

Inspection report
Regent College

Independent school
DfES ref no: 310/6080

Inspection under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002

Dates of inspection: 29 November – 1 December 2005

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Regent College started as an independent, non-selective, co-educational college in 1998, and registered as a school in 2003. It is located in Harrow in the north-western suburbs of London. There are currently 110 students, including 20 aged from 13 to 16 years. The school's main mission statement proposes that *'the end of education is character'*. The statement includes academic and pastoral aims showing how the school seeks to achieve its goal.

Summary of main findings

Regent College is a successful school that achieves its aims. It provides a good quality education for its students of compulsory school age and its older students. It has a well-balanced curriculum, while good teaching enables students to make very good progress. It is a friendly and purposeful community where students are happy and work well and where standards of behaviour are high.

What the school does well:

- it makes very good provision for students' spiritual, moral and social development;
- it is particularly effective in motivating students so that they are keen to learn;
- teaching is of very high academic quality and prepares students very well for public examinations; and
- it forms a cohesive and mutually supportive community where learning is well supported.

Next Steps

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

- review the length of teaching sessions especially in French and maths and some science subjects;
- put into place its plans for students to obtain daily physical exercise on and off the premises; and
- continue to develop its range of extra-curricular activities.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION

1. The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is broad, well balanced and covers most of the subjects of the National Curriculum. Although music and design and technology are not explicitly named on the timetable, elements of design and working with resistant materials are included in the school's art syllabus. This subject also makes a major contribution to students' aesthetic education. The information and communication technology (ICT) syllabus contains major aspects of technology. Citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) are taught through specific programmes of study. Careers education and guidance prepares students for choices, changes and transitions affecting their future education, training and employment. Additional English lessons are arranged for those students who require extra support in English. This support enables them to improve the literacy skills required for the other subjects.

Total time allocations for each subject are sensible and place an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, especially for students of compulsory school age. Some teaching sessions are too long. The school bases most of its curricular planning on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work and on public examination syllabuses. Individual subject teachers' plans show plainly and precisely the content of the syllabus for each year group. This has been particularly well exemplified in the scheme of work for art for Year 9, which shows how the school has strongly personalised its planning and rationale for the students' work in art. There are some valuable cross-curricular links. The geography scheme, for example, demonstrates very clearly how ICT is used to enrich students' work on meteorology. Teachers ensure that all schemes of work and lesson plans are available for monitoring by the Principal at any time. Some very successful fieldwork was conducted by biology and business studies students with the results of their work on display in the college.

The sixth form curriculum follows the guidance of 'Curriculum 2000'. The individual students' programmes are well balanced and include good provision for teaching basic skills.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are mostly well planned and teachers have appropriate expertise, not only in their academic subjects but also in ensuring that students know how to do themselves justice in their examinations. Teachers have great enthusiasm for their subjects and pass on their enthusiasm to the students. Appropriate praise and encouragement are given for effort and achievement. Good opportunities for discussion are taken during lessons; occasionally, however, one or two students dominate the discussion. Resources for learning and teaching are always all to hand.

Effective use of questioning enables the class teachers to ascertain the level of understanding of the students and to target those with questions that match their

level of understanding. It also enables students to show if they have progressed further. More able students are generally given more challenging work. Homework reinforces learning effectively. Some successful use of paired work was seen in discussions in class and there was generally a good pace in lessons.

Students use the sports facilities well, sharing equipment and taking turns. They demonstrate good standards of sporting behaviour. Team games encourage fairness whilst encouraging students to work co-operatively to a common goal.

Assessment is very good; all participate in weekly tests and these are used not only to assess students' progress but also for reviewing the success of units of work to assist evaluation of the teaching. In this way the assessments directly influence the planning and teaching of the curriculum. Students' work is marked appropriately; much advice on how to improve work still further is given either in writing or verbally when work is returned.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

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

Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is very good. In line with the school's stated interest in character-building, there is a strong emphasis on individual responsibility, participation in college life, and the encouragement of good behaviour, alongside the development of students' self-confidence.

Assemblies provide some opportunities for spiritual reflection and the development of personal awareness. For example, during the registration period, students of compulsory school age are considering issues of comparative religion, and looking at how the various religions of the world approach the important stages in people's lives, including rites of passage.

Teachers promote students' self-esteem, self-discipline and the ability to mix freely and sensibly with other students and adults in the school. Many opportunities are given for individual, partnered and group work, and students often give presentations. Relationships are good between students and between staff and students. Teachers know their students well and their strengths and weaknesses. Students are always very respectful towards members of staff and visitors. Behaviour is good in classes and around the school. The students take good care of each other. There are a number of after-school clubs: chess, politics and a debating society. The clubs for sports include cricket, football, netball and badminton. Despite this, on the pre-inspection questionnaire, a fifth of those parents who replied reported that they would prefer still more visits and activities outside lessons, and a further third did not know if there was a good range of activities. The school continues to develop its extra-curricular activities. There is a cultural evening for parents later this term and plans to develop a music club are under way.

