

Radnor House

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Flora Bean

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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

Radnor House is a new, independent co-educational day school situated in the historic premises of Pope's Villa on the banks of the River Thames in Twickenham, London. The premises were previously occupied by another school. The school opened in September 2011, and currently provides education for 148 boys and girls in the age range seven to 14 years. The school will admit Year 10 pupils from September 2012 and sixth formers from 2014. Pupils have a broad range of needs but currently, no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. A small number of pupils have English as a second language, although their knowledge and understanding of English is good.

Radnor House has 'a philosophy of developing a genuine love of learning'. It seeks to 'challenge pupils in a stimulating and caring environment; encourage them in the pursuit of excellence; foster an environment where learning and knowledge are valued in their own right; and to nurture in every individual an ideal of service to the community through active engagement'. This is the school's first inspection.

The school is currently registered to take a maximum of 320 pupils. It has made a request to the Department for Education for a material change to extend this number to 420 from September 2012. This request has been considered as part of this inspection.

Evaluation of the school

Radnor House provides an outstanding quality of education and very successfully meets its aims. As a result of a rich and diverse curriculum and outstanding teaching and assessment, pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their behaviour, and the provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, are also outstanding. The school meets all of the independent school regulations. The material change to increase the number on roll to 420 is recommended.

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

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

Quality of education

The school has developed an outstanding curriculum. It includes not only the subjects of a well-planned and enriched National Curriculum, but also an extensive range of other activities. For example, a whole-school away day and overnight camp set the tone early in the autumn term for an exciting school year. The school provides excellent enrichment for the gifted and talented and excellent support for those with special educational needs. Plans are well in hand to provide a broad curriculum for Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form building on the foundations already set.

Pupils' interest in lessons is captivated when subjects are brought to life by a broad range of activities. For example, in history, pupils visit 'Pope's Grotto' to explore the use of artefacts and in mathematics, they complete accounts after a shopping trip. In foreign languages, pupils often enjoy songs from different linguistic heritages and there has recently been a French breakfast. In religious education, pupils simulate roles when exploring the political activities of the monks of St Benedict. In music, pupils experiment with xylophones to explore scales and in art, they cover a broad range of creative styles and artistic techniques. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively throughout the curriculum, including graphic communication and design. Pupils enhance their sporting abilities through tactical sports, competitive matches and individual sports, and they enjoy rowing and other water activities at the local outward bound club. There is a wide range of clubs, including judo, debating, drama, ornithology, dance, history and more which broaden pupils' horizons.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught effectively as a weekly lesson, often following an assembly. Recently, this encouraged greater awareness of charity work in Cambodia. Successful careers education and guidance are included from Year 7 onwards. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils suitably explored how to create a business plan.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding and as a result, pupils' overall progress is outstanding. All lessons observed were good or outstanding. Central to achieving this very high standard of provision has been the drive provided by senior leaders, who fully support teachers. Staff appraisals are rigorous and involve self-assessment and the pupils' assessments of their teachers. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and promote pupils' thinking skills very effectively through searching questioning. In lessons, teaching is brisk, imaginative and creative, with different tasks carefully aimed at the needs of different groups of pupils, who do extremely well as a result.

Pupils' engagement and attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils confirmed that they find tasks challenging and fun, and their work shows that good links are made between subjects to enhance their learning. There was real challenge in mathematics when Year 8 successfully worked out the Pythagorean theorem for themselves and in

chemistry when Year 9 worked in pairs to experiment with ten set challenging tasks and then to record the results.

Classroom resources are excellent and appropriate to each age group and range of ability. Interactive computer whiteboards have been installed in each teaching room and are used imaginatively. There are appropriate plans for the effective resourcing of courses for Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form to provide effectively for the increased number on roll.

Assessment procedures are rigorous. All pupils are regularly assessed, with data rigorously recorded and analysed by senior leaders to identify where pupils need support. Lessons are modified as required and support for both teachers and pupils is planned where needed. Pupils talk highly of the support that they receive from teachers and responses in parental questionnaires are overwhelmingly appreciative of the level of support given to their children.

Pupils' self-assessment is a strong feature of the school's work to encourage pupils' progress. They often work in pairs in class and, after demonstrating their work, they analyse the strengths and weaknesses, and constructive comments are also made by other pupils. Pupils are used to celebrating each other's work and measure their own progress against targets set for them by teachers. Marking is generally very effective, often with constructive and helpful comments, although on occasion, the comments are less helpful and targets for improvement are not always set.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' attendance is excellent and their attitudes to school are exceptionally positive, as shown in lessons and their wholehearted participation in after-school clubs and sporting activities. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They get on very well with each other and there is little disharmony. Pupils take pride in their school and acknowledge the opportunities open to them. They contribute to school life through the school council, in cooperative activities in the different houses and in raising money for charities.

