



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

## REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

### ST MARY'S SCHOOL

MARCH 2017



## School's details

|  |  |     |                       |
|--|--|-----|-----------------------|
| <b>School</b>                            | St Mary's  |     |                       |
| <b>DfE Number</b>                        | 825/6006   |     |                       |
| <b>Registered charity number</b>         | 310634   |     |                       |
| <b>Address</b>                           | St Mary's School<br>Packhorse Rd,<br>Gerrards Cross<br>Buckinghamshire<br>SL9 8JQ  |     |                       |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                  | 01753 883370   |     |                       |
| <b>Email address</b>                     | info@stmarys.bucks.sch.org.co.uk   |     |                       |
| <b>Headmistress</b>                      | Mrs Jean Ross  |     |                       |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>                | Mr Derek Wilson  |     |                       |
| <b>Age range</b>                         | 3 to 18  |     |                       |
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b>          | 310  |     |                       |
|  | <b>Girls</b>   | 310 |                       |
|  | <b>EYFS</b>  | 7   | <b>Preparatory</b> 97 |
|  | <b>Seniors</b>   | 161 | <b>Sixth Form</b> 45  |
| <b>Pupils' ability</b>                   | National standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average in the preparatory and senior schools, and broadly average in the sixth form.  |     |                       |
| <b>Pupils' needs</b>                     | The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 67. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive support. |     |                       |
| <b>History of the school</b>             | Founded in 1872 in Paddington, the school moved to its present site in Gerrards Cross in 1937. The school has a Church of England Foundation.  |     |                       |
| <b>Ownership and governing structure</b> | The school is a charitable trust and is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of ten members.  |     |                       |
| <b>School structure</b>                  | The Nursery, Reception classes and Years 1 to 6  |     |                       |

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comprise the Preparatory Department. Senior House comprises Years 7 to 13. All sections of the school are on one site.

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**Inspection dates**

22 to 23 March 2017

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## 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. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards and any qualitative concerns identified at their previous inspection

The inspection does not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as:

- (i) the school’s aims;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) compliance with data protection requirements;
- (iv) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (v) contractual arrangements with parents;
- (vi) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups. Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Independent School Standards Regulations](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## SUMMARY EVALUATION

**The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, 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

In the preparatory school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework. At GCSE in the years 2013 to 2015, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools. Results in IGCSE examinations have been higher than worldwide norms. In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2013 to 2015 have been in line with the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.

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.

**The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

### PART 2

#### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.

**The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

### PART 3

#### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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.

**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**

The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and Governors and a register is kept as required. The school does not employ supply staff.

**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**

Suitable toilet and washroom, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their 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.

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

## **PART 6**

### **Provision of information**

A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the governing body, 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 those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, 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.

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

## **PART 7**

### **Manner in which complaints are handled**

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.

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

## **PART 8**

### **Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

The governing body 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.

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

## **ABOUT THE INSPECTION**

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff and with the chairman of the Board of Governors. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Flora Bean

Reporting inspector

Mr Stephen Holliday

Compliance team inspector ( Bursar HMC school)