

## **RICHMOND PARK SCHOOL**

Calle de la Costa Brava, 55,

28034, Madrid, España

**School's regional authorisation number:** BOE 28079886

### **Date of Inspection:**

7<sup>th</sup> October 2022

### **Inspection Team:**

Claire Madeley (Lead Inspector)

Clare Mooney (Team Inspector)

### **Reason for the Inspection:**

To renew the school's authorisation for Key Stage 3 and to assess the school for authorisation of Key Stage 4 as offering a British education.

### **Overall Recommendation:**

The school is recommended for authorisation from **Year 7 (11 years) to Year 11 (16 years)** for a period of **2 years** for **280 pupils**. This period allows the synchronization of the cycle of inspections, so that the next inspection will cover the whole school (Pre-nursery to Year 11) and is due in **October 2024**.

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

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## History and Context of the School:

Richmond Park School is situated to the north of Madrid in a residential area. It 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 the school is rapidly expanding in numbers and classes with the first cohort of Year 10 being admitted in September, 2022.

There are currently 109 students on the register in Years 7-10, most of whom are Spanish. With two classes in Years 7 and 9 and one in Year 8 at the time of inspection, intake is anticipated to reach three classes per year eventually. Richmond Park School draws students from other international schools in Madrid as well as Spanish schools.

## Accommodation and Resources:

The secondary school accommodation is new, as are all installations and furniture. Classrooms are spacious, well-lit, and appropriately furnished. The reception area and corridors are decorated with displays which promote the school's values, house identities and classwork.

Students in the secondary school enjoy the use of excellent facilities and resources. The music room is well-equipped with a variety of instruments including percussion and keyboards; the art room is spacious with ample storage and a kiln for pottery work; and drama is delivered in the theatre which has a stage, audio-visual equipment and audience seating.

The two science laboratories are well-resourced and linked by a central preparation room. Adequate safety facilities include an eye-washing station and secure area for chemical storage.

Other specialist classrooms include a computer suite and food technology room. There is an excellent range of facilities for physical education, including a sports hall, indoor heated swimming pool, comfortable changing areas, outdoor multi-purpose sports pitch and superb resources to deliver a variety of different sports like cricket, gymnastics and basketball.

All classrooms have interactive whiteboards which are used effectively to enhance learning. All students have tablet computers which they use across the curriculum during lessons to access online resources and at home for research and completing work through the school's chosen online learning platform. In music, students use music production software to create their own compositions.

While some teachers make good use of display space to reinforce subject-specific content and celebrate the work of the students, many classrooms are less stimulating for the students.

At the time of inspection, the secondary library was being established, resources had been ordered and a limited range of books were available. Students have access to an online fiction resource to develop their literacy.

There are sufficient toilet facilities for staff and students, including disabled access. They are situated conveniently around the school. 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 projected increase in the number of students

## 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 staff supervise the arrival and departure of students. Children enter the school in an orderly way and move safely around it.

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 maps, routes and exits clearly marked. There is an appropriate number of fire extinguishers which are appropriately positioned in the buildings. Evacuation drills are regularly carried out to ensure that all members of the school community are as confident as possible in an emergency.

Supervision at breaktimes and lunchtimes ensures that students are safe. Policies are in place for health and safety, safeguarding, child protection, anti-bullying and online safety. The students say they feel safe as they learn.

All teachers have safeguarding training and a designated safeguarding leader coordinates this area of care. An acting discipline coordinator is in place until the new head of secondary school is appointed.

All staff are trained in first aid and there are plans for a school nurse and psychologist to be appointed next year. First aid resources are good, and defibrillators are located in the sports hall and the medical room.

All adults who work at the school are required to provide police check certificates which are updated every two years. New staff from other countries are required to present an international child protection certificate.

## The Curriculum:

In the secondary school, the English National Curriculum is clearly followed and is broad and balanced. Students with additional learning needs are well catered for, but sometimes, the more able students are not sufficiently challenged or stretched. For example, in a Year 10 lesson two students gave extended answers in a class discussion but were told to keep it simple.

