



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Runnymede College

Madrid
Spain

Date **10th – 12th February 2025**
Inspection number **20250210**

Contents		page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	1
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
3	Overall effectiveness of the school	4
	3.1 What the school does well	4
	3.2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the school	5
	4.1 The British nature of the school	6
5	Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school	7
	5.1 Curriculum	7
	5.2 Teaching and assessment	10
	5.3 Standards achieved by pupils	14
6	Standard 2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	16
7	Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of pupils	18
8	Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff	21
9	Standard 5 The premises and accommodation	22
10	Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others	24
11	Standard 7 The school's procedures for handling complaints	25
12	Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school	27

1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the DfE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, more than 50 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with pupils. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Simon Sharron. The team members were Halima Bouazza and Sarah Neild-Le Conte

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British schools Overseas.

The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Runnymede College is a caring, nurturing school where a comprehensive curriculum, both formal and informal, delivered through high quality teaching and assessment, leads to pupils' exceptionally high academic attainment and their becoming curious, well-rounded, confident young citizens equipped to move on to the next stages of their lives.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including:

- the leadership and management across the school;
- the quality of teaching;
- promoting the well-being of pupils;
- welcoming of cultural diversity;
- creating a safe, happy learning environment;
- nurturing a strong sense of community and belonging;
- exceptionally high academic standards;
- pupils enjoy learning, understand their assessment criteria and next steps;
- a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils;
- well planned schemes of work building progression;
- professional development for all academic staff;
- a vast range of curriculum enrichment opportunities including many international trips;
- excellent relationships between staff and pupils;
- pastoral care of pupils;
- creative and performing arts subjects;
- modern purpose built and well-maintained buildings and premises;
- the provision of a forest school;
- specialist subject rooms and specialist teaching in KS2.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Complete the building adaptations to the school site and facilities;
- ii. Embed the new systems of pupil tracking and pupil progress data management exploring enhancement through AI automation;
- iii. Ensure that communication and language pervade and is the focus for all Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) continuous provision.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Runnymede College				
Address	Calle Salvia 30, La Moraleja, 28109 Alcobendas, Madrid				
Telephone Number/s	Tel: +34 916 508 302				
Website Address	https://runnymede-college.co				
Key Email Address	secretary@runnymede-college.com				
Headteacher/Principal	Mr Frank M. Powell				
Proprietor	Mr Frank M. Powell				
Age Range	2-18 years				
Total number of pupils	1,153	Boys	625	Girls	530
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	20	<i>12-16 years</i>	422	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	166	<i>17-18 years</i>	118	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	425	<i>18+ years</i>	2	
Total number of part-time children	0				

Runnymede College is a family owned, private non-denominational and co-educational UK curriculum school in Madrid offering a British education to girls and boys of all nationalities from the age of two to eighteen. It was founded in 1967 by Arthur Powell who chose the name 'Runnymede College' to reflect his view of the school's role and values, whereby it offered an education that was free-thinking, challenging and enriching. The school continues to be owned by the Powell family who are very much involved in its day-to-day operation. The primary school was inaugurated in 1987, and since 1990, the whole school has been located in La Moraleja, in the north of Madrid. The school has recently been restructured and divided into pre-prep (EYFS to Year 3), prep (Years 4 to 8) and senior school (Years 9 to 13).

4.1 British nature of the school

- UK curriculum, EYFS to Year 13;
- Classes are taught in English except for Spanish, Spanish social sciences and modern languages;
- Accredited as a UK public examination centre for A Levels and IGCSE;
- More than 40% of pupils move on to tertiary education in the UK;
- The academic and pastoral organisation of the school mirrors structures in the UK private independent school sector;
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and practices are based on the DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE);
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is just as important as their academic success;
- The school respects the UK Equality Act 2010;
- It has discrete provision for children with SEND;
- The school's rich international community reflects much of the cultural diversity prevalent in the UK;
- Promotion of British traditions of democracy, respect for the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance and an understanding of civic institutions in the UK and Spain;
- British values are entrenched in the PSHE curriculum;
- Celebration of British cultural events such as Remembrance Day, Black History Month, Anti-Bullying Week;
- Pupils' well-being is a relentless priority for the school;
- Pupil voice and youth leadership are considered important and promoted;
- There is a rich programme of extracurricular activities including school visits to the Madrid Shakespeare Company productions, subject-related trips across Spain, Europe and the UK and participation in international and UK-based pupil competitions and awards including the Duke of Edinburgh scheme.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is outstanding because the breadth and holistic nature of the curriculum, together with very high standards of teaching and assessment, leads to exceptionally good academic outcomes and the development of pupils who have strong social and moral values, preparing them well for the next stages in their lives.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum fully meets the standard for BSO, and is judged to be outstanding. The curriculum, enriched by a wealth of extracurricular activities, is carefully arranged to ensure that pupils can thrive academically and develop as thoughtful, caring and socially responsible individuals. There are clear and detailed curriculum policies, including overviews on the school website and parents' and pupils' handbooks. Long, medium and short term curriculum planning, as well as systematic reviews of its effectiveness were all in evidence.

