



Holland House School

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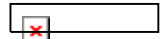
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Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

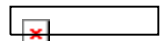
What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

School details

Introduction and summary

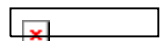


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

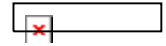


Holland House school is an independent, non-denominational selective school for boys and girls from four to eleven years of age. There are 135 pupils on roll. The school was established in 1937 in a residential property in North London. In 1974 a group of parents formed a Charitable Education Trust and bought the school. The board of governors is now the proprietor of the school. Over the years, the original building has been extended and now includes purpose-built accommodation

consisting of additional classrooms, a kitchen and a hall.

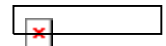
The school offers an education rooted in traditional values and places a high priority on pupils' intellectual and personal development and aims to make learning enjoyable within a close family ethos.

Summary of main findings



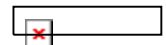
This is a good school, with many strengths. It is very successful in meeting its aims. The pupils consistently attain high standards and achieve well, especially in English. Their individual talents are nurtured and celebrated. Teaching is good, overall, although assessment is not used well to inform teachers' planning. The school provides a sound curriculum, strong in English and the expressive arts, but weaker in the range of technological and investigational experiences it provides. Staff are nearly always positive, friendly and very caring. Great strengths of the school are the quality of relationships between staff and pupils and the very good behaviour of pupils. These result in a very good ethos for learning. Although the staff take good care of pupils' welfare, health and safety, some school policies do not fully reflect the current guidance and do not meet the regulations.

What the school does well



- it enables pupils to attain high standards and compete successfully for selective secondary schools;
- it promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem and caters for their personal development very effectively;
- it encourages excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning by pupils;
- It fosters pupils' individual gifts and talents well;
- it is highly effective in promoting a knowledge and appreciation of language and the expressive arts; and
- it takes good care of its pupils.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- provide more experience of technological learning, in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology (DT) as identified in section 1 of this report;
- ensure information from the assessment of pupils' work is used in subsequent lesson planning as specified in section 1;
- prepare and implement a written policy which takes full account of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance on 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' as referred to in section 3;
- ensure that attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 as noted in section 3;
- prior to the appointment of staff, carry out appropriate checks to confirm their medical fitness as indicated in section 4;

- improve the information to parents of pupils and prospective pupils by making available the items listed in section 6; and
- ensure that the complaints procedure fully meets the regulations listed in section 7.

What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA, the school should:

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

Next steps

Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- develop the use of investigations in the teaching of science.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

1. The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

The school provides a sound curriculum. The emphasis is on English and mathematics, and standards in these subjects are very high. For example, all pupils attain the national expectations in Years 2 and 6, with very high percentages of pupils reaching the higher levels. The school has evolved its own approach to the teaching of reading, based exclusively on the recognition of letter sounds and their combinations, and it has developed its own materials for reading and writing for younger pupils. The results are very good, and nearly all pupils in the reception class read and write much more competently than is usual for pupils of this age.

In mathematics, there is a concentration on mental arithmetic and the rapid recall of number facts, and in performing written calculations accurately. In English, lessons in grammar, vocabulary, spellings, and composition form the backbone of pupils' work. These core lessons are considerably enriched through drama, poetry, and dance, both within lessons and in after-school clubs.

Moreover, teachers use every opportunity to demonstrate and develop the use of pupils' speech and language and convey to them a love of books and reading. As a result of this encouragement, pupils are very articulate and their contributions during lessons are of a high quality.

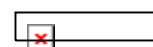
The rest of the curriculum is broad and includes French and personal, social and health education (PSHE). It is appropriately balanced. The school offers a good range of subjects with the exception that pupils' experience of technology is too limited. The school deals well with the limitations to the curriculum imposed by the small classrooms and by the site. Extensive use is made of the hall and the soft-surfaced play area, and pupils make good use of local facilities, for example, to ensure that they have full access to swimming. Pupils in the reception class follow a more academically-orientated curriculum than in most schools. However, all the areas of learning recommended for pupils of this age are provided, and pupils are happy, confident and make very good progress.

Subjects such as science, history and geography are taught with an emphasis on the teacher imparting knowledge with the support of textbooks. In general, this works satisfactorily. The schemes of work and the lessons are planned for teachers to teach the same material to all the pupils in the class. Although the school has no pupils with special educational needs, and most pupils are higher attaining, there is a range of abilities and aptitudes in each class. In history, the curriculum is enhanced through natural links with work in English and art.

