



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Salesian College

November 2022

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School's Details

College	Salesian College		
DfE number	850/6022		
Registered charity number	1130166		
Address	119 Reading Road Farnborough Hampshire GU14 6PA		
Telephone number	01252 893000		
Email address	office@salesiancollege.com		
Headmaster	Mr Gerard Owens		
Chair of governors	Mr Mirek Gliniecki		
Age range	11 to 18		
Number of pupils on roll	634		
	Seniors	505	Sixth Form 129
Inspection dates	15 to 17 November 2022		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Salesian College is an independent Catholic day school located in Farnborough, Hampshire. The school was founded in 1901, and is part of a world-wide organisation of educational foundations run by the Salesians of Don Bosco, a religious order founded in the nineteenth century in Italy by St John Bosco. It became an independent school for male pupils in 1966, and admitted female pupils into the sixth form in 2007. The school is a charitable trust whose trustees form the board of governors with proprietorial responsibility. Since the previous inspection a new chair of governors was appointed in 2019.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school embraces the principles of Don Bosco and wishes its pupils to recognise that they are important, have dignity, and possess a set of gifts that are uniquely theirs. It aims to provide an environment where pupils are challenged to ask questions about life and themselves, as well as building their knowledge and skills.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from families with a range of professional and business backgrounds, and most live within 30 minutes' travel from the school. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared with pupils taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 63 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 30 of whom receive additional support in the classroom or specialist help when required. Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 10 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified a number of pupils as being more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for other pupils because of their special talents in sport, music and drama.

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. 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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. 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 in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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](#).

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2019 to 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, 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.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 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.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 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.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 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.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils display exemplary attitudes to learning both in their individual studies and in the support and encouragement they offer their peers.
- Pupils are highly articulate and confident speakers and listen respectfully to one another.
- Pupils use ICT instinctively and highly effectively to support their learning.
- Pupils enjoy excellent levels of success in a wide variety of co-curricular activities.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils display high levels of self-confidence and self-motivation.
- Pupils have a deep spiritual understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
- Pupils are naturally inclusive and demonstrate particularly strong acceptance of those who have different backgrounds or beliefs to their own.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the difference between right and wrong and firmly uphold the school's ethos and values.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure that all pupils have consistent opportunities to develop their higher-order thinking skills by sharing successful teaching approaches in this area.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils' attainment at A level was high in 2022 with about three-quarters of entries graded A* to B. This mirrored the strong teacher- and centre-assessed results in 2020 and 2021. In 2019 about two-thirds of entries were graded A* to B. During the period 2019 to 2022, pupils have shown equally high levels of attainment at GCSE, with nearly two-thirds of examination results were at one of the highest three grades. Entry data indicate that almost all pupils have an ability above others taking similar tests nationally. Data provided by the school indicate that in public examinations most pupils attain grades at least in-line with those expected for their ability. Pupils with SEND make progress in-line with that

of their peers. Pupils' strong progress is supported by the highly effective tracking and assessment procedures provided by the school to monitor pupils' progress and to measure their attainment.

