

School inspection report

11 to 13 February 2025

Richmond House School

170 Otley Road

Leeds

West Yorkshire

LS16 5LG

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. Leaders communicate a clear vision for the school alongside its values and ethos. Leaders at all levels demonstrate good skills and knowledge so that the Standards are met consistently, and pupils' wellbeing is prioritised.
2. Leaders are reflective. They evaluate the success of their actions and seek ways to improve the school's provision. They have a thorough awareness of risks and the means by which these may be mitigated. Governors check all aspects of the school's work. They give appropriate support and challenge to leaders. Leaders provide information to parents about school policies and procedures through the school's website. At the start of the inspection, leaders had not published information about the school's academic performance on the school website. This was rectified during the inspection.
3. The curriculum and how it is taught enables pupils, including children in the early years, to make good progress from their different starting points. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding across all subjects. Leaders and teaching staff assess pupils' performance to find out what pupils know and can do. Teachers typically use this information to plan and teach pupils' next steps. In some lessons, pupils do not learn as well as they should because teachers have not used assessment data to tailor activities to pupils' specific needs. Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities to develop their interests and skills outside the classroom.
4. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Across the school, leaders and staff ensure that respect towards others is consistently promoted and practised. Pupils develop a clear understanding of the importance of physical and mental health and how these can be maintained. The physical, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum includes content on relationships and sex education (RSE). Through discussions about what constitutes healthy relationships, pupils learn how to interact positively and keep themselves safe. Pupils understand and follow leaders' high expectations of their behaviour. Leaders conduct robust and systematic health and safety checks to ensure pupils' physical safety.
5. Pupils are taught about the range of cultures and faiths that make up their school community. They are positive about difference and are well prepared for life in modern British society. Leaders refer to the school's key values of participation and kindness so that pupils develop a mature understanding of their responsibilities towards others. Pupils make meaningful contributions to school life and to the lives of others in the wider community. They understand the principles of democracy and the importance of learning to manage money.
6. Leaders establish suitable procedures to safeguard pupils. Governors and staff are well trained to understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Leaders carry out recruitment procedures and checks to ensure the suitability of adults in the school. Staff understand leaders' expectations of their conduct and how to respond to concerns about pupils. Leaders and staff teach pupils how to stay safe in different situations, including when using the internet.

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 all required information is consistently made available to parents of prospective pupils so they have a complete picture of the school
- ensure teachers throughout the school use assessment information to plan and teach activities in lessons that are well-matched to pupils' needs so they learn as well as they should.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

7. Leaders make sure that the school's policies and procedures are understood and followed through. These reflect leaders' understanding of pupils' needs as well as relevant legislation and guidance. Leaders communicate the school's aims clearly and consistently so that staff and pupils share a common understanding of the school's values and leaders' expectations.
8. Leaders in the early years are appropriately trained for their roles. Leaders work closely with early years staff to identify training needs, any safeguarding concerns and the actions necessary to improve teaching and learning.
9. Governors maintain effective oversight through leaders' reports to sub-committees. Governors test out what they have been told through regular visits to the school. They challenge leaders and provide appropriate support so that the school continues to improve. Governors oversee leadership appointments to assure themselves that leaders have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
10. Leaders evaluate the impact of their actions to make sure they continue to achieve the school's aims and meet the Standards. They adjust policies and procedures to meet the requirements of current statutory guidance. Leaders assess pupils' needs and adapt provision accordingly so that pupils' wellbeing is at the forefront of their decisions. Governors gain insight into this process through involvement in leaders' professional development alongside regular scrutiny and discussion of the school's development plan.
11. There have been a number of recent academic and pastoral appointments to the leadership team. Leaders new to role have been quick to review and evaluate outcomes in their areas of responsibility and to identify what needs to change. A wide range of initiatives have been introduced that focus on meeting pupils' academic and pastoral needs. Although recent, these initiatives are already making a positive difference. These include improving pupils' writing skills across the curriculum and strengthening pupils' understanding of the importance of good mental health.
12. Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the potential risks to pupils. These include risks that are specific to the school and its context, and those relating to safeguarding, the school premises and extra-curricular activities. Leaders take action to reduce risk and monitor how effective their actions are through data analysis and regular reviews.
13. Leaders fulfil their duties under section 10 of the Equality Act 2010. They teach pupils about equality and respect through the school's curriculum and daily activities. They have a suitable accessibility plan and take appropriate action to improve pupils' access to the school environment, information and the curriculum. Leaders regularly check that these actions lead to the desired outcomes.
14. Leaders provide information about the school, its policies and procedures to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school's website or through other suitable means. Information about the school's academic performance for the preceding school year was not made available to parents of prospective pupils before the start of the inspection. This was addressed during the on-site visit.
15. The school has a suitable complaints policy and procedure for managing complaints. This includes how to raise a complaint and how the school will respond both informally and formally when required.

