

# International Stanborough School

Stanborough Park, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 9JT

## Inspection dates

21–23 November 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Strong and effective leadership and governance have brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils' work and the school's accurate records show that in the short term and long term, pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is of a high quality. Adults regularly check on how well pupils are doing to ensure that work is not too easy or too hard.
- The quality of assessment is a real strength of the school. It helps leaders to accurately measure pupils' progress.
- The international pupils make good progress when learning English as an additional language. The personalised curriculum is well designed and supports pupils' learning well.
- Staff have access to regular professional development.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.
- Teachers take into account the international pupils' variable understanding of English when planning their lessons.
- The school is inclusive. It welcomes pupils from different backgrounds and other schools. All pupils respect their peers and support each other exceptionally well.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are at the heart of the school's beliefs. Pupils are happy and feel safe and well looked after.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Questioning is not sufficiently sophisticated to encourage pupils to reflect carefully.
- Staff performance processes do not help to improve the school. Targets are not precise enough to demonstrate clear impact on staff development.
- Careers information needs stronger coordination to ensure maximum impact on teaching and learning.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - improving performance management processes so that targets are precise, challenging and clearly linked to improvements for pupils and staff development
  - ensuring that the coordination of careers, information and guidance is centralised to ensure effective practice.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
  - increasing the amount of outstanding teaching in the school by ensuring that teachers provide the highest levels of challenge consistently, to enable all pupils to reach their academic potential
  - ensuring that teachers further develop their questioning so that it requires pupils to reflect more deeply on their answers to acquire a deeper understanding of knowledge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have taken swift, decisive action to address the independent school standards not met at the previous inspection.
- Leaders, including governors and proprietors, have taken effective action to improve the school. The headteacher and her senior leadership team provide strong leadership. They have established a positive and ambitious climate where all pupils can succeed.
- The school self-evaluation provides an accurate reflection of the school's performance. Development plans are detailed and show how planned actions improve pupils' progress.
- The proprietors, governors and teachers are passionate in their commitment to providing equal opportunities for all the international pupils, ensuring that their individual needs are met. All staff share the headteacher's vision that all pupils can succeed.
- The international school offers an effective programme for learners of English for speakers of other languages and those wishing to study British history and English literature. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully planned to maximise success. It helps to prepare pupils to compete in a global society with confidence.
- Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has helped to improve the international pupils' outcomes. A number of flexible courses are now available which range from 10 days to a full year. Pupils who decide to stay beyond the year are given the opportunity to take the GCSE examinations. Teachers carefully plan learning activities which motivate pupils and meet the needs of individuals.
- Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits for pupils. For example, pupils attend London theatres, Shakespeare plays, Warwick Castle, the cinema, and go bowling. Pupils value the way in which teachers encourage them to take part in school life.
- The school's programme for evaluating the quality of pupils' progress is meticulous. Systematic monitoring provides an accurate picture of where each pupil is in their learning. This ensures that any pupil falling behind receives the right support to help them catch up.
- The fundamental principle by which the school lives as a community, Dominus Magister Ludi Nostri (God is the master of our school), underpins the importance leaders attach to the spiritual development of their pupils.
- The school effectively develops pupils' understanding of what it means to live in modern Britain. Fundamental British values are taught in every lesson of the school day, relating areas to individual lesson themes. Tolerance and respect are at the heart of International Stanborough's chosen values and shine through every aspect of its work. Pupils have the opportunity to visit the court house, the mosque and a Hindu temple.
- All parents who made their views known to the inspector would recommend the school. Parents value the regular reports they receive and rightly believe that staff communicate well with them.
- Robust and rigorous performance management targets are not well established.

