



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

ST PAUL'S SCHOOL

MARCH 2017



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	020 8748 9162			
Email address	reception@stpaulsschool.org.uk			
High Master	Professor Mark Bailey			
Chair of governors	Mr John Robertson			
Age range	7 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1406			
	Boys	1406	Girls	0
	Day pupils	1385	Boarders	21
	Juniors	449	Seniors	550
	Sixth Form	407		
Inspection dates	8 to 9 March 2017			

PREFACE

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

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.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended tutorials and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Bill Burn	Reporting inspector
Mr Garry Bowe	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Robin Davies	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr David Dawswell	Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Graham Letley	Team inspector (Director of studies, HMC school)
Mr William Norton	Team inspector (Director of sport, HMC school)
Mrs Sally Ward	Team inspector (Senior teacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Lorraine Winch-Johnson	Team inspector (Head of department, GSA school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1
About the school	1
What the school seeks to do	1
About the pupils	1
Recommendations from previous inspections	3
2 KEY FINDINGS	4
Recommendation	4
3 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 St Paul's School is an independent day and boarding school for boys aged between 7 and 18 years. Boys up to the age of 13 are educated at St Paul's Juniors, which was Colet Court and shares the same site. A small number of boys attend as boarders and have their own purpose-built accommodation. The school was founded in the twelfth century as the choir school to St Paul's Cathedral, and re-founded in 1509 on humanist principles. It is a limited company with charitable status, governed by a board of trustees.
- 1.2 In 1968 the school moved to the London borough of Richmond, and it now stands on a 46-acre site on the south bank of the River Thames. A phased development programme is currently ongoing; new science laboratories have opened since the previous inspection and more reconstruction is planned to include a dining hall and further classrooms. In 2016, a new head of the junior school was appointed. At the same time the junior and senior schools were brought closer together; the transfer examination between the schools has been discontinued.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide an outstanding intellectual, spiritual and physical education to all academically eligible boys. It seeks to foster scholarship through inspirational and responsive teaching, and to promote independence, respect, tolerance, kindness and service. The school also endeavours to build links with the local community, including through voluntary service.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a culturally mixed cross-section of British families living within 20 miles of the school, with a range of professional and business backgrounds. The school is academically selective. Nationally standardised data used in the senior school indicate that the ability of the pupils is well above average. The junior school does not use standardised tests. Its own assessments indicate that the ability of pupils is also well above average. Most pupils are in the top 10 per cent nationally and half are in the top 3 per cent. The school has identified 101 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 33 receive additional support. These needs are generally mild forms of dyslexia, dyspraxia and dysgraphia. Also, 1 pupil has an education, health and care plan. A total of 84 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 3 receive individual support. The school provides academic enrichment for all pupils in the curriculum and other activities, with opportunities for research and participation in national and international competitions.

- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Lower First Form	Year 3
Upper First Form	Year 4
Lower Second Form	Year 5
Upper Second Form	Year 6
Lower Third Form	Year 7
Upper Third Form	Year 8
Fourth Form	Year 9
Fifth Form	Year 10
Sixth Form	Year 11
Lower Eighth Form	Year 12
Upper Eighth Form	Year 13

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the senior school by ISI was an integrated inspection in March 2013. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Ensure that pupils in Years 9 and 10 have an effective mechanism for putting forward and receiving feedback on their opinions on whole-school issues.
 - Share the outstanding practice in teaching methods, seen in much teaching, across all subject areas, including the creative use of assessment data to track the pupils' progress.
 - Ensure that the minutes of the full governing body meetings record the detail and outcomes of the annual review of safeguarding.
- 1.7 The previous full inspection of the junior school by ISI was an integrated inspection in March 2013. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Improve the quality and consistency of marking.
 - Ensure that the minutes of the full governing body record the outcomes of the annual review of safeguarding.
- 1.8 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of both previous full inspections.
- 1.9 The recommendations of the intermediate boarding inspection in March 2016 were:
- Ensure that the views of boarders about matters that are of particular concern to them, such as food at evening meals, are regularly sought and responses provided.
 - Maintain more detailed records of the governors' monitoring of welfare, health and safety.
- 1.10 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous intermediate boarding inspection.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils excel in their academic and intellectual development, and achieve exceptional standards in public examinations, sport and performing arts.
- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to their learning and respond responsibly to the high level of autonomy they are provided.
- The great majority of pupils gain admission to universities with highly demanding entry requirements due teaching which inspires them and is responsive to their needs.
- Pupils are highly numerate and literate, and they also have excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
- Pupils take full advantage of and achieve high standards in the excellent programme of extra-curricular activities.

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

- Pupils grow into confident young adults as a direct result of the autonomy the school provides them and the high levels of pastoral support.
- Pupils treat one another with exemplary tolerance and mutual respect, and enjoy the opportunities school life offers to work collaboratively with their peers.
- Pupils make a major contribution to the lives of others within the school, in the local area and in the wider community. A few pupils lack awareness of these opportunities.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how they can take responsibility for their own health and welfare.

