



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

ST PETER'S SCHOOL

APRIL 2017



CONTENTS

SCHOOL'S DETAILS	1
PREFACE	2
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	3
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. KEY FINDINGS	6
Recommendation	6
3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	7
4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9

SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	St Peter's School			
DfE number	816/6002			
Registered charity number	1141329			
Address	Clifton York North Yorkshire YO30 6AB			
Telephone number	01904 527300			
Email address	enquiries@stpetersyork.org.uk			
Head Master	Mr Leo Winkley			
Chair of Governors	Mr William Woolley			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1142			
	Boys	652	Girls	490
	Day pupils	994	Boarders	148
	EYFS	83	Juniors	321
	Seniors	491	Sixth Form	247
Inspection dates	26 to 27 April 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 unmet 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, the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Mr Andrew Farren	Reporting inspector
Mr Steven Popper	Accompanying inspector
Mrs Sarah Gomm	Boarding inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Elizabeth Knibb	Boarding inspector (Vice principal, HMC school)
Mr Francis Clough	Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Mike Crossley	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Lee Glaser	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Sarah Graham	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Henry Rickman	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 St Peter's School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 3 to 18 years. Pupils up to the age of 8 years are educated at Clifton School and Nursery, those aged from 8 to 13 years at the junior school, St Olave's, and those aged from 13 to 18 years at the senior school, St Peter's 13-18. Each section of the school has a separate head but the Head Master of St Peter's is in overall charge. There are four boarding houses for senior pupils and one for junior pupils.
- 1.2 Founded in AD 627, the school moved to its present site in Clifton in 1844. Since the previous full inspection in 2010, the school has built a new swimming pool, refurbished the Memorial Hall, created a new reception area, and upgraded boarding accommodation and most classrooms. The school belongs to a charitable foundation, overseen by a governing body.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to combine a high quality, all-round education with an exciting approach to learning. It seeks to engender the school's seven Christian values of friendship, trust, wisdom, compassion, endurance, humility and hope in its pupils.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The day pupils come from a wide area in Yorkshire, from professional, business and farming families. About one third of boarders are from overseas. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 75 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and specific learning difficulties, 14 of whom receive specialist support from the school. English is an additional language (EAL) for 73 pupils, of whom 17 receive additional support. There is one pupil with a statement of educational need. The school has not identified those being the most able in the school's population.
- 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>
J 1	Year 4
J 2	Year 5
J 3	Year 6
J 4	Year 7
J 5	Year 8
Third form	Year 9
Fourth form	Year 10
Fifth form	Year 11
Lower sixth	Year 12
Upper sixth	Year 13

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- All groups of pupils make rapid progress and achieve academic excellence.
- Pupils show excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the range of subjects.
- Pupils possess entirely positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' non-academic achievements are outstanding.

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

- Pupils display excellent self-confidence and a commitment to achieve.
- Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent.
- Pupils demonstrate high moral standards.
- Pupils show mature consideration of others in all aspects of school life.

Recommendation

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, and acknowledging that the school has already identified this need for development:

- Further embed opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) across the full range of subjects throughout the school.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 All pupils, including the more able, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those with English as an additional language (EAL), make excellent academic progress in all sections of the school. The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception achieve well above the national average and are helped to do so because of stimulating learning experiences whereby they can explore their environment with considerable independence and develop a keen sense of enquiry and curiosity. Pupils build on these strengths in the junior school, learning to reflect on, and keep improving, their performance; in this they are encouraged by the very effective personal mentoring system which challenges and supports them at every step in their learning. Senior pupils and sixth-formers continue to make assured strides in their learning, benefitting from consistently vibrant and engaging teaching which matches their own lively commitment to achieving their very best. They monitor their own progress, always seeking to extend it further, helped in this by the school's excellent progress and attainment tracking procedures.
- 3.3 Pupils' consistently strong academic progress across the year groups results in outcomes at GCSE and A level which are improving every year. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2013 to 2015, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. GCSE performance has been above the national average for maintained schools. Results in IGCSE examinations have been higher than worldwide norms. Results at A level have been above the national average for maintained schools. Pupils have been hugely successful in gaining entrance to preferred universities and other settings.
- 3.4 Pupils' academic accomplishments are underpinned by the continual emphasis provided by the governing body on ambitious standards and expectations, and senior leadership's relentless attention to detail, such as in the recent revision of setting arrangements to give all pupils the best opportunities to excel and the development of the curriculum. Parents were strongly appreciative in their questionnaire replies regarding the school's leadership and management. Pupils and parents were overwhelmingly positive in their questionnaire responses about the quality of academic education provided by the school, the progress made by pupils and the choice of subjects available. A very large majority of pupils replying to the questionnaires said that lessons are interesting and, when interviewed, were very enthusiastic about the teaching they receive, describing it as often being exciting and fun. This approval demonstrates that the school has acted very effectively on the recommendation of the previous full inspection to encourage more adventurous teaching.
- 3.5 Children in the EYFS and years 1, 2 and 3 find out how to be better learners, relating to the four 'learning superheroes' displayed in their setting and developing their four 'heroic' skills of resilience, collaboration, resourcefulness and being reflective. Junior pupils focus on eight specific learning habits which are built into the curriculum and schemes of work, systematically strengthening their positive approach to, and independence in, their work. In the senior school, pupils have scope to select GCSEs and A levels which match their strengths and interests, with plenty of opportunity for extension work, which means they can apply and further develop their knowledge, skills and understanding on a personalised basis. They also broaden their knowledge through the additional study of global perspectives.
- 3.6 Pupils' communication skills are particularly well developed throughout their time in school, and are integral to their success in their academic learning. The youngest pupils are absorbed in a richly colourful, themed environment, rapidly learning new vocabulary, using it in conversations and applying it as they confront new situations and solve problems. Older pupils

