

# School inspection report

3 to 5 February 2026

## **Royal Masonic School for Girls**

Rickmansworth Park  
Chorleywood Road  
Rickmansworth  
WD3 4HF

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders promote an inclusive, nurturing environment for pupils to develop academically as well as socially. The school's values of inclusivity, courage, ambition, kindness, perseverance and integrity are promoted alongside fundamental British values across the curriculum. Leaders encourage pupils to succeed but maintain a clear focus on their wellbeing. Pupils and staff are respectful in their relationships with one another and pupils are determined and ambitious.
2. Governors provide effective oversight of the school to ensure that the Standards are met. They engage in discussions with leaders and visit the school so that they are assured that leaders have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities. Governors and leaders are aware of situational and contextual risks to pupils and take steps to mitigate them.
3. Leaders provide a broad curriculum so that pupils develop and build on the skills needed to succeed in public examinations, starting in the early years. The co-curricular programme enables pupils to develop a wide range of skills to prepare them for life beyond the school. Pupils have a range of subjects to choose from at GCSE and A level and can personalise choices to match their needs and interests.
4. Teachers have good subject knowledge and typically plan lessons and activities to engage pupils in their learning. They use assessment information to ensure they meet pupils' needs. Pupils across the school receive useful feedback so they know what they do well and how to improve. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are provided with effective support, matched closely to their needs so that they make good progress. Pupils are motivated and apply effort in their learning, developing skills of self-awareness and resilience. Pupils make good progress, perform well in public examinations and gain suitable places at university or in the workplace.
5. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress from their starting points. Most teachers use effective strategies and resources to develop pupils' language skills so that they are able to engage effectively in lessons. However, this practice is inconsistent in the senior school and sixth form. As a result, pupils who are less proficient in English are not always engaged and supported effectively.
6. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned so that pupils develop self-awareness and understand how to form positive relationships. Children in the early years are taught how to manage their emotions and get along well with their peers. In the prep and senior schools, pupils learn life skills and citizenship, which prepares them for life in British society. In the sixth form, leaders provide a comprehensive 'futures' programme, which enables pupils to acquire knowledge and skills to prepare them for the world of work or further studies.
7. Leaders ensure the behaviour policy meets the needs of pupils in the school. They involve pupils in discussions and encourage restorative approaches to ensure positive relationships. Pupils demonstrate self-awareness, conduct themselves responsibly in lessons and move around the school calmly and purposefully. The school's premises are well maintained, with rigorous and thorough checks of health and safety arrangements. Staff who are suitably trained in first aid cater for pupils' medical needs. The medical centre is suitably equipped.

8. Boarding accommodation is comfortable and provides pupils with space to study, socialise and relax. Staff in the boarding houses organise boarding time thoughtfully so that boarders develop appropriate levels of independence and responsibility.
9. Pupils across the school have a good understanding of how to be responsible citizens. They take part in age-appropriate discussions about current affairs, listening to each other's views and opinions. They make contributions to charities through fundraising and develop their financial understanding by taking part in entrepreneurship programmes.
10. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities fulfil their duties effectively by promoting a robust and collective approach to safeguarding in the school. Governors, staff, pupils and parents understand their responsibility for safeguarding through effective and regular training, assemblies and workshops. Leaders work closely with relevant local authorities and other professionals to inform their decision-making.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that teaching strategies and resources are used effectively and consistently across the senior school and sixth form to support and engage all pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

