



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

The Rowans School

February 2022

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School's Details

School	The Rowans School			
DfE number	315/6002			
Registered charity number	277324			
Address	The Rowans School 19 Drax Avenue Wimbledon London SW20 0EG			
Telephone number	020 8946 8220			
Email address	office@rowans.org.uk			
Head	Miss Elizabeth Spratt			
Proprietor	Shrewsbury House School Trust			
Age range	3 to 7			
Number of pupils on roll	120			
	EYFS	62	Juniors	58
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Rowans School is an independent co-educational day school situated on a single site in a residential district of Wimbledon. The school has been administered by the Shrewsbury House School Trust since September 2017. The school comprises the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which includes a kindergarten and two reception classes, and two Year 1 and two Year 2 classes. The current head took up her responsibilities in February 2021, having previously been deputy head of the school.
- 1.2 During the period March to June 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials and teaching for all pupils. In June 2020, the school reopened for pupils in the EYFS and Year 1. It remained closed for pupils in Year 2 until the end of August 2020.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than kindergarten children, the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.6 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school aims to enable each child to progress in all areas of their learning and become independent, confident, enthusiastic learners. It seeks to nurture the well-being of each child and promote a love of learning, the acquisition of life skills, a desire to achieve to the best of their potential, and a social awareness of others.

About the pupils

- 1.8 Most pupils come from local families representing a range of professional backgrounds. The school's own assessment data indicate that the ability of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified five pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include speech and language conditions and other learning needs. Of these, four pupils receive additional specialist help. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 16 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The curriculum is modified for those pupils whom the school identifies as the most able in the school's population.

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 statutory framework. 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.

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](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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 in the school. 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' achievement is outstanding. They make mainly excellent progress and attain very highly.
 - Pupils demonstrate substantial skills, knowledge and understanding across the range of subjects.
 - Pupils demonstrate advanced communication skills. They use excellent, imaginative and varied language to convey their ideas.
 - Pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge are outstanding. They show very strong understanding of aspects such as place value, multiplication and division.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils show excellent self-confidence and self-awareness for their age.
 - Pupils exhibit outstanding moral development and can distinguish right from wrong.
 - Pupils consistently demonstrate excellent social collaboration and teamwork.
 - Pupils exhibit outstanding appreciation of diversity for their age.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following improvement:
- Further strengthen pupils' ability to learn independently.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils' achievement is excellent. The school's own assessment data show that attainment is above average for those taking the same tests nationally. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work confirm that pupils, including those with SEND and the most able, make mainly excellent and sometimes good progress over time. EYFS children make rapid progress from their starting points and achieve highly. The school's own assessment data show some variation between the attainment and progress of different groups, but the very small size of some cohorts means that no general conclusions can be drawn from this. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress. Inspection evidence supports this view. Leaders and staff make highly effective use of assessment data to inform teaching, so that pupils' learning and progress are

strengthened. The school fully meets its aim to enable each child to progress in all areas of their learning.

- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate substantial skills, knowledge and understanding across the range of subjects. In a science lesson, Year 1 pupils exhibited excellent knowledge about animals and their habitats. They understood and explained key terms such as 'predator', 'prey' and 'rainforest'. Pupils showed swift understanding of different musical rhythms and beats during a global music workshop. Books seen show advanced knowledge across the range of subjects. For instance, humanities books exhibit developed knowledge about Tudor clothing and features of rivers. Typically, the quality of work is beyond that expected for the age group. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teachers know how to help them to learn. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding very well because staff know their subjects and communicate about them clearly and enthusiastically. However, some of the work seen does not demonstrate strong application of independent learning skills. This is because frequent use of prescriptive worksheets does not enable pupils to apply their independent learning skills as strongly as those displayed in other work.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate excellent communication skills. Nursery children were able to express their ideas and feelings about an international week very articulately for their age. They listened very carefully to the staff and each other. In a lesson about letters and sounds, Reception children demonstrated secure understanding of the term 'digraph', describing this as 'two letters making one sound'. They can form letters using cursive script well. The children listen very carefully and are able to identify and express the sounds created by the letters precisely and accurately. Year 1 pupils spoke with much clarity and confidence while describing an ocean picture which included a submarine. They used excellent, imaginative and varied language to convey their ideas. Much writing seen is of an extremely high standard. Reception children's writing is structured and formed very well for their age. The most able pupils' work features an extensive and expressive use of vocabulary, accurate grammar and punctuation and clear handwriting. This is because marking includes clear guidance about strengths of work and how it could be improved further. Staff make effective use of 'golden sentence checklists' and challenges for including more sophisticated features of writing, such as similes.
- 3.8 Pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge are outstanding. For example, Nursery children's work on display demonstrated very good understanding of repetitive patterns for the children's age. Reception children counted a range of numbers up to 85 accurately during their registration. Some children were able to explain that 'The next ten after eighty is ninety'. Year 1 pupils were able to accurately select which coins they would need to pay for pieces of fruit priced in different currencies. They could explain what an 'equals sign' means. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils gave very detailed and accurate explanations of what a bar chart was before creating their own graphs of countries visited by the school community. The books of pupils across the rest of the school show a very strong understanding of aspects of mathematics, such as place value, multiplication and division. Pupils' mathematical abilities are strengthened by staff who are very observant of when pupils have difficulties and offer clear support in a timely fashion. Pupils' mathematical understanding is also enhanced by highly effective use of practical and colourful resources and a 'maths target wall' to communicate with pupils about their achievements and next steps.
- 3.9 Pupils demonstrated excellent focus and attitudes to learning in all lessons and activities seen. For example, pupils attending a choir rehearsal were extremely enthusiastic and keen to participate. Similarly, Year 2 pupils were highly attentive and engaged when asking questions over a video call to pupils in a school in China. They were keen to find out all that they could. In addition, pupils who spoke to the inspectors expressed very strong enthusiasm for, and delight in their learning and achievements. They said that teachers always make their learning fun. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that most lessons are interesting. This was confirmed by lesson observations. The school fully meets its aim to promote in pupils a love of learning and a desire to achieve to the best of their potential.

- 3.10 Portfolios of information and communication technology (ICT) work show that children and pupils apply their ICT skills very well to other subjects. For example, Nursery children use their devices to identify sounds they can hear at the beginning of particular words. Similarly, Reception children use the interactive whiteboard to complete mathematical activities. Year 2 pupils have successfully developed 'fact files' about particular rivers. They have created electronic presentations about these that are advanced for the pupils' age in terms of their composition and use of images and maps. Pupils applied their ICT skills very effectively during a religious education (RE) lesson when using their devices to video their partner answering questions about different places of worship. Pupils' achievements in ICT result from leaders' development of this curriculum so that computing is taught as a discrete subject to all year groups. They also result from governors' active support of the provision of ICT devices in the school.
- 3.11 Pupils exhibit highly developed study skills. For example, Reception children demonstrated excellent research skills for their age. They suggested that they could use the computer to find and copy pictures of Australia and 'use the internet to find out things' about this country. With support, the children were able to use the appropriate applications on their individual devices to find out facts about Australia. Similarly, Year 1 and 2 pupils attending a Philosophy Club session demonstrated excellent observational and inquiry skills for their age. They were able to offer perceptive observations of a large painting of a storm scene and identify precise features of it. Pupils suggested intelligent ideas about what might be happening in the picture and identified what they would like to find out about it. Pupils' ability to observe and ask intelligent questions is strengthened by staff's use of clear 'I see, I think, I wonder' questions and their entirely positive responses to the pupils' ideas.
- 3.12 Pupils' academic and other achievements are strong for their age and the size of the school. Leavers succeed in obtaining places at their choice of subsequent schools, including those with competitive entry requirements. Some leavers have been successful in achieving scholarships. Pupils achieve very highly in LAMDA examinations, with all entrants gaining at least merits and a majority attaining distinctions. The quality of pupils' singing heard during the inspection was very high. All pupils from Reception upwards represent the school in sporting fixtures against other schools. Pupils' non-academic achievements are supported and strengthened by the wide range of clubs and activities that leaders and staff provide.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show excellent self-confidence and self-awareness for their age. For example, at the start of the day, Reception children settle into the classroom very calmly and happily, smiling and clearly at ease. In a Year 1 English lesson, pupils demonstrated an extremely high level of self-confidence and self-knowledge when speaking in front of their peers. Year 2 pupils' personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) books contain very thoughtful ideas about personal goals and understanding about possible barriers to achieving these. The most able pupils' work demonstrates particularly developed and well-expressed understanding in this regard. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that school helps their child to be confident and independent. Observations throughout the inspection support this view. Leaders and staff promote a 'can-do' approach to learning so that pupils are unafraid to make mistakes and attempt things more than once. They relate to pupils in an entirely positive and encouraging manner that promotes pupils' self-confidence effectively.
- 3.15 Pupils exhibit outstanding moral development and can distinguish right from wrong. For example, pupils' PSHE books and dialogue with inspectors featured very thoughtful reflections about why kindness, fairness and caring for others are important. Pupils understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own behaviour. This was demonstrated throughout the inspection through pupils' consistently excellent behaviour towards one another. Leaders and staff promote and model very high behavioural expectations particularly effectively. They use *Beau the Badger's Wheel of*

