



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER  
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

**MONITORING VISIT**

**BRITISH RACING SCHOOL**

**(REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1161555)**

Full Name **British Racing School**

Address Snailwell Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7NU

Telephone Number 01638 665103

Email Address duncan.gregory@brs.org.uk

Website www.brs.org.uk

Chief Executive Mr Andrew Braithwaite

Proprietor BRS Education Ltd

Age Range 10+

Total number of students 261

Numbers by age and type of study

Under 16:	8
16–18	190
18+:	63
FE only:	261

Inspection date **12 June 2023**

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges and, by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements.

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>10</b>

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 The British Racing School (BRS) is a registered charity. It was established in 1983 in Newmarket, Suffolk to provide training to promote and encourage young people to ride as professional jockeys. The school's aim is to provide a range of training of the highest standard to meet the needs of the racing industry and to meet the needs of its trainees. The Chief Executive Officer is supported by an Operations Director and a Human Resource Director. Together, they form the senior team. The senior team report to the board of trustees who provide overall governance of the school.
- 1.2 The main provision of the school is foundation training. Under the rules of racing, it is mandatory that young people under the age of 19 complete pre-employment training. BRS provides this as a 6, 12 or 18-week residential foundation course depending on trainees' experience and capability. The school also offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in Racehorse Care and Management for trainees studying in the workplace. In addition, a 6-week ground-based yard staff course is offered for those wishing to work in yards but not in a riding capacity.
- 1.3 The school also provides a range of specialised programmes for the racing industry, professional and amateur jockey courses, courses for prospective trainers, racing secretaries and supervisory management training. In association with local schools, BRS offers a flexible learning programme for trainees aged 14–16. BRS provides a Foundation Degree in Racing in partnership with Hartpury University.
- 1.4 BRS also operates the Newmarket Pony Academy (NPA). The academy provides a weeklong programme for young people from local schools which introduces them to horses. BRS also hosts the Riding a Dream Academy, which aims to help young people from underrepresented communities become involved in British horseracing.
- 1.5 At the time of inspection, there were 261 trainees, 260 from the United Kingdom and one from South Korea. The majority are female. The school has identified 46 trainees with language and learning difficulties or disabilities. Trainees are recruited throughout the year and are selected on the basis of meeting published entry requirements.
- 1.6 The British Racing School was last inspected in July 2021, when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations.
- 1.7 The recommendation from the previous report is:
  - Ensure that trainees with limited prior schooling are provided with additional support in English and mathematics.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 29 June to 01 July 2021 the school was found to exceed expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Comprehensive initial assessments are highly effective in ensuring trainees are enrolled on the most appropriate course to meet their needs. The curriculum very effectively supports trainees in developing the knowledge, confidence and practical skills they need to achieve their goals and aspirations. Courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Trainees are very well supported to develop their applied English and mathematics skills. Trainees benefit from highly experienced vocational instructors who use their subject expertise to plan challenging and engaging learning sessions. Instructors are highly effective in checking for understanding. Trainees benefit from specific feedback, which helps them to improve over time. As a result, they make excellent progress in developing substantial new practical racing and horse care skills. Most trainees complete their course and progress into employment in the equine industry. The large majority of trainees on the apprenticeship programme complete their course within the expected timescales.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Trainees benefit from a high-quality learning environment that supports the development of their practical skills very well. The school keeps highly accurate admissions and attendance registers. Overall attendance rates are very high. Staff clearly understand Home Office requirements regarding enrolment, attendance and reporting arrangements relating to trainees on Student visas. Safeguarding arrangements for trainees under 18 are excellent. Safeguarding has a high priority at the school, supported by detailed policies and procedures, which are very effectively implemented. Designated safeguarding staff are suitably trained to an appropriate level. They fully understand their role, and responsibilities for ensuring any safeguarding concerns are meticulously recorded, reported and responded to. All staff complete appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to ensure their suitability to work regularly with trainees under 18.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Trustees are very effective in discharging their responsibilities for educational standards, safeguarding, and financial planning. There is a very effective relationship between the trustees and the senior leadership team. Quality assurance is good. Leaders effectively self-evaluate and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders and managers are proactive in implementing enhanced quality assurance arrangements to support more trainees on the apprenticeship programme to complete their course within expected timescales. However, it is too soon for leaders and managers to fully evaluate the impact of these measures. Staff recruitment arrangements are excellent. Leaders and managers ensure all the necessary

suitability checks on staff have been completed prior to their appointment. The provision of information is excellent.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure that trainees with limited prior schooling are provided with additional support in English and mathematics.
- 3.3 The school has made excellent progress in meeting the recommendation. Leaders and managers have implemented a range of appropriate measures since the previous inspection to ensure all trainees receive very effective support to develop their English and mathematics skills. Assessment information helps instructors to identify trainees' specific knowledge gaps and learning priorities early in their course. Additional specialist instructors have been recruited who offer daily dedicated lessons to support trainees in developing the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their qualifications in English and mathematics. Trainees benefit from access to effective online learning resources providing activities which help them to practise and consolidate their knowledge and understanding further. As a result, trainees are very well supported in developing their applied English and mathematics skills.
- 3.4 Assessment of trainees prior to or on arrival is excellent. Comprehensive initial assessments are highly effective in identifying trainees' prior skills, experience and fitness levels to ensure they are enrolled onto the most appropriate course to meet their learning needs. Instructors use assessment information very effectively to plan a learning and support programme, which helps trainees make substantial progress from their starting points.
- 3.5 The quality of course provision and curriculum are excellent. The specialist courses on offer help the school effectively meet its aims. The NPA and Riding a Dream Academy help to attract and support younger trainees and those from diverse and underrepresented groups to participate in high-quality riding education. The curriculum very effectively supports trainees in developing the skills they need to learn and progress in the equine industry. Courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 The quality of teaching is excellent. Instructors use their specialist expertise to plan and deliver challenging and engaging practical training that meets the needs and capabilities of trainees very well. Instructors use a range of effective teaching and learning strategies that ensure trainees develop the knowledge, confidence and skills required to care for racehorses. For example, school pupils attending the NPA quickly build their confidence in working with horses before learning how to use grooming tools and equipment effectively and safely.



