



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Holland House School

February 2022

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School's Details

School	Holland House School		
DfE number	302/6066		
Registered charity number	267174		
Address	Holland House School 1 Broadhurst Avenue Edgware Middlesex HA8 8TP		
Telephone number	0208 958 6979		
Email address	schooloffice@hollandhouse.org.uk		
Headmistress	Mrs Emily Brown		
Chair of governors	Mr Richard May		
Age range	4 to 11		
Number of pupils on roll	147		
	Pre-prep EYFS to Year 2	60	Prep Years 3 to 6 87
Inspection dates	1 to 4 February 2022		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Holland House School is an independent co-educational day school. It is located in Edgware. The school was opened in 1937 and moved to its current site in 1941. It remained privately owned until 1974 when it became a charitable trust. It is governed by a board of eleven governors. Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed, along with four new governors. The current headmistress has been in post since September 2020.
- 1.2 During the period March to June 2020, the whole school was closed. It reopened in June 2020 for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), pupils in Years 1 and 6 and children of key workers. Pupils in Year 5 returned for two weeks before the summer holidays. During the lockdown period, the school provided live face-to-face learning all day via an online learning platform.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.6 The school aims to provide a high-quality learning environment where pupils are happy, secure and productive. They seek to provide an education that is underpinned by traditional values and strong relationships between teachers, pupils and parents. It strives to provide a broad education with strong academic foundations through which pupils will flourish. The school endeavours to reward pupils' achievements in whatever field.

About the pupils

- 1.7 Most pupils live locally, within a five-mile radius of the school. The large majority of parents have a professional or business background. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is above average. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has identified seven pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional support as required. English is an additional language (EAL) for two pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The curriculum is modified for pupils who demonstrate ability or talent within a particular area.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary; they are keen to learn and focus extremely well during their lessons.
- Pupils' achievements in competitions and scholarships are excellent.
- Pupils' numeracy skills are highly developed.
- Across the age range, pupils are extremely articulate and are confident communicators.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils are highly respectful of the backgrounds, beliefs and cultures of others.
- Pupils are extremely self-aware; they are politely confident and understand how to improve by learning from mistakes.
- Pupils have an outstanding moral understanding, fully aware of the consequences for their behaviour choices.
- Pupils with roles of responsibility are highly committed and act as excellent role models to those that are younger.

Recommendations

3.3 The school should make the following improvements:

- Enhance pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills by increasing opportunities for technology to be used across the curriculum.
- Strengthen pupils' science knowledge by developing the practical aspect of the subject, enabling a more hands-on experience for all.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Through their questionnaire responses and discussions, it is evident that pupils have a love for learning and value the education that they are given. This is a successful fulfilment of the school's aim that education can be fun, and that enjoyment of school life should not preclude high academic achievement. Pupils engage wholeheartedly in their learning, often working effectively with others, such as in a dance lesson in Year 1 where members of the class demonstrated excellent rhythm whilst dancing in a group. Pupils are curious and show high levels of independence and initiative. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) display high levels of confidence when completing activities in class, requiring minimal assistance. Older pupils relish the opportunities to lead in their learning; for example when Year 6 ambassadors plan and present assemblies to the whole school. Positive attitudes abound throughout the school. Pupils show great respect for each other and are proud of their peers' achievements.
- 3.6 Pupils' academic and other achievements are excellent. A significant number of pupils achieve scholarships each year, including for academic work, music, sport and drama. Across the school, pupils enjoy success in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including in local and national competitions. Leaders and governors had identified that the school was focused on academic study and made a dedicated effort to increase opportunities in extra-curricular activities. Pupils' excitement in participating in such events is palpable, with many eager to share news of their successes and those of others. For example, pupils proudly talked about their recent victories in ISA national competitions for table tennis and art as well as in local swimming competitions. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the range of extra-curricular clubs is sufficient. The suitably diverse offering of activities such as digital art, tap dancing, chess and cross-country enables pupils to develop their skills in areas that interest them. The school enjoys considerable successes in a myriad of areas and the children aspire to achieve more in the future.
- 3.7 Pupils' numeracy skills are particularly well developed. They achieve at high levels for their age. Throughout the school, pupils' enjoyment in numeracy is evident. Children in the EYFS, for example, eagerly joined in a lesson on time, correctly reading and writing times on clocks. Further up the school, pupils display excellent mathematical skills within the class when they are working to solve answers. For example, in a mental arithmetic warm up, pupils in Year 6 displayed tenacity, self-discipline, perseverance and concentration when addressing the answers to the challenging questions. Pupils shared their reasoning as to how they reached their answers, such as by explaining about the inverse calculation used to reach their answer. Pupils are especially proud of their successes in online mathematical challenges that the school encourages them to engage in.
- 3.8 Pupils are extremely articulate. They are highly confident communicators from an early age and apply their skills across the areas of their learning. For example, in drama in Year 2, when exploring *The Land of Sweets*, pupils listened intently and were able to focus on their individual parts by speaking with clarity and projecting their voices with confidence and strength. Older pupils displayed excellent public speaking skills as they discussed an inspirational person with a passion. This high level of acquisition is facilitated by the strong focus the school pays to this area of the curriculum and the range of opportunities provided for pupils to use their skills, such as by taking part in performances and debates. Pupils writing skills are well developed, as seen in a lesson in Year 4 on writing character descriptions of criminals. Pupils in Year 3 displayed excellent understanding of prefixes used as opposites and how this affected the meaning of words. Their enthusiasm was palpable within the lesson as they gave examples to their peers. Children in the EYFS excitedly explained how they had thought of over 50 verbs. Across the school, pupils display a love for reading, and the library is well used. Older pupils play a key role in encouraging those younger to be avid readers; pupils aspire to be library captains with a view to helping younger children in this area.