11. Leaders promote an inclusive, calm and purposeful learning environment. The school's values of inclusivity, courage, ambition, kindness, perseverance and integrity, chosen together with pupils, are promoted through lessons, assemblies and reward systems. Staff model these values and pupils treat others with kindness and respect. Pupils' self-esteem and self-worth are promoted throughout the school, so they are ambitious and resilient.
12. Governors use their wide range of skills and expertise to provide effective oversight of the school through regular visits. They engage in discussions with leaders to assure themselves that leaders have the appropriate knowledge and skills and to offer suitable challenge and support. Governors review policies and ensure they are implemented effectively to ensure that the Standards are met.
13. Leaders at all levels are reflective and make appropriate changes to provision, considering risks and unintended consequences carefully. For instance, they have reviewed the subjects that pupils choose to study at GCSE in order to provide a balance between academic achievement and pupils' wellbeing. They ensure that pupils make well-informed choices in consultation with them and their parents.
14. Governors and leaders have a comprehensive approach to risk management. They maintain an up-to-date risk register, which is discussed regularly so they can take the necessary steps to mitigate risks. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to identify risks and take prompt action so that pupils can participate safely in practical, sporting and creative activities. Risk assessments, including for boarding, trips, activities and lettings, are comprehensive. Leaders review these carefully and regularly to ensure their continued validity.
15. Leaders work closely with the local authority and the police and seek advice when necessary to inform their actions in promoting pupils' wellbeing. They act on recommendations made by experts, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and educational psychologists, to provide effective support for pupils.
16. Leaders share all the required information on the school's website so that parents are well informed. Leaders ensure that they inform the local authority when pupils join or leave the school at non-standard times so that pupils do not miss education. They provide the required information about education for pupils who have education and health care plans (EHC plans) through systematic reviews. Leaders ensure that regular reports and parents' evenings give parents useful information about their child's progress.
17. In the early years, leaders provide a curriculum and a learning environment that provide children with a positive start to their education. They work closely with parents, with daily exchanges of information, both in person and online, so that parents are well informed. As a result, children make good progress in all seven areas of learning.
18. Leaders provide effective oversight of all three boarding houses to ensure that the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools (NMS) are met. Boarding staff are well trained and provide effective systems for pastoral care so that boarders feel comfortable and cared for.

19. Leaders implement the complaints policy effectively. They review logs regularly to look for patterns and take appropriate action to address concerns. Governors have effective oversight of the complaints procedures. Boarders understand the process by which to raise their own complaints.
20. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 through an appropriate accessibility plan. They adapt the curriculum and physical spaces to meet the needs of pupils. Leaders promote diversity and inclusion through the curriculum as well as clubs and societies. Pupils in the senior school and sixth form regularly work in partnership with male pupils in a nearby school to understand about equality in the workplace through the 'futures' programme.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance**

- 21. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

22. Leaders plan the curriculum so that pupils develop a wide range of skills and can make informed choices for GCSE. Staff plan schemes of work to build on pupils' prior knowledge and skills as they progress through the school. For instance, children begin to learn Spanish in the early years, French and Mandarin are introduced in prep and Latin is added in the senior school. Pupils in prep develop a range of different skills in design and technology, and food and nutrition lessons. Pupils develop geographical skills in the early years, when they begin each day with a walk in the school grounds to make careful observations about the weather. Younger pupils in prep learn how to use a compass to navigate their way across a meadow, which helps to develop fieldwork skills in geography.
23. Leaders review the curriculum regularly, with careful consideration, to ensure that it is modified to meet the needs, aptitudes and interests of pupils, as well as covering the required areas. In addition to English, mathematics and science, pupils choose from a range of subjects to study at GCSE. These include computer science, astronomy, creative iMedia, and health and social care. In the sixth form, pupils personalise their choices, with the option of A-level subjects ranging from further mathematics, visual arts, and government and politics to Mandarin, as well as options to study for a qualification in English as a second language, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) or a certificate in professional cookery.
24. Pupils develop linguistic skills across the curriculum through the teaching of precise vocabulary and frequent opportunities to articulate their learning. They develop confidence in speaking and listening skills though role play in the early years and lessons in performing arts from prep upwards. Pupils use English language skills to structure discussions and written work in other subjects. Children in the early years use their phonics knowledge to recognise sounds and develop their vocabulary throughout their school day.
25. In prep, pupils build secure foundations to equip them with the skills they need in the senior school. In mathematics, effective visual representations, practical resources, and trial and error approaches enable pupils to develop mathematical reasoning. In science, pupils hypothesise and test ideas to deepen their understanding of concepts. Pupils develop an understanding of technological skills in information, communication and technology (ICT) lessons and use these to develop their work in other subjects. Across the visual arts and music, pupils are creative and experiment with new techniques. Older pupils adeptly use current technological tools, alongside acquired techniques, to produce high-quality pieces of work in art, music, photography and textiles.
26. Teachers across the school demonstrate good subject knowledge and skilfully use good-quality resources to engage pupils in their learning. They typically plan tasks and activities to meet the individual needs of pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive so that pupils are motivated, apply determination and make good progress.
27. Leaders use an effective assessment framework to evaluate pupils' performance and adapt learning to their needs. Teachers give pupils detailed written feedback, together with time to self-reflect, so that they understand what they do well and how to improve. In the senior school and sixth form, teachers routinely involve pupils in assessment, which fosters high levels of motivation. Pupils achieve well in public examinations and are ambitious in their selection of options for further study or work.

