



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

St Paul's School

November 2021

Contents

School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
About the inspection	5
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	6
Preface	6
Key findings	7
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	7
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	7
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	8
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	8
PART 6 – Provision of information	8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	8
Additional information on particular areas of focus	9
3. Inspection Evidence	11

School's Details

School	St Paul's School			
DfE number	318/6066			
Registered charity number	1119619			
Address	St Paul's School Lonsdale Road London SW13 9JT			
Telephone number	02087 489162			
Email address	reception@stpaulsschool.org.uk			
High Master	Mrs Sally-Anne Huang			
Chair of governors	Mr Richard Cassell			
Age range	7 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1484			
	Day pupils	1448	Boarders	36
			Juniors	286
	Seniors	785	Sixth Form	413
Inspection dates	3 to 5 November 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Paul's is an independent day and boarding school for male pupils; it is a limited company with charitable status overseen by a board of trustees. The school was founded in the sixteenth century by the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, John Colet, to provide a Christian and humanist education. It moved to its current site on the south bank of the Thames in 1968. The junior and senior schools and the two boarding houses occupy separate buildings on the same site.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the governing body has appointed a new high master who took up the post in September 2020. A new chair of governors was appointed in January 2021. The school has completed the re-building of the senior school, with the addition of a dining room and teaching block. A second boarding house, designed for flexi-boarding, opened in September 2021.
- 1.3 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for the most vulnerable children and for the children of key workers. No boarders remained on site. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.4 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.5 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.6 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders.
- 1.7 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades in 2021 were awarded.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.8 The school aims to provide an outstanding intellectual, spiritual and physical education which prepares pupils for their future. It seeks to foster scholarship and enquiry through inspirational and responsive teaching, and to promote independence, respect, tolerance, kindness and service to others, including the local community.

About the pupils

- 1.9 Most pupils come from families living around the London area and represent a range of cultural, business and professional backgrounds. The school is academically selective, and, in the senior school, nationally standardised data indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The junior school does not use standardised tests; its own assessments indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 130 pupils as having special educational needs and/or difficulties (SEND), of whom 57 receive additional support such as one-to-one lessons or pupil-specific strategies within the classroom, for needs such as mild dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia and autistic spectrum disorders. No pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHC). Seventy-two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), none of whom receives individual support. The school provides academic

enrichment for its pupils, all of whom may be considered as more able or to have particular talents, through the design of its curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

About the inspection

For this inspection, the DfE requested a particular focus on ISSR Part 1 (curriculum, relationships and sex education, teaching and assessment), Part 2 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) and Part 3 (welfare, health and safety) and related NMS to ensure that pupils are safeguarded effectively, that the quality of education provided fosters a culture of positive relationships and respect for protected characteristics, and that the school implements a curriculum for relationships and sex education which meets the requirements of the statutory guidance.

Details relating to this particular focus can be found at the end of the Regulatory Compliance section under the heading 'Additional information on particular areas of focus' beginning on page 9.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2018 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2018 to 2021 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.5 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.6 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.7 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.8 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.9 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.10 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.11 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.12 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.13 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.17 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.19 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.20 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.21 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.**

Additional information on particular areas of focus

Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

- 2.23 Relationships and sex education (RSE) is effectively embedded within personal, social and health education (PSHE) provision throughout the school. All statutory content is delivered in regular timetabled lessons by the end of Year 10. Currently, pupils in Years 11 to 13 are allocated less timetable time for PSHE than those in earlier years, but key issues from the RSE programme are revisited with a suitable mixture of lessons, workshops and talks focusing on preparation for life after and outside school. These include respectful relationships, issues of consent, the party scene and misogyny. At present this provision includes off-timetable sessions which all pupils must attend. The school has plans to offer a regular timetabled session in these year groups from September 2022. A minority of pupils in Year 13 who completed the questionnaire said they wanted more teaching on healthy relationships. Inspection evidence shows that this year group has received less guidance in this area than others.
- 2.24 There are specialist heads of PSHE in both the junior and senior schools. They plan and oversee the curriculum for PSHE and RSE and provide appropriate training and materials to those teaching the sessions. Provision is monitored and assessment is implemented to ensure pupils' understanding is strong. Well-planned resources are pupil-friendly and appropriate. Pupils confirm that lessons are helpful and informative, and they feel confident that they are well prepared for life after school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5; NMS 17]