The technological subjects of ICT and DT are represented less well. There are opportunities, in art in particular, where pupils make things, and where elements of design are involved, but pupils have little opportunity to work with a wide variety of materials, to solve problems, and evaluate what they make. Very little use is made of computers, either in learning the basic skills or using their considerable potential to enhance learning in other subjects.

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, with at least one activity on each night, with sessions organised for pupils of different ages. These sessions of sport and the expressive arts nurture individual talents and interests well. They provide a valuable foil to the curriculum in lessons, where the pupils are expected to work hard, individually, at their desks, since they often involve working with others and provide an opportunity to release energy. This was clearly evident during a drama club with older pupils, where, under expert tuition, pupils staged a convincing conflict between the warring families in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Out-of-school visits are not frequent, but are carefully planned to have a significant educational impact, such as visits to the theatre and the biennial residential visit to France for the oldest pupils.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, a half of the lessons observed were of good or better quality and there was very little teaching of an unsatisfactory standard. Generally, the teaching of English is a strength. The curriculum in English is taught rigorously, and pupils' knowledge of reading and writing skills is of a high standard. Teachers introduce pupils to good children's literature, and poetry, and discuss these with pupils, thus encouraging a broader understanding and appreciation of English and language. The pupils achieve very well, partly as a result of the consistency with which subjects are taught, year-on-year, and also because relationships between teachers and pupils are almost always of the highest quality. There is humour and challenge, and pupils respond very well to these conditions; they are keen to contribute, work hard and they show obvious enjoyment in their work. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and attitudes and they rise to these very well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge in most of the subjects they teach, and make appropriate arrangements for pupils with different abilities and aptitudes. Part-time teachers are often specialists, and French is taught by a native speaker of the language. The teachers' strengths are in English, mathematics, the arts and the humanities; they are less secure in science and technology

and these subjects are less well taught. Where teachers' subject knowledge is less strong, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment for themselves, and hence build important scientific skills.

Aspects of PSHE are taught in such a way that supports pupils' personal development. All the staff play an important part in the moral and social development of pupils because of the example they set in their relationships with them. Teachers of the younger pupils, in particular, are patient in allowing time for them to answer questions, and are very positive, praising them frequently.

Teachers plan their lessons from detailed schemes of work. They have a clear idea of what they are going to teach and what pupils are going to do, but in general, they are less clear about what they want pupils to learn. One of the reasons why some lessons were less effective than others was because teachers sometimes lost the focus of the lesson and spent time talking to the class about different things. The pupils were not informed about what they were expected to learn at the beginning of the lesson, and so they became unsure about what was required.

Teachers know and understand their pupils very well, on the whole, and they are sensitive to their strengths and weaknesses. They skilfully adapt their questions to suit the pupils, and provide extra work for pupils who require extra practice or extension work for the most able. In this way, pupils of different abilities are catered for within lessons.

The school has a clear policy for the regular and frequent testing of pupils' work, and the marks and grades are recorded, discussed with pupils and used to inform the pupils' progress reports to parents. This form of assessment is fully in keeping with the ethos and aims of the school, and prepares pupils for the entrance examinations for selective secondary schools. In addition, class sizes are generally small, and teachers get to know their pupils very well, especially since nearly all of them stay at the school throughout their primary years. As a consequence, through formal and informal means, teachers assess pupils' work and have a good sense of their different capabilities. However, a weakness in teaching is that they do not use this knowledge in their planning for subsequent lessons, and teaching is not as tailored as it might be to the needs of all pupils.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

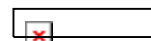
The school meets most but not all of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- improve the curriculum in the technological area of learning (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii)); and
- use information from assessments more effectively to plan subsequent lessons (paragraph 1(3)(h)).

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



Provision for the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils is good; a wide range of opportunities is provided for moral development which is a particular strength. The school is a diverse, multi-cultural community that works, plays and learns together in harmony, and where pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are close friends. The school aims contain a strong commitment to nurturing and valuing each individual's special interests and talents.

