

Autumn 2022

St Paul's Cathedral School was subject to a planned and routine ISI Compliance Inspection in 2022.

The inspectors found that we met all the standards in terms of our safeguarding, premises, health and safety, and the provision of information. There was, however, one area which has been the basis of some debate since the inspection took place – which is why we wanted to provide additional context alongside the report.

As way of background, in September 2019 changes were made to the Independent School Inspection Framework and inspectors were asked to further scrutinise equality of educational opportunity. This increased focus should be applauded.

There have, however, been some unintended consequences for a small number of the country's single-sex choral schools which are owned by the institution to which the choir belongs. Irrespective of a school's ethos and overall offering, it was impossible for a school, which, like ours is a part of a Cathedral with an all-boys choir, to meet all of ISI's equality compliance standards.

Even though St Paul's Cathedral is fundraising and developing a girls' choir of equal standing to the boys, the inspectors can only make judgements based on what they saw during the inspection process.

As a result, despite the fact that the choir was, of course, also single-sex when we were last inspected in 2017 and met all the equality standards on that occasion, the ISI took a different approach in this year's inspection. For the first time that we have knowledge of, the school was given action points to address.

We will, of course, continue to work tirelessly to ensure that we provide the highest quality of education and opportunity for both girls and boys in all aspects of school life. It is important to stress that the Cathedral is in the process of developing the girls' choir, including raising the necessary funds. In the meantime, the Cathedral is considering additional ways to give girls the opportunity to sing at St Paul's.

Once the girls' choir is established, we are confident that we will meet the required standards for ISI once again.



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

St Paul's Cathedral School

March 2022

Contents

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

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	020 7248 5156			
Email address	admissions@spcs.london.sch.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Simon Larter-Evans			
Chair of governors	The Very Reverend Dr David Ison			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	258			
	Day pupils	233	Boarders	25
	EYFS	29	Juniors	186
			Years 1 to 6	
	Seniors	43		
	Years 7 and 8			
Inspection dates	9 to 11 March 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Paul's Cathedral School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school educates the male choristers for the cathedral and they make up the boarding population at the school. Boarding accommodation is on the school site. The proprietor of the school is the Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, which delegates oversight to the school's governing body. This comprises twelve members, of whom three are members of the Chapter and one a former member of the Chapter. It is chaired by the Dean. Since the previous inspection the school's boarding accommodation has been fully refurbished and restructured. This, in turn, has released more accommodation for teaching and learning.
- 1.2 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to instil a love of learning through a broad curriculum, giving each pupil the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially, personally, physically, culturally and spiritually. It seeks to encourage its pupils to work to the best of their ability and achieve excellence in all of their endeavours. Within a Christian community, which welcomes children of all faiths and none, and where the welfare of each child is of the utmost importance, the school strives to develop pupils' independence and mutual responsibility. It encourages close partnerships with parents and aims to promote positive relationships, where the values of love, justice, tolerance, respect, honesty, service and trust are nurtured and practised.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from families whose parents work in a range of professional backgrounds, mostly living within a 10-mile radius of the school. Boarders come from across the United Kingdom and around the world. The school's own assessment data show that the ability profile of the pupils is above average for those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 11 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, 10 of whom receive specialist learning support. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. In addition to the choristers, the needs of pupils who have been identified as the more able or talented in the school's population are catered for through extension activities and challenge by class and subject teachers. There are 16 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) of whom none requires any additional support.

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. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1** The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2** 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** The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4** 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.
- 2.5** The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. Teaching does not ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met with regard to gender equality, as all choristers are male pupils. The school has a plan to ensure equality of opportunity by introducing female choristers. However, this was not implemented effectively, through clear timelines for stated aims to be met, at the time of the inspection.
- 2.6** The standards relating to the quality of education in paragraphs 2 and 4 are met, but that in paragraph 3 [teaching] is not met.

Action point 1

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 choristers [Part 1, paragraph 3(j)].

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

- 2.7** In general, 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.
- 2.8** School leaders and managers do not currently ensure that provision encourages respect for other people with regard to gender because not all pupils are given the equal opportunity to become a chorister.
- 2.9** NMS 17 is met but the standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in paragraph 5 is not met.

Action point 2

The school must ensure that it encourages respect for other people, as required by the Equality Act 2010, by ensuring that educational opportunities are equal for all pupils irrespective of their gender [Part 2, paragraph 5(b)(vi)].

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, and 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** Appropriate management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school ensure that the required policies and records in boarding are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.22** School leadership and management have not ensured that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met in relation to gender equality, in particular with regard to equality of opportunity to become a chorister.
- 2.23** **The standards relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 and NMS 13 are not met.**

Action point 3

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 roles, and must fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, thus actively promoting the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Inspection Evidence

3.1 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 and attended form times and an assembly. Inspectors visited the boarding house and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with 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 Graham Gorton	Reporting inspector
Mr Patrick Wenham	Compliance team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mrs Francesca Bradbury	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, IAPSschool)