Central to the school's philosophy is the ethos of respect for all. This is brought to life in the 'MADD' day, ('Making a Difference Day'), when all pupils help with different community projects outside school. Appropriate elements of citizenship are included in the PSHE programme. Pupils have a very good general knowledge of world, national and local issues. Assemblies are used well to celebrate diversity within and beyond the school community in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony. They include opportunities for reflection, although these opportunities are sometimes restricted.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare health and safety is outstanding. The school has all the required policies, including those for child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, fire and first aid. The policy documents are very clear and follow national guidance. The proprietor and a member of the senior management team have attended the required training for designated child protection officers. All staff are trained in safeguarding, including child protection and fire safety, and many in first aid. They have an excellent understanding of procedures. Pupils are properly supervised at all times.

The school has clear guidelines for risk assessments, for fire safety, the premises, educational visits, and off-site activities and these are conducted well. Security arrangements are robust. Pupils confirm without hesitation that they feel safe at school and equally confirm the greatest appreciation for the high quality care that they receive, including when any behavioural issues arise. Pupils unanimously report that bullying is rare and any incident is dealt with immediately.

Admission and attendance registers meet requirements. Pupils are active and keep fit through the extensive sports enrichment programme and have healthy lunches. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All of the required checks for staff and others have been completed effectively with details recorded correctly in a single central register. Recruitment procedures are suitable for the checking of any new staff employed as the number on roll increases.

Premises and accommodation at the school

A refurbishment programme has now been completed to a very high standard. On entry to the school, the bright and spacious reception area reflects a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Lighting, decoration, heating, ventilation and floor coverings are all new. Bright and airy classrooms provide an excellent learning environment. However, the display of pupils' work is limited.

A synthetic turf area is available for play, together with easy access to an adjacent park. The school has an agreement for the use of sports facilities at a nearby college and at the local rowing club and outward bound centre.

There are good changing facilities and a more than adequate number of showers and washrooms for both present and future pupils. There are well-equipped kitchen facilities for the hygienic preparation of food and an adjacent spacious dining room. The café provides an excellent opportunity for parents, carers and others to meet.

The existing provision will easily accommodate the requested increase in numbers of pupils. Some good-sized classrooms, tutorial rooms and a large area with individual

work stations very suited to Year 11 and sixth form pupils are already available. There is a new technology suite, which links through to the main school library, is suitable for art, design, music and technology. There are excellent facilities for sixth-form science.

Provision of information

The school meets all of the requirements for the provision of information to parents, carers and others. A detailed prospectus draws attention to the existence of the school's website where all of the necessary information and policies are displayed.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's policy for handling complaints, which is available on the school website, meets requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').³

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 pupils' work is of a consistently high quality and that targets for improvement are always set
- ensure that assemblies include a time of reflection to help pupils in their spiritual development
- provide more opportunities for the display of pupils' work around the school.

³

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

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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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Preparatory and Senior School		
Date school opened	September 2011		
Age range of pupils	7–14 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 119	Girls: 29	Total: 148
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)	£11,850 to £13,875		
Address of school	Pope's Villa Cross Deep Twickenham TW1 4QG		
Telephone number	020 8891 6264		
Email address	info@radnorhouse.org		
Head teacher	Robert Cook		
Proprietor	David Paton		

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.



26 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Radnor House, Twickenham TW1 4QG

It was a real pleasure and privilege to spend two days in your school. I was impressed by the beautifully renovated building situated on the river with newly painted classrooms and excellent facilities.

I have judged that the quality of education is outstanding. Teaching and assessment are also outstanding and account for the excellent progress made. What impressed me most was you, the pupils. You were all working very hard, enjoying your learning and making the most of the opportunities you are offered. When I spoke with you, you were all very polite and helpful and considerate of each other. Your behaviour was excellent. This is very pleasing.

It was also very good to see that you appreciate your teachers' hard work and the way that they look after you. I was very impressed by the time and energy they give to preparing outstanding lessons and spend time helping you to enjoy other activities. I hope you will continue to appreciate them and work with them. As a teacher, it is very rewarding when pupils work hard and enjoy a teacher's subject.

Being in a new school is very exciting as you can help develop and improve it. You do this very well through the school council and in other ways. I have made three suggestions for improvement, which you and your teachers can consider:

- the marking of your work is mostly very helpful but occasionally, it is not so useful and marking targets are not always set
- sometimes, in assemblies, you are not given sufficient time to reflect
- your art and other work is excellent but not enough of it is displayed around the school.

I wish you all every success in your time at Radnor House and for the future.

Yours sincerely

Flora Bean
Lead inspector