are very articulate, responding fully to the skilled, challenging questioning they receive in most lessons and extending their expressive expertise through debating and public speaking.

- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate excellent numeracy knowledge and skills, reflecting the strength of mathematics teaching across the school. They can readily apply these strengths in other subjects because there is effective inter-departmental liaison to ensure that opportunities to do so are carefully planned. Pupils are confident in their use of mathematical vocabulary and solving problems because questioning and support from staff is very focused. Pupils with SEND or EAL, or who are experiencing a temporary difficulty in understanding a mathematical concept, receive the additional help they require and so do not fall behind in their learning.
- 3.8 The use of ICT by pupils is excellent in much of the school. There are examples of its innovative use, such as in music and in animation arts, and even the very youngest children are learning to use devices creatively and confidently. Pupils often use ICT for research and skill levels are very good generally. In a small minority of lessons, ICT is not used as fully as it could be and in these instances, learning is restricted. The school acknowledges that there is a need to further embed opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the full range of subjects throughout the school.
- 3.9 Pupils' books show excellent application of study skills, which is a result of the questions and tasks set by teachers that require pupils to apply their skills of analysis, selection, inference and deduction and put forward and justify hypotheses. Pupils demonstrated the same strengths in lessons, responding fully to the school's mission to 'develop enquiring minds' by encouraging intellectual risk-taking and independent thinking, not only in examination years, but at all ages. Pupils know how well they are doing because teachers' marking and feedback are constructive and analytical; when pupils need help, teachers are always there for them. The thematic curriculum and learning habits for younger pupils aim to foster and embed lifelong learning. Pupils in the senior school are enabled to take more responsibility for their learning, to engage independently with their coursework, and to use self-evaluation. Boarders use their additional time in school very well to develop their study skills to the full. Those from overseas are earnest in their application to studies, tackling any issues with the English language with commitment, and engaging fully with the additional support that is available when necessary.
- 3.10 Pupils' academic and other achievements are outstanding, as demonstrated through pupils' substantial success in areas such as sports and the expressive arts, scholarships and leavers' destinations. The list of pupils' successes is extensive and spans all the three schools. Pupils demonstrate their readiness to excel, gaining awards in music, dance, drama, public speaking and youth leadership. They also participate competitively, and very often successfully, in a broad range of sporting events. The pupils achieve so well because the school is proactive in creating opportunities for them to do so, and because of the pupils' entirely positive attitudes to learning. They display a very strong willingness to work collaboratively and on their own initiative. Pupils are committed to achieving the best they can. This was observed in lessons when pupils rose to the expectations of their teachers in pursuing tasks based on their own decisions alongside their peers, and in persevering to complete what was required. Examples of this were seen with pupils of all ages. Pupils have a cheerful and good-humoured approach to their learning but are always diligent and determined. Pupils' attitudes to their peers from other schools is positive too, and they value the opportunity to meet and learn together with children from the local consortium of independent and state schools. Pupils who are boarders demonstrate very good attitudes to learning, making the most of their full engagement in the life of the school and drawing on the extended range of activities available to them locally during their time in residence.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils demonstrate a quiet self-assurance and confidence in themselves. They have a very strong awareness of their strengths and what they need to do to improve their performance. Pupils display strong perseverance, commitment and personal desire to achieve. This is due to consistent and positive relationships between pupils and staff, age-appropriate measures to develop resilience, from 'learning superheroes' to core values, and excellent preparation for the transition to the next stages of their lives. In the EYFS, pupils learn to be happy in themselves and in their learning because staff let them follow their own lines of investigation but are always there to answer questions, pose new ones, reassure and value their individual explorations. As pupils move up through the school, they continue to be encouraged to find things out for themselves. Pupils' well-being and personal development continue to flourish because the highly effective pastoral system keeps each pupil clearly in view and accurately addresses their needs. A very large majority of parents and pupils responding to questionnaires agreed that the school successfully supports pupils' personal development and meets their pastoral and welfare needs effectively. A similar proportion of boarders agreed that the school has helped them to become more independent and confident.
- 4.3 Pupils of all ages demonstrate that they can make sensible decisions that affect their lives, taking others into consideration. Opportunities for pupils to make their own decisions are given to them from an early age, as the youngest children are encouraged to think for themselves and help build their own classroom setting, whether it is an imaginary island or a storybook backdrop. From these small but constructive beginnings, pupils exercise choices through corporate decision-making within the house system, or in the boarding provision, for example about extra-curricular options. They take full advantage of the very good careers advice on offer, giving due consideration to their post-school lives. Just as importantly, pupils were observed making small, everyday decisions about minor courses of action, as demonstrated when boarders chose to help each other get ready for a visit to an off-site sports venue so that no one would be left behind.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent. They demonstrate sincere thoughtfulness and can reflect on the non-material aspects of life. This is due to the strong school values that are reflected in chapel services, assemblies and opportunities for quiet reflection during collective worship. Pupils also showed spiritual understanding in their sensitive engagement with all world faiths, aspects of terrorism and the sanctity of life in their religious studies lessons. Their ability to reflect philosophically and express themselves musically and artistically also indicates a strong spiritual dimension in their personal development. The very full participation observed during an afternoon of sports activities showed the commitment of many pupils in pursuing physical endeavours with great spirit.
- 4.5 Almost all pupils and parents in their questionnaire responses agree that the school helps the pupils behave well, and pupils understand the system of sanctions. Pupils demonstrate an excellent moral understanding and take full responsibility for their own behaviour and their own mistakes. They appreciate selflessness and kindness. Pupils have a strong understanding of rules and laws and know why these are important. They engage with challenging ethical issues. Pupils know, and take to heart, the school's 'seven values' and the modelling of moral responsibility by leaders and staff. They actively express their moral responsibility in their support for charitable causes, and in small acts, such as not jumping a dinner queue and in keeping the school scrupulously litter-free by taking personal care of the environment. The pupils play a major part in making the school an enjoyable place to be, where a strong regard for one another prevails.

