



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Richmond House School

March 2022

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School's Details

School	Richmond House School			
DfE number	383/6004			
Registered charity number	505630			
Address	Richmond House School 170 Otley Road Far Headingley Leeds West Yorkshire LS16 5LG			
Telephone number	0113 2752670			
Email address	enquiries@rhschool.org			
Headmaster	Mr Christopher Bouckley			
Chair of governors	Mrs Gill Galdins			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	219			
	EYFS	47	Juniors	172
Inspection dates	15 to 18 March 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Richmond House is a co-educational day school for pupils from the ages of three to eleven. The school was established in 1934 as a non- denominational foundation in the Christian tradition. In 1989, a charitable trust was formed to oversee the school, with the trustees serving as the governing body. The school welcomes pupils of all faiths and of none. Since the previous inspection a new Chair of Governors, new Headmaster and a new Bursar have been appointed. The EYFS has moved into a new building.
- 1.2 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to give each pupil a first-class education and the opportunity to develop into a confident, hard-working and successful individual, where each child is valued for themselves and their individual talents. It seeks to inspire high achievement in all areas of school life within a happy, friendly atmosphere and to encourage enquiring minds and an appreciation of the world around us with a sense of responsibility for the environment.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of the pupils come from the local area and from a variety of professions, backgrounds and cultures. Data supplied by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average for those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified four pupils as having special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, all of whom receive additional specialist support. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan (EHC). English is an additional language for 22 pupils, 3 of whom receive additional support for their English. The needs of more able pupils are catered for within the classroom and through the provision of individually tailored opportunities outside of lessons.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils of all ages display excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum and achieve highly in both academic and other areas.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic, hardworking and resilient.
- Pupils are excellent communicators, both orally and in writing. They listen and respond maturely, both to their teachers and each other.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils have a highly developed moral understanding and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils have a very mature social awareness and work effectively with others.
- Pupils show deep respect for and empathy with those from different backgrounds, faiths and cultures.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy living, including mental well-being.

Recommendation

3.3 In the light of the excellent outcomes, the school may wish to consider:

- strengthening pupils' understanding of how to improve their work by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of written feedback.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Throughout the school, pupils make excellent progress over time and achieve highly in all areas. This was confirmed through lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, and the school's own assessment data. Pupils have enjoyed considerable academic success in recent years, gaining places and scholarships at their first choice of senior school, many of which have rigorous academic selection criteria. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), all children make rapid progress in relation to their age and development, so that the majority attain well above national age-related expectations by the end of Reception: next steps in learning are clearly identified and shared with parents to ensure a co-ordinated approach. Pupils with SEND make equally good progress, and often outperform

expectations, thanks in part to the effective specialist support they receive. Excellent progress was seen in most lessons; for example, younger pupils rapidly assimilated the correct procedures for adding and subtracting 2-digit numbers using maths pyramids, while older pupils quickly grasped telling the time in Spanish. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the range of subjects provided is suitable and almost all parents and pupils felt that teaching enables pupils to learn and make progress.

- 3.6 Pupils are successful in an extensive range of creative and physical pursuits and are supported in their achievements by the wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, good sports facilities, and specialist sports coaching. Teachers' encouragement and challenge empower this achievement through enrichment activities. Pupils are successful in individual external music examinations. School teams of all ages are successful in a variety of local and national competitions, and exceptionally talented pupils represent regional and county teams in a range of sports, including gymnastics and swimming.
- 3.7 Pupils are enthusiastic and ambitious learners, with a genuine desire to succeed. They are curious and willing to learn new skills, and not afraid to take risks; they recognise that making mistakes is part of the learning process. They are resilient and confident in the classroom, approaching every task willingly and with high degrees of motivation. Mutual support between pupils is a strong feature of the school. This was seen in an English class where pupils worked together to 'brainstorm' suitable adjectives to describe the personality of a character in a book. They listen respectfully to each other, collaborating and sharing ideas appropriately. Throughout the school pupils challenge each other's ideas in a constructive way whilst being supportive and respectful of each other's views. In a music class pupils showed considerable perception and sensitivity when providing feedback to their peers regarding their performance. A scrutiny of work from pupils across the school showed that all work was neatly presented and kept in a very orderly manner.
- 3.8 Pupils throughout the school become increasingly confident in the development of their higher-order thinking skills. Children in the EYFS develop good study skills as they engage in independent and collaborative learning, such as when predicting which materials will float or sink. Research skills are developed through a range of independent tasks with an element of choice, for example in a history lesson pupils collected evidence from a range of sources to write diary entries of the D-day landings or letters home from an evacuee. Pupils utilise their analytical skills through hypothesising, encouraged by well-directed questions from their teachers. For example, in a senior science lesson the pupils hypothesised about what would happen to their heart rate when they did a variety of exercises. In English pupils are given many opportunities for free writing and they greatly enjoy this and show excellent imagination, a wide vocabulary and accurate use of grammar. Comprehension exercises provide pupils with the chance to develop their analytical skills, such as when year three pupils made inferences about Boudicca's character, after reading about her exploits in a textbook.
- 3.9 Pupils develop excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning, including aesthetic and creative education in response to the well-planned and broad curriculum. In the EYFS children made rapid progress in distinguishing 'o' sounds and were able to sound out simple words. In almost all lessons, well chosen, challenging tasks and probing questions, all informed by strong teacher subject knowledge, encourage pupils to think carefully about issues. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors, said they value the detailed oral feedback provided by teachers, and enjoy receiving assessment from their peers. They feel that this support and encouragement helps them to become better learners and know how to improve in their work. However, scrutiny of work confirms that written marking often contains few suggestions for improvement and so is less helpful to pupils as they seek to make progress. Pupils show a good understanding of their previous learning and are encouraged to apply this knowledge to new situations. For example, in a religious education (RE) lesson, pupils showed excellent prior knowledge of the story of *the Exodus* and the *ten plagues of Egypt* when conducting research for an essay on the feast of *Passover*. In the questionnaires, a very large majority of parents agree that the school benefits from strong governance, leadership and management. This contributes to the success of the pupils by creating an ethos which supports and