- 3.9 Pupils achieve highly within the range of subjects on offer. This is evidenced in the excellent levels of success in internal tests and entry examinations to senior schools. Pupils are judged to be of above average ability on entry and make considerable progress during their time at the school due to the suitably challenging curriculum that prepares them for their next schools extremely well. This includes children identified with SEND and EAL. Pupils' academic outcomes during a period of remote learning continued to be high due to the seamless transition to moving lessons online, with leaders deciding to maintain the usual timetable as much as possible. Pupils recognise that their teachers' feedback and support help them improve; since the previous full inspection, the school has revised its approach to marking, which was a recommendation made in the report.
- 3.10 Pupils have a thirst for knowledge and demonstrate excellent understanding and skills for their age. For example, children in the EYFS spontaneously recalled facts about Chinese New Year, such as that the colour red is lucky. As pupils progress up the school, it is fully evident that they absorb knowledge across the subjects, helped by the spiralling curriculum the school has adopted that fosters a solid understanding. All parents who answered the inspection questionnaire agreed that the range of subjects provided by the school is suitable for their children. Pupils' robust knowledge is clearly seen in class and whilst speaking to them. Pupils in Year 2 keenly shared their history knowledge, explaining how stone-age people packed their shoes with grass to keep them warm. In Year 5, when discussing the spelling of French nouns, pupils displayed a very good understanding of the different spelling of feminine and masculine words and why. Younger pupils spoke about how they enjoyed practical science experiments, such as those related to shadows. Secure science knowledge is acquired across the age range, although opportunities for practical experiments are limited, and the school has identified this as an area for further development.
- 3.11 Pupils display highly developed study skills for their age. For example, children in the EYFS worked effectively together to work out why a programmable toy was not landing on the expected square on a mat. They were seen to enjoy working together in a play-based activity, an area identified as a recommendation in the previous full inspection. Pupils in Year 6 displayed excellent teamwork as they collaborated with their learning partners to explain their reasoning to answers in problem solving. Pupils' skills are further fostered through challenging weekly puzzles and there is clear excitement in solving these. Pupils were seen to enjoy working collaboratively to solve problems, such as how to tie a knot in a rope without letting go of either end in the critical thinking club. Pupils have inquiring minds and are not afraid to question their teachers to gain a deeper understanding of subjects. Opportunities for research using technology and books do exist, although pupils explained how they mainly undertake this at home.
- 3.12 Pupils demonstrate competence in ICT skills, due to weekly sessions that develop key skills, such as coding and digital art. They enjoy learning different skillsets from programmable toys in the EYFS to research and project work in Year 6. All year groups are actively involved with aspects of programming and enjoy utilising what they have learned in creative arts, such as when Year 4 pupils set about the task of making a stop-motion film with a relish, with the incentive of making entries into the ISA film and digital art competition. Pupils do not develop their ability to apply their skills to other areas of the curriculum sufficiently because there are limited opportunities for them to do so, although when given the opportunity they apply their skills well.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils are highly respectful of the diverse world that they live in. They embrace differences and enjoy learning about their own and others' beliefs and cultures. Pupils' understanding is reinforced through involvement in initiatives such as Black History Week where they researched inspirational public figures, as well as visits to places of worship, such as a visit for pupils in Year 1 and 2 to a Hindu temple. The inclusion of a greater number of visits to further pupils' cultural development successfully meets

a recommendation made in the previous full inspection. Pupils' level of understanding has been enriched by the introduction of a range of cultural books to the library. Those spoken to during the inspection were clear that it does not matter what culture, background or race others come from, everyone must be treated with the same levels of respect. This supports the stance that the school takes on promoting anti-racism. The school governors are highly aware of the importance of maintaining an inclusive and harmonious community and have a dedicated governor to promote equality.