## Governance

- The governors and proprietors share the headteacher's passion and commitment to do everything possible to meet the needs of the pupils, including the international pupils.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise to support leaders in the school. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors consistently hold leaders to account for the quality of education they provide for pupils, as well as the care they receive.
- A full review of the governing body has been undertaken. Governors routinely check that actions in the school development plan are making a difference to pupils' progress and well-being. For example, governors regularly make visits to the school and scrutinise the half-termly headteacher's report to provide support and challenge.
- There is no complacency. Governors make sure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. They have a strong understanding of how the school promotes tolerance, emphasises British values and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Governors closely monitor the school finances to ensure the financial stability of the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have rapidly addressed the aspects identified at the previous inspection as being inadequate. There is an up-to-date safeguarding policy on the school website which takes account of statutory requirements.
- Records are well kept and are stored securely. The single central record of checks on staff is appropriate and is routinely checked by the headteacher. The appointments of staff meet statutory requirements. Consequently, all staff are suitable to work with pupils. Appropriate checks are made on visitors.
- The designated safeguarding officer has a thorough understanding of the role in order to support the well-being of pupils. Pupils are continually monitored to ensure that they stay safe through the embedded culture of safety and security.
- Staff understand that they all share responsibility for safeguarding and that there is a need to protect pupils against all possible risks. Staff receive high-quality training and regular updates on current legislation to keep pupils safe. Staff know how to report concerns. They remain vigilant and keep a careful eye on each individual.
- Risk assessments are thorough. They give consideration to the potential hazards for pupils in educational visits away from the school site. The risk assessments completed for each trip are detailed about the particular needs of the international pupils, who may not be fluent speakers of English.
- Parents consider their children are safe. Additionally, pupils talk confidently about how to keep safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. High expectations

and aspirations are promoted by the teachers. The pupils respond with enthusiasm and consistently make good or better progress.

- Teaching is much improved because leaders carry out rigorous checks on the quality. They provide support and guidance when required. As a result, teaching is good and impacts positively on pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have a detailed understanding of the needs of individual pupils. They plan effectively, resulting in pupils making at least good progress.
- Leaders have built on the improvements noted during the Ofsted monitoring inspection in June 2016. The school now makes effective use of baseline assessments in English, mathematics and science to determine accurate starting points for learning. This results in all teachers now taking account of pupils' prior learning in order to plan the next steps.
- The teaching of English for speakers of other languages is particularly strong. All pupils, from their various starting points, are given tailored guidance about how to improve. Teachers help pupils to overcome any misunderstandings so that they participate in and understand the lesson fully.
- In subjects other than English, the level of challenge is high enough to ensure good progress from pupils' starting points.
- Teachers are using the assessment systems to track and record the progress of their pupils, but it is too early to see the impact of the system on improving outcomes for the oldest pupils from their starting points. Nevertheless, teachers are tracking the progress older pupils are making in their examination courses.
- Teachers implement the school's feedback policy on a consistent basis. As a consequence, the feedback pupils receive helps them to improve in their subjects.
- The school provides regular reports for parents on the progress their children are making towards their targets and in all areas of learning. Parents said that they are happy with the information they receive about their child's progress.
- Homework is set regularly and used to enhance what pupils have learned in their lessons. All pupils said that they receive regular homework in all of their subjects and that this improves their learning. The most able pupils commented that the homework is routinely challenging and has helped them to progress further.
- Staff who are new to teaching are very well supported. They appreciate the guidance and support they receive from all staff, ensuring that they learn the necessary skills to teach the international pupils.
- Stanborough seeks to develop the whole person. Pupils are encouraged to value healthy living by eating sensibly and playing a range of sports, for example participating in the friendly inter-house leagues and matches, and the annual swimming gala.
- Teachers use an appropriate range of questioning to explore pupils' thoughts. However, some questioning is not sharp enough in encouraging international pupils to answer, so that they can develop their spoken English and achieve the highest grades. Questioning is not consistently tailored to encourage pupils to reflect carefully on answers, and to acquire deeper knowledge and understanding.

## **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils settle into school seamlessly because of the excellent care and support they receive. The international pupils are provided with a mentor and a peer buddy when they arrive at the school to help them adjust to school life.
- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils are fundamental to the success of this school. Pupils feel safe and secure. The school is a harmonious and inclusive community. Pastoral systems are fine-tuned to meet individual needs.
- Adults work relentlessly to encourage each pupil to develop independence and self-confidence in learning English. As a result, pupils are happy to 'have a go' when presented with anything new. They thrive on the encouragement they receive and display excellent attitudes to learning.
- Many respond well to the responsibility given to them. For example, in a home economics lesson, a pupil was able to instruct another pupil on the next step in mixing ingredients and how to do the task well.
- Lunchtimes and breaktimes reinforce pupils' personal and social skills. All pupils engage well with their peers. They enjoy each other's company and are highly supportive of each other. They show interest and admiration for each other's successes.
- The school promotes pupils' understanding about being part of a global family. This prepares them well to make a contribution to the international community. Pupils are given the opportunity to mix and engage with pupils and professionals from other countries. Visiting speakers from around the world address pupils at assemblies and during themed weeks.
- Compassion is one of the core values of the school. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved with both local and international charity organisations. Pupils organise and perform in charity concerts and fundraising events and the school's annual community service day.
- Trips abroad provide excellent preparation for becoming suitable citizens of the world.
- Career guidance gives pupils the necessary guidance on the qualifications needed for their chosen career path. The school acknowledges that the coordination and centralisation to ensure effective practice needs refining.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There are no incidents of low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and talk excitedly about activities and opportunities available to them. Pupils move through the corridors sensibly and calmly, and respect the environment they work in.
- At lunchtimes and breaktimes, the pupils mix cooperatively together in the dining hall and the play area, in friendship groups. International pupils say that they feel welcomed by the secondary school pupils, who fully involve them in the life of the school.