encourages pupils and staff in the pursuit of academic success. Almost all pupils agree that their skills and knowledge improve in lessons and that their teachers help them learn.

- 3.10 Communication skills throughout the school are excellent. Pupils are confident and articulate speakers. They enthusiastically embrace opportunities for public speaking including presenting reports in assemblies or delivering speeches they have prepared as part of the process for selection onto the school council. They are fluent readers and enjoy reading aloud in lessons such as when year two pupils confidently read from a digital storybook, using intonation and expression appropriately. Reception children have a good understanding of the sounds letters make and their writing and speaking skills develop rapidly as they grow in confidence and maturity. Pupils can write fluently in a range of genres, a skill they learn from an early age. EYFS children, for example, could write simple sentences, explaining what made a good friend, using their secure knowledge of phonics. As pupils progress through the school, they write with increasing fluency and sophistication. Year four pupils used a variety of techniques such as rhetorical questions, flattery, presumption and threat when writing persuasive letters, and older pupils can use sophisticated adjectives, adverbs, metaphors and similes to create atmosphere such as in Year 6 stories about being shipwrecked on a desert island. Pupils use technical language confidently and competently, for example older pupils using the correct terminology in geography to describe the various elements of the hydrological cycle.
- 3.11 Pupils are very competent mathematicians, successfully using their excellent calculation skills both in mathematics and across the curriculum. The youngest children in the EYFS demonstrated firm foundations in their numeracy skills being able to match number words to the actual number. Prep school pupils confidently solved equivalent fractions and were able to round decimals up or down to the nearest hundredth. Pupils are comfortable using their skills across a wide range of other subjects such as when drawing graphs in science or making timelines in history. They learn to measure with precision in design technology (DT), recognising that accuracy is vital for success.
- 3.12 Pupils of all ages competently use a broad range of ICT skills, as well as specific computing skills such as coding. The range and complexity of their skills increase as they move through the school. Younger pupils used their tablet devices to draw their favourite 'minibeast' and then created a graph using a spreadsheet to show which were the most popular within the class. Older pupils demonstrated a thorough understanding of how to create a stop motion animation. Other pupils produced flyers encouraging people to attend the local church, while senior pupils produced excellent projects which involved embedding photographs and other items into the text. Pupils' use of ICT for remote learning has increased their familiarity with a range of programmes and strengthened their ICT skills.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' self-understanding is excellent. The school aims to provide a nurturing and secure place that has pupil well-being at its heart, and within this environment the pupils flourish and grow in self-confidence. They are helped in this by the positive support and helpful oral feedback they receive from their teachers. However, marking contains few written comments and pupils said they would appreciate more written guidance about how they could improve their work. Peer assessment is used to good effect in most lessons; pupils value the input from their peers and say that when critiquing the work of others, it helps them understand how they can improve their own work. Pupils' responses to the feedback they receive confirms that they know the steps they need to take in order to improve their own learning and performance. This was seen, for example, in a DT lesson where pupils evaluated their soft toy construction and so identified how it could be improved. Pupils develop resilience and perseverance from an early age with Reception children showing great determination in their numeracy class and prep pupils persevering when solving equivalent fractions – a task some initially found challenging. The annual careers week provides pupils with an opportunity to hear about possible future careers from a range of professionals and pupils say that they find this very helpful

when considering their futures. A very large majority of parents said that the school helped the pupils become self-confident and independent and all pupils said they felt very well prepared for their senior schools.