- 3.15 Throughout the school, pupils exhibit excellent self-understanding. Those spoken to during the inspection were polite, confident yet modest and secure in their knowledge of what they have already achieved and how they can improve on their skills. They clearly believe in themselves and are quick to explain the importance of learning from mistakes. This is helped by the leadership's regular reminders of the need to embrace challenge and understand that making mistakes is a vital part of the learning process. All pupils, staff and governors are fully invested in the *Four Pillars of Holland House: Moral, Intellectual, Civic and Performance*. These have been introduced to help develop every aspect of the pupils, and their impact is clear on their attitudes to learning and their levels of respect for one another. Year 6 ambassadors enthuse pupils to develop their skills in all four areas and explain how they provide help and support to others be it in their studies or in pastoral areas. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced by the teaching staff, who help pupils build their confidence, resilience and self-esteem, with pupils stating that teachers never give up on them. As a result, by the time pupils leave, they are well prepared for life at senior school.
- 3.16 Pupils, including those in the EYFS, have a strong moral compass. One of the *Four Pillars* of the school is *Moral*, with an ambassador elected to promote this virtue. Pupils of all ages explained the importance of this and had an excellent understanding of right and wrong. School leaders have fully involved pupils in the process of developing the school's behavioural systems. As they have helped shape the rules, they have an excellent understanding of why they are needed and how they help promote good behaviour. Pupils embrace the school ethos that promotes responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. They explained that rewards and sanctions are managed fairly by the staff. As a result, they felt that there is mutual respect and that this in turn fosters good behaviour.
- 3.17 Across the age range, pupils demonstrate high levels of social awareness, helped by the school-wide emphasis on teamwork and responsibility. Pupils work extremely well with others in a wide variety of contexts, including in lessons and whole-school events. For example, children in the EYFS were observed working extremely well in groups, taking turns and respecting others' ideas. Pupils are confident for their voices to be heard and respect the views of others during weekly debates on topical events. Those involved in leadership roles are all extremely proud of their positions of responsibility and of the fact that they had been selected. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and assemblies are a cornerstone of how the pupils learn their social awareness, and they extol the virtues of these two avenues to learn. Pupils feel confident and comfortable to access a number of staff to enhance their well-being. Likewise, in their questionnaire responses, all agreed that the school teaches them how to build positive relationships and friendships.
- 3.18 Pupils understand that they are responsible for their own success and happiness because the school actively teaches this from the moment they join. They understand the importance of their decisions, acknowledging the impact that these may have on themselves and others. Pupils make well-informed decisions. They are encouraged to think more deeply, not rush answers, and discard inappropriate reasoning. In discussion, pupils explained how voting on topical issues has helped them to build these skills. In a debate in Year 4 about 'do punishments work?' pupils made choices and considered right and wrong options. They understand that decision-making is made more complicated by having choice, especially questions which are complex and posed to confuse and mislead.
- 3.19 Pupils have a deep understanding of the important part they play in contributing to the lives of others, both in school as well as in the community. Whilst observing their interactions in class and during play time, it is clear that pupils care about each other and treat each other with respect. This culture begins

with the governors and leaders, who are wholly committed to creating a learning environment where everyone is valued and able to reach their potential. Older pupils are excellent role models to those that are younger and provide advice and encouragement to help them achieve common goals, such as by teaching them how to play table tennis correctly and by helping children in the EYFS to read. Across the school, pupils play an active role on the school council, with two representatives from each year. The council makes changes happen to improve school life, such as by increasing the range of activities available at break time, as well as in the wider world, for example by fundraising for national charities. Year 6 leaders and ambassadors are catalysts for further charity work, such as by organising a recent book sale that raised money for an autism charity. Pupils are extremely proud of their efforts and, in discussion, all were aware of how much they have raised and for what charities.

- 3.20 Pupils' spirituality is innate within the school, even though many pupils when asked did not specifically recognise what this term meant. Spirituality is evident through pupils' embracing the well-being and PSHE sessions that include opportunities for reflection. They show a fascination with how wonderful the natural world is, for example in a lesson in Year 5 where pupils were amazed to hear that lobsters in the sea can be blue. Pupils understand religious aspects of life; they appreciate others' views and can relate their learning in other areas of the curriculum, such as history, explaining how religions have evolved over time. Pupils value the non-material aspects of life, such as kindness and laughter. They gain great satisfaction from undertaking charity work to help others less fortunate than themselves.
- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. This is due to carefully planned lessons on subjects such as well-being as well as a highly effective parental partnership that encourages sensitive topics such as body boundaries to be discussed at home. Younger pupils understand the NSPCC's *PANTS* rule. During discussions, pupils were clearly aware of how to stay safe on the internet, pointing the rules out on the computer room wall. They are also aware of the importance of sport and physical education (PE) as explained by pupils in Years 3 and 4 who understand that exercise helps them to build strength. Similarly, pupils are aware of the need to adopt a healthy diet. This is evident when pupils discuss healthy choices during registration when selecting from the daily menu. Many were seen to opt for a balanced meal; for example, children in the EYFS explained how they enjoyed supplementing their main courses with salad.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended a virtual assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Reporting inspector
Mrs Susan Bonell	Compliance team inspector (Former bursar, SofH school)
Mr Lawrence Groves	Team inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)