- 3.6 Pupils of all ages display excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects. Pupils easily recall previous knowledge, which they use effectively to deepen their understanding of new topics. For example, in a GCSE history lesson, pupils skilfully deployed their knowledge from previous work on Russia to enhance their understanding of Stalin's policies and motives. Pupils often show a deep and subtle appreciation of ideas and concepts, such as in an English lesson, where Year 8 pupils engaged in a mature discussion of the dystopian themes they had been studying. Similarly, in an economics lesson, sixth form pupils displayed a highly sophisticated understanding of price elasticity. Pupils exhibit strong subject-specific skills. In a Year 9 art lesson, pupils produced highly creative and technical sculptures and in Year 7 science, pupils performed practical work safely and confidently. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils said that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons. Evidence from lesson observations, pupil interviews and the scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed these views. Beyond the classroom, pupils develop or discover their gifts and talents and hone their skills in a wide range of co-curricular activities, which complement the academic curriculum. Pupils' development of excellent knowledge, skills and understanding is enabled by teachers who are committed to helping pupils to improve and achieve their full potential, not just in public examinations, but as individual members of the school community.
- 3.7 Pupils are excellent and enthusiastic communicators. Their natural confidence and ease in conversation is facilitated in and out of lessons by teachers, who value the opinions of pupils and listen to their ideas and concerns. Pupils of all ages readily engaged with inspectors in formal discussions and informally over lunch, displaying both engaging humour and a profound and mature understanding of the school's values and ethos. When presenting in assemblies or in lessons, pupils express their ideas fluently and coherently. For example, in a religious studies lesson, Year 9 pupils confidently articulated their ideas on pacifism and conflict, offering considered and carefully constructed arguments. In a drama rehearsal, sixth form pupils were highly accomplished and confident when adopting appropriate regional accents in character roles. Pupils understand and use subject-specific vocabulary carefully and accurately in subjects such as computer science and mathematics. Pupils are also excellent listeners. In a whole school assembly, pupils listened to music in an atmosphere of calm reflection. In a Year 13 politics lesson, pupils listened respectfully to differing views on the image of American presidents and used the ideas of others to shape their own understanding. Pupils of all ages write persuasively and are able to provide sustained and developed responses, as seen in many examples of their written work.
- 3.8 Pupils display strong numerical skills. Sixth form mathematicians demonstrated highly developed numerical skills when tackling complex questions. Often working together to solve problems in mathematics lessons, younger pupils are confident to take risks and not afraid to make mistakes. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm to mathematics challenges, games and puzzles, which extend their knowledge and sharpen their arithmetical skills. Pupils regularly perform strongly in mathematics and science Olympiads. Across the curriculum, pupils deploy their numeracy skills naturally and confidently. For example, in a Year 8 geography lesson, pupils accurately calculated and plotted data to create climate graphs. Pupils of all ages have an excellent grounding in mathematical skills to support their learning and for future life.
- 3.9 Pupils have equally strong and excellent ICT skills. They use their devices naturally and frequently both to support and to develop their learning. Most pupils also use their devices highly effectively to organise their daily routines and commitments in school. Older pupils use ICT skilfully as a research tool and to review their previous work to consolidate their learning. In sixth form lessons, pupils use their devices to share ideas and facilitate group work to build a broader understanding. For example in a Year 12 psychology lesson, pupils linked their devices to the class screen to contribute ideas and build a group response. Younger pupils also use their devices naturally and expertly to support their

learning as seen in a Year 10 English lesson, where pupils successfully accessed on-line resources to aid their creative writing. Pupils with SEND report feeling very confident in using ICT resources and specialist software to help them access the curriculum and to present their work. Pupils' development of excellent ICT skills has been facilitated by the school's recent digital learning strategy and the investment by the school's leadership and management in ICT resources and training.

