

Richmond Park School

Calle Nuria 96 (Costa Brava 55)
28034, Madrid

School's regional authorisation number: BOE Orden 3624/2019

Date of Inspection:

27th November 2020

Inspection Team:

Julie Harris (Lead Inspector)
Andrew Beavon (Team Inspector)

Reason for the Inspection:

To assess the school from Pre-nursery to Year 9 for authorisation as British.

The school opened in September 2019 and was given temporary authorisation for Pre-nursery to Year 6 for 576 pupils. The next inspection was due to take place in term 3 of the academic year 2019-2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the inspection was postponed until November 2020.

Overall Recommendation:

The school is recommended for authorisation from Pre-nursery (age 2 years) to Year 6 (age 11 years) for a period of 4 years for 600 pupils. The next inspection of Pre-nursery to Year 6 is due in November 2024.

The school is recommended for authorisation from Year 7 (age 12 years) to Year 9 (age 13 years) for a period of 19 months for 110 pupils. The next inspection of Years 7 to 9 is due in June 2022.

*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 opened in a residential area to the north of Madrid in September 2019. The school is privately owned by a limited company. In August 2019 the school was granted temporary authorisation as a British School for 576 pupils from pre-nursery to year 6. From September 2019 until June 2020, the school was housed in temporary accommodation on the current site.

The school now has 345 pupils on roll, from pre-nursery to year 8. The school is planning for two to three form entry in pre-nursery to year 9 in the next academic year, 2021-22. Ninety two percent of the pupils are Spanish and the remaining eight percent are from a variety of nationalities.

Accommodation and Resources:

The school is housed in a very attractive, new, purpose-built building. The school owners intend to build a separate secondary building on the same site, and construction will begin in 2021. There is adequate space for the planned two to three form entry in pre-nursery to year 9 in 2021-2022. The secondary building is due to open in September 2022.

The classrooms are spacious and are appropriately furnished and resourced. Interactive boards in all classrooms are used effectively to support teaching and learning. The early years classes currently have direct access to a small, but adequate, outdoor area and the school plans to increase the size of this outdoor area once the COVID 19 restrictions are lifted. Current provision for outdoor learning is limited by the space and the range of experiences.

There is a wide range of specialist teaching areas, which include well-resourced music and art rooms; a mathematics and science laboratory which is adequately resourced to meet the requirements of the Key Stage 3 curriculum; a yoga and mindfulness room; a theatre; a knowledge centre which contains a library and large teaching space; a very well equipped food technology laboratory; a computer suite with 22 computers; and space for a large multi-purpose room, which is under development. All students from year 1 upwards are provided with an electronic tablet to use both in school and whenever a student needs to access on-line learning.

The school has an excellent range of sports facilities, which include an indoor swimming pool and spacious changing rooms; a large indoor sports hall, also with spacious changing rooms; and a large outdoor pitch area which is used both at break times and for physical education classes. Classes have access to two covered outdoor areas which can also be used for physical education or at breaktimes when it rains.

Corridor and classroom displays are attractive and are at an age appropriate height, ensuring that the younger children can see the work on display.

Ample toilets are available for all students and staff. The dining room is spacious and attractive and kitchen facilities are good. Facilities for staff are good, with a staff work-space and a comfortable area for relaxation. Maintenance and domestic staff are also provided with a spacious changing area.

All areas of the school are currently adequately and attractively furnished and resourced, and plans are in place to further increase the level of resourcing, particularly in the specialist areas.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The school provides a safe environment for all students and staff. The grounds are secure with a perimeter fence and access controlled by cameras. There is good disabled access to all areas of the school. The lift to the sports hall is large enough to accommodate an ambulance trolley, should it be required in the case of an accident. The school has good procedures for dealing with on-site accidents and first aid training has been provided for all staff.

Evacuation maps are displayed in all areas of the school and a fire drill has been carried out this term. There are sufficient fire extinguishers throughout the school.

The school has policies for safeguarding, child protection, health and safety and antibullying. Staff are aware of procedures to follow if concerned and the school has a designated member of staff for safeguarding. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know who to speak to should they have a problem.

All staff members are required to complete a police check within Spain and staff recruited from the UK have full checks. Staff recruited from countries other than Spain and the UK are asked to provide an International Child Protection Certificate.

The school has put in place appropriate and effective additional health and safety protocols and procedures in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. These protocols and procedures comply with local requirements and are being implemented consistently and rigorously.

The Curriculum:

The curriculum is clearly based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum. The school offers a generally broad and balanced curriculum. English is the principal language of instruction.

The curriculum is extended by tuition in thinking skills, which is integrated within all subjects and all students participate in a whole-school sustainability project. All pupils also take part in a French club twice a week at lunchtime and are offered the choice of additional activities such as computing and music.

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

Pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral and cultural development are well-provided for in a weekly personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson.

Staffing:

All teachers have appropriate qualifications and the majority are UK qualified, with at least four years teaching experience. The school successfully prioritises the recruitment of UK trained, experienced teachers. The school has retained all teachers after their first year and there is a good level of commitment to the school community. Teachers are encouraged to contribute to development plans and are consulted on resourcing requirements. For example, the secondary science teacher was fully involved in the design and resourcing of the science and mathematics laboratory space. All teachers and assistants have a clear, consistent approach to interacting with students. Spanish and non-Spanish teaching staff work well together, achieving a positively consistent approach to teaching and learning.

