



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Staines Preparatory School

December 2019



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School's Details

School	Staines Preparatory School			
DfE number	936/6510			
Registered charity number	296691			
Address	Staines Preparatory School 3 Gresham road Staines TW18 2BT			
Telephone number	01784 450909			
Email address	secretary@stainesprep.co.uk			
Headteacher	Ms Samantha Sawyer			
Chair of governors	Mr Matthew Hall			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	342			
	EYFS	73	Juniors	269
Inspection dates	3 to 5 December 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Staines Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged three to eleven years. Founded in 1935, the school is a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors.
- 1.2 The school comprises two sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged from three to five years; and the junior school, for pupils aged five to eleven years.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to promote the advancement of pupils by educating them for the challenges of tomorrow, providing an interesting learning environment, developing their life skills and setting high expectations and goals for success in the school community and the wider world.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, representing a diverse multi-cultural community, living within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 37 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 106 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 56 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 37 other pupils because of their special talents in art, music and chess.

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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection 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. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

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 the 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, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

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 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.
- 2.8 **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 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **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

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously 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.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 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.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports 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.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. 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'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

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

- Pupils' achievement is high, particularly in entrance and scholarship to selective senior schools.
- Pupils apply their knowledge and understanding effectively to solve problems, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils demonstrate extremely positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils communication skills are excellent. They speak articulately, read demanding texts and use high quality writing in all subjects.
- Pupils display considerable research and collaborative skills.

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

- Pupils display high levels of self-esteem due to the nurturing environment of the school.
- Pupils have a deep sense of right and wrong. Their behaviour and manners are impeccable.
- Pupils have very purposeful and supportive relationships with each other and adults in the school community.
- Pupils from a diverse multi-cultural community integrate extremely well and respect each other's different cultures and beliefs.
- Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of social awareness. The oldest pupils undertake their elected leadership roles with maturity.

Recommendation

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

- Ensuring that all pupils increase their involvement in physical health, exercise and sport.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils achieve well, in line with the school's aims to prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow, alongside goals for success in the school community and the wider world. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests. However, evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' books and the school's own assessment data show attainment to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils' high standards of achievement are supported effectively by school leaders through robust monitoring of teaching and learning and staff development, including in the EYFS, satisfying recommendations from the previous inspection in 2010. Pupils with EAL and SEND make excellent progress from their starting points as a result of the effective learning support they receive, with strong collaboration between specialist SEND staff and subject teachers. A large majority of pupils leaving the school in Year 6 gain places in academically selective schools. Pupils achieve scholarships in specific areas, such as music and chess, supported in this by the effective partnership between the school and home. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their child makes progress and develops skills for their future.

- 3.6 In the EYFS, children are engaged and enthused in their learning because staff have created a welcoming and stimulating environment. Overall achievement in the EYFS is excellent in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social development. Across the rest of the school, pupils achieve very well in technological, aesthetic, creative and science subjects because specialist teachers ensure the curriculum is rich and broad. For example, pupils acquire a deep knowledge of scientific vocabulary such as function, protection and mobility when studying the human skeleton.
- 3.7 Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning by responding well to increasingly demanding expectations. They show high levels of success when taking responsibility for their own learning with a willingness to work hard, individually and collaboratively. They play their part in lessons well. Pupils are keen to learn, listen intently to their teachers and show a thirst for knowledge. They show excellent levels of concentration in lessons. Pupils are competitive and determined to improve by hard work and by working on advice they are given. They demonstrate high levels of ability when discussing their work with a partner and collaborate willingly. Pupils respond positively to the encouragement they receive to try their best. They are not afraid to learn from mistakes they may make. Throughout the school and in all subjects, the quality of work produced by the pupils is above that expected for their age and stage of development.
- 3.8 From a young age, pupils are particularly articulate when talking to adults and with classmates. They shine in lessons, the public arena, or as ambassadors for the school through the many opportunities provided for public speaking. They listen, debate and share ideas well when making oral contributions in class. Pupils show a keen interest in the people they are talking to and know how to conduct an interesting conversation when answering questions. Pupils reading capability has improved significantly in recent years, because of the emphasis provided by leadership and governance, and the positive partnership between home and school for developing reading. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the library stimulates them to read more often, meeting the recommendation from the previous inspection in 2010. Younger pupils read very confidently with fluency, accuracy and expression. They apply their phonic skills well when decoding unfamiliar or multisyllable words. Older pupils use many effective strategies to deepen their reading skills, for example by focusing closely on a short piece of text, and then analysing it line by line. This enables them to increase their vocabulary and understand nuances and irony in different genres.
- 3.9 Pupils' writing in English is excellent, with particularly strong pieces of extended writing evident in their books. Children in the EYFS confidently use letters and the sounds they make to convey meaning and plausibly attempt spelling words. Junior school pupils' writing reflects an increasing ability to produce vivid descriptions and accounts, using complex sentences and a widening vocabulary. Older pupils use high level skills to learn, retain, investigate and analyse information in their written work. For example, history lessons include imaginative reconstructions of events from the past, and in geography and science pupils present concise explanations for what they have observed. Pupils in Year 5 effectively retrieved information about Scrooge's ghostly visitors in *A Christmas Carol*, to write about what he learns from each spectre.
- 3.10 Mathematics is a strength of the school and pupils show an increasing command in a range of concepts. Children in nursery can recognise and count numbers to at least ten when singing about the seven days of the week, counting toy zoo animals and using number charts in the outdoor learning area. The most able Reception children can write simple number sentences, such as six plus four equals ten. Numeracy achievement in Years 1 and 2 is excellent, both in solving problems and in formal methods of calculation. They make connections and find patterns in number and demonstrate sophisticated understanding and vocabulary for their age when studying shape and measurement. Older pupils learn progressively more complicated relationships between numbers so that they can approach calculations and investigations from a variety of standpoints. As a result, they develop high level reasoning skills, flexibility and inventiveness in their thinking, such as the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They confidently use mathematical terminology in advance of

