

St Peter's Independent School

Lingswood Park, Blackthorn, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 8TA

Inspection dates

9–10 January 2019

Overall outcome

Met all standards that were checked

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

All paragraphs

- At the previous inspection teachers had not taken into account the pupils' prior attainment when planning lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), did not make the progress of which they were capable. Leaders had not ensured that an assessment framework was in place to assess pupils' work regularly and inform teachers' planning. Finally, leaders had not put in place a framework to evaluate pupils' performance.
- Teachers have amended the curriculum plans for all subjects to take into account the needs of pupils with SEND. Planning includes strategies that teachers may use to support the learning of pupils with SEND. In addition, pupils with SEND are set individual targets each term to help improve their work. This group of pupils receives extra support from learning support assistants to help them achieve their targets. Most of the targets are measurable; however, this is not consistent for all targets.
- The school has comprehensive schemes of work to teach a broad and balanced curriculum. The plans are detailed and provide the opportunity for pupils to make good progress in all subjects.
- Pupils' progress in the school is improving, particularly in the senior school. Pupils from Year 7 to Year 11 make very strong progress in art. Pupils in Year 9 have studied the artist Mark Powell. They have drawn portraits in a similar style to the artist. Pupils could demonstrate how their work has improved over the sequence of lessons that they have studied the artist. The artwork displayed around the school is of a very high standard. This includes the paintings of birds by Year 8. Pupils are delighted with their work. One pupil explained, 'Previously, I was not very good at art. Now I am proud to show my work to my family.'
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics in the senior school. Pupils are able to use their knowledge to solve challenging questions. Outcomes in mathematics at GCSE at grade 4 or higher are above the national average. Pupils in the preparatory school study a wide range of mathematical topics to gain a broad understanding of concepts. However, they do not have enough opportunities to reason mathematically.

- Pupils read well. They are fluent and demonstrate a good understanding of the texts that they have read. Pupils have the opportunity to write in a range of genres. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have written 'slam' poetry to a good standard. In the early years, children are developing their letter formation and beginning to write simple sentences.
- Pupils make good progress in languages. In a French lesson observed, Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to speak simple sentences and then add more adjectives and nouns to increase the complexity of the sentence. They were confident at speaking and the teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge to ensure that pupils learned new vocabulary and pronounced the words accurately.
- In history, pupils have visited Warwick Castle and written their own brochures for the castle to inform readers of its historical significance. Pupils have designed posters to persuade other pupils about who would have been the best king in 1066. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the subject taught.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' abilities in the core subjects of English and mathematics in the preparatory school. Senior school teachers also assess the pupils' progress every term. The assessments inform the teachers' planning, particularly for those pupils who are at risk of underachieving. Specific interventions are put in place to help some pupils improve their progress, but this is not consistent through the school.
- The school has an informative performance framework by which leaders can evaluate pupils' progress and attainment with accuracy. However, leaders do not consistently use their evaluation of pupils' progress to check whether teaching is meeting the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils in the senior school receive careers education each year. Pupils have the opportunities to research different careers and hear visiting speakers discuss their jobs. Pupils research courses available at different colleges and about apprenticeships and scholarships that are advertised in the local area. These opportunities help pupils to make informed choices about their future career options.
- Pupils demonstrate respect for each other and with adults. They enjoy learning about different cultures from around the world. Pupils respect people who represent the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act. Pupils have the opportunities to learn about different religions and have listened to visiting speakers to gain more knowledge of religions that are different from their own.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values. They learn about democracy through electing representatives to the school council. Older pupils have visited the Houses of Parliament and met their local Member of Parliament.
- Pupils have opportunities to learn about their local community. Pupils have donated food for the local food bank as part of their harvest festival. Pupils have also supported the charity Mary's Meals to provide one meal a day for chronically hungry children in developing countries. In addition, the school council has organised activities to raise funds for cancer research. Pupils are being prepared well for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- All standards in part 1 have been met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that governors had reviewed the school's safeguarding policy or the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders had not taken swift and effective action to remove potential hazards in the building which could be to the detriment to the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. Leaders had not conducted a full fire risk assessment, ensuring that all fire routes were clearly signed, nor ensured that regular fire evacuation drills were carried out and recorded. The school had not implemented the risk assessment policy effectively. Finally, the school had not ensured that pupils in the early years were supervised at all times by appropriately qualified staff.
- Leaders have taken swift and decisive action to resolve the weaknesses identified during the last inspection.
- The governing body includes safeguarding on the agenda for all its meetings. Governors have reviewed the school's safeguarding policy. The policy includes all the latest government guidance. Leaders produce a detailed annual report about safeguarding, which governors have discussed thoroughly.
- All staff have received appropriate training about safeguarding. They are aware of how to report concerns and leaders take prompt and effective action when concerns have been raised. The school's record-keeping of actions taken in response to concerns raised has improved over the last few months and is now robust.
- The school has ensured that the health and safety policy is implemented effectively. The site is well maintained and potential safety hazards to pupils and staff have been removed.
- The school has comprehensive risk assessments for activities in school and for visits out of school. The risk assessments have been recently updated and contain appropriate measures to reduce potential risks.
- The school has completed a full fire risk assessment. Appropriate checks on the fire-safety equipment have been carried out by external companies. Staff have received training to be fire marshals. The fire alarm is tested weekly and all rooms have a notice to inform pupils and staff of their nearest exit to evacuate from the building. All escape routes are appropriately signposted. Fire drills have been carried out regularly and the details recorded.
- Leaders have ensured that the staff working in the early years are appropriately qualified to supervise the children.
- The school has a behaviour policy which includes rewards and sanctions. Leaders record any incidents of poor behaviour and any subsequent action taken as a result. Records for the current academic year show very few incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils said that bullying is rare, but that when it does happen teachers are quick to resolve the issue.
- Staff have appropriate first-aid qualifications and there are several well-equipped first-aid boxes around the school.

