

# Inspection of The German School

Douglas House, Petersham Road, Petersham, Richmond, Surrey TW10 7AH

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Inspection dates: 1 to 3 July 2025

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school has very high expectations of pupils. Pupils enjoy meeting these and flourish here. They behave excellently, work hard and make many friends. Pupils are confident, respectful and work together sensibly. Bullying is not tolerated and on the rare incidents that it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly by the school.

Across all phases, pupils achieve highly in public examinations. Sixth-form students who take the International Baccalaureate alongside German qualifications also excel. Children in the early years are fully prepared for the primary phase.

The school offers a wide range of high-quality, extra-curricular activities that broaden pupils' skills and interests. In the primary phase, pupils learn to ride a bike, carol sing and take part in German traditions including lantern-making. In the sixth form, students learn to row on the river Thames. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is very popular, and some pupils play competitive sport internationally.

The school enriches the curriculum with outings and activities that deepen pupils' understanding. For example, pupils in Year 6 visit the British Museum to expand their knowledge of ancient Egypt. Pupils take part in school-exchange programmes with local schools and schools across Europe. This develops their language skills and teaches them about other cultures and traditions.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school delivers a highly ambitious curriculum for pupils. It is broad throughout pupils' education. For example, all pupils study art or music throughout their time at the school.

In the Kinderhaus, children are immersed fully in the German and English languages. They learn through play, teacher modelling and their peers, to speak fluently in both languages. Here, children are taught important skills for the future, including sharing and taking turns. In the sixth form, the small proportion of students who study the Fachoberschule curriculum take part in meaningful work experience in England and Germany.

The curriculum enables pupils to acquire the key knowledge that they need. Pupils transfer this knowledge to new contexts, share their opinions and evaluate each other's work. For example, in Year 9 in English, pupils study Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Then, they consider how important themes in the text, such as marriage and slander, apply in the modern day.

Across all year groups, pupils develop their learning through discussion. This supports pupils successfully to explain their thinking and shape their ideas aloud. Pupils also secure key concepts through purposeful practise. For example, in mathematics in the primary school, pupils practise questions, become fluent and

solve mathematical problems. In the early years, teachers frequently check children's understanding and identify and fill any gaps in children's knowledge.

Pupils make connections across subjects. For example, as part of a bicycle safety project in Year 6, pupils brought together a range of mathematical and geographical fieldwork skills to design a cycling route through London that passed key landmarks and avoided hazards.

Pupils learn to read and write English and German fluently. They learn the letters and sounds that they need to speak English systematically. Pupils who require support to catch up receive frequent help to do so. At secondary level, pupils study English to a standard as ambitious as the English national curriculum, alongside German literature. Many pupils take GCSE English in Year 10 and achieve highly. The school provides speaking and writing classes for pupils of all ages who join the school with lower levels of English.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) expertly. It makes sure that pupils with SEND access a curriculum as ambitious as their peers successfully. The school identifies any emerging needs of pupils with SEND including pupils who enrol at the school other than at the usual start times. Staff understand the range of support that pupils with SEND require and adapt teaching and resources.

The school encourages pupils to keep themselves safe and to be happy, ready for life in modern Britain and beyond. For example, in ethics and religion, pupils discuss and debate the meaning of happiness. Pupils study politics and know how political systems work around the world. In the sixth form, students discuss complex moral dilemmas as part of the German literature.

In class, pupils listen attentively, share their ideas enthusiastically and debate respectfully. They support one another to take part and be themselves. Teachers encourage pupils to communicate with honesty and with respect. During break times, pupils cooperate politely and calmly. Across the school, pupils have very high attendance rates.

Pupil leadership opportunities develop pupils' confidence. Pupils on the student council organise whole school events, contribute to whole-school decisions and help to shape the school's development plans.

Pupils access extensive careers information. In the Kindergarten, children hear from visitors from different professions. Older pupils receive independent careers advice and Year 10 pupils take part in meaningful work experience. At school careers fairs, sixth-form students meet representatives from German and British universities and employers. Students frequently progress to prestigious global higher education institutions.

Those responsible for governance regularly seek and act on the views of parents, carers, pupils and staff. They check that the school is maintaining high standards in

education and support leaders to implement continued improvements and change. The school ensures that staff workload and well-being are taken into account when they make decisions. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102945
<b>DfE registration number</b>	318/6070
<b>Local authority</b>	Richmond Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	10391702
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent School
<b>School category</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	889
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	101
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	83
<b>Proprietor</b>	German School Association Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Jan-Peter Weiland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Oliver Schmitz
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£10,920 - £13,104
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8940 2510
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dslondon.org.uk">www.dslondon.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@dslondon.org.uk">info@dslondon.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 to 26 May 2022

## Information about this school

- The school is housed in modern purpose-built accommodation set in extensive grounds in Richmond-upon-Thames, Petersham Road, Petersham, Surrey TW10 7AH.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place in May 2022, when the school was judged good in all areas.
- The school does not use make use of alternative provision.
- The school serves the German-speaking community in London and those who wish their children to have a bilingual education in German and English. The German School London is part of a system of 140 German schools abroad.
- The language of instruction is mainly German, and the pupils follow, from age six to 18 years, the curriculum from the German state Baden-Württemberg. Most pupils complete the German International Abitur at the end of their education at 18 years old and some complete the International Baccalaureate diploma programme in addition. A small number of students in the sixth form complete the Fachoberschule. This is a hybrid course, some of which is delivered virtually.
- The school aims for all pupils to become fluent in both German and English by the time they finish school and for them to be able to progress to further education in either German- or English-speaking institutions.
- In the Kinderhaus, the school has a Kindergarten class and pre-school for three- to six-year-olds. The school has an exemption from the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy commercial director, senior teachers and other staff. Inspectors met with the chair and other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors had a tour of the premises and reviewed documentation to check compliance with the standards.

### **Inspection team**

Guy Forbat, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Conway

His Majesty's Inspector

Nick Flesher

Ofsted Inspector

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