16. Leaders liaise with external agencies when necessary to keep pupils safe and secure. This includes communication with safeguarding agencies and the local authority in relation to early years statutory assessments.

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

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders have designed a curriculum that enables pupils to gain a wide range of subject-specific skills and knowledge. Pupils make good progress over time. Parents receive regular reports on their children's academic performance and progress. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They gain places and scholarships at selective senior schools.
19. Leaders regularly review the curriculum and seek ways in which to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They have drawn up plans and strategies to achieve this which are in the early stages of implementation, such as leaders' thorough monitoring, specific staff training and the consistent use of assessment data.
20. Early years staff have a secure knowledge of the statutory early years curriculum and how this should be taught. They understand children's individual needs and interests and use this to plan relevant and interesting learning. Early years staff model how to use language in speaking, listening and phonics, so that children develop and increase their literacy skills. Staff support and challenge children throughout the day, helping them to develop positive attitudes to learning. As a result, children achieve well in all areas of learning.
21. Teachers promote the school values of participation and achievement in their lessons. Pupils understand these well. They are engaged and keen to learn. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They give pupils clear explanations and correct pupils' misunderstandings so that pupils can apply what they know to more complex work. Teachers make good use of time and resources during lessons. They communicate high expectations of behaviour, which pupils understand and follow.
22. Leaders' recent focus on improving pupils' writing across subjects enables pupils to use their reading and writing skills to good effect. In history, pupils present their research findings to a high standard and write accurate diaries from the perspectives of characters from the past. Pupils develop secure scientific knowledge and understanding by designing their own investigations. They extend their learning by revisiting topics at more advanced levels as they move through the school.
23. In mathematics, early years staff make good use of resources to encourage children's reasoning and numeracy skills such as when identifying different ways to make specific numbers. Older pupils apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as when representing scientific data in graphs. Pupils acquire secure coding and technological skills. Their creative skills develop well over time. Teachers help pupils to express their ideas whilst building on previous learning. Pupils embed their artistic skills by revisiting their learning in areas such as portraiture and cubism. Their compositions become more complex over time as they learn to use formal notation and add more detail.
24. Leaders identify pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and check if they need additional help to access the curriculum. If needed, teachers provide tailored support in lessons and throughout the school day to help these pupils improve their English language skills quickly. This includes the use of symbols and songs as well as focused reading sessions.
25. Leaders work closely with staff and parents to identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff give pupils personal targets and the additional help they need to achieve them. Leaders work with teaching staff to decide the best teaching strategies to meet pupils' specific needs. Leaders check the impact of this personalised teaching and make necessary

adjustments if needed. Pupils who have SEND make good progress from their different starting points and achieve well.

26. Leaders have in place an assessment system that monitors pupils' progress and attainment in key subject areas. Teachers identify pupils who can work at higher levels and those who need additional help in order to make sufficient progress. Teachers provide pupils with individual verbal support and challenge which helps pupils to make progress. In most lessons, including those in the early years, activities are carefully planned in response to teachers' understanding of pupils' needs and prior attainment, but this is not consistent across the school. In some lessons, pupils are not taught what they need to learn next and so they do not achieve as well as they should.
27. Leaders provide pupils with a broad range of activities outside of their lessons. These include opportunities to pursue new and existing interests and develop their creative, sporting and academic talents. Pupils engage successfully in a number of musical and artistic competitions and events both in and outside school.

