

Dear Parents,

Wednesday, 20 September 2017

As you are probably aware, Ofsted carried out their usual full inspection of Saint Pierre School at what is becoming its usual time - the last full week of the academic year!

This inspection report is now available for you to read. I will get Mr. Harris to have the report available via the Ofsted and Policies page of our website as soon as possible, but it is also immediately downloadable from www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk and simply search Saint Pierre School. Just make sure that you do view our most recent report of 12 - 14 July, 2017. A hard copy of the report is also available from Jan in the Office. Please find time to read.

The inspection was carried out by two Ofsted inspectors. Declan McCarthy and Sue Cox over a three day period, with time spent equally checking paperwork and observing the school in action, including lesson observations. There was no forewarning of this inspection.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your feedback to Ofsted which was plentiful in amount and massively supportive and appreciative of the efforts of the staff at Saint Pierre in providing your children with the best possible education in a safe, stimulating and fun environment. Your comments via email, text, in writing and indeed, in conversation with the inspectors, are appreciated hugely by myself and all other staff.

As expected, the report once again highlighted the many, many strengths of Saint Pierre, including:-

- The good progress made since the last report by management;
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding;
- The basis of reading, the teaching of phonics, is outstanding;
- Children make good(sometimes outstanding) progress throughout the school and are well prepared for senior school;
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding;
- Children are very happy at school and thoroughly enjoy their education;
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very impressive;

- Pupils maintain excellent relationships with each other and adults;
- Leadership in the Early Years has ensured that all requirements are met;
- Children's learning and well-being in the Early Years are very good;
- Close monitoring of the impact of teaching and pupils' outcomes has been used very successfully;
- The leadership of teaching is good - all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making at least good progress;
- Excellent relationships exist throughout the school;
- The curriculum is balance and broad with excellent enrichment opportunities;
- Personal development is excellent - promoting high self-esteem and developing skills of leadership and responsibility;
- All Safeguarding arrangements are now strong and effective;
- Staff know the children exceptionally well;
- More opportunities for outdoor learning for the Early Years;
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring children's safety and well-being and children stay safe;
- Many children exceed expectations at the end of the Early Years stage;
- Children in Early Years, and throughout the school, display a sense of wonder and curiosity.

I am delighted with these comments as they have confirmed what we already knew - your children are working incredibly hard, behaving impeccably, becoming articulate and confident independent learners, making excellent progress, interacting beautifully with their peers and staff and taking full advantage of the excellent opportunities and good teaching that are being presented to them. They are well looked after, they are safe and, without doubt, they are very much enjoying their education at Saint Pierre School. This is all very, very pleasing to myself and all the other teachers who work really hard to provide the best learning experiences for your children.

Whilst all of this is very, very positive, the inspector's overall grade for the report has come out as, 'Requiring improvement'. Whilst this is an improvement on last time, it goes without saying that this is hugely disappointing, frustrating and exasperating!

Much hard work has gone into ensuring that all 195 School Standard boxes were ticked (Ofsted's checklist of schools). Indeed, as you are aware, a different Ofsted inspector gave us a clean bill of health just back in October, saying that we were fully compliant.

This time the inspector has deemed that we have not fully ticked 2 related boxes out of the 195 and this has led to an automatic overall downgrading from Good to the next category - Requires Improvement. The problem this time was that just one of our many, many Risk Assessments was not written in enough detail. It concerned Sports' Day and the care of one child with specific medical needs. Whilst the Risk Assessment made it clear that this child would need special attention and monitoring (which had already been discussed with his mother, who was at the event) and the TA who was to take responsibility for ensuring these needs were met, we had not named that TA on the Risk Assessment, so we were then deemed to have, 'not ensured the safety of our most vulnerable children'! This is why we were downgraded.

Saying this, the inspectors were 100% convinced that that particular child, and every other child was safe at the event, because they both actually came over and really enjoyed their time there, commenting on the excellent behaviour, supervision and staff ratios! At no point was anybody in any danger. We pride ourselves on going well beyond, 'checklist requirements', to ensure the safety of our children - ALWAYS.

We even had external expert staff training at the start of the last academic year on Risk Assessment and nothing was mentioned there, or at our Ofsted visit last October, to make it clear that such overly pedantic detail was required.

I do absolutely admit that ignorance is no defence but I do also find it more than quite difficult sometimes to, 'interpret' Ofsted's wishes and once again I have urged them to provide greater clarity in their requirements.

Moving forward, we have already addressed this perceived shortcoming and have carried out extensive research and have created a new and improved Risk Assessment Form which now has a series of sub-headings to remind us all

of exactly what is required in a Risk Assessment, including the naming of those persons with specific responsibilities.