The PSHE programme makes a positive contribution to students' social development. It promotes their ability to discuss important issues about society and their place within it. The citizenship course contains strong elements concerning social and moral responsibility, and explores human rights legislation. Further aspects of citizenship and PSHE are studied in other subjects, particularly in science, but also in economics, and in ICT. There are good links with local public services such as the police, who provide elements of the school's drugs education policy, and with the local Member of Parliament, who opened the new school building. The use of Harrow School's sports facilities is fully appreciated by the students who feel that this is a very special part of their school week.

Many opportunities are provided for students to take responsibility, in clubs and teams, and on the school council. This meets in the impressive wood-panelled boardroom, which provides an appropriate environment encouraging a serious approach to the business on hand.

Career education and guidance is considered to be very important to prepare students for choices, changes and transitions affecting their future education, training and employment. Students have open access to information upon a broad range of careers either in written or electronic form. Students are encouraged to take part in the Young Enterprise activities run by the school. The school has also planned presentations in the autumn and spring term by various professionals including doctors, dentists, accountants, bankers, lawyers, teachers, and civil servants. The school arranges work experience in the local community during the summer term for Year 9, 10 and 11 students.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the students

The college makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of its students. It takes the necessary steps to ensure that it is a safe place in which to work and learn. Students are well supervised throughout the day. School policies meet all the key requirements for students' welfare, health and safety, supported by suitably detailed risk assessments.

There is good provision for First Aid, with two qualified members of staff with recent training. There is an effective school behaviour policy. Anti-bullying policies are in place and students report that there is no bullying. There is an appropriate child protection policy in line with local authority arrangements. The school has written records of serious disciplinary offences and of the sanctions taken. Attendance and admission registers are in order.

The school has made good provision for fire safety. There is a well-prepared fire risk assessment. The fire drill book is up-to-date and contains evaluative comments on past fire drills. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 (DDA), and is preparing its three year plan for submission in January 2006 in line with the requirements of the Act.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has worked very hard to ensure that it has appropriate procedures and so meets all the requirements for the suitability and checking of staff. Criminal Record Bureau certificates have been sought for all staff, but a few still remain to be returned. In the meantime, it is adopting the procedures recommended in the DfES guidelines.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation

The school moved into the current premises in 2004 and has worked hard to make a learning environment of high quality. The classrooms are all of appropriate size and mostly well decorated. They are appropriately furnished with whiteboards and overhead projectors. There is one room with an interactive whiteboard that was seen to be used to good effect in a number of lessons during the inspection. The school is currently developing the accommodation to suit the planned intake of students from Years 7 and 8. The heating in the school has recently been upgraded and appropriate temperatures are maintained within the school during cold weather. A First Aid room has been fitted out on the second floor. There are well-signposted fire escapes and fire notices in every classroom.

The school is implementing its three year plan in line with the DDA. It has already constructed a ramp and fitted disabled toilets and appropriate facilities on the ground floor.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners

The quality of information for parents is good. It is a priority of the school that communication with parents is effective. The informative prospectus contains details about the school's ethos, the curriculum and the education offered, as well as details of the complaints procedure. Students receive a brief report on their progress each half term and a termly full report.

The homework diary which students take home each day is also used to share news with home, so that it keeps everyone up-to-date with the life and work of the school. Parents are welcome to come and speak to the Principal. Most parents responded

positively to the questionnaire sent to them before the inspection. The results showed a high level of parental satisfaction with the school.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

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

The school has a very effective procedure for handling formal complaints which is detailed in the latest prospectus. There has not been any call to put the procedure into operation to date.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Regent College
DfES Number:	310/6080
Type of school:	Independent School
Status:	Independent
Age range of students:	13 – 19 years
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time students):	Boys: 69 Girls: 41 Total: 110
Annual fees (day students):	£6,500 (compulsory school aged students)
Address of school:	Regent College Sai House 167 Imperial Drive Harrow, Middlesex HA2 7JP
Telephone number:	0208 966 9900
Fax number:	0208 429 5639
Email address:	selva@regentcollege.uk.com
Headteacher:	Mr Selva Pankaj
Proprietor:	RTC Education Ltd
Reporting Inspector:	Mr Neville Grenyer
Date of inspection:	28 November – 1 December 2005

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