28. The leader of provision for pupils who have SEND works closely with specialists and staff to support pupils. Staff are trained to identify needs early through observations and assessments, so that appropriate adaptations can be made. Where necessary, one-to-one support and resources such as writing frames or the use of devices are put in place. As a result, pupils who have SEND make good progress.
29. The school supports pupils who speak EAL on a one-to-one basis or in small groups to improve language proficiency. In lessons, teachers use subject-specific prompts, visual aids and translations in native languages, so that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Teachers are trained to use strategies such as enabling pupils to think and develop confidence by sharing with a partner before they answer a question. However, these strategies and the effective use of resources are implemented inconsistently in lessons in the senior school and sixth form. As a result, pupils who are less proficient in English are not always effectively engaged or supported in their learning.
30. In the early years, children learn through play in a stimulating environment. Staff develop children's curiosity, creativity and imagination through thoughtfully planned activities. Children gain new knowledge and understanding. They develop fine and gross motor skills indoors and outdoors. Children develop their communication and language skills through positive interactions with staff and make good progress in all areas of learning.
31. Pupils across the school choose from an extensive range of clubs to develop their skills and interests. Pupils develop skills in a range of sports through activities such as climbing, running club and trampolining. There are clubs to promote pupils' social confidence in the library, learn chess, astronomy and philosophy or develop teamwork and musical talents in orchestra. Boarders enjoy a wide range of evening and weekend activities, with time well balanced for study, socialising and enjoying free time. Sixth-form boarders are given appropriate responsibility, such as cooking for themselves, to develop independence and skills for life beyond school.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 32. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

33. Leaders plan the PSHE curriculum so that pupils develop an understanding of respect for all in assemblies, form time and life skills lessons. Pupils explore their identity, beginning in the early years, to develop their self-awareness and self-knowledge. They learn about positive friendships and relationships in age-appropriate ways. Pupils are respectful with each other and with adults.
34. Lessons and assemblies frequently start with a reminder of the school's values. Pupils learn about different world religions and cultures so that they understand inclusivity. Pupils develop their spirituality in the multi-faith prayer room, where they can participate in discussions about faith, guided by a member of staff. They use the mindfulness garden for quiet contemplation and reflection.
35. Leaders develop the school's relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum in consultation with parents and in line with statutory guidance. Pupils across the school understand consent in age-appropriate ways, including when using online platforms. They understand how to take care of their bodies and explore areas such as personal hygiene, women's health, and drug and alcohol misuse. Leaders arrange talks by external providers to supplement these lessons through a range of current statistics and scenarios. These talks equip pupils with deepened knowledge and emotional understanding to make positive choices in their relationships, and they know when and how to seek help.
36. The physical education (PE) curriculum is well planned so that pupils across the school develop a range of skills. Children in the early years develop balance and co-ordination through age-appropriate games. In the prep and senior schools, pupils improve their performance in sports such as gymnastics, hockey and netball. For older pupils, the range of sports is widened to include yoga, Pilates and high-intensity interval training to develop a life-long interest in becoming physically active adults.
37. Leaders provide pupils with pastoral support that is carefully adapted to meet their needs. Staff identify children's social and emotional needs in the early years and, through careful observations, provide effective support in close partnership with families. Across the school, leaders cater for pupils' emotional needs by providing suitable quiet spaces for pupils to reflect, listen to music or to eat in quieter environments when needed. Pupils know how to seek help when they need it, including from adults such their form tutors, the counsellor and staff trained specifically to support pupils so they develop self-confidence.
38. The school's behaviour policy is comprehensive and effectively implemented. Staff take the time to listen to pupils and understand their needs before meting out appropriate sanctions. Leaders set clear expectations, and pupils are aware of and respect the boundaries. Appropriate systems are in place for leaders to spot patterns of poor behaviour and take steps to prevent future incidents. Across the school, pupils are praised for making positive choices. Pupils behave well in lessons and move calmly around the campus.
39. There is a clear anti-bullying policy that is implemented effectively by staff so that bullying is rare. Leaders proactively encourage pupils to develop strategies to deal with unkind behaviour or disagreements. They provide appropriate training, including from external providers, for anti-

bullying ambassadors with due regard for their own vulnerability as they support other pupils in drop-in clinics.