expected levels when describing the strategies they use to solve problems. They reason logically in a variety of ways and confidently check the accuracy of their own work.

- 3.11 Pupils use commercially available programmes very effectively to support their information and communication technology (ICT) learning. The wide range of skills they use are secure due to the opportunities to apply these across other subject areas and in timetabled weekly computer lessons. Digital devices are used confidently across all year groups. Younger pupils in the junior school display proficiency when using coding software to add characters to a design and use commands to start an event. Older pupils demonstrate highly effective use of multimedia software to combine animations, sound and text, confidently editing sound and video. They demonstrate excellent word processing skills, manipulate data using higher level spreadsheets and use presentation software to good effect.
- 3.12 Pupils are confident learners, enjoy challenge and have well-developed study skills. Children in the EYFS demonstrate excellent independent learning skills during inside and outdoors activities. Effective study skills are clearly responsible for achievement across the school. Pupils' ability to focus for extended periods is evident, particularly in mathematics, science and writing activities. Pupils are very active and engaged in their learning. They talk perceptively about any new learning acquired. For example, pupils explained how they successfully used the internet for research when exploring the Rosetta stone, as an essential discovery to understanding Egyptian literature and civilisation. Pupils demonstrate particularly high levels of ability to draw analogies, to hypothesise and to evaluate.
- 3.13 Many pupils achieve musical success at a high level in graded examinations as a result of the large number of music lessons and musical groups on offer. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that a suitable range of extra-curricular activities is provided. This was observed during the inspection in daily activities and clubs, such as chess, bridge and fencing. However, an insufficient number of pupils engage in exercise and sport, even though the school's leaders and governors have invested in equipment for physical activities and games.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 The school is a harmonious community. Governors, leaders, staff and pupils work together to ensure the *Staines Prep Way* set of values is consistently promoted within the nurturing ethos which exists across all year groups. This is seen in the unforced politeness that pupils show towards each other. For example, without any prompting from teachers, they check that fellow pupils have whatever materials they need, and they thank each other for any help they receive. Pupils are notably respectful, courteous and kind to one another. They display very well-developed levels of initiative and a clear understanding of how to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils are self-reflective, realistic and positive about themselves. They show a perceptive understanding about working to the best of their ability across the curriculum and know what steps they must take to improve their work. Pupils develop high levels of self-sufficiency and independence and can be relied on to get on with their work, even when not being directly overseen by a member of staff. They are very ambitious to succeed and have confidence in their own powers to do so.
- 3.16 From an early age pupils understand that the decisions they make can affect their well-being. Children in the EYFS readily make sensible decisions about what to wear outside. They confidently choose from a range of suitable activities, carefully prepared by staff who are knowledgeable about their individual needs and interests. Younger pupils easily model the language used by staff, such as 'making good choices'. Pupil school council representatives are empowered to make well-informed decisions, such as when they replaced the names of the four houses in the school. They provided convincing reasons for changing the rotation of year groups at lunchtime, and which equipment to purchase for the new adventure trail in the school playground. Older pupils increase their self-confidence and self-esteem through residential visits. They show maturity in making choices about the level of difficulty of work which they take on.

- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate high levels of appreciation for the natural world and how they interact with it. They have well-developed spiritual understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote a letter to the prime minister about human rights for refugees in current conflicts, including the impact these have on children and their access to schools and better education. Pupils talk with maturity and respect about the different religious faiths held by pupils in the school community. They think critically about different ways of looking at the world and uphold the view that everyone has the right to be respected for their own opinions. Pupils celebrated differences, and what makes our beliefs unique, with a fabulous array of colour when they took part in *odd sock day*. Throughout the school, pupils display high levels of tolerance and acceptance of different religions and cultures. Many pupils show excellent aesthetic understanding about how to express emotion and feelings when involved in painting and other artwork.
- 3.18 Pupils have a very mature understanding of right and wrong. They have a strong sense of what is fair and appreciate that school rules and high expectations come with rewards or sanctions. Children in the EYFS talk confidently about how police officers help us all. They enthusiastically wore luminescent jackets, police helmets and held truncheons whilst sitting in a patrol car during a visit by the local police. Pupils show an excellent understanding of why rules are important and how they benefit everyone. All pupils, and the vast majority of parents, who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are well-mannered and polite, holding doors open to visitors. Pupils provided convincing reasons why the special lunch table hosted by the headmistress, for those identified each week who have excelled in following the *Staines Prep Way*, is held in high regard.
- 3.19 Pupils work successfully in pairs and in groups, as well as on their own. They set a high example to other pupils and adults through discussions and debates, and through participation in activities such as elections for roles of responsibility in school. The younger children are particularly confident to ask friends for help which is kindly given. Older pupils confidently volunteer and show effective capability to be buddies and playground helpers for the younger pupils. Very positive and respectful relationships underpin the successful learning in the school. Classroom routines are well established, accepted and understood by all pupils. They understand the importance of resilience and are determined to achieve well. Pupils clearly enjoy their work and concentrate hard. They are very proud to show visitors the progress they are making and the positive feedback they have received from their teachers.
- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate high levels of maturity in their views about contribution to the community being important. They are very proud ambassadors of the school and younger pupils aspire to be in year 6 with responsibilities. These oldest pupils have well-developed leadership capabilities through a structured system with male and female heads of school, heads of house and prefects, buddies and librarians. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the importance of the school's regular charity days, charitable giving, kindness and respect for others. In English lessons, Year 6 pupils demonstrated detailed knowledge of environmental issues and the impact of single use plastics. They wrote letters to their local member of parliament about the hazards of plastic waste and the rapid diminishing of the earth's resources. In geography lessons, they debated their views on whether a hotel should be built in a coastal town, comparing the impact on the environment to the economic benefits of tourism.
- 3.21 School leadership and governance ensure that equality is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils respect diversity and display tolerance towards others' backgrounds and traditions. They show high levels of respect for the opinions of others, even when they are not the same views as their own. The younger children are well aware, but appreciative, of differences between them. When discussing religion, older pupils talked knowledgeably about the differences between the Christian and Muslim faiths and how it is acceptable to have different views and beliefs. They use the language of inclusivity and talked with great respect about Diwali. Pupils show extensive levels of knowledge and understanding about the cultural differences in art, music, drama, dance and diet. They write very well about Spanish culture, from football to the production of saffron.

3.22 Pupils have an appreciation of how to stay safe and understand how to be mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet and the need for quiet reflection. For example, Year 6 pupils commented positively on the support they received for their emotional health, in personal social and health education (PSHE), where stress and anxiety before secondary school entrance examinations were discussed sensibly and thoughtfully. Pupils competently use an exciting range of play equipment, either individually or in pupil organised games at lunch and break times, including the new adventure playground trail. This is in response to the school's encouragement for pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle. However, a minority of pupils have not chosen to be sufficiently involved in after-school exercise, or sports activities. This leads to an imbalance between the choices they make to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils understand how to use hand sanitisation independently in class after sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately. All of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire stated that they understand how to keep safe on-line and all parents agreed that their children learn in a safe environment. In interviews, pupils were secure in their knowledge of how to keep safe on the internet. They confidently explained the potential dangers of on-line interactions and how to avoid associated risks.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Desmond Dunne	Reporting inspector
Mrs Alison Cordingley	Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)
Mr Andrew Edwards	Team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)