The Early Years in the pre-prep school provides a rich and stimulating learning programme that aims to foster and encourage children's literacy and numeracy in an emerging system of planned continuous provision. There is a strong focus on personal, social, and emotional development (PSED), while children's physical development is carefully nurtured. All this ensures a solid foundation for learning. Hands-on activities support engagement. Reception pupils were observed expanding their vocabulary through structured discussions and linking flashcards to real-world experiences. Teachers use skilful questioning to deepen understanding and ignite curiosity. The continuous provision offers a stimulating environment where children develop exploration, creativity, and independence.

The curriculum that sits astride the pre-prep and prep school up to Year 6, is richly thematic and, because it is closely aligned with the national curriculum for England, it is broad and balanced. The curriculum, its thematic method of delivery and assessment paradigms are well-aligned with UK best practices, ensuring a potent mix of pupil well-being, knowledge and skill acquisition. It is this that drives high levels of progress.

The pastoral curriculum, boosted by an effective PSHE programme of lessons and regular assemblies, generates an ethos of nurture so that behaviour is consistently good, with children demonstrating kindness, cooperation, and independence. Indeed, behaviour for learning and relationships throughout the

school are excellent. It is not surprising that pupils, parents and staff at all levels pay tribute to the family feel of a school where senior pupils are often engaged supporting their younger counterparts.

The curriculum that straddles the prep and senior school reflects again the breadth and balance of the national curriculum for England. In Year 9, pupils study 15 subject disciplines which include the three branches of coordinated science, Spanish language and Spanish social studies. Design and technology is restricted to computer science and some areas of the art curriculum. In senior school, pupils follow IGCSE syllabuses across at least 11 subjects until Year 11. This includes a core of English language (first language) and literature, Spanish as a first language, mathematics, French and one science. Most pupils continue with 4 A levels. Only PE and PSHE are not examined.

In the sixth form, the quality of the curriculum attracts an influx of pupils from other schools. Most pupils take four A Levels with the option of relinquishing one in Year 13. Business studies has been recently introduced and an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is also available. Particularly commendable is the opportunity for pupils studying French to sit the French government's exam that tests candidates at C1 level of the CEFR. The school also offers opportunities for non-native users of English to follow the International English Language Testing (IELTS) syllabus and sit the course exam in order to strengthen their English language proficiency and qualifications for admission into UK universities.

There is a detailed sixth form orientation programme, which includes the sixth form summit. The school's careers education is exemplary. Both pupils and parents have access to many opportunities for careers information and advice. There are university talks, where key information about the university application process to various countries is shared (including the UK, USA, Spain and elsewhere in Europe). The school holds regular meetings to support pupils' applications, including an enrichment club, called *Aspire*. *Unifrog* is provided to pupils as an additional research tool to help them manage the application process effectively. The whole school community is enlisted to support work experience for sixth formers in a programme called 'Take a Runnymedian to work', in which pupils experiencing work and business in many organisations in Madrid. Furthermore, the school has a higher education and exams officer that supports applications and provides official transcripts for all university systems worldwide.

An enormous strength of the school is its provision of extracurricular activities which profoundly enrich the pupils' experiences at Runnymede College. These are highly valued by parents. During the inspection, the school staged the musical 'The Sound of Music' whereby dozens of singing stage performers were

accompanied by the impressive school orchestra. We also saw a variety of exciting activities during lunchtime and after school including two Model United Nations sessions for different age groups.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment is overall outstanding despite there being some variation across the school and between subjects. These are areas that the school is aware of and is addressing. Because of the high calibre of teaching and assessment, pupils nearly always make excellent progress within lessons and over time.

