



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS

STRATFORD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Stratford Preparatory School			
DfE number	937/6094			
Address	Church House Old Town Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire CV37 6BG			
Telephone number	01789 297993			
Email address	secretary@stratfordprep.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Neil Musk			
Proprietor	Mrs Catherine Quinn			
Age range	2-11			
Number of pupils on roll	113			
	Boys	52	Girls	61
	EYFS	31	Juniors	82
Inspection dates	26th to 28th September 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Stratford Preparatory School is a school for boys and girls aged from 2 to 11, with a Montessori Nursery.
- 1.2 It was founded in 1989, by the current proprietor, who is also the principal.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has restructured its leadership team to include the introduction of an office manager. New provision for outside learning has been made in the Nursery garden and technology has been introduced to monitor pupils' attainment and progress in EYFS, with support for technology use available across the school.
- 1.4 The school is situated in the Old Town district of Stratford-upon-Avon in a former Rectory with later additions to the site providing further accommodation and the use of a near-by field for games. The present headteacher, who is responsible to the principal for the day to day running of the school, has been in post since 2010.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.5 The school is focused on traditional values and manners. They promote a culture of mutual respect for the children, parents and staff. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves in a safe environment.

About the pupils

- 1.6 Pupils come from a range of professional families, mostly living within a 10-15 mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support within the classroom and 10 which receive additional specialist support. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language for one pupil, who is supported within the classroom. Data used by the school have identified nine pupils as being the most able in the schools population; the curriculum is modified for them and three receive additional specialist support.

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, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their 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. These include 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 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.

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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Blue room	Pre-Nursery
Yellow room	Nursery
Infant 1	Reception
Infant 2	Year 1
Infant 3	Year 2
Junior 1	Year 3
Junior 2	Year 4
Junior 3	Year 5
Junior 4	Year 6

Key Findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary and facilitate excellence in achievement and depth of knowledge across the curriculum.
 - The pupils have accomplished literacy skills, are articulate and avid readers who communicate with confidence.
 - Pupils of all age and abilities make excellent progress.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- The pupils display outstanding social skills which enables them to efficiently collaborate and achieve effectively with their peers.
 - The pupils have a highly developed sense of right and wrong and a strong personal moral code.
 - The pupils demonstrate excellent levels of self-confidence and are ready and willing to take risks, knowing that this will enable them to progress to their next learning experience.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:
- Enabling the pupils to further refine and enhance their ICT skills through greater opportunities to use ICT across the whole curriculum and in a wider variety of contexts.

THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The pupils have excellent attitudes to learning; they are very willing and able to study with considerable independence, displaying a very strong work ethic. They accept the opportunities for leadership and work eagerly with others, either sharing in discussion or collaborating in activities such as science investigations. The pupils support their peers, take on board the views of others and demonstrate initiative in leading group activities. The youngest children are able to choose appropriate equipment and tools to solve problems or use word books for spellings to increase their independence in written work. The pupil's excellent attitudes to learning are rooted in the ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which extends and permeates through the whole school. Many pupils commented on the importance of their teachers' enthusiasm which in turn, made them enthusiastic. In the pre-inspection questionnaires the overwhelming majority of pupils felt their teachers were supportive and helpful if they have any problems in their work.
- 3.6 Pupils of all ages and abilities are excellent communicators in both speaking and in their use of the written word. Younger pupils demonstrate highly competent early language skills. They completed an excellent written recount of a recent trip, confidently and with considerable independence. This included the use of complex descriptive vocabulary for their age, written in a well-developed cursive handwriting style. The pupils understand the importance of being good listeners and collaborators, displaying a calm confidence when engaged in conversation. This enables them to make connections between areas of knowledge and debate ideas among themselves, so they take ownership of their own learning. Pupils are strong communicators because teachers give many opportunities for active engagement in discussion and their enthusiasm is reflected by the pupils who are clearly not worried about making mistakes, and are confident speaking in front of visitors. High levels of communication skills for their age are developed very early on in the school with the youngest children enthusiastically taking part in, for example, a paired discussion about looking after pets. Pupils' reading skills are particularly highly developed, they are able to use complex material for their age to complete research. This is because of the emphasis the school places on developing these basic skills, so that the pupils have high levels of comprehension. The school puts resources and time into an extended reading programme where all children are regularly heard to read, the pupils are very appreciative of this and they clearly gain confidence from these experiences which supports them in their language work across the curriculum.
- 3.7 Pupils' ability is above average judging from observation of lessons and pupils' work, EYFS profile results, and pupil interviews. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN/D, make rapid progress relative to their age and ability and so attainment is well above average. The following analysis uses national data from 2014/15. This is the most recent year for which comparative statistics are available. Results in the national tests at 11 were well above average, in relation to the national average for national maintained primary school. The progress pupils make is in part due to the focus of leadership on, and the teacher's use of, targeted marking, this allows each pupil to understand what they need to do next to develop further. This is consistent with the aims of the school with acknowledges that every child has individual educational needs which can be catered for within this small school. The vast majority of parents felt that teaching enabled their children to make good progress and develop skills for the future.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages and abilities, demonstrate consistently high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. Older pupils solved decoding problems and demonstrated their excellent ability to apply knowledge to complex challenges. The pupils are highly engaged with the learning process, and because of this are keen to complete extra research and background reading. This gives them in depth background experiences on which to draw upon in school, to deepen their learning further. The pupils' high levels of understanding are developed in lessons which are mostly conducted at pace and with challenging, engaging content. Teachers prepare clearly structured and differentiated tasks that ensure full access to the curriculum for all children.