A very positive ethos, characterised by consistently high expectations, helps pupils to develop excellent attitudes towards each other and their work. The staff know their pupils very well and encourage them to give of their best at all times. The pupils are highly motivated and respond well by working industriously. They are happy and take great pride in their school and said:

Everyone in this school is very friendly - we are just a big happy family. It feels like home to us, we spend a lot of time here and it feels quite comfortable. If you have problems teachers are nice and give you time to explain things especially for you.

The school's policy and scheme of work on PSHE promotes pupils' motivation, self-esteem, responsibility and personal and social skills. The younger pupils learn about relationships and ways in which they can help each other. Older pupils write, discuss and debate current social, political and environmental issues. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of citizenship, local public services and democratic institutions such as the police, courts, parliament and the United Nations. They differentiate between fact and opinion and present their points of view with confidence. They show a high degree of maturity and a keen awareness of moral issues. As an example, pupils empathise with other peoples' circumstances, and this was captured well in their sensitive written reflections following a talk given by a blind person.

The school successfully instils values of honesty, fairness and respect amongst its pupils. The older ones set a good example at all times and willingly adopt a caring role towards the younger pupils. Pupils chosen to be monitors consider it a great privilege to be given specific responsibilities and are conscientious about fulfilling these roles. Pupils are perceptive and have worthwhile views on things that work well in the school and those they would like to improve. Many pupils are keen to make an active contribution.

The school's behaviour policy is clearly understood by pupils. They contribute to defining the classroom rules and comply willingly with these expectations. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. The lessons start promptly after break times and all pupils concentrate and persevere with their learning. A high level of trust, courtesy and mutual respect underpins the interactions between most adults and pupils; this promotes an orderly and calm learning environment for all.

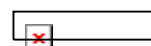
Pupils' achievements are celebrated in classrooms through praise, encouragement and a merit system. A more public recognition is provided through the school newsletter and magazine, prize-giving days and the award of certificates and commendations in assembly.

A strong community spirit and very good relationships contribute to racial harmony; pupils treat each other with respect and understand each other's personal beliefs and values. This is a strong basis for the school to develop all pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse cultural traditions through planned programmes of study in different curriculum areas, such as visual and performing arts, history and geography. The residential trip to France provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to extend their linguistic skills and raise their awareness of a different culture. Pupils' cultural understanding and appreciation of what they learn at school are enhanced by the programme of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of interest, including the theatre.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school takes good care of the health and safety of its pupils. Parents' responses to the pre-

inspection questionnaires endorse this. Discussions with pupils show they feel safe and secure and know that they can turn to a number of adults for help to resolve any difficulties.

A detailed health and safety policy sets clearly out the principles and procedures guiding the provision of the health and safety of pupils. These fulfil all the requirements. External consultants are engaged to keep the policy and practice under regular review. Staff are deployed in such a way as to ensure the proper supervision of pupils in all respects. This includes careful arrangements to escort pupils to the local park and other schools for off-site sports facilities.

All day and residential trips are carefully planned to ensure pupils' safety and security. Although in practice the school pays close attention to the DfES guidance on educational visits, the policy does not reflect this fully. For example, although risk assessments are taken into account for the planning of out-of-school visits and activities, these are not always recorded.

Policies emphasise the promotion of orderly behaviour and the prevention of bullying. Good behaviour is rewarded through a merit system. Staff are sensitive to any unhappiness in pupils and are swift to remedy the causes. Pupils report that incidents of serious misbehaviour or bullying are very rare and that they are almost always treated fairly. Pupils take good care of each other and work and play together naturally. However, the policy on child protection does not make clear the procedures to be followed when involving the appropriate external support services to protect pupils from abuse.

The First Aid policy outlines clearly the procedures to be used in case of accidents in the school. The First Aid boxes are well equipped with basic medical resources; records are kept of all accidents, including the details of any treatment given by the staff. All staff and pupils understand the policy on medicines. They are safely stored. Appropriate provision is made for the care of sick children. A number of staff are trained in emergency First Aid.

Appropriate fire safety arrangements are in place. The school regularly seeks to improve these in response to advice from fire safety specialists. The local fire officer has been involved in the fire risk assessment. All fire escape signs are in place and a detailed log is maintained of fire drills, which take place regularly. All fire appliances are tested annually.

The admission register is maintained satisfactorily. However, the attendance registers do not consistently distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence, and the original entries are not always legible following corrections and amendments.