The quality of teaching and assessment in pre-prep, is consistently good or better, with some notable outstanding practice observed. Lessons are well-structured and engaging. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and age-appropriate pedagogical skills such as effective questioning techniques to extend pupils' thinking.

In pre-prep, pupils are given opportunities to work independently and collaboratively, confidently sharing their knowledge and applying their learning. There is constantly a strong emphasis on developing key literacy and numeracy skills. The teaching of phonics, using among other tools 'Read Write Inc', is well-planned and embedded, ensuring pupils are closely tracked and make good or better progress in reading and writing.

While literacy teaching and learning are consistently good, some EYFS lessons could be enhanced further by providing more structured opportunities for purposeful discussions during play, thus opening the door to children actively applying newly acquired vocabulary in meaningful peer interactions.

Mathematics and science are taught well in pre-prep. In one outstanding lesson, pupils were encouraged to solve problems and explore number composition whereby they created the number 17 using different resources and partitioned it into tens and ones. Teachers' targeted questioning supported deeper thinking and problem-solving, helping pupils articulate their reasoning clearly.

In an excellent science lesson focused on materials and waterproofing, pupils engaged in practical investigations, working with materials such as newspapers, tracing paper, and cellophane to determine which would make good material for a waterproof umbrella. Strong dialogic interactions between the adults and the young scientists promoted scientific thinking and problem-solving, ensuring pupils acquired the correct language to correctly explain their findings.

New subject leaders have recently been appointed in the pre-prep to improve subject knowledge and progression through EYFS and Years 1, 2 and 3, in preparation for subject specialism in the prep school.

In the prep school, the majority of the lessons observed were outstanding owing to highly effective teaching methods. These included good pace, exemplary stretch and challenge options, as well as success criteria for self-assessment, and intrinsic self-motivation for the pupils. Across the prep school campus, the use of IT was embedded within each lesson. Pupils in Year 3 upwards are each allocated an iPad for their use in school; they were observed using different apps and learning tools to support and lead their learning. In a Year 3 reading lesson, each pupil followed the text on their individual iPads, zooming in on key words and were actively engaged in the story. Pupils had also written letters to world leaders to persuade them to stop cutting down rainforests, demonstrating clear links within their literacy lessons and the thematic schemes of work.

In the prep school, teaching was seen to engender an infectious enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning among the pupils. Teaching clearly has a high impact so that almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress. In Year 4 maths, a range of creative teaching methodologies and resource rich lessons are used to stimulate interest, promote creativity and encourage pupils to think and learn independently. Misconceptions are immediately addressed and corrected through targeted instruction and engaging activities. In lessons on fractions, teachers systematically checked pupils' understanding, anticipating where they needed to intervene, and did so with notable impact on the quality of learning and the depth of the pupils' understanding.

Medium and long-term plans reflect what is being learnt in the classroom. In a Year 6 drama lesson, short term plans showed stretch and challenge. Pupils were enthused through vibrant learning opportunities and were exceptionally well taught on how to improve their performances with pupils working in pairs improving their tone and positioning before assessment. Pupils knew the assessment criteria for their performances, and as a result, were highly engaged in their own, and in their peer's progress.

Most lessons focused on developing key vocabulary and functional language to make predictions and hypotheses so that pupils could clearly express the complex language of confident problem solvers. Teaching approaches and resources are consistent and inclusive across year groups. Pupils are taught to be resilient learners who persevere through setbacks, utilising resources and seeking support when needed, and viewing mistakes as learning experiences. In prep school lessons, assessment is very often used to inform teaching and learning with regular summative assessments planned for pre-topic and end of term topics. An array of excellent formative assessment techniques guide pupils towards their next steps of learning. A scrutiny of Year 7 English exercise books revealed excellent teacher feedback with next steps clearly annotated to the pupils' work and cross-referenced with the work module's success

criteria. Summative assessments too are analysed to determine gaps in learning and trigger remedial interventions. In Year 5 Maths, a catch-up week built into the curriculum plan, enables teachers to review and revisit topics.

Within the curriculum, pupils are taught to be resilient learners who persevere through setbacks, utilising resources seeking support when needed, and viewing mistakes as learning experiences. Pupils in each class in Year 4 maths, for example, were observed adopting a systematic approach to problem solving including using their peers as well as information on the board which was always available to them.

In the minority of lessons that were less successful, there was insufficient stretch and challenge for those pupils able to go beyond the core demand for the class, or indeed, adequate support for those struggling to meet it.