Other, 'areas of development' mentioned that leaders' views were over generous of the management of the school. Again this was, 'called', because I said in our own SEF - Self Evaluation Form - that Leadership & Management was, 'Good', but, in the eyes of Ofsted this is impossible as we did not tick all boxes - ie Risk Assessment - as previously explained.

Finally, the inspector was of the opinion that some of our brightest children could be stretched still further. Whilst we absolutely do not agree with this, as professionals, we will take this opinion on board and see if there is even more that we can do in this area to ensure that this viewpoint could never be considered again, even falsely, by future inspectors. We have already introduced a 'Challenge / Enrichment' lesson for Year 6, and perhaps this is something that we could roll out for the whole school in the future.

In summary, three out of four of the areas for improvement come from that one Risk Assessment (out of 50 or so) which did ensure the safety of our pupils, as it is designed to do, but was not written in the exact required fashion. Very frustrating!

This report is a very positive one and highlights the wonderful progress that your children are making in a school that I continue to believe is a very special place, with a wonderful staff, hugely supportive parents and massively talented, beautifully behaved and incredibly respectful children.

I will be sending Ofsted a copy of our new Risk Assessment form very shortly for them to confirm that this is what they want as we move forwards.

Once again, I thank you for your support and can understand your possible initial disappointment with our overall grade. However, I can guarantee that we will work even harder to ensure that all boxes are ticked in the future. To this end we will be arranging for an Ofsted inspector to do some work privately for us on an annual basis to ensure that all standards are met and Saint Pierre School could then realistically achieve the highest possible accolade of being an outstanding school - which it deserves!

Please find time to read the report. I am more than happy to discuss the contents of the report and/or this letter at any mutually convenient time.

Here's to another hugely successful and rewarding year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. C. Perkins MA (Headmaster)

Saint Pierre School

16 Leigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LE

Inspection dates

12–14 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and proprietors are not ensuring that the school's procedures to identify and manage potential hazards and risk are effective.
- The proprietors' views of leadership and management in the school are overgenerous.
- Leaders are not rigorous enough in monitoring the school's compliance with the independent school standards. Some of the independent school standards are not met.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to work at greater depth, which prevents them from making outstanding progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have sustained good teaching, learning and assessment and a good curriculum since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted exceptionally well.
- The teaching of phonics is outstanding, enabling all pupils in Year 1 to reach the expected standard in the phonics check.
- Pupils throughout the school make good progress and are well prepared for their secondary education.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They feel safe and are very happy at school, thoroughly enjoying their learning.
- Attendance is above average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well developed. They greatly respect the feelings and views of others and maintain excellent relationships with others.
- Leaders have ensured that all the requirements for the early years are met. Children's learning and well-being are good.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - senior leaders and proprietors rigorously implement the school's procedures for assessing and reducing potential risks for all pupils
 - leaders regularly check that the independent school standards are consistently met across the school.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers challenge pupils of all abilities to work at greater depth.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietors must ensure the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- The proprietors must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibility:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The proprietors are not ensuring that all of the independent school standards are consistently met. They are not implementing their revised policy for assessing risks for individual pupils.
- The leaders' views of the school's effectiveness are overgenerous, particularly regarding leadership and management.
- In some respects, the school's view of itself is accurate. Close monitoring of the impact of teaching, assessment and the curriculum on pupils' outcomes is used effectively to inform clear priorities for development.
- Leaders are showing their capacity to improve by successfully moving the overall effectiveness and leadership and management of the school from 'inadequate' at the time of the previous inspection to 'requires improvement' now. They have also successfully ensured that the early years provision meets statutory requirements and has moved from 'inadequate' to 'good'.
- Leadership of teaching is good. Senior and middle leaders, including the early years leader and the special educational needs coordinator, are successfully promoting good teaching. They visit lessons, look at pupils' work and regularly review the progress pupils are making over time. They are ensuring that all pupils, including children in the Nursery and Reception and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, across the school are making good progress.
- Leaders are promoting equality of opportunity well. They have developed a clear plan to improve accessibility for the curriculum and they are ensuring that all pupils make equally good progress from their different starting points. They are successfully eliminating any form of racism or harassment through the promotion of excellent relationships across the school.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils also have good opportunities to learn a wide range of subjects, including Mandarin, French, music, drama, computing, science, physical education, religious education, history, geography and art.
- The curriculum is effectively enriched by good opportunities to participate in drama and music festivals, and sporting events in and out of school. Pupils also have good opportunities to participate in a wide range of clubs such as computing, homework and sports clubs, which are popular.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, exceptionally well. Pupils benefit greatly from well-thought-out topics on diversity, the identification of extremism, elections and Brexit. The celebration assemblies, the strong house system and prefect system contribute significantly to pupils' high self-esteem and encourage cooperation, and develop skills of leadership and responsibility effectively.
- Leaders are implementing the assessment systems for tracking pupils, including for

children in the early years, well and ensuring that teachers use this effectively in their planning.