The most able pupils make progress as teachers target comments and activities designed to extend and widen their thinking. The school uses a variety of strategies to ensure high attainment and progress for all. These include use of classroom assistants, as well as support and extension activities and in individual lessons. Almost all parents felt their child's educational needs were met effectively by the school.

- 3.9 The pupils have excellent study skills, they are able to reflect on the facts and knowledge they have read or heard, and make connections with previously held ideas to make leaps in their understanding. They can synthesise knowledge to hypothesise and present ideas new to them. They understand and appreciate the value of having original ideas. The pupils work is detailed, reflects the time and care they take with it and demonstrates a willingness to analyse and deliberate their thoughts. Teachers make time for review and reflection within lessons and the curriculum includes study skills designed to encourage children to develop higher order thinking skills.
- 3.10 The pupils demonstrate a wide array of numeracy skills and are confident in applying them to solve less identifiable problems. They are encouraged to work at pace and use material carefully designed to meet the needs of all abilities. Teachers use targeted comments in their marking so that the pupils learn from previous mistakes and are then guided onto the next appropriate activity. Pupils are able to apply their mathematical skills to great effect for example; in a science lesson older child confidently measured and recorded the rates at which sugar dissolves at different concentrations and temperatures. Pupils are able to confidently process and analyse results, and use them to hypothesise, and communicate conclusions and ideas effectively to their peers and teachers.
- 3.11 The pupils are competent users of information control technology (ICT) and have a clear understanding of and ability to use a variety of ICT skills, including designing their own computer games and simple computer programming. Although planning does not include ICT as a matter of course, given the opportunity pupils are extremely efficient at using ICT as a research tool and producing word processed material from their research including pictures and diagrams.
- 3.12 The pupils are highly successful in their academic aspirations. The school has increased the success rates in gaining places at grammar schools at 11+ over the past three years. Pupils are thoroughly prepared for external examinations. In the last academic year, three pupils achieved academic scholarships to local independent schools. The same level of commitment is very evident in the children's many successes in the arts and in sports. All pupils leave the school with a recognised qualification in sailing. The netball team won the Stratford Primary School tournament for the second consecutive year. There have been individual and team success in cross country; three pupils in the last academic year represented south Warwickshire. Pupils' art has been exhibited locally. Some pupils take part in in Royal Shakespeare Company productions and a large number of pupils achieve success in nationally accredited drama examinations. There is a culture of celebrating personal and corporate success, the school ensures pupils have opportunities to take part in wide and varied events.

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 The pupils demonstrate outstanding social awareness; they are sensitive to each other's vulnerabilities because they are kind-hearted and respectful. They take it on themselves to encourage each other to live up to the school's standards of impeccable behaviour and manners. Pupils talked about the good relationships that they need with one another to sail effectively in pairs. The school is clear in its policies and practices that it places high importance on teaching effective social relationships. The Headmaster holds 'friendship meetings' encouraging pupils to discuss and resolve any issues in their social relationships: pupils and staff spoke warmly

about the effectiveness of this in reinforcing good social skills. Staff described their joy in watching the very youngest children co-operate with one another to build an enclosure in the paddock, working collaboratively to move logs too big for one child to place. Older pupils work with one another, in the school council, to ensure the whole pupil body has a voice.