In the senior school and the sixth form, all the lessons observed were at least good and many were indeed outstanding. In an exemplary Year 11 maths revision lesson, pupils had access via a QR code to differentiated exercises downloadable to their tablets that they had been using since Year 7. They practised individually, in pairs or in groups. The teacher intervened sometimes with higher level questions for the whole class, or at other times with individual or group support to assist progress. Pupils demonstrated impressive autonomy over their own learning, explaining how they could improve on past grades, and how they could access school curated material from home to address gaps in their learning, email the teacher or attend subject clinics. Pupils also valued the opportunity in maths to work initially at a slower pace in a 'core' group before engaging with 'extended' maths content. In a Year 12 biology lesson preparing an experiment on plant mineral deficiency, the interest, engagement and curiosity of the pupils were palpable. When asked by one of the class how a mung bean seedling's growth could be measured, the teacher encouraged the pupil to explore ideas with her group and then report back to the class. The lesson was marked by excellent, trusting relationships whereby the teacher was at pains to nudge the class in the right direction rather than put the solution on a plate. The pupils were clearly used to this style of experiential learning and collectively found the right answers. In the very few less successful lessons observed in the senior school, the lesson structure did not involve all the pupils in the class, and some pupil interactions in Spanish ensued.

Assessment and tracking in the senior school and sixth form achieve their goal by identifying pupils who are underachieving and those who are successfully being stretched beyond their predicted performance levels. Where underachievement is spotted, interventions (such as For example with drop in sessions, interventions, the intervention timetable for Year 11 exams, target sheets, additional support for SEND pupils) are put in place. Formative

assessment in many forms, including peer and self-assessment according to exam success criteria, is a strong feature of most lessons.

While teacher subject knowledge is strong and therefore authoritative, pupils are regularly asked to research their own subject related content. Most lessons produced evidence of secured previous learning: for example, a Year 12 chemistry lesson on organic alcohol compounds built on knowledge acquired in the chemistry IGCSE course.

Enjoyment of learning encapsulates nearly every lesson. It was a joy to listen to a Year 13 physics A level pupil, keen for a career in material science, explain enthusiastically to a curious inspector looking at his group's apparatus, how the angle of a current-carrying conductor affects the forces of a magnetic field.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by pupils are overall outstanding.

In the pre-prep, pupils develop confidence, independence, and a love for learning. Social and personal development is tangibly of a high standard. While GLD outcomes are below UK and international averages, which the school attributes to the fact that for nearly all the children English is an additional language, there is rapid progress in English literacy skills over time, as the children benefit from a nurturing environment, engaging curriculum and quality first teaching. The school effectively tracks progress using Arc Pathway, ensuring that learning is personalised and responsive to individual needs. The outdoor learning environment and forest area provide valuable opportunities for exploration, creativity, and hands-on learning, further enriching pupils' experiences.

By Year 1 and Year 2, pupil progress has accelerated, particularly in language and communication with high-quality planning and strong quality assurance processes ensuring engaging and well-differentiated lessons. Teachers make effective use of assessment data, including Arc pathway in EYFS, leading to strong progress across core subjects. By Years 7 and 8, the pupils' PIRA scores exceed the average in this internationally standardised test. At the end of Years 2 and 3, most pupils record a benchmarked performance exceeding international averages in 'The Progress in Understanding Mathematics Assessment (PUMA)'.

In the prep school, standards are now tracked with the use of iSAMS. Benchmarking assessments using CAT4, PIRA and PUMA indicate that by the end of Year 6, Runnymede College pupils are exceeding international averages. School data shows that 90% of Year 6 attained the expected level in reading in June 2024; this compares with 80% in UK maintained schools discounting disadvantaged children (FFT). In the PUMA test, pupils scored on average 13% higher than the expected standard. In the 'Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Assessment' (GAPS) standardised across 10,000 learners, 90% Runnymede College Year 6 pupils attained the expected level.

These results indicate the very strong foundations for academic success in IGCSEs and A Levels which are well above UK national averages and also surpass attainment in similar private independent and international schools.

Pupil progress is strong and the system of data tracking, only recently re-routed through iSAMS, may respond well to a degree of automation mapping out learning gaps for each pupil and targeting interventions.

There is a high level of success in the IELTS exam and the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. Many sixth form pupils studying French take the *Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française* (DALF) attaining an outstanding C1 (proficient user) on the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) bearing in mind that A Level French examines only up to B2.

