

RICHMOND PARK SCHOOL

Calle de la Costa Brava, 55, Fuencarral-El Pardo, 28034, Madrid

School's regional authorisation number: BOE 28079886

Date of Inspection:

22nd November, 2024

Inspection Team:

Claire Madeley (Lead Inspector)
Nicola Crawford (Team Inspector)

Reason for the Inspection:

To renew the school's authorisation from Pre-Nursery to Year 11 and to assess the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) for authorisation as British.

Overall Recommendation:

The school is recommended for authorisation for four years from *Pre-nursery (age 1 year) to Year 11 (age 16 years)* and for two years for Sixth Form (ages 16-18 years) for a total of 1192 students. The next inspection of the Sixth Form is due in *November, 2026*. The next inspection for Pre-nursery to Year 11 is *November, 2028*.

*Schools are **authorised** by regional authorities after **inspection** by NABSS (or another recognised inspection service) and **certification** by the British Council.*

Schools should not refer to themselves as being authorised by the British Council, NABSS nor any other inspection service. Schools must not use the logos of any of these organisations in their publicity. NABSS member schools may use the NABSS logo.

N.B. A NABSS inspection does not infer membership of the Association. Authorised schools may apply for NABSS membership.

History and Context of the School:

Richmond Park School is situated to the north of Madrid in a rapidly developing residential area. The school opened in September 2019, offering a British education to children from Pre-nursery age to Year 6. Key Stage Three was authorised in 2020 (Years 7, 8 and 9) and Key Stage Four (Years 9 and 10) in 2022.

The new Sixth Form building plans were approved and authorised in 2023 and will be completed in August 2025 to accommodate the first cohort of Year 12 students in September 2025.

There are currently 748 students on the register from Pre-nursery to Year 11 (aged 2-16), 95% of whom are Spanish. Richmond Park School draws most of its students from the local area, other international schools and Spanish schools.

Accommodation and Resources:

The school accommodation is attractive and modern. Classrooms and corridors are spacious, well-lit, and appropriately furnished with ample space for storing resources. The welcoming reception area and corridors are decorated with displays which promote the school's values, house identities, projects and classwork. The ambience is warm and inviting.

The primary and reception classes are housed in one side of the building while the secondary pupils have their classrooms in another, enabling safe movement between classes.

The music room is well-equipped with a variety of instruments including percussion, guitars and keyboards which are used very effectively for performances and coursework. The art room is bright and spacious, and drama is delivered in the theatre which has a stage, audio-visual equipment and audience seating. Other specialist classrooms include a computer suite and food technology room.

The two science laboratories are very well-resourced and linked by a locked preparation room. Appropriate safety facilities are in place, including an eye-washing station and secure area for chemical supplies. The rooms can be subdivided for greater flexibility and there is an external terrace for outdoor experiments.

There is an excellent range of facilities for physical education, including a sports hall, indoor heated swimming pool, changing areas, outdoor multi-purpose sports pitch and extensive resources for a variety of different sports.

All classrooms have interactive touch-screen whiteboards which are used effectively to enhance learning. All secondary students have tablets or laptops which they use across the curriculum during lessons and at home for research and completing work via the school's chosen online learning platform.

The library facilities have grown since the previous inspection, with an interesting range of reading resources attractively arranged in a welcoming and comfortable space.

There are sufficient toilet facilities for staff and students, including disabled access, which are located conveniently around the school. Additional water fountains have been provided, including steps to make them easy for the younger children to reach.

There are very good facilities for staff; maintenance and domestic staff have their own secure space for changing and storage while teachers have the use of two staffrooms designated for working and relaxation.

The dining room and kitchen areas are well-equipped and large enough to cater for the increased number of students. Food is cooked on-site and served to the students in a rotation system over their staggered lunchtime breaks.

The new Sixth Form building, due to be completed in August, 2025, will provide a safe and suitable environment for the students embarking on their International Baccalaureate Diplomas.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The school environment is safe and secure with controlled access to the grounds. Entrances and exits are monitored by cameras and supervisors facilitate the safe arrival and departure of students. In addition, there are three pedestrian crossings and some drop-off lay-bys outside the school gate.

Children move safely around the school using the designated stairs to access different levels. Corridors and stairways are wide and well-lit with lifts for those with reduced mobility. Access to the swimming pool and changing rooms is controlled.

Detailed emergency evacuation procedures are in place with clear maps, routes and exits clearly marked. There is an appropriate number of fire extinguishers which are clearly marked and distributed around the school. Evacuation drills are regularly carried out to ensure that all members of the school community are prepared for an emergency.

Supervision at breaktimes and lunchtimes ensures that students are safe, although, as a result of the growing student population, the outside space can be crowded at breaktime.

Policies are in place for health and safety, safeguarding, child protection, anti-bullying and online safety which enable the students to feel safe and confident as they learn. They know who they can go to if they need help and they feel that the adults know them well.

All teachers have safeguarding training and a designated safeguarding leader coordinates this area of care, leading to a safe environment for the students. A new Director of Formation focuses on behavioural matters.

All staff are trained in first aid and there is a first aid room and a nurse to take care of sick or injured pupils. First aid resources are good, and there are defibrillators in the sports hall and the medical room.

All adults who work at the school are required to provide police check certificates to the administration which are regularly renewed. New staff from other countries are required to present an International Child Protection Certificate.

The buildings are clean and very well maintained.