- 3.10 Pupils display extremely well-developed study skills. They think critically, question incisively and analyse logically. In a Year 11 history lesson, pupils asked searching questions to deepen their understanding of global politics in the Cold War period. Similarly, in an English lesson, Year 13 pupils reasoned perceptively as they discussed the modern and Jacobean contextual interpretations of a character. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a strong willingness and skilful capacity to research and use a broad range of sources in their work, as seen in a religious studies lesson where Year 9 pupils expertly deployed a wide range of research material when discussing themes of violence and war. Pupils relish the opportunity to make perceptive links between their subjects. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson, pupils related their historical knowledge perceptively to enhance their understanding of war poetry.
- 3.11 Pupils reach an extremely high level of achievement in a range of physical and creative activities. Pupils' lives are enriched by the many opportunities provided by the school to compete in sport, to perform in drama and music, to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme (DofE) or to enjoy the wide range of clubs and societies. School teams have enjoyed national success in biathlon and regional successes in athletics, cricket, football, netball, rugby and swimming. Individual pupils have achieved national and regional honours in these and a wide range of other sports including American football, basketball, rowing and squash. In drama and music, many pupils achieve high grades in examinations. In drama, pupils enjoy writing and directing their own work such as the recent pupil-led production of the Great Gatsby. Musical pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide variety of activities for choirs, ensembles and rock groups. In response to their questionnaires, almost all parents felt that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities and inspection evidence confirms that most pupils enjoy busy and successful lives beyond the classroom.
- 3.12 Pupils have an innate love of learning and approach their lessons with enthusiasm and a desire to succeed. They are eager to ask questions to deepen their understanding and delight in offering to present their work to the class. Pupils collaborate naturally and instinctively, helping one another to solve problems or to reach a shared understanding. For example, in a Year 7 history lesson, pupils worked productively to devise and perform short scenes to illustrate the events of the Norman Conquest. When given the opportunity, pupils love to rise to the challenge of working independently and to take charge of their own learning, exploring ideas and expanding their thinking. In a Year 13 English lesson, pupils debated animatedly as they analysed the character of King Lear, exploring and testing their ideas. In the questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils did not agree that most lessons are interesting. Inspectors found this to be justified in a small number of lessons where the teaching was more directive or lessons did not allow pupils to develop their own thinking, which as a result meant that pupils made less progress.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils are highly self-confident with no hint of arrogance. They know their own strengths and weaknesses and are very self-aware. For example, pupils recognize a growing need to support pupils with mental health concerns and are appreciative of the increased provision of counselling organised by the leadership and management of the school. Pupils understand that making mistakes is an opportunity for personal development and feel confident to take risks in their learning because of the encouragement from teachers and the support of their peers. This was apparent in a Year 8 drama lesson, where pupils devised and performed their own pieces with confidence and aplomb, and in a

Year 11 maths lesson, where individual pupils presented solutions for their peers to critique and correct. Pupils at all levels are very clear about how to improve their work and are not afraid to ask for help, supported by constructive assessments and clear target-setting. They display high levels of tenacity and resilience when tackling problems or when persevering to develop their skills. In discussion, pupils spoke of how leadership opportunities, such as being a house captain, can help them to know themselves better and to overcome their doubts. They are not afraid to voice their opinions through the school council and have made sensible suggestions about improving the outside play areas. Many pupils spoke about how proud they are to be a Salesian and how the school's ethos of valuing the contribution of each pupil affirms and develops their sense of self-worth.