- 4.6 Pupils show a mature consideration of others in all aspects of school life. They enjoy interacting with others, as when they welcomed inspectors to chat with them over lunch. Children in the EYFS eagerly share and play with each other very happily, and boarders are highly supportive of each other and value being part of the boarding community. Camaraderie is present everywhere, and older and younger pupils socialise very well, with a caring attitude clearly displayed by the senior pupils towards their junior peers. Pupils demonstrate substantial awareness and appreciation of diversity and respect for individuals from all backgrounds, including their fellow boarding students from overseas. They value the school's proactive approach to ensuring they experience and appreciate diversity through initiatives such as inviting speakers from different cultures and faiths into the school, international visits, and the school's inclusive principles.
- 4.7 Pupils engage enthusiastically in activities that contribute positively to the enhancement of the lives of others in the school community and beyond. Elected pupils on the school council from Year 1 onwards play an important part in gathering representative views and initiating actions in liaison with the school's leaders. Pupils use the school council to initiate projects to help others, for instance through fund-raising, and these projects are fully encouraged, supported and celebrated by the school. They also have opportunities to extend their responsibilities towards others through the house system, buddying schemes and the boarders' council. There is also a very well-developed community action programme that enables pupils to engage in a range of activities which serve others beyond the school, such as involvement with elderly people on a regular and supportive basis.
- 4.8 Almost all pupils responding to questionnaires indicated they know how to keep safe, including online. They look after each other's safety as a matter of course. This is because of the very effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, guidance about online safety, advice from external speakers, and the school's positive engagement with families. Pupils also demonstrate good awareness of healthy eating, valuing the balanced menu offered by the school, including the ones offered in the boarding houses. They understand the importance of regular physical exercise and enthusiastically engage in the wide range of sports which is provided by the school. Boarders have access to the gym outside of normal school hours and take full advantage of this provision. Pupils' very settled and happy behaviour in school reflects the safety and security they feel. The very large majority of parents surveyed were clear that they have high regard for the way in which the school's leaders and governors ensure that the arrangements for pupils' welfare and safety are continually monitored and assured.