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

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

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

29. Leaders prepare pupils for their adult lives through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, form time and other curriculum areas. In PSHE lessons, pupils learn about and reflect on the ways in which people live their lives. They are taught to respect different groups within society. Pupils appreciate and accept people who may be different from themselves. They understand the need to combat discrimination.
30. Staff maintain positive relationships with pupils, informed by a detailed understanding of pupils' pastoral needs. Teachers identify and celebrate pupils' personal and academic strengths and achievements whilst providing targeted encouragement and support when required. Pupils develop self-confidence alongside an understanding of their own attributes and a readiness to improve.
31. Leaders and staff demonstrate their expectation that everyone should be kind and respectful through the school's ethos and values, the PSHE curriculum and their daily interactions with pupils. Pupils understand the behaviour policy, which is implemented consistently and fairly by adults throughout the school. Teachers help pupils to resolve their differences and make amends through a system that is based around discussion and personal reflection. Pupils benefit from their teachers' guidance and support in considering future actions. Leaders only rarely need to administer more serious sanctions.
32. Early years staff develop supportive relationships with the children in their care. Leaders monitor children's emotional development carefully. They provide support when needed to help children understand their own feelings and manage their behaviour. Children respond well to individual guidance and to strategies such as the 'kindness bear', which staff use to highlight and celebrate children's thoughtful actions.
33. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy relationships through the RSE curriculum. Teachers encourage pupils to take part in discussions within lessons, so that pupils are confident to share their questions and ideas whilst developing their understanding. Pupils are confident when talking about relationships and the different forms these may take.
34. Leaders respond to incidents of alleged bullying appropriately. Teachers equip pupils with skills and knowledge to enable them to recognise and prevent its occurrence. Instances of bullying are rare. When they occur, they are managed swiftly and in line with the school's procedures.
35. Leaders develop pupils' physical wellbeing through the physical education (PE) curriculum and a broad programme of physical activities both in and outside lessons. Early years staff teach a range of activities to enable children to develop their fine and gross-motor skills. Pupils develop their skills in many different sports and physical disciplines through a well-planned curriculum taught by specialist staff. Pupils put their skills to good use in sporting fixtures and events. They understand the importance of physical exercise to maintain their good health.
36. Teachers help pupils to understand the importance of healthy food choices. Early years staff encourage children to try new foods, whilst older pupils develop their understanding during PE and PSHE lessons. Pupils recognise the variety of healthy food options that are available to them at lunchtimes and how sensible choices help them to maintain a balanced diet.

37. Teachers provide pupils with guidance about how to maintain their mental health during PSHE lessons, and with practical advice. Pupils make effective use of strategies such as quiet background music and short breaks in lessons. They understand the importance of maintaining their own mental health, as illustrated in the pupil-devised mental health guide.
38. The school's health and safety policies and procedures are in line with relevant requirements and statutory guidance. They set out the necessary actions to reduce the potential risks from fire. Staff complete premises checks in a timely manner alongside a systematic programme of monitoring and review.
39. Pupils who have been injured or are unwell are cared for within appropriate medical facilities and by suitably trained staff. There are effective procedures to identify pupils' individual medical needs and suitable plans and processes in place to meet these.
40. The attendance and admission registers are completed correctly and in line with statutory guidance. Leaders inform the local authority when pupils leave or join the school at non-standard points in the school year. They act quickly when concerns about pupils' attendance arise. Leaders liaise with appropriate agencies to improve any attendance issues.
41. Throughout their time in school, pupils are supervised by sufficient numbers of suitably trained adults. Leaders make sure that the required ratios of adults to children are in place within the early years classes.