- 3.15 The pupils have a highly developed sense of respect for rules of morality and of right and wrong. Pupils can express their personal emotions confidently and analyse the key values of promoting community cohesion. Older pupils articulated the key requirements of living in harmony within their communities. They were able to identify the elements of being a supportive and helpful citizen and the importance of living a caring lifestyle. This is fostered through their knowledge of the importance of the values of citizenship and understanding of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. These attitudes are actively promoted through the school's well-developed sanctions and rewards system and the clear setting of high expectations of outstanding behaviour. The pupils' excellent moral understanding is enhanced through carefully designed curriculum content in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and in discussions with staff during pastoral care lessons. The overwhelming majority of parents felt the school met their child's pastoral and welfare needs effectively.
- 3.16 The pupils are quietly and respectfully, self-confident and unassuming in their self-belief. This is seen in the way that they participate fully and take ownership of discussions in lessons, which are often truly collaborative not just lead by the teacher. Pupils have a strong belief in themselves demonstrated by the way they are prepared to 'have a go' and take risks in discussions, as they develop their thinking through comments, rather than just respond to factual questions. They will persevere to fully understand a concept, generating their own perceptive questions, knowing that this approach will help them improve their own learning. Pupils can improve their own work independently because they understand the importance of taking note of the targeted marking their work receives, so they can make progress next time. Pupils of all ages value the constant reassurance and praise they receive universally from staff, which has a significant impact on their very high levels of self-confidence. Pupils are allowed time to express their thoughts and feelings, which promotes their self-worth and encourages them to keep trying. By the time they are ready to leave the school, they are keen and enthusiastic to take the next step, echoing the enthusiasm for challenge and change that has been modelled by their teachers. Almost all parents, who responded to the questionnaire, felt the school fostered an environment which promoted their child's personal developments.
- 3.17 The pupils make quick and effective decisions in initiating their own learning; they often start work without prompting and are capable of carrying out pre-determined tasks without needing a reminder. They self-select clubs and make confident choices about the way they will respond to a task. Pupils said that they felt most of the pupil body realise that it is important to learn from mistakes because this will help them progress when they are older. The staff are instrumental in developing the pupils' independence; expectations are both high and consistent in their application.
- 3.18 The pupils show a clear and strong appreciation of the natural world around them and the non-material aspects of life, apparent through their excitement in being able to be alone in the middle of a lake whilst sailing or taking a moment to reflect on how lucky they are, when laying a wreath at the local war memorial. The children's spirituality is developed through church services, reflective assemblies and a personal, social and health education programme, that promotes spiritual understanding, and pupils' responsibility to respect everyone's individuality and care for those who need support.
- 3.19 Pupils of all ages demonstrate that they fully understand and are exceptionally willing to fulfil their responsibilities, to be positive and active members of a democratic society. This may be through the youngest children being 'back of the line' monitors or the older pupils carrying out duties as prefects and house captains. At lunch time older pupils were quick to carry out their duties in re-

laying tables and helping the younger ones, without any prompting. They are encouraged by a fully supportive staff which actively collaborates with them, and initiates opportunities to contribute to the wider society of Stratford. This is exemplified in the annual charity fundraising activities and in visits to local care homes.

- 3.20 Pupils speak warmly of their school community. Pupils are able to clearly articulate their differences whilst celebrating diversity. Pupils are guided by the strong culture of tolerance and inclusion, which underpins the school ethos. This is based on the school's unrelenting and uncompromising emphasis on good behaviour and respect for others. Some parents were pleased to notice how quickly their children had settled, having recently joined the school.
- 3.21 The pupils demonstrate a happy and healthy approach to life in all that they do. Pupils say they value the opportunity to bringing healthy snacks for break as they are keen to demonstrate a high level of understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They have a balanced attitude to life's challenges and opportunities, they have the confidence to 'fly' and not worry about life's stresses because they know they have adults surrounding them who care about each individual and will listen to all and any of their worries and concerns. The school gives outstanding attention to each child's everyday well-being.

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

Inspectors

Mrs Vivien Sergeant

Reporting inspector

Mrs Caroline Korniczky

Compliance team inspector (Bursar, GSA school)

Mr Christopher Emmott

Team inspector (headmaster, IAPS and ISA school)