

Saint Pierre School

Independent Preparatory School for 2 1/2 - 11 year olds



27th January 2020

Dear Parents,

Despite our consternation over the unanticipated inspection in December it will resonate with me forever due to a single statement the lead inspector made at our final meeting; "If I had grandchildren, I would send them to Saint Pierre". In all my years of leading schools through inspection I have never heard anything even approaching that kind of accolade.

The inspection team certainly recognised many of the strengths of our school. A major contributor to this opinion was the outstanding responses you, our parents, made to the survey. The lead inspector was clearly moved by both the remarkable response rate (94% of parents responded; most schools struggle to get above 50%) and the positive nature of that response (98% of responses were in the top two categories for satisfaction). I cannot thank you enough for this dramatically humbling illustration of your belief in our school.

The "Quality of Education" was praised and standards here were fully met. The team were happy with our teaching, schemes of work, behaviour management, assessment etc. Our personal development of pupils was similarly extolled, and the inspectors described them as "responsible, tolerant and law abiding", remarking poignantly about both their good behaviour and Saint Pierre's effective prevention of bullying.

Frustratingly, when an unexpected inspection occurs it is often as a result of a specific issue raised to the inspectorate by an anonymous individual. On our residential trip (a regular annual event) we had been reassured by the centre at Othona that their staff were properly background checked, but the inspectors felt we should have checked this independently. This meant that, at an early stage in the inspection, we knew that safeguarding standards would be judged as "not met". This is particularly unpalatable because we are devoted to keeping our children safe and firmly believe that, beyond these paperwork issues, we achieve this.

I would encourage you to read the report and look beyond the fact that we have not met a handful of the standards. (Please be aware that in all aspects of this report Early Years and the upper school are considered together - the way it is written can easily be incorrectly interpreted as specifically directed at Early Years). These include some historical hiring data (going back to 2003) where we did not have full records (at the date of writing this letter records are now complete), some health and safety checks, and our organisation of risk assessments. The new leadership at the school had been frantically working on these areas, but the premature (by 2 terms) inspection rather thwarted our intentions.

Because of these issues the inspectors have to judge that we don't meet leadership standards. As you will appreciate this hurt us deeply and we are determined and confident that we will respond to the demands effectively and obtain a glowing report upon the inspector's impending revisit.

As always please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions,

Kind regards,

Peter Lane (Headmaster)



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Saint Pierre School

December 2019



Contents

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

School's Details

School	Saint Pierre School			
DfE number	882/6007			
Address	Saint Pierre School 16 Leigh Road Leigh-on-Sea Essex SS9 1LE			
Telephone number	01702 474164			
Email address	info@saintpierreschool.com			
Headteacher	Mr Peter Spencer Lane			
Proprietor	Mr Kurt Davies			
Age range	2.5 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	114			
	EYFS	32	Upper School	82
Inspection dates	4 to 5 December 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Saint Pierre School is a co-educational independent school catering for pupils aged between two and a half and eleven years of age. The school comprises the Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) and an upper school, which includes Years 1 to 6. The school was founded in 1952 by Monsieur Eugene Bragard and Mrs Teresa Barton. It is located in a large private house built in 1880. The current proprietor took over the school in 2003. A new headmaster and leadership team were appointed in 2019. Since the previous inspection, the school has updated its curriculum, policies and procedures.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims for academic excellence underpinned by a nurturing ethos that supports an enjoyment of learning, well-being and the development of each pupil's unique character, confidence and potential. It seeks to promote intellectual curiosity and creativity encouraging respect, honesty, integrity, tolerance, service, politeness, resilience and independence. There is a commitment to supporting parents and to preparing pupils for their next school and the world beyond.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Most pupils come from the local community and are from a wide range of ethnic and family backgrounds. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above the national average. The school has identified five pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive additional support individually or in small groups to meet their needs which include dyslexia, dyspraxia, global delay and visual impairment. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). The learning of more able pupils is catered for within the classroom. Pupils who are talented in sport and the creative arts are given opportunities to extend their skills by taking part in a range of competitions and clubs.

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 COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such 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.

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 does not meet all of the required 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 should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

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 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 Arrangements are not in place consistently to promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance. All of the required checks for those engaged in regulated activity including volunteers and the proprietor had not been completed prior to the start date. The school did not verify that the appropriate checks were in place for external staff and volunteers at a residential centre visited by pupils.
- 2.9 Health and safety checks are not met, recorded and monitored consistently. Responses to issues raised are not always implemented in a timely manner.
- 2.10 Pupils are properly supervised within school. Supervision during residential trips is not sufficiently well organised.
- 2.11 Although some individual risk assessments have been completed, there is no strategic approach to risk assessment with suitably robust monitoring.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 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 but those in paragraphs 7, 11, 14, 16 are not met.**

Action point 1

- The school must ensure that arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils pays full regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, in particular, with regard to safeguarding, ensuring appropriate recruitment procedures are in place [paragraph 7 (a) and (b); EYFS 3.4, 3.7 and 3.9]

Action point 2

- The school must ensure the effective implementation of a written health and safety policy ensuring that all of the required health and safety checks are conducted consistently, recorded efficiently and monitored to ensure any issues are addressed in a timely manner [paragraph 11; EYFS 3.54, 3.65 and 3.66]

Action point 3

- The school must ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised and safeguarded during residential trips, and that any staff and volunteers provided by another organisation have been properly checked [paragraph 14]

Action point 4

- The school must put in place the strategic management of risk assessment with consistent implementation, regular updates and robust monitoring [paragraph 16 (a) and (b); EYFS 3.64 and 3.65]

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

- 2.13 A number of recruitment checks, including prohibition checks, obtaining of references and medical declarations were not carried out by the school prior to recruitment. Although all omissions had been corrected by the school prior to and during the inspection, the single central register of recruitment (SCR) contained numerous inaccuracies and evidence that checks have been carried out has not been retained consistently.
- 2.14 The standard relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 18 [appointment of staff], 20 [appointment of proprietors] and 21 [the single central register of appointments] are not met.

Action point 5

- The school must ensure that the required checks are carried out prior to recruitment, that evidence is maintained appropriately and, that checks are recorded accurately on the SCR [paragraph 18 (2) (a), (b), (c)(i-iv), (d) and (e); 18 (3); paragraph 21 (3)(a)(i - viii); EYFS 3.9, 3.11 and 3.12]

Action point 6

- The proprietor must ensure they obtain the required DBS check, counter-signed by the Secretary of State, in a timely manner [paragraph 20 (3)(b)(i)]

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical 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.

2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.17 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

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.19 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The proprietor does not ensure 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.

2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 7

- **The school must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities so that the independent school standards are met consistently [paragraph 34 (1)(a), (b) and (c)]**

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 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 proprietor, 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

Dr Patricia Preedy

Reporting inspector

Mr Jonathan Dunn

Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, ISA school)