- 2.25 School leaders, staff and pupils responded strongly and positively to recent issues raised in the public domain around sexism and misogyny. A robust action plan addressing school culture is being implemented, particularly focused on the promotion of positive school values and behaviour. Pupils have been involved in updating the school's code of conduct to address specifically issues of lack of respect and sexism. There have been joint initiatives with a nearby girls' school, partly driven by older pupils, who have formed a Values committee to help improve social and behavioural cultures, such as those around respect and consent. Other pupils have started a society to promote diversity, and the newly formed Feminist Society invited the school's first female head to speak at its inaugural meeting. These innovations help pupils to accept their responsibility for their own behaviour and have contributed strongly to encourage pupils' respect for other people, particularly those with protected characteristics.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 2 and 11]

- 2.26 The school has suitable policies and procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils and these are implemented successfully. Staff, including boarding staff, are trained appropriately as was evidenced in their well-informed responses in meetings with inspectors and in their confident handling of safeguarding incidents as recorded in files. Safeguarding concerns, incidents of peer-on peer abuse, including online, and relevant bullying and behavioural incidents are logged centrally. Highly detailed records are monitored regularly to identify patterns of behaviour both across the school and for individual pupils.
- 2.27 The school educates all pupils effectively about keeping safe, including online, through its PSHE programme. Pupils know when and how to seek help from a wide range of adults within school and know that they can take any safeguarding issues to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or their deputies, confident that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately. Posters on safeguarding are displayed widely and the school has adopted online platforms for pupils to report concerns anonymously. Staff understand how to respond to cases of sexual violence and harassment and peer-

on-peer abuse. The school's code of conduct for staff and whistleblowing procedures are similarly well understood. Local safeguarding partners confirm that the school has a good relationship with children's services. Referrals are made appropriately, including if allegations are made against adults working in the school and the school consults on situations around the threshold for referrals. The school also has a good relationship with the local police liaison officer and other agencies. The governing body has a dedicated safeguarding committee which informs all governors so that they can monitor policies and procedures effectively. The designated safeguarding governor has particular expertise in the area of peer-on-peer abuse and is in the process of training others, including the chair and boarding governor.

- 2.28 The school has effective safer recruitment procedures in place and maintains and checks a suitable single register of all staff which is also checked termly by the safeguarding governor.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 12]

- 2.29 The school has successfully reviewed and updated its peer-on-peer abuse and behaviour policies as part of the action plan on culture change. A new role has been created to strengthen and embed positive values in the school community. Encouraging respect from pupils for others inside and outside school, and a determination for the school to intervene early in any abusive behaviour, are at the heart of these initiatives. Staff and pupils told inspectors that the culture is steadily changing for the better and they feel empowered by the school's actions to challenge low-level poor behaviour. Inspection evidence supports these views. Records show that pastoral and safeguarding staff provide appropriate support for victims. As well as receiving appropriate sanctions, perpetrators are offered suitable support and guidance to change their behaviour. This includes educative measures that have been used effectively in past incidents relating to the possession of offensive weapons and drugs.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 1 and 13]

- 2.30 Governors and school leaders have made considerable changes to the school's staffing, procedures and curriculum with appropriate focus on historical and current issues, aiming to change the culture within the school. Inspection evidence confirms that governors and leaders are making progress in ensuring that pupils develop respectful attitudes to others within and outside the school.

3. Inspection Evidence

3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and the safeguarding and boarding governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Catherine Williamson	Reporting inspector
Mr William Ibbetson-Price	Accompanying inspector
Mrs Nicola McAvoy	Compliance team inspector (Director of finance and operations, Prep Schools Trust)
Mr Stuart Nicolson	Compliance team inspector (Principal, ISA school)
Mr Alan Sturrock	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, SofH school)