The duration of lessons is appropriate, as is the allocation in the timetable for each subject in Key Stages Three and Four.

The range of subjects offered at IGCSE level is good, given the number of students in Year 10 and as the school population increases, additional option subjects are ready to be added to the programme.

The school is currently preparing to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma to future sixth form students.

There is a busy programme of extra-curricular activities, before and after school and at lunchtime, including breakfast club, football and swimming. Inter-house and inter-school sports fixtures encourage teamwork and participation in physical education.

External speakers are regularly invited to lead assemblies and Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) activities, giving the students the opportunity to gain new perspectives. Residential trips such as the recent Year 8 geography and science trip to

Gredos enhanced understanding in the classroom and enabled the students to develop social skills, such as resilience and team problem-solving.

### **Staffing:**

Most of the secondary school staff are UK-qualified and have over five years' teaching experience. Staff retention has been very good in the secondary school since it opened in September 2020 and more teachers are being recruited in line with the plan to cater for a growing student population and Key Stage 4 programme. Staff work well as a team.

The secondary school teachers are well-deployed, although there is a need for improvement in the delivery of the computing curriculum. At the time of inspection, the subject was being taught by the teacher of business studies and economics. Some areas such as programming are neglected and standards of knowledge and understanding by the students are below expectations for their age. The management is providing access to training to address this

### **Teaching, Learning & Assessment:**

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall, the standard of teaching is good. Where teaching is best, there is profound subject knowledge, excellent use of resources, and well-paced lessons with clear objectives which build on previous learning. All students participate well at their own level.

Although other lessons are satisfactory, sometimes the pace and management of resources and technology is misjudged. The impact on learning is unequal, with some students benefitting greatly and others not being required to work sufficiently hard.

The relationships between students and teachers are generally very good and students enjoy school.

Despite there being a policy for marking, feedback is inconsistent in method, quality and impact. Some teachers effectively highlight success and point out areas for improvement. But others give only grades, and some do not give any guidance at all for the students to refer to. Consequently, some students explained that they did not know how well they were doing or how they could improve. This was a particular concern of a year 10 student on an IGCSE course in a discussion about revising for assessments.

The use of English in the classroom is expected and the standard of written and spoken English is very high.

### **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 with teachers are positive, resulting in a respectful and productive learning environment. Students speak enthusiastically and fondly of their school. They know who to ask if there is a problem.

The values of the school are promoted well. Weekly assemblies cover a wide range of topics and celebrate successful achievements. In the curriculum, opportunities are

taken to study different current issues. For example Year 7 English students were encouraged to explore the themes of empathy and tolerance in the book they were studying.

There is a Student Council in the secondary school for which students may stand for election. There are typically two representatives per year group who act as a student voices, feeding back to senior leaders on learning and other school matters and organise charity fundraising events. Students are encouraged to show leadership and develop communication skills.

### **Leadership and Management:**

The school is managed by one of the owners and two directors of education. The development plan for the school details each phase of growth, and the school already has a clear identity and ethos which is reinforced by staff and valued by the students. Self-evaluation is a key part of the process as each step is taken and leaders are aware of areas for improvement.

Staff training and professional development are offered through in-house training, online courses and workshops delivered by external agents during the course of the year. All staff have completed first aid training.

Appraisal of the teachers is carried out formally by the senior leaders in the form of observations of lessons, scrutiny of books and planning, and feedback from parents and students. Staff are given the opportunity to share good practice.

### **Response to the previous inspection report:**

During the last two years, the consistency in teaching and learning has improved as a result of thorough self-review and focused staff meetings. Inconsistencies in marking remain.

### **Recommendations:**

The school should:

- Continue to improve the quality of computing in KS3 and KS4 by providing training or appointing a specialist teacher.
- Improve the quality of marking and feedback across the curriculum so that all children know how well they are doing in each subject and how to improve their work.
- Offer the more able students more challenge in their work.