40. Leaders and managers ensure that there is a robust approach towards health and safety. They take appropriate steps to ensure that the school's premises, accommodation and equipment are secure and suitable through systematic checks, including external audits. Fire safety is promoted through regular training and fire drills, including during the night in the boarding houses, so that pupils are familiar with routines. There is a suitably equipped medical centre in the school and staff are trained in first aid to provide care, including in the early years, on trips and out of hours in the boarding houses. Consequently, pupils receive prompt and appropriate treatment if they are sick or injured. Leaders ensure that there is suitable supervision for pupils at the start and end of the day, as well as during breaktimes and mealtimes, to promote pupils' safety.
41. Boarders' accommodation is well maintained, with spaces that are equipped for relaxation and socialising as well as privacy. There are appropriate procedures for dispensing medicine, appropriate to boarders' ages. Boarders know where and how they can seek help if they have any concerns. The school provides nutritious and well-balanced meals for day pupils and boarders. The menu is varied, offers appropriate options and takes into consideration pupils' dietary and cultural needs. A range of snacks is provided for boarders, which caters for dietary and cultural needs.
42. Admission and attendance registers are maintained with due regard to statutory guidance. Leaders promote attendance through careful monitoring, and timely support and challenge as needed.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

**43. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

44. Across the school, pupils are taught how to recognise right from wrong and make appropriate choices. Children in the early years are sensitively guided as they learn to socialise and share resources with their peers. PSHE lessons and class charters reinforce expectations about honesty, fairness and respect for all in the prep. In the senior school and sixth form, pupils take part in discussions about ethics, human rights and women's rights. As a result, pupils are inclusive, kind and helpful to one another.
45. The curriculum and assemblies promote British values. Pupils in prep learn about democracy in lessons, visits to Parliament and talks from local MPs. Older pupils learn about different types of government and different political parties. Teaching encourages pupils to develop balanced perspectives when they discuss current affairs and politics.
46. Children in the early years begin to develop financial awareness through role play when they pay for items in shops and restaurants with play money and credit cards. Pupils in prep gain understanding of the relationship between different currencies through mathematics lessons about ratio and proportion, and they learn about fair trade. In Years 5, 8 and 12, pupils take part in entrepreneurship programmes, where they manage budgets and market products. In the senior school, pupils learn about banking, borrowing and debt, including how the latter can affect credit scores.
47. Pupils of all ages are inspired by a range of visitors to the school, who share with them their experiences of a wide variety of jobs and careers. In the early years, children learn about the roles of the police and fire service in keeping them safe. Pupils in prep learn about inspirational women in different careers. In the senior school, pupils review the skills needed for different courses and careers through talks and using appropriate online applications. Consultations with pupils and their parents, as well as support from sixth-form 'futures' prefects, give pupils the ability to make informed choices at GCSE and A level.
48. Sixth-form pupils benefit from a well-planned and purposeful 'futures' programme, where they learn a range of skills to equip them for life beyond school. They develop an awareness about student finance and about deductions on a pay slip. They are taught the importance of presenting themselves when networking, whether in person or on professional social media sites. They discuss how to keep safe and develop their independence when socialising and online. They learn practical skills such as how to cook, iron, reset a fuse box or what to do when a car breaks down. Pupils in the sixth form attend 'futures Fridays', where they learn about a wide range of careers from visitors. They receive impartial, one-to-one support so that they can choose courses, universities and future pathways, including apprenticeships, resulting in diverse and ambitious destinations.
49. In the early years, staff create learning environments for children to access resources independently and follow their interests. Staff are skilled in enabling children to develop their communication and social skills, adapting their language to suit different children's needs. Children work productively in pairs and groups, sharing and co-operating with each other.
50. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills and a sense of responsibility. Prefects in the sixth form undertake roles such as presenting information about different charities for pupils to vote on, or information about choices at GCSE and careers. Pupils in the senior school

and sixth form provide academic support to younger pupils as subject ambassadors and digital ambassadors. Prefects in the boarding house support younger boarders with academic work as well as organising activities.