The Curriculum:

The curriculum is clearly based on the English National Curriculum and is well balanced across the school at all levels. The school offers a good range of subjects for IGCSE and excellent planning for the newly authorised International Baccalaureate Diploma to be implemented from September 2025.

A range of lunchtime clubs and after school activities complement the learning in the classroom, offering support and extension. Students are also offered opportunities to learn outside school, for example the annual residential science and geography field trip to Gredos and the skiing trip to Astún

Detailed schemes of work, and long-term and medium-term plans ensure progression, continuity and full coverage of the programmes of study.

Staffing:

Most of the staff at Richmond Park School are UK-qualified and have over five years' teaching experience. Staff retention has been very good since it opened in September 2020 with more teachers joining the team as the student population grows. The school has a rigorous recruiting system with the appropriate police checks, interview process and reference checks enabling them to employ highly qualified and experienced applicants from Spain and the UK.

There is a very good staff-student ratio across the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, the quality of supervision is excellent, with teaching assistants being deployed very effectively to support classroom learning and smaller group activities.

Breaktime and lunchtime supervisors allow the teachers to focus on their lessons, which enhances the well-being of the faculty.

Teaching and Learning:

The standard of teaching ranges from good to outstanding. Overall, it is good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge or area of expertise.

Where teaching is best, there is excellent use of differentiated resources which meet the needs of all students, and the lessons are well-paced with clear objectives, building on prior learning.

In a Year 3 mathematics lesson the use of open questions and allowing time for pupils to think and talk to a partner gave the opportunity for collaboration and to expand answers. When the teacher made a mistake in an example and asked the children for help to find what she had done wrong they all eagerly helped to pinpoint the error. This led to deeper thinking about the problem which was demonstrated when they explained how the teacher could correct the mistake.

Students regularly reflect on their work and are accustomed to identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, meaning that they are engaged in their progress and accustomed to viewing their work critically.

The quality of written and spoken English is excellent. Teachers help students to expand their vocabulary and incorporate important subject-specific terminology.

Assessment:

The school uses assessment effectively to monitor the progress of each child through a combination of standardised testing at the end of Years 1, 3 and 6 and regular class assessments which are recorded in the tracking system.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator liaises with teachers to support students who require further assistance with classroom strategies and individual education plans. Students with learning difficulties are further supported by the dyslexia consultant who works with the leader for exams access to ensure that students are aware of how to manage their time in assessments.

In the secondary school, mid-term tests are similarly recorded, and students are monitored as they prepare for their IGCSE exams at the end of Year 11. IGCSE results from June, 2024 were excellent, with 97% of grades being A*-C. This is significantly higher than the UK average.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The atmosphere is calm, and students behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. Interactions between students and teachers are positive, resulting in a respectful and productive learning environment. Students speak proudly of their school.

A Year 10 student commented that the thing he valued the most was that his teachers encouraged him to think about his learning. In a Year 9 lesson exploring Western stereotypes of people from Africa, the teacher asked the students what stereotypes they thought the Africans had of people in Spain. This led to a lively discussion about perception and prejudice.

Personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development is well provided for in a weekly lesson.

The values of the school are promoted in communal spaces. Weekly assemblies cover a wide range of topics and celebrate achievements. In the curriculum, opportunities are taken to study global issues. For example, in a Year 7 English lesson the teacher asked the students to consider the reasons for and against granting asylum to refugees.

The school is currently working with a charity to create a new nursery school in Kenya, giving current students the opportunity to gain new perspectives, volunteer their skills and contribute to the collaborative project.

Leadership and Management:

The school is managed by one of the owners (whose role is Chief Executive Officer), and two Executive Directors of Education. The leadership team is completed by additional directors and key stage co-ordinators with specific roles and responsibilities.

The management structure of the school changed significantly in 2023, so the new leaders are still establishing themselves as a team. So far, the changes have been positive.

Leaders and managers are already implementing the assessment systems in place to track progress and identify areas for further development and have created four new director roles to focus on specific areas. In order to enable these new director roles to make the impact required, it is important that they are given the time to fulfil their roles. One of the directors had a clear vision of the developments they wished to put into action, but did not have the time to pursue them, given their other responsibilities.

Staff are encouraged to contribute to development plans and are consulted on resourcing requirements. Teachers feel that they have a voice and that their input is valued. Formal appraisals are regularly carried out by the senior leaders in the form of observations and scrutiny of books and planning. This enables teachers to identify targets and to be accountable for their professional development.

The school provides a good range and level of professional development opportunities for staff, both in-house and online. Teachers benefit from sharing good practice through peer observation. Newly qualified teachers are supported by experienced teachers who share their strategies and professional knowledge, helping them to integrate and develop.

Response to the previous inspection reports:

The opportunities for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved but requires further development to fulfil all the requirements of the Early Years framework.

The consistency in teaching approach has improved across the school.

The computer curriculum is now taught by a specialist.

The primary teachers adhere to the marking and feedback policy more strictly; however, most feedback relates to presentation rather than the learning objectives and success criteria. In the secondary school, there are still discrepancies in the type and quality of marking and feedback meaning that students do not know what their level is or how to improve.

The library has been improved and there is now a better selection of resources for the secondary students.

Recommendations:

- Improve the consistency and quality of marking and feedback, especially in the secondary classes so that all pupils know clearly what they have done well and how their work can be refined.
- Support members of staff in their new roles by giving appropriate training and time to fulfil their responsibilities.