Behaviour in and outside of lessons is excellent. Pupil school attendance and punctuality are very commendable.

6. Standard 2 Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils at Runnymede College is outstanding, and another huge strength of the school. It permeates the school's ethos.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on personal values, beliefs, and experiences through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, and pupil-led initiatives. Impressive drama, music, art and PE lessons clearly generate excitement and personal enjoyment among pupils. High performing athletes, musicians and artists are celebrated and valued by the pupils themselves. This is true too of those gaining top academic grades and entry to top universities. Many extracurricular activities provide pupils with unforgettable and deep human experiences.

The *Fundación Runnymede* is a charity initiative set up by the founder to fundraise to send a child from the local area to a British university. The school has also fundraised for other charities, such as *Fundación Aladina* in other years. Ambitious school trips such as those to London, New York, Nepal and even Borneo offer opportunities for awe and wonder. The production of "The Sound of Music" during the inspection caused great excitement throughout the school community.

The school fosters a culture of respect, inclusiveness, and positive relationships, ensuring that all pupils feel safe, valued, and supported. Pastoral care structures, pupil mentoring, and leadership opportunities help create a strong sense of community, where pupils are encouraged to be kind, supportive, and understanding of others. Pupils, parents and staff unite in the idea that Runnymede College generates a strong, uplifting sense of belonging to its community. Meetings, events, and alumni involvement in many school activities through the expansive 'Old Runnymedian' network.

Moral development is supported through clear expectations, strong school values, and a well-structured positive behaviour policy. The headmaster and leadership team reinforce key messages about respect, fairness, and personal responsibility, ensuring that pupils understand how their actions impact others. Older pupils engage in ethical discussions, social initiatives, and pupil-led projects, developing their ability to think critically and reflect on complex issues. Initiatives such as charity events, pupil-led podcasts, and debates on current affairs further promote social awareness.

Pupils develop a global perspective, learning to appreciate and respect different cultures and traditions. The school celebrates local and international events, such as San Isidro, Diwali, Chinese New Year, and Remembrance Day, fostering an inclusive environment where pupils recognise and value diversity. Plans for an International Day further demonstrate the school's commitment to broadening pupils' multicultural awareness and understanding.

The house system and pupil councils provide pupils with opportunities to share ideas, take on leadership roles, and contribute to the school community, developing their confidence and sense of responsibility. The pupil leadership team has committees for academic, sustainability and charity.

The very name 'Runnymede College', founded in 1967, strongly evokes the British traditions of democracy and the rule of law. The school proudly promotes through its curriculum and, in particular, the citizenship content of the PSHE programme, the democratic relevance of Remembrance Day, elected school councils and pupil representation. At the same time, there is an insistence on adherence to school rules, backed up by a clear pupil behaviour policy and code of conduct.

The school encourages active participation in pupil leadership, with pupils taking on roles such as head pupils, house captains, pupil council members, and sixth form leaders. - The four committees (Sustainability, Charity, Academic, House/Pastoral) of the pupil leadership team (PLT) encourage to improve the school and local community. Pupil-led assemblies also celebrate PLT initiatives. The prefect team (Years 12/13) assists with duties such as lunch queue management and break supervision. Prefects attend events, such as parents' evenings or options evenings to represent the pupil body or offer advice. Through these roles, pupils develop a sense of teamwork, responsibility, and collaboration, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued. Regular debate clubs, pupil-led events including participation in Model United Nations, and others such as Bake Sales, Movie Nights, Discos, vintage fashion sales, and second-hand sports equipment, contribute not only to their personal and social development, but also to a valuable experience of democratic practice in action.

7. Standard 3

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for welfare, health and safety of the pupils is outstanding. This is because the school demonstrates a relentless commitment to pupil welfare, and health and safety are a constant priority for it.

Safeguarding provision is of a very high standard. Robust policies and procedures are in place to ensure the welfare, health, and safety of all pupils at all times. A team of trained designated safeguarding leads (DSLs), known to all staff and pupils, cover each section of the school. The DSLs coordinate annual safeguarding training for the academic staff and, in particular, to new teachers.

Safeguarding, child protection policies and practices comply with host country legislation and guidance. They are overseen and audited by local authorities. The full-time school nurse is also the '*Coordinador de Bienestar y Protección*' (Coordinator of Well-Being and Protection). She is responsible, on behalf of the school, for coordinating communication with the Spanish safeguarding agencies including the police. She also provides safeguarding and child protection training, as well as translations of related policies for Spanish speaking administration and ancillary staff. Staff training logs are kept by both the *Coordinador de Bienestar y Protección* and the DSLs.

