



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**ST PAUL'S SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St Paul's School

Full Name of School	<b>St Paul's School</b>
DfE Number	<b>318/6066</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1119619</b>
Address	<b>St Paul's School Lonsdale Road Barnes London SW13 9JT</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8748 9162</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 8746 5353</b>
Email Address	<b>hmsec@stpaulsschool.org.uk</b>
High Master	<b>Professor Mark Bailey</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr John Robertson</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>943</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>Total: 921</b>
Number of Boarders	<b>Total: 22</b> <b>Full: 9    Weekly: 13</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>15 Mar 2016 to 17 Mar 2016</b>

## PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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 in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and a representative of the governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions, tutor meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Rodney Fox    Reporting Inspector

Mr Tim Dewes    Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Department, HMC school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Paul's School aims to provide an outstanding intellectual, spiritual and physical education which will prepare gifted boys for their future. It sets out to foster a culture of scholarship and to develop a spirit of enquiry and curiosity, through inspirational and responsive teaching; to treat the welfare of pupils as the highest priority; and to provide individual pastoral care that promotes independence whilst fostering respect, tolerance, kindness and service. The school is committed to honouring the founder's vision that it should be open to all academically eligible boys regardless of their circumstances, and to building substantive links with the local community. It is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, whose sole member is the Mercers' Company. The school is governed by its trustees.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1509 by John Colet, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, who entrusted care of the school to the Mercers' Company. It educates boys aged between 13 and 18 years old. Since 1968 the school has occupied its present 45-acre site on the south bank of the River Thames at Barnes in south-west London, which it shares with its preparatory school, Colet Court. It is chiefly a day school, but also provides boarding education for about 30 boys who are accommodated in a purpose-built boarding house on the school campus, overlooking the river.
- 1.3 A theatre and drama centre was constructed and opened in 2014. The school dining hall, kitchen and energy centre were all demolished in 2015 to make way for a new teaching block, dining hall, kitchen and plant room which are under construction and due for completion in 2017. The school is currently using temporary dining facilities and kitchens. A significant area of development in the last two years has been in the areas of pastoral support and safeguarding the welfare of pupils.
- 1.4 Of the 943 boys in the school at the time of the inspection, 392 are in either Year 12 or Year 13. The school has identified 96 boys as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, 34 of whom receive specialist support. It also has 1 pupil with both an education, health and care plan, and a statement of special educational needs. English is spoken as an additional language (EAL) by 100 boys, almost all of whose English language needs are able to be supported in lessons by their teachers.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Fourth Form	Year 9
Fifth Form	Year 10
Sixth Form	Year 11
Lower Eighth	Year 12
Upper Eighth	Year 13

## **2. SUMMARY**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that the views of the boarders about matters that are of particular concern to them, such as food at evening meals, are regularly sought and responses provided.
  2. Maintain more detailed records of the governors' monitoring of welfare, health and safety.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

- 2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was an integrated inspection undertaken by ISI in March 2013. The subsequent report stated that the school met all the National Minimum Standards, and made two recommendations relevant to boarding. These recommendations concerned providing younger pupils with the means to express opinions on whole-school issues, and recording more detail of the annual safeguarding review in the minutes of governors' meetings. Suitable progress has been made in response to both of these recommendations, and the minutes of governors' meetings now contain detailed reports of safeguarding reviews.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New boarders receive appropriate induction. They receive suitable information about boarding before joining and are provided with a mentor on arrival.. A survey which is conducted with new boarders a month after starting enables staff to monitor how well they are settling in. House staff and tutors are the main people to whom boarders can turn for support, although many other staff are available if needed including the chaplain, nurses and counsellors. Senior boarders also assist with this role. All boarders responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied that they have people to whom they can turn for support. Boarders are provided with appropriate contact details for various sources of support including external helplines, the Children's Commissioner and an independent listener. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Suitable policies, which are effectively implemented, govern the care provided for boarders who are sick or injured. All boarding staff are trained in first aid. The centrally situated and suitably equipped medical room is available to boarders by day, with appropriate alternative provision at night within the boarding house. House staff may provide a limited number of household remedies, but only as permitted by a suitable protocol. Otherwise, all ailments are dealt with in the medical room where appropriately qualified nursing staff are supported by a visiting doctor. Boarders have ready access to additional medical and dental services locally, as necessary. Policies and practice regarding the appropriate storage and issuing of medication are rigorous; medicines are provided only to the boarder for which they are prescribed. Senior boarders may self-medicate, subject to a suitable risk assessment and having agreed to abide by appropriate rules and conditions. Boarders' rights and confidentiality are properly respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Suitably filtered and monitored internet access is available in the house, which enables boarders to communicate easily with home and friends. All boarders' questionnaire responses indicated satisfaction with the ease of contact. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Appropriate sleeping, living and study accommodation is provided for the sole use of the boarders. It is properly and safely maintained, and suitably furnished. Heating, lighting and ventilation are satisfactory and the common recreation room is suitably appointed, clean and tidy. Washing and toilet facilities are sufficiently provided and offer adequate privacy. Bedding is clean and appropriately warm. Boarders can personalise their rooms and sleeping areas. Parents' questionnaire responses unanimously expressed satisfaction with the comfort of the accommodation and the effectiveness of the management of boarding. The house is secure from visitor access, and boarders are suitably supervised during evening use of school facilities by members of the public. Use of security cameras does not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 The food provided is nutritious, plentiful and appetising, and it meets the needs of all boarders including those with special dietary needs. Most boarders in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses expressed concerns about the food and the availability of snacks. The concerns that boarders raised in interview were chiefly about the perceived inconsistency of the evening meal, which was not apparent during the inspection. The inspection found that boarders have opportunities to express their views about the food and that the caterer is responsive to their comments. Food is prepared in a hygienic, temporary kitchen and the menus allow plenty of choice at all meals. The temporary dining room provides a suitable and



accessible eating area. Menus are varied, with occasional themed days to provide interest. Drinking water is readily available. Suitable provisions are supplied for making snacks in the boarding house. The house kitchen area is well equipped and hygienic. [NMS 8]