51. Pupils make contributions to local and international charities. Pupils across the school fundraise to support a school in Ghana and a local charity for pupils with disabilities. Pupils in the prep visit members of the Watford Social Centre for the Blind to sing for them and invite them to lunch. This helps pupils to develop their understanding of different challenges faced by people and improve their own social skills.
52. Sixth-form pupils receive personalised guidance, as needed, to help them achieve well. Pupils use spaces provided to them responsibly to study or collaborate on projects. They lead assemblies, organise events, direct musical ensembles and run clubs and societies on topics such as medicine or women's rights.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society**

- 53. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

54. Leaders promote an informed and vigilant approach towards safeguarding in the school. Governors, staff, parents and pupils are all aware of their role in safeguarding. Governors are effectively trained to scrutinise policies, ensuring they are implemented effectively. Records are detailed and leaders record the rationale for actions taken, in line with statutory guidance.
55. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have up-to-date knowledge and skills, including appropriate 'Prevent' duty training. They attend a range of training events provided by the local authority. Leaders maintain close links with relevant children's services and the police and seek advice so that they can take informed decisions and make referrals when necessary. As a result, they are aware of situational and contextual risks for pupils and take appropriate steps to mitigate these. Leaders work together with professionals, such as educational psychologists, so that they provide considerate and effective support for pupils and their families.
56. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that new staff have a thorough induction in safeguarding, with due consideration for different roles and responsibilities. Staff understand the role of those with designated safeguarding responsibilities and are well informed about current statutory guidance. They undergo required training, as well as additional training relevant to their role. This provides staff with a deeper understanding of contextual and situational risks to pupils, so that they are vigilant and know when to report a concern about pupils. Staff understand the importance of raising safeguarding concerns about adults, including self-referrals, and who to report them to. Logs are reviewed regularly so that leaders can spot patterns and modify safeguarding training updates.
57. Pupils are taught how they can promote safeguarding by reporting a concern about themselves or others. They understand the prevalent risks, relevant to their age, and the steps they can take to prevent them. Pupils across the school know how to report concerns, including anonymously. Information about when to report a concern and the procedure that follows is shared with pupils through posters around the school and on their devices. An independent person visits the boarding houses regularly so that boarders have the opportunity to raise concerns.
58. The school has suitable internet filtering and monitoring systems. These systems are tested regularly to determine their robustness. Leaders follow up alerts quickly and sensitively. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online in ICT lessons, PSHE lessons and assemblies. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities provide useful talks and leaflets for parents on issues such as parenting in the digital age, so that parents understand the need to be vigilant and how to support their child at home.
59. Leaders and governors ensure that all the required pre-employment checks are made before adults begin working with pupils. The information is recorded accurately and systematically in the school's single central record of appointments. Leaders trained in safer recruitment make regular checks of recruitment procedures and records.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

**60. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Royal Masonic School for Girls
<b>Department for Education number</b>	919/6165
<b>Registered charity number</b>	276784
<b>Address</b>	Royal Masonic School for Girls Rickmansworth Park Chorleywood Road Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 4HF
<b>Phone number</b>	01923 773168
<b>Email address</b>	reception@rmsforgirls.com
<b>Website</b>	www.rmsforgirls.com
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Royal Masonic School for Girls Governors
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Simon Staite
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Kevin Carson
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 19
<b>Number of pupils</b>	880
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	70
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 to 27 May 2022

## Information about the school

61. Royal Masonic School for Girls is an independent day and boarding school for female pupils. The school is located in Rickmansworth Park in the town of Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. The school is a registered charity with a board of governors who provide oversight of the school. It comprises nursery, prep, senior and sixth form sections.
62. There are 57 children in the early years: 38 in two Nursery classes; and 19 in one Reception class.
63. There are 70 boarders accommodated in three boarding houses, situated on the main site. The school provides accommodation for full and flexi-boarders.
64. The school has identified 172 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Twelve pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
65. There are 145 pupils who speak English as an additional language in the school.
66. The school states its aims are for every pupil to thrive and be prepared to shape their future through values of inclusivity, courage, ambition, kindness, perseverance and integrity.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

3 to 5 February 2026

67. A team of 9 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

68. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

69. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)