The school welcomes children with special educational needs and disabilities (SENDCo) as long as it is thought that they can thrive with the support the school can offer. The school also employs a full-time school educational psychologist who works closely with the *Coordinador de Bienestar y Protección* to provide support plans for children who may be identified as having SEND, or for those with existing diagnoses such as ASD, ADHD and Dyslexia. The inspection team was impressed that the educational psychologist was seeking to convert his office into a much-needed sensory calming room. Secondary EAL pupils who need a confidence boost before their IGCSEs can opt for a supplementary English course in Years 10 and 11. Fluency in English is considered to be an essential ingredient of pupils' well-being at Runnymede College.

Child protection records are maintained through *My Concern* with clear and detailed accounts of all cases and facilitating prompt and efficient follow-up by the DSL. The school is transitioning to the iSAMS system for logging and updating information. This centralised platform will streamline data management, improve accessibility for staff, and enhance the efficiency of administrative processes for both welfare and safeguarding. The safeguarding team is readily identifiable to both pupils and staff, who understand the team's role, their remit, and how to access their support, with pupils sharing that they feel confident in approaching staff for support at any time, and with the knowledge that staff will immediately respond and address any worries or concerns.

The school prioritises pupils' emotional and mental well-being. Two staff are being trained in ELSA (Emotional literacy support assistants) as a direct result of identified pupil need. PASS (The Pupil Attitudes to Self and School Pupils) was introduced in January 2025 from Year 3 to Year 13 with outcomes analysed in depth, and a robust and strategic age-appropriate intervention plan implemented to support the welfare of pupils. Regular whole school Team Around the Child meetings are held with key pastoral staff, DSLs, coordinator/school nurse, educational psychologist and SENCo to discuss individual cases and to review levels of need. In the senior school, form tutors meet with heads of year weekly to discuss year-wide issues and individual causes for concern. Heads of year then meet weekly with the deputy head pastoral, who is also a DSL, to discuss vulnerable pupils.

There are regular drop-in sessions for pupils with teachers for both curriculum and well-being check-ins. Year 10 and 12 pupils read with younger learners, fostering cross-year relationships which can be particularly beneficial for younger pupils.

The school's extensive charitable support programme sponsors local pupils through university, supports families impacted by cancer and responded immediately to the 2024 flooding tragedies in Valencia. This cultivates a strong sense of social responsibility among pupils of all ages, underscoring the school's commitment to pupil support and fostering a culture where both pupils and staff actively contribute to the well-being of others.

Relationships throughout the school are exemplary. Pupils feel safe, valued, and quickly form strong friendships within the inclusive Runnymede community. Bullying is extremely rare, and the school proactively addresses all forms of prejudice, including derogatory language and misuse of technology.

The school provides comprehensive on-site medical care thanks to the full-time, registered nurse. The medical facility is equipped to provide care for pupils who are sick or injured, and is well-stocked with medical supplies and equipment appropriate for short-term care. The school's health and safety policy also includes a first aid policy. There has been whole staff training on basic first aid, including the use of the two defibrillators on the school site. A trained first aider is available at all school events where injuries are more possible such as sports day or cross country. In a new initiative, first aid training, including CPR, was given to Year 11s in October 2024 to enhance their ability to respond in first-aid emergencies.

A thorough and detailed risk assessment policy is in place. Risk assessments are routinely carried out and regularly reviewed for specific areas of the school, for example the canteen, science laboratories, physical education facilities and playgrounds. The accommodation and premises are safe, secure, clean, well-maintained and regularly monitored to minimise risks to pupils. All off-site visits are carefully risk assessed before plans are approved. Local police are involved in risk assessments as appropriate; for

example, a recent Runnymede cross country event. Risk assessments identify clearly and precisely any issues which might prove hazardous and prompt highly effective action to minimise risks to pupils. However, vigilance needs to be maintained around the regular use of off-site facilities where the general public has uncontrolled access.

Runnymede has a robust and comprehensive system in place for managing food allergies. This system is well-understood and consistently followed by kitchen staff, school staff, and pupils. They maintain clear and up-to-date records of pupil allergies, and this information is readily accessible to all relevant personnel. These allergy management protocols are age-appropriate and adapt to the specific needs of different pupil age-groups, ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils. This includes regular training for all staff on allergy awareness and management.