The staff-to-pupil ratio is very good in pre-nursery and early years. The classroom assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning in small groups. All classroom assistants also have a good level of spoken English and interact with the children in English at all times. Assistant teachers are used effectively in primary classes both to support children's learning and to assist with the running of the split classes in years 3, 4 and 5. These classes are split into smaller groups because of restrictions on class sizes due to COVID 19. The situation is being dealt with very effectively using electronic tablets and electronic screens in the classrooms, which allow teacher and assistant time to be divided equally between groups.

Secondary teachers are appropriately qualified and deployed. The school has adequate staffing in place for the transition into year 9 next year and clear plans for the staffing requirements for the transition into key stage 4 in the future.

The school has provided a good range and level of professional development opportunities for staff. Much of the professional training has been in-house, led either by the Directors of Education or by other members of staff. UK-based training has been accessed on-line. All staff have received safeguarding and first aid training. Two teachers currently lead the school's blended learning initiative, supporting teachers in their approach to teaching at distance using technology. A good level of support is provided for staff in the use of technology for teaching and learning. An external company supports the designated teachers in ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills required to lead the staff in this area.

Teaching and Learning:

The standard of teaching is generally good, and in some cases outstanding. When teaching is outstanding the teacher uses a variety of teaching materials and approaches, makes good use of questioning to check understanding and extend learning, and maintains a good pace in the lesson. The work is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, thus ensuring that all pupils are challenged. All teachers have a good level of knowledge of their subject or area of learning.

Pupils are encouraged to be self-reflective. They respond thoughtfully to teachers' marking of their work and are encouraged to assess their own levels of confidence and understanding of the concept being taught. Pupils demonstrate a good level of engagement and motivation, and have a clear understanding of how they can improve their work.

An adequate range of resources and activities are provided for children in the early years and the children attain a good level of English. However, activities are often adult-led and offer limited opportunities for child-initiated learning. Pupils are assigned tasks, rather than being able to select activities independently. Teachers within the same year group in early years and primary plan together, but there is some inconsistency in the teaching of the lessons, resulting in varying levels of challenge between the classes. For example, different approaches to the teaching of writing with the younger children resulted in a greater level of challenge in one group.

The use of English is insisted upon where this is the language of instruction and pupils consistently speak to each other in English in lessons. Teachers regularly check for understanding of English vocabulary and insist on the correct use of subject specific vocabulary.

A very good level of behaviour means that class time is used productively. Good behaviour is reinforced and results in a consistently positive relationship between pupils and teachers.

Assessment:

Standardised assessments are completed at the beginning of each year and are used as baseline tests for any new pupils entering the school. Good use is made of data to monitor achievement and progress. The results of these tests are analysed by the Primary Leader and Primary and Secondary Key Stage Coordinators and are then discussed with class teachers, and if necessary, with the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Coordinator and the ALN Consultant. Teacher assessments are completed each half term and results are moderated by teachers in the same year group or key stage. Assessments and tests are used effectively to identify the next steps for individual pupils.

Achievement is good and pupils who are below the expected level are identified. Teachers are aware of the individual needs of pupils and the school provides additional support when necessary. The ALN Coordinator and a part-time ALN Consultant work successfully with teachers to write individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. They also advise teachers on the implementation of strategies which support children with their learning and liaise with external support agencies. A full-time support teacher works with children in key stage 2. Additional support for children in the early years and key stage 1 is provided by teaching assistants.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The staff promote a calm and purposeful atmosphere within the school. This results in good behaviour by the pupils.

The school behaviour policy encourages reflection and making things better, rather than punishment. Pupils speak very positively about their school, display a positive attitude to learning, behave responsibly and show a caring attitude towards each other. They feel that staff are caring and listen to their concerns, resulting in them feeling safe at school.

Leadership and Management:

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is one of the school owners, and the two Directors of Education, have a very clear vision regarding the aims and ethos of the school. They work closely with the Primary Leader and Key Stage Coordinators to ensure that this vision is transmitted clearly to staff and pupils. There is a strong emphasis on teaching and learning, and on using technology purposefully. This has resulted in a successful response to the requirement to provide distance learning during the pandemic. The use of technology to support learning throughout the curriculum is currently being developed successfully.

Regular meetings allow staff to contribute to the development of the school. Coordinators and the Primary Leader are aware of areas for development and consolidation. Staff are encouraged to be leaders in different areas. They propose projects and apply for financial allowances to lead these projects.

Response to the previous inspection report:

Pupil numbers at the school have increased rapidly since the school received its temporary authorisation in August 2019. The CEO and Directors of Education have clear plans in place for a further predicted increase in numbers in pre-nursery to year 9 in September 2021, and for the move into key stage 4 and 5 in the future. The first phase of the new school building has been completed very successfully and the accommodation is of a high standard. The next stage of building is planned to begin in 2021.

Recommendations:

The school should:

- develop opportunities for outdoor learning in the early years, which include opportunities for child-initiated learning;
- continue to focus on teaching and learning, ensuring a consistent approach to the teaching of lessons across year groups.