- 3.15 Pupils have a deep and sensitive awareness of spirituality and the non-material aspects of life. Those with a personal faith speak naturally and openly about their beliefs in lessons and assemblies, while others recognise that the school's ethos of showing kindness and service encourages the development of a strong moral character. Pupils who wish to express or explore their faith, appreciate enormously the various opportunities for worship and discussion provided through the chaplaincy, in assemblies and in the annual retreats and pilgrimages. They are supported in their spiritual development by staff who promote the advantages of diversity in the school's population and prioritise spiritual contemplation and reflection as features of the school's religious identity. Pupils of all faiths value the opportunities for silent prayer in the school chapel and appreciate the school library as a centre for quiet meditation as well as study. Pupils are naturally reflective and sensitive to global concerns and issues. For example, Year 9 pupils discussed their recent trip to the battlefields and how it had helped them to reflect on suffering and the impact of war on families in the current conflict in Ukraine. Pupils are hugely encouraged and supported in their personal development and in their learning by the strong Christian ethos of the school.
- 3.16 Pupils are extremely accepting of anyone who is different within the school community, stressing that their identity as a Salesian transcends any apparent difference of race, gender or religion. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and different faith groups report that they get along easily in and out of the classroom. Pupil diversity and inclusion ambassadors of all ages work hard to inform their peers and allay any misunderstandings that may arise. In lessons, pupils readily share their cultural and religious experiences. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson, pupils explored stereotypical images of potential terrorists maturely and sensitively, listening carefully and respectfully to one another's views. In their questionnaires, all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people and inspectors agreed with this view.
- 3.17 Pupils are confident to make their own decisions. Older pupils are ambitious and realistic in planning the next stage in their lives and value the support of the careers department. Younger pupils spoke enthusiastically about how they feel supported and encouraged to make decisions about subject choices because they enjoy excellent relations with their teachers. Pupils of all ages feel very well informed to make wise personal choices because of the carefully structured and comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) curriculum. They understand clearly the school's 'Chance, Choice, Consequence' approach to minor disciplinary incidents, which encourages them to make a conscious decision to learn from their mistakes.
- 3.18 A sense of mutual respect and a shared understanding of right and wrong are at the heart of the school community. Incidents of serious misbehaviour are rare. In their questionnaires, almost all pupils agreed that the school expects them to behave well but a small minority felt that pupils do not always treat each other with kindness or respect. Inspectors raised these concerns in conversation with a significant proportion of pupils, almost all of whom expressed a contrary view. Pupils felt that, on the very rare occasions when unkindness occurs, it stems from a natural and mostly healthy competitiveness in the playground or a clumsy rather than malicious choice of words. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and are willing to learn from their mistakes. They appreciate and benefit from the school's emphasis on redemption rather than retribution when misbehaviour occurs. In discussion, pupils reported that staff are always willing to listen to their

concerns and that they are confident that the school has highly effective strategies to deal with any bullying or poor behaviour should it occur.

- 3.19 Pupils of all backgrounds have an extremely strong sense of teamwork and desire to support one another in and out of lessons. This highly developed sense of social awareness is immediately apparent in the school's Don Bosco Centre, where pupils of all ages mix easily, chatting and relaxing whilst playing games, or just enjoying being together. In lessons, pupils affirm one another in their learning. For example, in a Year 11 French lesson, pupils collaborated supportively to correct each other's mistakes and produce accurate translations. In discussions, pupils spoke positively about the benefits of working together in charitable endeavours and the joys of participating collaboratively in drama and music. In their questionnaires, most parents agreed that the school helps pupils to develop strong teamwork and social skills and inspectors confirmed these views through observations in and out of lessons.
- 3.20 Pupils show an extremely strong desire to support the school community and to serve the needs of others through charitable activities. Pupil leaders given formal roles are excellent role models for younger pupils and have a self-evident desire to give something back to the school community. For example, Year 12 pupils have recently led sessions for Year 7 pupils on the benefits of good mental health. Senior pupils act as peer mentors or academic mentors, offering their free time to support younger pupils. Pupils of all ages enthusiastically involve themselves in raising money for local and international charities. For example, the porridge club raises money to feed around 750 children a day in Zambia. In most form rooms, pupils are collecting items for a local foodbank and older pupils volunteer more directly in local projects to help the homeless. Pupils demonstrate an excellent social awareness of those less fortunate than themselves and are encouraged to develop a strong sense of service by staff who are willing to support and facilitate pupils' initiatives to help others.
- 3.21 Pupils greatly value the encouragement they are given to remain both physically and mentally healthy. They understand the importance and benefits of physical exercise and of a healthy diet. Pupils enthusiastically embrace the opportunities provided by the school to maintain their fitness through sport and other activities. Similarly, many pupils spoke maturely about the importance of maintaining good mental health and the need to establish a sensible work-life balance. All pupils were confident that they knew how to remain safe on-line and many spoke appreciatively about the way that the school's PSHE programme has helped them to make informed choices.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Holliday	Reporting inspector
Mr David Bradbury	Compliance team inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mrs Kate Corbin	Team inspector (Deputy head HMC school)
Miss Jacky Gill	Team inspector (Head of Department HMC school)
Mr Will Williams	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)