Rigorous systems are in place to monitor both attendance and punctuality. The school implements procedures to promote high levels of attendance and minimise lateness. As a result, attendance is very good; pupils are consistently punctual in arriving at school and for lessons.

All aspects of the BSO standards are met.

8. Standard 4

The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the standard for BSO in respect of the suitability of the proprietor and staff.

Safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed and are compliant with Spanish and UK requirements. Several senior staff have undergone safer recruitment training. The school has a strict recruitment process to ensure all staff meet safeguarding and professional standards. Candidates are shortlisted via TES adverts which advise that all candidates should expect full safeguarding checks. Applicants undergo multiple interview stages, including identity and references checks. They must also give a demonstration lesson. All staff must provide legalised work permits and police clearance from Spain, as well as from any country where they have lived for more than three months in the past five years. Candidates for employment must also undergo a safeguarding interview.

A single central record (SCR) is in place, managed through *Factorial*, *ISAMS*, and *FileMaker*, with plans to integrate these systems for greater efficiency. The SCR is overseen by the head of human resources.

The school is committed to continuous professional development (CPD), offering induction programmes and mentoring for new staff, weekly training sessions, peer observations, and leadership development opportunities. Teachers present CPD sessions focused on key areas of development, with 34 different training programmes available, both online and in-person. International PGCE trainees are welcomed and well supported. External training opportunities are provided, along with coaching and mentoring programmes to encourage professional improvement and career progression. Leaders are given opportunities to step up into new roles, with tailored development plans based on their leadership aspirations.

9. Standard 5

The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation of the school are good with a robust strategic plan for substantial future improvements. The accommodation is well suited to the age and gender of the pupils. There is generally good provision of specialist rooms to meet needs of the curriculum, although older pupils have to travel off-site by bus to have most outdoor PE lessons. A brand-new purpose-built prep school and school Library opened in September 2024, which has followed the major refurbishment of the senior school in 2019 and the pre-prep premises in 2022. EYFS now benefits from classrooms that have direct access to natural light, as well as external learning spaces.

Perimeter security consists of walls, fences and CCTV surveillance. It is reinforced by 24/7 guards, the number of whom is increased at the start and end of school to marshal a 'kiss and go' area and the flow of traffic outside. Following major construction and refurbishment works, modern access control equipment has been installed, and its full functionality will soon be operational to easily identify different categories of school site users. Further infrastructural improvements are foreseen as part of this overall site improvement, including the development of a new astro turf pitch, hard-surface sports courts, a pre-prep music room, and outdoor toilets, all set to be completed in 2025.

All available areas across Runnymede are utilised very well, with many outdoor areas used for recreation as well as learning. The head of PE has worked with the chief operating officer in terms of maximising sporting facilities and space. There are plans to install a 2,000m² new astro turf pitch and a 500m² all-weather sports surface on the site of a demolished building. Staggered break and lunch times mitigate the relatively small area of shaded outdoor recreational space. There are plans here too to increase shading as part of the overall site development. In hot or inclement weather, pupils can safely access supervised indoor areas.

Buildings are in good condition and are well maintained by a site team. Effective procedures are in place to report and resolve any issues. Staff log any areas that need maintenance, and the school employs an on-site team for general maintenance. All buildings are well lit, kept at a comfortable temperature and well-ventilated. The furniture and fittings are of good quality and well matched to the needs of pupils. Good systems are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils, including careful attention to cleanliness and hygiene which meet local and BSO standards. Windows are fitted with sunlight protection, and learning spaces are designed for excellent acoustics. Specialist facilities are modern and well maintained. The forest school area in EYFS is kept in good order. There are well-equipped and safely maintained specialist rooms for science in both the prep school and the senior school. The chief operating officer, overseeing the continuous development of the school site and facilities, works in effective

partnership with the site business manager, who has the day to day responsibility for the maintenance of the site.

The modern, pleasant buildings and outdoor areas are appreciated by the pupils and contribute to their enjoyment of school. Displays around the school are good and regularly refreshed. They support the curriculum including cross-curricular links and celebrating pupils' work.

Changing and shower facilities for PE meet the requirements for BSO. Drinking water is available at many points around the campus, and more drinking water facilities are planned. The pre-prep and prep school have sinks in each classroom for pupils to fill up their water bottles. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH records for labs are maintained and hazardous equipment and chemicals are stored securely with limited access. Fume hoods are in labs, and science prep rooms and labs are well ventilated.

