

Holland House School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Holland House is a co-educational independent school situated in Edgware, Middlesex. The school opened in 1937, but in 1974 the board of governors, and all parents and carers at that time, purchased the school and formed a charitable educational trust. In 2008 and 2009 the school underwent extensive refurbishment to the existing detached property. There are currently 141 pupils on roll aged four to eleven years. The school operates an Early Years Foundation Stage for children in the Reception class. No children are in receipt of government funding. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils attending the school come from differing ethnic backgrounds.

The school's aim is to provide a learning environment where children are happy and productive. The school believes that education can be fun and that enjoyment of school life does not preclude high academic achievement.

Evaluation of the school

Holland House provides an outstanding quality of education overall and enables pupils to make outstanding academic progress and to leave the school as very well-rounded individuals, more than ready to tackle the next challenges in their academic lives. Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the overall effectiveness is good. Outstanding teaching and a good quality curriculum elsewhere in school contribute significantly to the exceptionally high academic standards that are reached when pupils leave school at 11 years of age. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this shines through in pupils' exemplary behaviour and their thirst for new knowledge and learning. The school's safeguarding arrangements are robust and fully meet requirements. The school has responded well to regulatory failures identified at the last inspection and all regulations are now met.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. There is a strong emphasis from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6 on the development of pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. An equally good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, which enables pupils to become very confident and articulate individuals who thoroughly enjoy the opportunities that are provided for them to perform in drama activities and school productions. The school provides specialised teachers in French, music and art, which adds breadth to the curriculum, and ample opportunities are provided for older pupils to carry out investigative and research-based activities in subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils enjoy nothing more than finding things out for themselves and presenting their work to classmates. Each class is timetabled to use the designated computer suite so that pupils' technology skills improve as they move through the school. The school provides an appropriate variety of sporting activities and pupils are right when they say that they would benefit from more sporting competition with other schools. A strong personal, social and health education programme is in place which contributes significantly to pupils' personal as well as academic development. Pupils learn about citizenship, keeping fit and healthy and dealing with different forms of bullying. A commercially produced children's newspaper encourages regular discussions about topical issues of local, national and international importance. Extra-curricular events include a variety of sporting activities and there are more specialised clubs such as those for chess, science, dance and judo. Year 6 pupils undertake an annual five-day residential trip to France but other visits out of school for pupils are limited and opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences are sometimes lost.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. This supports pupils' exceptional progress. Teachers set very high expectations and work is demanding and challenging. Teachers show very good subject knowledge and use this incisively in questioning pupils to ascertain their level of understanding. Teachers are skilled at explaining new concepts and, as a result, pupils very quickly understand what is required of them and are eager to move forward in their learning. Good use is made of the interactive computer whiteboards to help bring learning to life. In almost all lessons there is a rigour and pace to learning which ensure that pupils remain on task from the start of the lesson to the end. Just occasionally these factors are missing. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and the levels of mutual respect are tangible. Teachers are very adept at assessing how well pupils are doing. This is done through formal tests and assessments, through the marking of pupils' work and through ongoing questioning within lessons. This information is used very well to assess the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and then to modify teaching accordingly. Pupils are made fully aware of their attainment and progress through tests and assessments, but there are times when the marking of work is not used in a similarly effective way to make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.

The progress made by pupils overall during their time in school is outstanding. Attainment on entry is above average overall, although there is variability. By the time that pupils leave school they are extremely well-rounded individuals both academically and socially. In addition, pupils are exceptionally well equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet the entrance requirements for their next phase of education; they have acquired significant levels of knowledge in subjects such as history and geography and developed highly effective reasoning, critical-thinking and research skills. The progress made by boys and girls is equally good and pupils consistently achieve very well against the challenging targets that are set for them in both the long and short term.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and makes a telling contribution in preparing them for secondary education. Pupils are extremely polite and courteous individuals. They show high levels of respect to adults and to one another. Pupils demonstrate great self-discipline and this is reflected in their outstanding behaviour in class and around the school. There is no doubt that pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and the high attendance rates are testimony to this. They demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to school and to learning. They are proud of their school and across the school enthusiasm, motivation, concentration and perseverance abound. Pupils are passionate in their desire to do well but this not at the expense of fun and enjoyment. They greatly appreciate what the school offers and are always ready to recognise and celebrate the successes of others, as was evidenced by the spontaneous applause that filled the assembly hall when individual pupils performed on the piano or recited a poem. Pupils have a strong and well-developed sense of fair play and talk maturely and articulately about injustices in the wider world. They have a good awareness of public institutions and understand the role that governments play, with even the youngest children in school knowing the name of the Prime Minister.