Recommendation

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Raising pupils' awareness of the opportunities available to them for voluntary service, especially in Years 9 to 11.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils excel in their academic and intellectual development, and achieve exceptional standards in public examinations, sport, and performing arts. The development of their knowledge, skills and understanding is excellent. Pupils relish the chance to range beyond the confines of the examination requirements. In doing so they broaden the base of their knowledge, develop skills, and enjoy making connections and drawing comparisons. They especially enjoy forming hypotheses of their own in lessons which invite them to ponder 'what if...?', rather than supplying answers. Tackling an ambitious construction project, for example, pupils were faced with writing at length about the process. At first, science specialists found this daunting, but as it neared completion it became a justifiable source of pride. Pupils derive benefit and enjoyment when they have the chance to pursue a trail that they find intriguing. Pupils in a chemistry lesson made aspirin, just to see if they could. Pupils in drama devised roles and circulated freely around the classroom before moving to the theatre for the next segment of the lesson, remaining in character all the time. Junior school pupils shared a highly developed analysis of whether some human rights took priority over others in a lesson on theology and philosophy. Pupils in an art class tried out different media whilst making geometric cardboard masks based on science-fiction characters. High-quality teaching feeds this appetite consistently, and thus fulfils the school's aim to be 'inspiring and responsive'. The school has met the recommendation of the previous inspection report to share the outstanding practice in teaching across all subject areas.
- 3.3 The great majority of pupils gain admission to universities with highly demanding entry requirements in this country and the United States. Results at GCSE are far above the national average, and in IGCSE are higher than worldwide norms. At A level, results are well above the national averages for both maintained selective and non-selective schools. These results and the standardised measures of progress available, alongside evidence from lesson observations, interviews and work scrutiny, indicate that pupils make good and often excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. The pupils with SEND achieve results in line or above those of other pupils of similar abilities. Pupils take full advantage of the school's wish for them to explore their subjects in the widest and deepest way possible. They are free to develop their intellectual lives with no particular emphasis on public examination results. Enrichment and extension activities are available in abundance, from junior art club to the Extended Project Qualification and the High Master's essay prize in Year 12.
- 3.4 Pupils are highly numerate and literate, and this accounts for much of their academic success. They also have excellent ICT skills, enabling them to present their work to a high standard. Pupils use the internet effectively for high-level research, as observed in a GCSE geography lesson where pupils were investigating glacial retreat in North America. Their oral communication skills are outstanding. Pupils' language is sophisticated and carefully judged. They weigh arguments carefully and evaluate evidence before taking a view. Pupils are highly persuasive in debate, a product of the teaching style used in many lessons. They are constantly provoked and stimulated into discussion, and lessons offer a stimulating environment for learning.

- 3.5 Pupils are frequently found to be working in advance of their age. In Year 8 they are routinely set GCSE questions in mathematics. Neither pupils nor teachers have ambitions to sit GCSE examinations early, however. Instead, they seize together the opportunity to explore and enrich their learning. Junior school pupils delight in the chance to dip into the history of the American War of Independence, China and India. Likewise, they enjoyed a version of *'Dragon's Den'* which featured artefacts from the Industrial Revolution. In English GCSE lessons, pupils investigate a range of genres and eras before embarking on a study of set texts for examinations. The removal of the requirement of the entry test into the senior school has reinforced the school's priority: education in the broadest sense in preference to testing.
- 3.6 Pupils embrace and value the extra-curricular opportunities that school life provides them, and achieve high levels of success. For example, over 100 pupils attend the junior school chess club each week. Standards in music, drama and sport throughout the school are exceptionally high, with each pupil able to develop his interests and talents to the full. Gold medals in mathematics Olympiads are thus matched by international honours in rowing and rugby. Pupils regard extra-curricular activity as central to their education. If they see an opportunity, they will create and organise a club or society. The formation of cycling and historical reading clubs are recent examples.
- 3.7 Pupils identified the benefits and enjoyment that they derive from the school's extra-curricular activities. By their own account, they develop qualities of organisation, perseverance and independence. These have a positive effect on their academic work. International sportsmen indicated that their academic work has prospered in proportion to the increased demands of their training programme, as they have to be motivated and learn to establish priorities. Pupils issue invitations to prominent public figures to speak at meetings in the school, devise the programmes and act as hosts. They behave like mature undergraduate students, living up to the expectations placed upon them by the school and recognising their responsibility to capitalise on the autonomy the school provides them.
- 3.8 Almost all parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses said that the range of subjects in the taught curriculum is suitable for their sons and that the school provides a good choice of extra-curricular activities. Similarly, they said that teaching enables their sons to make good progress and develop skills for the future and that the school is governed, led and managed well. Virtually all pupils in their questionnaire responses confirmed that they have the opportunity to learn and make progress. They also expressed that their lessons are interesting and that the teachers are supportive and helpful. Pupils agree that they know how they are doing in their subjects, and that marking helps them to improve their work. In this way, the junior school has met the recommendation of the previous integrated inspection to improve the quality and consistency of marking.