- Adults act as excellent role models for how to respect individuals. They set an example of how different nationalities can work and live together in harmony. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils are courteous and polite to each other, adults and visitors.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and this is reflected in their attendance being above the national average. Their punctuality to school and to lessons is good. There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions in the last three years.
- Pupils respond positively to the nurturing environment provided for them. They wear their uniform with pride. They demonstrate a mature respect for the school environment, which is exceptionally well kept.
- The pupils spoken to said that bullying is extremely rare. They feel safe and secure.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' outcomes are good.
- Some international pupils spend a short time in the school, whereas others can spend a number of years. These pupils are fully immersed in mainstream lessons with Stanborough School pupils.
- The limited level of English for many pupils on arrival at the school does not act as a barrier to making good progress. The school has worked hard on developing teachers' awareness of individual pupils' needs. This is reflected in teachers' planning and the good progress pupils make.
- Short-term pupils who join the school for between one month and a year to improve the quality of their English make at least good progress in their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. This is as a result of good teaching which is well matched to their individual needs.
- Pupils read regularly in English, which positively develops their knowledge of vocabulary and fluency of reading.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work across the key stages, together with detailed assessment information, indicates that current pupils are making at least good progress from their starting points.
- The very small proportion of pupils that sat GCSEs in 2017 makes comparison with national information unreliable. School performance information indicates that almost all the long-term international pupils of different ability levels have met their expected goals and gained entry to the schools and colleges of their choice.
- Short-term pupils' achievement in history and geography was not as strong as in other subjects. The school immediately recognised this and redesigned the curriculum, resulting in stronger outcomes in the humanities subjects.
- Former pupils follow a variety of distinguished careers in business, education, law, medicine and theology. Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with impartial careers education and guidance. The school is in agreement that the coordination of this area needs further development.

## School details

Unique reference number	134933
DfE registration number	919/6209
Inspection number	10038906

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 boarding school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Seventh Day Adventists
Chair	Berton Samuel
Headteacher	Lorraine Dixon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,350
Telephone number	01923 673268
Website	<a href="http://www.spsch.org/international-school/">www.spsch.org/international-school/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:ldixon@spsch.org">ldixon@spsch.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2015

## Information about this school

- International Stanborough School is an independent faith day and boarding school located in Watford.
- The school operates within Stanborough School. Both schools are owned by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and are open to pupils of all faiths or none.
- The school aims to provide 'a caring secure Christian environment which enables all pupils to reach their potential' and to do this by providing 'a specialised, but broad and balanced curriculum which promotes each pupil's well-being.'



- The International Stanborough School makes provision for pupils who are learning to speak English. They stay for either a few weeks, mainly to develop their skills in speaking English, or for longer, sometimes as long as one year. Longer-term pupils study alongside pupils in the Stanborough School, with a full range of GCSE subjects to opt from.
- The school offers provision for 70 boarding pupils.
- An education progress monitoring inspection was conducted in June 2016 where the school met all of the independent school standards.
- The school presently has no international pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- The inspector visited nine lessons to observe pupils' learning and to look at the work in their books. The headteacher accompanied the inspector when she visited the lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the governors, the proprietor and a group of pupils. Staff were spoken to informally.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including the school self-evaluation, the school development plan, school policies, records on the quality of teaching, information on pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance, and minutes of the governing body meeting. Records about safeguarding and pupils' welfare were also viewed.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for these to be taken into account. The inspector took account of six free-text responses to Ofsted and considered 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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