- 3.7 Instructors use practical assessments and questioning skills very effectively to check learning. Trainees benefit from high-quality personalised feedback, which helps refine and improve their practical riding skills over time. Consequently, trainees make significant progress in their riding lessons and practical activities. There is a very positive relationship and rapport between instructors and trainees. As a result, training is inclusive and does not undermine fundamental British values and principles of respect and tolerance.
- 3.8 Progress and attainment are good. Trainees make significant progress in developing their practical skills from their starting points. Most complete their course and progress into employment in the equine industry. Achievement rates on most courses are above national averages. The large majority of trainees on the apprenticeship programme complete their course within the expected timescales.

#### **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Trainees benefit from a high-quality learning environment that supports the development of their practical skills very well. Classrooms are modern, clean and appropriately equipped and furnished. The school has an outstanding range of specialist indoor and outdoor facilities which support the development of trainees' practical riding and horse care skills. The school is very well maintained to a professional standard. Heating, lighting and ventilation are all appropriate. There are sufficient washrooms for staff and trainees. The premises are accessible to those with specific needs and disabilities. Free drinking water is available. Security arrangements are effective.
- 4.3 Systems for recording trainee registration and attendance are excellent. The school maintains highly accurate admissions and attendance registers. Trainees on foundation courses are accommodated on-site with very effective monitoring arrangements in place to ensure their whereabouts. Attendance levels are very high, and absences are rare. Where they do occur, staff have effective procedures in place to quickly follow these up. There are transparent and fair procedures for collecting and refunding fees and deposits. Staff have a very clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment, attendance and reporting arrangements relating to trainees on Student visas.
- 4.4 Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Trustees and senior leaders ensure safeguarding has a high priority at the school and are proactive in taking action to minimise risks. Detailed and up-to-date safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented in line with official guidance. A team of staff are suitably trained to an appropriate level to lead on safeguarding. They fully understand their role and responsibilities for ensuring any safeguarding concerns are meticulously recorded, reported and responded to. Safeguarding leads make effective and prompt referrals to relevant external agencies when necessary. Leaders and managers ensure that all staff complete regular safeguarding training, including trustees. Appropriate safer recruitment practices are effectively implemented. All staff complete appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to ensure their suitability to work regularly with trainees under 18.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 Ownership and oversight are excellent. Trustees have a very effective relationship with the Chief Executive and the senior leadership team. They effectively oversee the school and understand its strengths, areas for development and strategic direction. Trustees use their considerable experience and range of expertise to hold senior leaders to account effectively. Trustees discharge their responsibilities well for educational standards, financial planning and legal permissions. They ensure they fulfil their statutory duties for the safeguarding of trainees.
- 5.3 Quality assurance arrangements are good. Leaders and managers complete a detailed and thorough self-evaluation of the school's performance. They systematically analyse performance data and trainee feedback to ensure they accurately understand the school's strengths and areas for further development. Leaders are effective in implementing robust quality improvement plans to further raise standards and the high quality of education. Managers complete appropriate staff appraisals and lesson observations to monitor the standards of teaching and learning effectively. They make available a range of relevant opportunities to further develop the expertise of instructors, for example, specific courses to develop instructors' coaching skills and techniques.
- 5.4 Appropriate quality measures have recently been implemented to ensure that the small minority of apprentices who do not achieve their apprenticeship within planned timescales are well supported. Leaders have introduced more rigorous progress monitoring mechanisms to identify quickly where apprentices may need more time and support. They have invested in additional resources to ensure employers and work-based instructors work in partnership to support busy apprentices in the workplace. The quality measures are having a positive impact on securing improvements, although it is too early for leaders to fully evaluate their impact. The school has a clear and appropriate complaints procedure. Complaints are very effectively handled and reported. There are appropriate systems for independent adjudication of complaints.
- 5.5 Staff recruitment arrangements are excellent. Robust arrangements are in place to ensure all the necessary identity, suitability and enhanced DBS checks have been completed prior to the appointment of staff. The school maintains accurate and clear records of all checks. A detailed single central register of appointments is monitored systematically for accuracy and compliance by senior leaders.
- 5.6 The provision of information is excellent. The website provides accurate and detailed information about courses on offer and the school's facilities. Information provided for inspectors is of high quality, well-organised and readily accessible.

## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The school has maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the school should:

- Fully evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements supporting trainees on the apprenticeship programme to achieve on time.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with trainees and examined samples of trainees' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of trustees and attended registration sessions. The responses of staff and trainees to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Steve Ingle	Lead Inspector
Mr Simon Bellamy	Team Inspector
Mr Saul Hyman	Team Inspector