- 3.15 Pupils show excellent spiritual awareness and develop a sound understanding of the world's major religions through a strong RE and PSHE programme. They have an excellent appreciation of the non-material aspects of school life, as seen in an English lesson where pupils identified the consequences of deforestation from the perspective of *The Great Kapok Tree*. During a 'science week' experiment pupils were in awe when raisins in a glass of tonic water started 'dancing'. Pupils' work on the artist David Hockney showed that they respond thoughtfully to the non-material aspects of life by appreciating and reproducing pictures and describing how it made them feel. Pupils enjoy the opportunities afforded them in the outdoor learning environment which increases their understanding of nature through activities such as planting sunflower seeds and thinking about what plants need to grow and thrive. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a passion for the environment and an appreciation of their own surroundings. They talked animatedly about releasing hedgehogs from a sanctuary into the school's grounds and seeing deer on the playing fields.
- 3.16 Pupils are highly self-disciplined, and their personal development is characterised by excellent standards of behaviour and respect, both for each other and for staff. In interview pupils reported that there was hardly any bullying, and that when relationship issues arise between pupils, the school's effective pastoral care systems help them to resolve them. Notice boards display reminders about the 'golden rules' of being kind and gentle, as well as strong anti-bullying messages. Pupils develop strong relationships derived from the ethos of the school which is based on mutual respect, and kindness. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Almost all parents and all pupils agreed that the school actively promotes and expects good behaviour. Pupils are polite and well-mannered; they support and understand the school rules and behaviour policy. The development of their moral values begins in pre-school where children learn to understand school and class rules, share, take turns and be polite to staff and each other.
- 3.17 All pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and stay safe. Almost all parents and all pupils agreed that the school encourages them to learn about and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are aided in making healthy eating choices by the ready availability of fresh fruit and vegetables at mealtimes. The youngest children understand the importance of good hygiene and eating a balanced diet; they discuss healthy lifestyles in PSHE lessons. Pupils learn to manage stress and maintain positive mental health and are aided in this by the school's well-being programme which teaches pupils how to relax, refresh, recharge, and develop respect and resilience. All pupils agreed that the school teaches them about safety, and they understand how to stay safe online, something which was regularly reinforced during the period of remote learning. Pupils appreciate the importance of physical fitness and enjoy both the formal sports programme and opportunities for recreation using the facilities provided. In interview all could name someone they could talk to should they have any worries or concerns, and spoke appreciatively of the school's pastoral care.
- 3.18 Pupils have outstanding levels of social development and work effectively with others to solve problems and find solutions to common goals. This is engendered by the school culture which encourages relaxed relationships and social confidence. Children in EYFS were observed socialising happily together, working well with others in lessons and sharing toys at break times. Pupils collaborate well in every aspect of school life, both in lessons and elsewhere. Pupils acquire excellent social skills through the many opportunities the school provides to engage with others in joint ventures. For example, in a team building exercise, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the benefits of working together as a team to catch a canister of 'radioactive' material and transport it to a safe location. In interviews, pupils, spoke of a caring, supportive and happy community in which they show genuine concern for each other. Pupils spoke very positively about working together as a team in sports competitions, and in residential trips where they take part in numerous team building exercises. Almost all parents agreed that the school equips their child with the team working and social

skills they need in later life, and most pupils said that the school helps them build positive relationships.

- 3.19 Pupils practise their decision-making skills from an early age with Reception children able to select which activity they will do in lessons and at playtime. Over time they become adept at making choices and are increasingly aware of the consequences of their decisions, with pupils increasingly taking responsibility for their own learning as they mature. For example, in a maths lesson pupils showed awareness of their own ability level and chose an appropriately challenging task to attempt. They make sensible choices over which activities to join. From the youngest age they are very mindful of the well-being of others and are considerate and caring in their relationships with peers and adults. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons pupils of all ages come to understand their own and others' emotions and how this can influence their actions and impact on those around them.
- 3.20 Pupils enjoy making a positive contribution to the school community through roles such as prefects and librarians. The active school council results in a very effective pupil voice which puts forward ideas for improvements in the school community, such as changes to the school food. Pupils are quick to stop and talk to anyone who is feeling lonely or sad. Pupils show a mature understanding of how they can help those less fortunate than themselves, for example by raising funds and providing practical support for a range of local, national and international charities. In discussions about dressing up for Red Nose Day pupils spoke about how they made a donation to help those less fortunate than themselves. During the inspection pupils were writing postcards to children in Ukraine, an initiative set up by a former pupil. The cards contained uplifting messages of support such as 'remember that the sun will shine again'.
- 3.21 Pupils show consideration for each other and adults and understand and strongly support the emphasis which the school places on respect for others which is engendered by governors and school leaders. Pupils show a thorough knowledge of fundamental British values, which are developed through a comprehensive PSHE programme. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the cultural diversity that surrounds them at school and within their local communities. This understanding is deepened by RE lessons which teach about other faiths and religions. Pupils treat one another with kindness and consideration within a community that is happy and inclusive. They value themselves and others as unique and worthwhile people; they understand that another person's appearance, personality, beliefs, and interests bring something special to the world. Almost all parents and most pupils felt that the school encourages an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. The school supports this via its ethos and expectations of tolerance and kindness to all; a poster in a classroom reminded pupils that 'there is only one human race, and everyone belongs'.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr William Ibbetson-Price	Reporting inspector
Mrs Emma Patel	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr David Sibson	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)