Governance

- Both proprietors (one of whom is the headteacher), undertake governance. They ensured that the unmet independent school standards identified at the previous inspection were met at the time of the school's monitoring inspection in October 2016. However, they have not ensured that leaders have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities in ensuring that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- Since the previous inspection, governors have used an independent health and safety company to carry out a full audit of health and safety and this enabled them to develop clear policies and carry out appropriate checks including fire safety, which are up to date. Nevertheless, governors have not checked that the most vulnerable pupils are risk assessed, for example when participating in activities, in line with the revised policy on risk assessments.
- The proprietors have a realistic view of teaching across the school through visits to classrooms and scrutiny of data, and are using this to inform priorities. They are ensuring that the leadership of teaching is good and are managing the headteacher's performance appropriately by setting objectives based on priorities for development and checking performance against these.
- Governors are ensuring that staffing levels are sufficient and they have successfully addressed the shortcomings in the accommodation identified at the previous inspection to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All required policies to promote the welfare and safety of pupils, including an updated and effectively implemented policy on safeguarding, are in place. However, the risk assessment policy is not implemented effectively.
- Staff maintain high levels of supervision and actively join in with pupils in their activities to ensure they feel safe, as seen during the school's annual sports day event in the local park.
- Leaders work closely with parents to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Leaders carry out all required checks on the suitability of staff and visitors to work with pupils.
- The premises and accommodation are secure and provide a safe environment.
- Leaders have ensured that the learning and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The school's information on the progress pupils are making over time, outcomes of leaders' visits to lessons and pupils' work show that good teaching and learning have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- The teaching of phonics enables all pupils to use phonics well to develop their reading and spelling.
- The teaching of basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics across the school is good. Staff track and record pupils' progress in reading well. They encourage pupils to present their work neatly and to extend their use of punctuation, grammar and spelling in their writing throughout the school. Staff also use opportunities to deepen pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics by ensuring that they apply these skills to real-life contexts such as budgeting.
- Teachers adapt their teaching well and provide additional homework for older pupils who extend their studies in preparation for secondary education.
- In all lessons seen over time and during the inspection, teaching assistants provided good support for pupils' learning. They clarify pupils' misconceptions, focus on the meaning of specialist vocabulary and model answers to questions effectively, providing useful examples.
- Teachers use resources well to develop learning. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils used flat and solid shapes and nets to deepen their understanding of the properties of shapes. Children in the early years used outdoor equipment safely to enhance their physical and creative development.
- Staff maintain excellent relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour effectively. Pupils focus well on their learning, follow instructions, listen very carefully and concentrate consistently well throughout lessons.
- Teachers make good use of the school's system of assessment in their planning to ensure that pupils make progress and that learning tasks are usually matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Teachers are implementing the school's marking policy effectively so that pupils know how to improve their work. However, sometimes opportunities to ensure that different pupils work at greater depth are limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent relationships with others. They listen carefully and respect one another's views. They are very respectful towards adults and are polite and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities for reflection, including during assemblies, where they enthusiastically celebrate the achievements of others. They have excellent attitudes to school and always take care with the presentation of their work,

which they enthusiastically complete. They wear their uniform with pride.

- Pupils work extremely well together and are eager to take responsibility in school. Pupils appreciate diversity and show a deepening awareness of different cultures and traditions in the celebration of different world festivals and understanding of different religions.
- Pupils know right from wrong and have a very good understanding of how to stay safe, as seen when they were sending electronic mail safely and securely to one another.
- Pupils say there is no bullying in school and if it did occur, it would be managed effectively by staff. Incidents of bullying are rare and parents and staff agree that when it occurs, it is successfully dealt with.
- Staff know their pupils exceptionally well and provide very good support for their needs. They maintain strong links with parents and communicate with them often. In discussion, parents praised the quality of care provided for their children by staff. Staff ensure that pupils benefit from good support and guidance on transfer to secondary education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding, in lessons and around school, which is confirmed by the views of parents, staff and pupils.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the contribution that behaviour makes to their learning and progress.
- The school's records show that exclusions are very rare and observations around the school over time show that pupils respond very positively to the system of rewards and sanctions.
- Attendance since the previous inspection continues to be above average and is promoted well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's information about the progress pupils make over time, pupils' work and outcomes of lesson visits show that pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Most are working at the level expected for their ages and some are working at greater depth. This is reflected in the above-average performance of pupils in the Year 6 national tests in recent years and currently. Some pupils who could work at greater depth are not encouraged sufficiently to do so.
- Children in the early years make good progress in all areas of learning from their broadly average starting points. They make strong progress in phonics which prepares them well for Year 1, where they rapidly build on their skills.
- Pupils in Year 1 make outstanding progress in phonics. All reach, and many exceed, the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Accurate teachers' assessments show that throughout key stage 1, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils read widely and often. In discussions with inspectors, they said how much they enjoyed reading in school and at home.