The school does not meet its duties under the DDA.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Almost all the regulations are met.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to fully comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

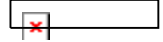
- prepare and implement a written policy which full account of the DfES guidance: 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (paragraph 3(2)(c)); and
- ensure that attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (paragraph 3(9)).

What does the school need to do to comply with the DDA?

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA the school should:

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



The school undertakes all but one of the necessary checks to confirm the suitability of staff to work with children. Candidates' medical fitness is not currently checked prior to confirmation of their appointment. Satisfactory checks are obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau prior to confirming staff appointments.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

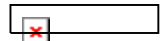
No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- prior to the appointment of any staff, carry out appropriate checks to confirm their medical fitness (paragraph 4(c)).;

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The accommodation is adequate for the current number of pupils. The original school was accommodated in a converted residential property. Over the years it has been gradually extended to include purpose-built classrooms, a kitchen and a hall. The building is well maintained, and the standard of cleanliness is high. The headteacher and governors are aware of the limitations of the present accommodation and are exploring alternatives. In response to specialist advice, several improvements have been made to the building to remedy potential hazards. This is particularly so in the original part of the house, which has awkward and narrow steps and corridors. For example, a new staircase has been constructed to ensure that pupils in each classroom have two routes for an emergency exit.

Despite the cramped conditions in the classrooms in the original building, teachers create displays which celebrate pupils' work and achievements. Most classrooms are only just adequate in size for the current number of pupils, particularly in classes for the oldest pupils. The lack of space and water supply in some classrooms inhibits the practical aspects of subjects such as science and art.

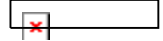
The small but functional rear playground is entirely covered with a safety surface and is used extensively for play times, and lessons in physical education. Pupils also use the local park for team games and sport. The school hall is used as a dining area and for lessons in music, dance, movement and other extra-curricular activities. Very good use is made of the well-organised storage space. Resources are sensibly stored and are easily accessible by the pupils.

There are sufficient washrooms for the number of pupils on roll and these meet the regulations fully. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the care of sick pupils.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



The school provides a wealth of useful information to parents through the prospectus, newsletters and memoranda. In addition, the school is open and welcoming to parents and to others. There is regular informal contact between parents and teachers before and after school. There are a number of opportunities for parents to formally discuss their children's work with teachers and for parents and prospective parents to see the school at work. Pupils' reports are of an adequate standard. However, the details contained within the prospectus, and guidance for parents about the availability of information do not meet the requirements fully.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

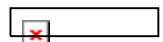
In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should ensure that all parents and prospective parents are provided with the following information:

- the full name, address and telephone number of the charity's registered office (paragraph 6(2)(b));
- the name and address of the chair of the board of governors (paragraph 6(2)(c)); and
- particulars of the school's policy on arrangements for admissions and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e)).

In addition, the school should ensure that all parents are aware that they may obtain on request:

- particulars of the curriculum offered by the school (paragraph 6(2)(g));
- particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, and health and safety (paragraph 6(2)(h));
- particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i)); and
- details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints



The school has a written complaints policy that promotes the informal resolution of complaints. However, in other respects, it does not meet the requirements.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

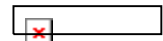
No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- o make available on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (paragraph 7(b));
- o set out clear timescales for the management of the complaint (paragraph 7(c));
- o provide for a formal complaint to be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint (paragraph 7(e));
- o provide for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint if the parents are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint (paragraph 7(f));
- o provide for one person on the panel to be independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g));
- o allow for parents to attend the panel hearing, and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h));
- o ensure that the complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulate that the complainant, proprietors and headteacher, and, where relevant, the person complained about, is given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i));
- o provide for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j)); and
- o ensure that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are kept confidential (paragraph 7(k)).

School details



Name of school:	Holland House School
DfES ref number:	302/6066
Type of school:	Day school for primary aged boys and girls
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 57, Girls 78, Total 135
Annual fees (day pupils):	£4,320
Address of school:	1 Broadhurst Avenue Edgware Middlesex HA8 8TP
E-mail address:	schooloffice@hollandhouse.org.uk
Telephone number:	0208 958 6979
Fax number:	0208 958 3591
Headteacher:	Mrs I Tyk
Proprietor:	The Board of Governors
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Usha Sahni
Dates of inspection:	31 January - 3 February 2005

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