



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

St Paul's Cathedral School

July 2024

School's details

School	St Paul's Cathedral School			
DfE number	201/6006			
Registered charity number	312718			
Address	St Paul's Cathedral School 2 New Change London EC4M 9AD			
Telephone number	0207 248 5156			
Email address	admissions@spcs.london.sch.uk			
Head	Mrs Judith Fremont-Barnes			
Chair of governors	Mr Robert-Jan Temmink KC			
Proprietor	The Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	270			
	Day pupils	248	Boarders	22
	EYFS	31	Juniors	205
	Seniors	34		
Date of inspection	3 July 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St Paul’s Cathedral School is a co-educational day and boarding school. The school educates the choristers for the Cathedral from the age of eight years. Boarders are accommodated in one boarding house situated on the school site. Oversight of the school is delegated by the Cathedral to a board of governors, led by an independent chair. The Dean is vice-chair and two of the governing body are members of the Cathedral Chapter. The current head took up her position in September 2023. The school has 30 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom has an education, health and care plan. Three pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school’s previous inspection was a progress monitoring and material change inspection in May 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the progress monitoring inspection on 22 May 2023. The inspection focused on the school’s compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1 paragraph 3 (teaching)	Remains unmet
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils); NMS 3	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8 (safeguarding); NMS 8	Met
Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance); NMS 9	Met
ISS Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
ISS Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Remain unmet

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

- 2.1 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.2 Teaching enables pupils to develop their abilities and understanding and make good progress across the range of subjects. Teachers communicate their subject knowledge effectively and make effective use of suitable resources. Teaching makes effective use of time and manages pupils' behaviour well. Male and female pupils are treated equally during lessons.
- 2.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has effectively implemented equality of opportunity to female pupils to become cathedral choristers. The school now caters for female choristers and probationer choristers. However male choristers are provided with boarding provision at the school in order to facilitate choir practice. Female choristers are currently day pupils, which sometimes impacts on the amount of time it takes for them to travel to choir practice. The school has made progress towards providing suitable boarding accommodation for female choristers, with its completion date on track and due to be completed and available to female choristers in September 2025. However, such accommodation is not yet available. Therefore, the school does not meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Standards are unlikely to be met until there is equality for boys and girls, particularly in respect of the lack of boarding provision for female choristers.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5; NMS 3]

- 2.4 The school meets the standards.
- 2.5 Leaders and staff effectively promote the importance of treating all groups of people with respect, including with regard to their protected characteristics. Pupils are conversant with the school's positive values and report that staff treat male and female pupils fairly and with equal consideration.
- 2.6 Since the previous inspection, governors and leaders have made progress in implementing their 'Girls' Voices' project, with the result that the school now provides equal opportunities for male and female pupils to become choristers and receive the same level of expertise and support in this role. Consequently, the school has met the action set as a result of the previous inspection in this respect.

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.7 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.8 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 Leaders and staff implement the safeguarding policy and procedures effectively and act in the best interests of the pupils, including those in the early years and those in boarding. Staff are appropriately trained and understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the expectations of the staff code of conduct. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities provide sufficient cover

for their role, including in boarding and the early years. They receive training to equip them for their role. They respond effectively when any safeguarding concerns arise, including by liaising with and, when appropriate, referring concerns to relevant external agencies. The school has appropriate procedures to respond to any issues relating to child-on-child abuse or allegations against staff. It implements a suitable safer recruitment policy. Leaders encourage pupils to express any concerns that they might have, and pupils report that there are members of staff available for them to talk to, including during boarding time and when they are at the Cathedral. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online, and appropriate filtering and monitoring of internet usage is in place. Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements, including through regular reports from the safeguarding team and an annual safeguarding review.

Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25; NMS 9]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 Leaders ensure that the premises and accommodation are maintained effectively. For example, they commission external surveys of the premises' suitability and act in accordance with advice that they receive.
- 2.13 At the start of the inspection, it was not clear whether the school had provided the DfE with information about fire safety cladding that they had previously requested from all independent schools. The situation was clarified during the inspection. The school does not have any fire safety cladding reportable to the DfE.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.14 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- 2.15 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.16 Leaders and governors have made progress in addressing the actions required as a result of the previous inspection. They have obtained planning permission for the proposed building work to provide boarding accommodation for female pupils and commissioned this work. Plans for the proposed development indicate that the resultant boarding accommodation for male and female pupils is likely to be of equal quality.
- 2.17 Although not completed at the time of the inspection, the record of actions taken so far indicates that the school is on track to provide boarding accommodation by September 2025. Leaders have effectively implemented equality of opportunity to female pupils to become Cathedral choristers in the timescale identified in the plan for the implementation of the 'Girls' Voices' project.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022 and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 1, Quality of education provided - teaching [paragraph 3]

- The school must ensure that teaching meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to gender equality, by providing equal opportunities for female pupils to become boarding choristers [paragraph 3(j)].

ISSR Part 8, Quality of leadership and management [paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- Governors and senior leaders must ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met through the demonstration of good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, fulfilling their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5].

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and the chair of governors. They met with two other governors, including the chair of the 'Girls' Voices' project and the Dean of the Cathedral. The inspectors observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies. The onsite inspection was quality assured.