minded individuals who belong to the local community but are also able to think as global citizens with an understanding of the wider world; learners who understand that effort and a growth mindset are required for the fulfilment of potential; individuals who can work alone or as a team for the benefit of themselves and for others; children who love and respect one another and who are free from prejudice; children who care for the environment and understand how they can make a difference; children who are expressive and articulate and children with a good sense of humour who love school and enjoy their lives.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

17 to 19 September 2024

62. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.

63. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

64. 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**.

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