- 3.7 Washing machines are provided for boarders' personal use; bedding is laundered weekly. Boarders are able to obtain personal items locally, and a lockable drawer is provided in which to store valuable possessions. A suitable search policy complies with official guidance. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 The school's extensive facilities provide a wide range and choice of activities organised at lunchtime, after lessons and in the evenings which was appreciated by all the boarders in their questionnaire responses. Not all boarders take part in the programme but they are always encouraged to do so. On some weekends trips and activities are organised, and house staff ensure that suitable risk assessments are conducted. The grounds and buildings provide a suitable range of safe areas for recreation and for those wishing to be alone. Boarders have ready access to information about world events and can easily make use of local amenities. [NMS 10]

### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school has a comprehensive written health and safety policy which has been approved by the governors and is meticulously implemented. Its premises, equipment and facilities are properly maintained, serviced and checked so as to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils. A suitable risk assessment policy is carefully implemented in order to identify and minimize hazard. A designated governor attends the health and safety committee meetings, and the minutes of these are sent to the full governors' meeting. Governors are aware of and properly exercise their responsibilities for ensuring welfare, health and safety, but this area of their work is less comprehensively recorded than others. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies fully with fire regulations. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire. Fire safety equipment is properly maintained and regularly tested. Fire evacuation practices are conducted at suitable intervals including termly in the boarding house during out of school hours, and properly recorded. Suitable assessments of the risks from fire are conducted with the help of expert consultants. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The governors and senior management have made the establishment of suitable safeguarding procedures a priority. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils reflect official guidance, are rigorously implemented and underpin the school's pastoral care. Effective links have been established with the local safeguarding officers. All teaching staff have been trained to at least the level required, to ensure their understanding of safeguarding procedures. Governors monitor the implementation of the school's policy closely. Safeguarding is an item on the agenda of every meeting of the full governing body. Minutes of the governors' meetings contain detailed reports of safeguarding reviews. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school has a suitable range of policies to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. Measures to counter bullying, including cyberbullying, are carefully implemented. Records are kept of any incidents of bullying and are regularly monitored for any sign of patterns. The school rules, the range of sanctions used, and the school's procedures with respect to the use of physical restraint or for

searching pupils and their possessions are all made clear and accord with official guidance. [NMS 12]

- 3.14 The school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and the manner in which they are implemented are meticulous. All the required checks are properly conducted. The central recruitment register is carefully and accurately maintained. Nobody over 16 who is not a pupil or employee of the school currently lives on the school premises, although procedures are in hand to conduct appropriate checks if needed. Visitors to the boarding house cannot gain entry unless they are admitted, sign the visitors' book and are escorted. The school does not appoint guardians on behalf of parents. [NMS 14]

### **3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision**

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles is provided to parents, staff and boarders, and works in practice. All boarding staff contribute to the supportive ethos and understand the importance of promoting the welfare of each boarder. All parents in their questionnaire responses were satisfied that their children are treated as an individual, and all the boarders in their responses reported that they feel safe in the boarding house. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The leadership and management of boarding is clear. Governors exercise close oversight of the school's boarding and care, and act appropriately as necessary. The school's leaders are experienced and knowledgeable about the management of boarding, and ensure that standards are met. The well-being of boarders is afforded appropriate priority and the boarding staff are suitably trained. All required records and policies are maintained and reviewed to ensure that appropriate measures are taken in response to any patterns detected. Effective links and information-sharing operate between boarding and non-boarding staff both at management and at operational level. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All boarding staff have job descriptions that reflect their duties, receive induction, have regular formal and informal reviews, and are provided with opportunities to continue developing their professional skills in boarding. The members of staff in charge of boarders during non-teaching time are suitably qualified and experienced. Staff know or can find the whereabouts of boarders at all times. They are aware of and implement the policy in relation to boarders going missing. At least one, and usually more, responsible members of staff sleep in the boarding house and are contactable at night. Appropriately separate accommodation, to which boarders do not have access, is provided for the use of residential staff. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Suitable policies to guard against discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity are carefully implemented. The school is committed to ensuring that the care of boarders is sensitive to their various needs. An appropriate disability access plan has been written and is being implemented. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders have a variety of ways in which they can make their opinions about the running of the school known. These include surveys, suggestion cards and asking the house prefects to represent their views. In interview, a minority of boarders questioned whether their views were heeded by the staff. Inspection evidence found that the school does take care to seek and respond to the views of all the pupils but does not always do so separately for the boarders, who are a small minority with needs and concerns which are not necessarily identical to those of the rest of the school. [NMS 17]

- 3.21 A suitable complaints policy is published for parents and prospective parents on the school website. Complaints are carefully recorded and monitored by senior staff to ensure that effective action can be taken to remedy any recurrent concerns. In practice, almost all complaints are resolved at the informal stage. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 House captains and prefects have clear role descriptions. They receive training on appointment, particularly in safeguarding the welfare of younger boarders. Their role largely involves assisting communication between boarders and staff, and they cannot issue sanctions. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for pupils on behalf of the parents. [NMS 20]