



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S IN THE PARK SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	St Joseph's in the Park			
DfE number	919/6099			
Registered charity number	1111064			
Address	St Joseph's in the Park St Mary's Lane Hertingfordbury Hertfordshire SG14 2LX			
Telephone number	01992 581378			
Email address	admin@stjosephsinthepark.co.uk			
Head	Mr Douglas Brown			
Chair of governors	Mrs Pauline Maile			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	150			
	Boys	81	Girls	69
	Pre-school	30	Infants	38
	Juniors	82		
Inspection dates	13 to 14 September 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 St Joseph's in the Park is a co-educational one-form entry day school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years. The school is a charitable trust governed by a board of trustees. The current headmaster arrived in April 2016. Since the previous inspection, a major building project providing a new library, science laboratory and re-siting of the Reception class adjacent to the Nursery, was completed in the summer of 2017. The final stage which provides new administrative facilities, is nearing completion.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1898 in Hertford as a convent high school for girls, and moved to its present location in Hertingfordbury in the early 1950s. It became a primary school in 1957. The school is divided into three sections: pre-school which comprises the Nursery and Reception classes; infants, for pupils in Years 1 and 2; and juniors for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some junior pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive specialist support in English and mathematics. This takes place each morning in parallel provision called Woodlands Learning Support Centre ("Woodlands").

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to encourage creative learning, to embrace individuality of spirit and self-reliance, and to provide every child with the opportunity to discover and develop talents to achieve their very best. It also seeks to promote traditional values and to build positive relationships and an ethos of care for others, both within the school's family and the wider world. The objective is to lay strong foundations for the next stage in pupils' education and for them to become life-long learners.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils come from business and professional backgrounds and live in the surrounding area. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is above average. The school has identified twenty-one pupils as having SEND, all of whom receive additional support. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. None require support for English as an additional language (EAL). The school has identified a number of pupils as being particularly able. The curriculum is modified for them and, for additional challenge, they are invited to a variety of workshops.

2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

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. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

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 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.

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 a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such 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.

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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key Findings

- 2.1 The school meets almost all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements. In order to meet all the standards, the school should take immediate action to remedy the deficiency as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance are secure in all but one respect. The school's safeguarding policy meets requirements and is supported by suitable staff code of conduct, whistleblowing, missing child and e-safety policies. Staff and governors are trained at the correct level for their responsibilities and concerns about pupils are appropriately handled. However, a separate check against the barred list has not been obtained for a few members of visiting staff with existing disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks from other organisations, who started work before their new DBS certificates were available. At the time of the inspection, the required checks had been completed for all but one member of staff whose new DBS certificate was awaited.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9-16, 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 but those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b) are not met.**

Action point 1

- **the school must ensure that all staff with existing DBS checks from other organisations are checked against the barred list and appropriate safeguards put in place before they start work. [Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)]**

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 for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical 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 variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include 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 those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include 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. 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, scrutinised the extra-curricular activities programme, and attended an assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, 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

Mrs Jan Preece

Reporting inspector

Mr Koen Claeys

Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, Society of Heads school)