The kitchen facilities meet the requirements for BSO. They are regularly inspected by the *Comunidad de Madrid*, ensuring compliance with local health and safety regulations, including pest control. They prioritise fresh food preparation, and all meals are made on-site. To maintain the highest standards of hygiene and prevent cross-contamination, food preparation occurs in designated areas (e.g., separate sections for meat, vegetables, etc.).

10. Standard 6

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers, and the wider community fully meets the standard for BSO. It is a strength of the school.

The school communicates through multiple platforms, ensuring parents stay well-informed. The school website includes curriculum maps, school policies, and public exam details, alongside comprehensive parent and pupil handbooks. Newsletters and an annual yearbook provide updates on pupil achievements, school events, and extra-curricular activities. Academic progress is reported termly, and the school is preparing to introduce Arc Pathways. ISAMS is used for access to pupil information.

Parents are invited to assemblies and performances, strengthening their connection to school life.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedures for handling complaints fully meet the standard for BSO.

The complaints process is transparent and accessible, ensuring clear and open communication between parents and staff. Parents are able to raise concerns through multiple channels.

Whenever possible, concerns are resolved informally, with teachers and senior leaders always being highly approachable and responsive. Parents regularly communicate via ClassDojo, email, and direct contact with senior staff. If a formal complaint arises, it is directed to the senior Leadership Team, including the Headteacher, who work to resolve the matter efficiently. There were very few formal complaints in the proceeding school year.

The complaints procedure is well-structured, with clear policies that are shared and consistently applied. While most issues are resolved at an early stage, the school ensures ongoing dialogue with parents when necessary. Parents say that they have easy access to teachers and the school leadership team, feeling that their concerns are taken seriously and addressed promptly.

In the last resort, parents have the right to complain to the Spanish authorities that issue operating licences to independent international schools. This is done through the "*Canal Ético*" the channel through which stakeholders and whistleblowers may make a complaint in line with Spanish legislation. Both the school's internal complaints procedure and procedures for "*Canal de Ético*" are available on the school website; the former is also to be found in the latest edition of the parent and pupil handbook.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

The school consistently maintains exceptionally high academic and holistic standards of education; an achievement due, in no small measure, to its passion for pupil well-being, the successful nurturing ethos in the school, and the very effective quality assurance mechanisms which are constantly being reviewed and refined. This quest for excellence is reflected too in the recent and ongoing renewal of school buildings and facilities. There is a relentless effort to recruit, professionally develop and retain staff of high calibre. The school organises sophisticated relocation packages, an induction programme, weekly support meetings and a mentor for new teachers starting at the school. Once on board, staff enjoy excellent working conditions because owners put great value on retention and stability. Both pupils and parents quoted staff stability as their reason for choosing Runnymede College over the many other reputable international schools in the area.

The school has been family owned and run for nearly 60 years. Many current family members are involved in the operation of the school at different levels. The family influence of the school's owners, who remain fiercely independent, is contagious, and this family ethos can be felt across the whole school. This is also enormously valued by pupils, parents and staff alike.

The leadership and management of the school have successfully created the conditions for academic excellence, a fully rounded education for its pupils and, no less importantly, a vibrant learning environment where pupils clearly love coming to school. The quality of education provided by the school is under constant review.

The school has successfully introduced substantial changes in its quest to improve and adapt to its pupils' needs, and create a unique institutional identity. The recent restructuring of the school has been a success. A new prep-school which replaced the former Junior school has just been built. This follows on from major refurbishments of buildings that now house the pre-prep, senior school and the Sixth-Form.

The chain of hierarchy is clear and together they effectively assure the quality of educational provision. Performance management is linked to the school development plan, while professional training is often born out of both. The school's self-evaluation for this inspection was detailed, insightful, reflective and compelling; it demonstrated the leadership's in-depth knowledge of the school and its commitment to seek continuous improvement. Middle-leaders spoke enthusiastically of their involvement in the whole school self-evaluation process. The headteacher is keen to explore peer review partnerships with similar international schools.

The finance department, school administration and facilities management provide a strong scaffold supporting and securing the core business of Runnymede College. There is an additional layer of oversight for legal and financial compliance provided by two specialist directors.

A mark of the overall success of the leadership and management of the school is its waiting list in many year groups despite the wide choice of international schools for parents in the Alcobendas area of Madrid.