Choice and the school's golden rules to successfully encourage pupils' reflection on their own choices of behaviour. Leaders and staff engage pupils constantly in dialogue about the importance of considering consequences. As a result, pupils express much consideration about the effects of their own actions on others. For example, when discussing possible courses of action to ensure positive behaviour, some Year 1 pupils advised others to 'Think through consequences of your actions, so stop and think first'.

- 3.16 Pupils consistently demonstrate excellent social collaboration and teamwork. These were witnessed in all lessons seen. For example, Year 1 pupils worked together very effectively to answer comprehension questions about the story *Wishing Star*. Children and pupils from across the school who engaged in dance worked entirely co-operatively in small and large groups to achieve the desired performance. Pupils' effectiveness in collaborating with each other is developed by staff who frequently partner pupils up to work together to solve problems and tackle tasks. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. All pupils who responded agreed that the school teaches them how to build positive relationships and friendships. Inspection evidence supports both these views. The school fully meets its aim to develop pupils' social awareness of others.
- 3.17 Pupils exhibit outstanding appreciation of diversity for their age. Older pupils who spoke to the inspectors expressed much appreciation of their discoveries about different religious and cultural customs. They explained articulately and with feeling the importance of rights and expressed passionately that all human beings should have the same rights. Year 2 pupils' work on the Tudors shows strong understanding of the different educational opportunities for male and female children in that time. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. The evidence supports this opinion. The school teaches pupils about a wide range of different religions in an entirely respectful manner. The international week that took place during the inspection stimulated pupils' curiosity about and admiration for, different cultures and ways of living. Pupils' appreciation of faiths other than their own is enhanced through visits to different institutions of worship. Leaders and staff make very effective use of opportunities to engage pupils with the wider world. For example, a mathematics lesson required pupils to solve addition problems using coins from a range of international currencies.
- 3.18 Pupils' spiritual awareness and appreciation of non-material aspects of life are advanced for their age. Year 2 pupils who spoke to the inspectors conveyed mature, reflective ideas about what is important to them in life, mentioning family, friends, happiness and being kind and helpful. They expressed very thoughtful ideas about why they appreciate dance, art and stories. In an RE lesson, Year 1 pupils successfully expressed how places of worship make them feel.
- 3.19 Pupils' contribution to others is very strong for their age. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors conveyed a very strong sense of responsibility as house captains and in other roles. Pupils in the school council expressed very thoughtful reasons that lay behind their choices of charities to support. For example, they explained their choice to support a hospital charity, saying, 'They don't have enough money and they want to maybe make the walls have pictures on them to help the children there be happy'. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities and make decisions on behalf of others.
- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate very strong decision-making skills for their age. For example, Nursery children are very confident to choose which activities to engage with during free-flow time. They demonstrate strong levels of concentration and engagement that indicate that their choices have been very sensible. The EYFS children chose and arranged materials successfully to construct models of famous buildings in Paris. In a PSHE lesson, Year 1 pupils ably chose positive courses of action for a fictional character to follow in order to look after others. In a science lesson, Year 2 pupils made independent and sensible choices about which animals they wished to research. Children's effective choices of activity are encouraged by attractively presented and accessible resources. Older pupils use 'plan, do,

review' books to capture their ideas about what they would like to do and how they plan to go about it.

- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Older pupils' books include very sensible ideas about what privacy means in relation to parts of the body and also about what to do in an emergency. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that they understand how to stay safe online. This view is supported by inspection evidence. Pupils' books convey very good understanding for their age of the consequences of sending unkind messages or images online. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors were able to articulate thoughtful and sensible strategies that they could use to keep themselves calm and stay safe when online. Leaders and staff constantly reinforce the importance of staying safe and healthy through lessons, displays and assemblies focused on themes such as internet safety, road safety and anti-bullying. This strengthens pupils' awareness of the importance of keeping safe and physically and mentally healthy, and of strategies to do so. The school fully meets its aim to nurture the well-being of each child.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Steven Popper	Reporting inspector
Mrs Susan Bonell	Compliance team inspector (Former bursar, SofH school)
Mr Richard Evans	Team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)