Pupils are appreciative of the world in which they live and recognise that there are others in the world who are less fortunate than themselves. With this in mind they raise significant amounts of money for different charities locally, nationally and internationally and are able to talk very knowledgeably about the work of these charities and how money raised will help improve people's lives. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of different faiths, cultures and traditions, although visits and visitors to further enhance their first-hand learning experiences are not plentiful. However, pupils demonstrate a genuine respect for the views and beliefs of others, which shines through in the harmonious learning environment that wraps around the school.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Pupils are very well cared for and the safety and well-being of pupils is afforded a high priority. Discussions with pupils clearly show that they feel very safe in school. They readily state that behaviour is excellent and that bullying is not an issue. Pupils state that all adults in school care for them and that there is always someone on hand to talk to if they have any worries or concerns whatsoever. Staff are effective at promoting healthy lifestyles for pupils both through the lunches provided and through the curriculum, which also promotes the importance of keeping safe. Child protection procedures are clear and are implemented effectively. There is a designated child protection officer who has attended relevant training off-site and online, as have all staff. Policies to promote good behaviour are in place and the effectiveness of these policies is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour. Pupils are well supervised at all times and effective risk assessments are carried out for activities both on and off the school site. There are a good number of trained first aiders. Policies and practices to ensure fire safety are securely embedded and followed by all staff. Policies relating to welfare and to health and safety are reviewed on a rolling and regular basis and the school has an accessibility plan which meets the school's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All of the required checks on the suitability of staff and governors are completed appropriately to ensure the safe recruitment of personnel. Details of all checks are recorded in a suitable single register. This is a notable improvement since the last inspection.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation contribute much to ensuring that pupils learn in a safe, secure and attractive environment. In 2008 and 2009 a major refurbishment of the school was completed that included a computer suite, a multi-purpose creativity room, interactive whiteboards and new administrative offices. A new school library and kitchen extension were added in 2010. There is an appropriate outdoor play area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff make very good use of the available space. The school does not have a designated playing field but there is a suitable playground for play and recreation. Appropriate facilities are provided for pupils who are ill and the school has been awarded a five-star rating by the local authority for its hygiene standards in food preparation and facilities.

Provision of information

The school provides all of the required information for parents and carers in the school prospectus, on its website and through informing them that policies are available on request. Procedures for keeping parents and carers informed of their children's progress are good. Parents and carers receive formal reports at least twice a year in addition to the regular information as to how well their children are doing in tests and assessments. The school operates an 'open-door' policy where parents and carers can enquire about their children's academic and personal progress at any time.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's arrangements for the management of any complaints meet regulatory requirements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The provision, outcomes, leadership and management are also good and the progress which children make in acquiring early literacy and numeracy skills is outstanding. Children behave outstandingly well and have a very good early understanding of what is needed to keep fit, healthy and safe. Children show high levels of concentration and perseverance and readily share resources. Opportunities to develop children's understanding of the wider world through play are not always seized upon. Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding practice seen in the development of early reading and writing skills. Here staff set very high expectations and ensure that children acquire skills and knowledge at a rapid rate. Relationships are excellent and staff are skilled and sensitive in the management of children and their behaviour. The teacher carries out ongoing assessment of children's progress and uses the information well to plan and amend future learning opportunities. Opportunities are at times missed by adults to use creative and physical learning activities as a vehicle for enhancing children's literacy and mathematical skills and for children to take a more proactive role in their own learning. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed. The welfare of children is given a high priority and the leader ensures that children are taught in a safe environment. Strong relationships have been established with parents and carers and there are effective channels of communication which help to cement a very good partnership between home and school. The leader of the provision is aware of the identified areas for continued development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Ensure that the marking of work is consistently used as a tool for making clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Explore opportunities to increase the number of visits out of school that may add to pupils' first-hand learning experiences and further their cultural development.
- Seek to provide more opportunities through play, physical and creative activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage that will further enhance children's literacy and numeracy skills and enable them to take some initiative for their own learning.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education	✓			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	✓			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	✓			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary		
Date school opened	1937		
Age range of pupils	4–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 55	Girls: 86	Total: 141
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,285		
Address of school	1 Broadhurst Avenue Edgware Middlesex HA8 8TP		
Telephone number	020 8958 6979		
Email address	Schooloffice@hollandhouse.org.uk		
Headteacher	I Tyk		
Proprietor	Holland House School (charitable trust)		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

3 December 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Holland House, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8TP

Thank you very much for making us so very welcome on our visit to your school. You were all so polite and friendly and we really enjoyed ourselves. We had opportunities to talk with many of you and it was great to hear how proud you were of your school, how you thoroughly enjoy attending Holland House and how helpful adults are if you had any worries or concerns.

Having spent time in your school we have decided that it provides you with an outstanding quality of education that enables you to make exceptional progress during your time there and to reach very high standards when you leave. Mrs Tyk, the teachers and other staff do a great job in teaching, supporting and helping you, and in making learning challenging but enjoyable. I want also to take this opportunity to say well done to some other very important people at Holland House and that is you the pupils. We thought that your behaviour, your enthusiasm and your eagerness to do well were all excellent and you play a very important role in the success story that is Holland House.

Successful schools like yours can still improve and so we have suggested that Mrs Tyk and the staff make sure that when teachers mark your work they always make clear to you what you need to do to improve. We agreed with some of your questionnaire responses that the school should explore the possibilities of providing you with more out-of-school trips and visits. Finally, we think the school could help the youngest children in school to learn even better through more creative, physical and independent activities. We know that you will want Holland House to continue to thrive and you can do that by continuing to work and behave as well as you do now. We wish you every success in the future and it was a pleasure to meet you.

Yours sincerely

Martin Newell
Lead inspector