- Pupils at key stage 2 continue to make good and sometimes outstanding progress across a range of different subjects, including art, geography, history, computing, science, music, drama and physical education.
- Members of the school choir make outstanding progress in singing, as seen when they performed for the whole school, singing in parts to celebrate the achievement of current Year 6 pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with education, health and care plans, make good progress from their starting points. Staff carefully formulate individual targets based on pupils' prior learning and use effective strategies, breaking down tasks into small achievable steps to enable the pupils to make good progress.
- The most able pupils make good progress and some of them make outstanding progress, as seen in the examples of detailed and perceptive work based on research. They spoke with enthusiasm about their extended pieces of project work and said that teachers always challenge them to deepen their thinking further.

Early years provision

Good

- The deputy headteacher provides good leadership for the early years. The statutory requirements are met and the shortcomings identified at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. There are now more opportunities for outdoor learning and new resources, such as the sand pit and new tricycles, promote learning and progress, especially in creative and physical development.
- Leaders in the Nursery and Reception are sustaining the warm, welcoming and supportive environment identified at the previous inspection. As a result, children are happy, well prepared for school and eager to learn.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring children's safety and well-being in school and on educational visits. Full and up-to-date risk assessments are in place for all activities, such as when children visited a theatre in London, and for all areas of the early years provision. Children stay safe and move safely around the school.
- Staff supervise children well and join in with them in their learning activities. They maintain a fine balance between teacher-directed and free-choice activities. This enables children to develop curiosity and imagination in learning.
- Parents are very pleased with the provision. In discussion, all said their children are very safe and happy in school and are making excellent progress, especially in reading and in their self-confidence.
- Staff assess children's progress over time accurately and teachers regularly keep parents well informed about the progress their children are making. Parents have good opportunities to provide information about each aspect of their child's learning from entry into the Nursery to the end of Reception through an online system for tracking and recording children's progress.
- Children enter the Nursery with levels of development in line with age-related expectations. By the end of Reception, most children have achieved a good level of development in all areas of learning, with many exceeding this. This includes children who

have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able children.

- Teachers use their good knowledge of the children to plan individual and small-group activities to captivate their interests.
- Good teaching of phonics is enabling children to develop good literacy skills, especially in reading, which prepares them well for Year 1.
- The older children can write simple sentences, for example about the sea, using phonics well. The younger children can use a range of different media including chalk, paint and crayons to produce interesting pictures.
- Children behave well and staff maintain excellent relationships with them. Children persevere in their activities, cooperating and sharing well with one another.
- The children display a sense of wonder and curiosity in their activities and have very good attitudes to learning. Children listen to and respect the views of others.

School details

Unique reference number	115408
DfE registration number	882/6007
Inspection number	10033600

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Number of part-time pupils	24
Proprietor	Kurt Davies and Chris Perkins
Headteacher	Chris Perkins
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,008–£8,265
Telephone number	01702 474164
Website	http://www.saintpierreschool.net
Email address	info@saintpierreschool.com
Date of previous inspection	7–9 July 2015

Information about this school

- Saint Pierre is an independent day preparatory school for boys and girls aged between two and 11 years old. There are currently 122 pupils on roll, including 35 children in the early years, 24 of whom are in the Nursery and attend on a part-time basis. Thirty-one of these children receive government funding for three- and four-year-olds.
- The school is situated in a large, detached, Victorian house in Leigh-on-Sea. Its facilities include a multi-purpose hall. The school uses local sports venues.
- The school aims to 'work effectively in collaboration with parents and pupils to ensure each individual child is enabled to develop their true potential to the full in all areas of the curriculum'.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly

average.

- Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds that reflect those of the local areas. No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provider.
- The school was inspected in July 2015, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate as the school failed to meet some of the independent school standards relating to: the welfare, health and safety of pupils; premises and accommodation; the provision of information; the quality of leadership and management; and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. The proprietor was required to produce an action plan and received a progress monitoring inspection in October 2016, which found that the school had taken the necessary action to meet the independent school standards inspected at that time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons and activities across the school, including the school's annual sports event and assemblies. Most of these were joint visits with senior leaders.
- Inspectors heard children read, looked at samples of pupils' work and the information about the progress pupils are making, including the progress of children in the early years provision.
- Meetings were held with the proprietors and senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide variety of evidence, including: the school's website; safeguarding policies and procedures; risk assessments and external audits of health and safety; behaviour logs and attendance figures; the school's self-evaluation document and school improvement plan; and evidence of the monitoring of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils and parents to seek their views. They also held telephone discussions with the local authority to seek its views.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses, including 12 text responses, to Parent View. They also looked at the responses in the 10 questionnaire returns from staff.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Cox

Ofsted Inspector

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