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

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

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

43. Leaders promote pupils' understanding of diversity and mutual respect through the PSHE and religious education (RE) curriculums. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the range of faiths that are represented within the school, British society and the wider world. Pupils build an appreciation of and respect for different cultural traditions within lessons and assemblies, and through visits and a programme of external speakers. Pupils learn about the customs of families within the school through visits from parents and presentations from their peers. They are interested in the lives of others. Pupils place a high value on the international days that have recently been introduced at the instigation of the school council, where they learn about the traditional food eaten in other countries.
44. Early years staff teach children how to play cooperatively with each other. Children form positive relationships with the early years staff. With adult support, children learn to take responsibility for their actions and to treat others with respect and consideration. Leaders help children to understand their place in the wider world by introducing them to the range of cultures and customs that make up British society. Children learn the importance of helping others through taking on positions of responsibility, for example as line leaders.
45. Staff promote and model the school value of kindness. They communicate to pupils the importance of maintaining positive relationships with others. Pupils understand the importance of supporting others. The recently appointed Year 5 peer mediators help pupils to resolve their differences. Pupils work productively and amicably alongside each other in lessons and during other activities. They listen attentively to each other and show consideration and patience.
46. Pupils develop an understanding of British institutions and public services through PSHE lessons and visitors to the school. They understand the roles played by organisations such as the police and health services, and the role played by the government in representing people and drawing up laws. Teachers support pupils to understand the importance of adhering to school rules. Pupils know they must be truthful and take responsibility for their actions, including when they make mistakes.
47. Pupils are taught about democracy when voting for school council members. Pupils appreciate the meaningful changes brought about by their representatives, such as the introduction of house events and newly purchased playground equipment.
48. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to fulfil the school value of participation through playing their part in school life. Younger pupils are allocated roles within their classes, whilst older pupils hold positions of responsibility such as dining hall monitors, house captains and head boy and girl.
49. Staff encourage pupils to support local charities and groups and in doing so contribute to the lives of others in the local and wider community. Pupils engage in fundraising activities for a range of national charities, some of which are selected by the school council. Pupils are keen to help others, whether by collecting litter in the school grounds, reading to local care home residents or donating food at the harvest festival.

50. Leaders provide activities that teach pupils how to use and manage money. Children in the early years begin to learn about money through role-play activities in their mathematics lessons. Older pupils develop skills in budgeting and financial decision-making when spending money at the school book and cake sales. The oldest pupils make considered decisions about whether to save or spend their daily allowance on residential trips and when creating business plans for the Year 6 enterprise project.

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

51. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

52. Leaders are clear with all staff that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures include the latest statutory guidance. Leaders have a detailed understanding of potential safeguarding risks to pupils and put suitable measures in place to mitigate these.
53. Safeguarding leaders, staff and governors are suitably trained. This includes induction training before staff commence work at the school. Staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities to put these into practice. Leaders provide regular updates and support for staff so that their knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding roles are kept up to date.
54. Staff identify and report concerns about pupils promptly. These are recorded and managed effectively by leaders, who liaise with external partnerships and agencies when required. Pupils are confident that there are trusted adults in whom they can confide and who will act on their concerns.
55. The staff code of conduct sets out leaders' expectations of how the adults in school must behave. Staff understand these expectations and the need to share concerns with leaders when they are not met. Leaders have procedures in place to manage concerns appropriately. This includes liaising with local authority partners when necessary.
56. Leaders carry out robust procedures to check that adults in the school are suitable to work with children. They complete the required checks in a timely manner and record these systematically on the record of staff appointments.
57. Governors and leaders have a suitable filtering and monitoring system to limit pupils' access to the internet when they are in school. They monitor attempted breaches closely and respond swiftly when these occur. Leaders and teachers provide pupils with guidance and additional teaching as appropriate. During PSHE and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons they teach pupils how to stay safe when they are online. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to guard against dangers when using the internet as well as in the physical environment of their school and the local area.
58. Governors ensure that they are knowledgeable about the school's safeguarding measures through regular visits and discussions with safeguarding leaders, and an annual review of safeguarding practice and procedures.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

59. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Richmond House School
Department for Education number	383/6004
Registered charity number	505630
Address	170 Otley Road Leeds West Yorkshire LS16 5LG
Phone number	01132 752670
Email address	enquiries@rhschool.org
Website	www.rhschool.org
Proprietor	Richmond House School
Chair	Mrs Helen Handy
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Young
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils	232
Date of previous inspection	15 to 18 March 2022

Information about the school

60. Richmond House School is a co-educational day school located on the outskirts of Leeds, West Yorkshire. The school is overseen by a charitable trust, whose trustees serve as governors. The headteacher took up her post in September 2022. A new chair of governors was appointed in September 2024.
61. The early years provision comprises 71 children in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes.
62. The school has identified 10 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
63. The school has identified English as an additional language for 24 pupils.
64. The school states its aims are to help each pupil to achieve their potential and develop resilience in preparation for their senior schools. It seeks to enable pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility and to provide an inclusive environment where all pupils are heard.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

11 to 13 February 2025

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

66. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assembly
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussion with the chair of governors
- discussions with the headteacher, 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.

67. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

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