- 3.9 Pupils benefit from a carefully planned programme of academic enrichment activities. The whole of Year 7 decamps to the Lake District under the auspices of the geography and science departments each year. They extend and enrich their knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of practical tasks and activities, some related to their academic curriculum. Pupils in the junior school relish the challenge of publishing a magazine, which is done by them alone. They develop skills and confidence in writing, art work and printing. Junior school pupils also seize the opportunity to excel in a range of diverse activities from pre-season cricket nets to national geography competitions. The programme is imaginative and stimulating. It is matched carefully by the school to the pupils' interests and abilities, and it changes frequently in consequence. Much of the success of the school's extra-curricular programme reflects the ambitious vision of the school's leadership and governors. They have high expectations, challenge pupils continuously and monitor standards effectively.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils are confident and demonstrate outstanding self-reliance and self-esteem, displaying an approach to life that sees no barriers to success. They display the capacity to be self-critical, identifying and reflecting on their own shortcomings and considering how to overcome them. The pupils behave in ways which demonstrate significant benefit from experiences such as a weekend camp held at the start of Year 9 which focuses on team building and developing their autonomy. They take advantage of the opportunity to create new friendships, as around half of new entrants to the senior school come from outside the school. Pupils were frequently observed in lessons to have sufficient confidence to venture comment, or to question when they are unsure of their ground. In interview, pupils were certain that the prevailing culture in their classes ensure that their words are heard and evaluated by others. Members of the school are fair in allowing others to have their say. They consider an argument on its merit and without prejudice.
- 4.3 Pupils work co-operatively and collaboratively to excellent effect. They are provided ample opportunity to develop the required skills and attitudes to do so effectively. This mirrors the school's view that teamwork is a quality demanded increasingly in the modern world of work, which is a view also embraced by the governors. Pupils display exemplary tolerance of each other, appreciate each other's abilities and enjoy shared purpose. They relish the chance to solve problems, for example in an international safe-cracking competition. In these collaborations, pupils enjoy the challenge and laugh a great deal. Boarders develop strong social skills and support one another academically and pastorally. They demonstrate high levels of organisational competence and resilience.
- 4.4 Pupils make a major contribution to the lives of others within the school, in the local area and in the wider community. This ranges from mentoring local children with learning difficulties to providing master classes in the junior school, and from London-based charity volunteering and fundraising to developing a relationship with a village in Sri Lanka. Mutual respect and tolerance for those with different backgrounds, cultures and faiths is second nature. Not all pupils are aware of the opportunities that the school offers for voluntary service, especially in Years 9 to 11.
- 4.5 Pupils make highly effective use of the autonomy provided by the school, which they describe as 'liberal' and concerned chiefly with meeting the needs of each individual. Their response to this is characterised by a clear sense of the responsibility this confers. They attach a high value to the tutorial system, which provides an excellent source of support. Pupils have an independent choice, for example, about which clubs, societies and activities to attend at lunchtimes. They enjoy choosing in accordance with their own tastes and interests. This leads to oversubscribed clubs, with pupils generally taking the lead as they frequently do in lessons. They manage and direct the Young Enterprise scheme and a campaign to raise awareness of homophobia. Pupils have set up a group to promote well-being and mental health, and they decide which charity the school will support with its extensive volunteering and fundraising each year.

- 4.6 Pupils feel that they are influenced to a great extent by the behaviour, attitudes and values of older pupils. This can lead to informal advice on future career choices, which supplements the careful guidance they receive from teaching staff. Their intellectual life is enriched too in this way. Pupils have freedom to act and think in individual ways. At the same time, they can choose to imitate the best of the behaviour modelled by others, including the teaching staff. This means they respond well to the school's expectation 'to create a culture of scholarship'.
- 4.7 Pupils display a high level of moral integrity; they are able to tell right from wrong, uphold rules and laws, and accept responsibility for the consequences of their own behaviour. This is underpinned in many cases by a full appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, especially religious and philosophical. During the inspection, pupils played a central role in an excellent junior school assembly, led a Jewish assembly in the senior school, and voluntarily attended Catholic Mass and meetings of the Christian Union. They responded exceptionally well to a lesson pondering the awe and wonder inspired by art and music. Senior school pupils do not unanimously support attendance at compulsory assemblies and chapel, questioning whether this is a priority given the busy nature of the school day.
- 4.8 Pupils have highly developed awareness of the need to remain safe, including online. They know how to eat healthily and exercise regularly. Pupils are aware of the developing role of mental health in young people's lives. In all this, they are supported by the structures of the school; the personal, social, health and economic education programme; assemblies; food committees; and the emphasis and impetus provided to well-being and mental health. Pupils benefit from the school's ethos, which encourages individuals to take personal responsibility for their own welfare. Throughout the school, pupils take full advantage of the mechanisms available to express their views on whole-school issues. Responses are recorded and published. In this way, the school has met a recommendation of the previous inspection.
- 4.9 Almost all parents said in their questionnaire responses that the school effectively promotes democracy, tolerance and respect with regard to those of different faiths and beliefs. This derives chiefly from the diverse nature of the community, which values all its members equally. This is explicit in the range of assemblies but also implicit in the way the pupils behave, as they demonstrate understanding and respect for different faiths and cultures. Inspection evidence supported these findings without exception.