- Attendance registers and the admissions registers are well-maintained. When a pupil has left the school, the local authority has been informed in a timely manner.
- All standards in part 3 have been met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection the school had not ensured that all the required checks on adults working at the school had been completed before they commenced work at the school. In addition, the school had not recorded on the single central record that a check had been made of their qualifications.
- Leaders have taken swift action to resolve the issues identified at the last inspection. The school has completed all the required checks on new staff before they started to work at the school. Staff personnel files contain all the relevant information required for leaders to conduct the required checks. The single central record includes all the required information, including the dates of when the checks have been completed and the checks on the qualifications of staff.
- The single central record includes all staff, volunteers, governors and trustees. All checks have been completed satisfactorily. The administrator is very knowledgeable about which checks need to be conducted and these are completed and recorded efficiently.
- All standards in part 4 have been met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection, the school had not ensured that there were suitable showering facilities for senior pupils' use after physical activity. In addition, it was found that the cleanliness of toilets and changing facilities was not maintained to a suitable standard.
- The school now uses changing facilities owned by the local authority for senior pupils to shower after physical activity. The school has an arrangement with the local authority about maintaining the cleanliness of the facilities. On inspection, the facilities were clean and suitable for use.
- There are separate toilets labelled for pupils and staff. The toilets are clean, and pupils have access to hot water to wash their hands. The temperature of the hot water is managed by a thermostat to ensure that it is not scalding.
- The school has appropriate space for pupils to play at breaktimes and a large hall for indoor physical activity. Nearby playing fields are used for field games.
- The school has an appropriate first-aid room with a medical bed which is situated close to a toilet and hand basin.
- The classrooms are of a good size and have good lighting. External lighting ensures that the building is well lit for staff and pupils when it is dark outside.
- All standards in part 5 have been met.

Part 6. Provision of information

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that the school's academic performance of the previous school year had been made available for parents. In addition, the school had not informed parents about the number of complaints it had received in the previous school year.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action in response to the unmet standards at the previous inspection. The school has published the GCSE results from the previous school year on its website. In addition, the number of complaints that the school has received in the previous school year has also been published on the school's website.
- The annual written reports to parents about pupils' progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught are detailed and informative.
- The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) gains appropriate information required to inform the reviews of pupils' education, health and care plans.
- Governors and proprietors can be contacted through the holidays by email. The email address is published on the website.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.
- All standards in part 6 have been met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection, the school had not followed its complaints policy. The school had not recorded formal written complaints, including those which had been lodged directly with governors. In addition, leaders had not included in the policy that all complaints about the provision in the early years must be investigated by the governing body within 28 days.
- Following the previous inspection, school leaders, including governors, have not received any formal complaints. The school has a complaints policy which allows for complaints to be heard in an informal way in the initial stage. If the complainant is not satisfied, the complaint is managed in a formal process. Clear timescales have been published in the policy to hear complaints.
- The complaints policy has been updated following the previous inspection and states that any complaints about the early years will be investigated within 28 days.
- All standards in this part have been met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All Paragraphs

- At the previous inspection leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards had been consistently met. In addition, governors had not held school leaders to account to rectify known weaknesses.
- Leaders have worked effectively, following the previous inspection, to ensure that all the independent school standards are now met.

- The governing body and trustees hold the headteacher and the senior leadership team to account for the progress that the school is making. Governors have regularly checked that the school's action plan has been implemented in a timely manner. Governors and trustees visit the school regularly and ask pertinent questions about safeguarding and health and safety matters. They do not consistently ask school leaders about the quality of teaching at the school. Nevertheless, the governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and have demonstrated their capacity to improve the school by ensuring that the school now meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders have put in place a comprehensive assessment framework for all pupils. They are able to track the progress of pupils and provide support for those pupils at risk of underachieving. However, leaders do not yet review the assessment information systematically to check that all teachers provide extra support for those pupils who require it.
- The SENCo has ensured that teachers have amended curriculum plans to include strategies to support pupils with SEND. Learning support assistants provide good support for this group of pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that the staff are well trained on safeguarding issues. The staff demonstrate a good knowledge of signs of abuse and know the school procedures for how to respond to a concern. Procedures for checking the suitability of new staff are efficient. Pupils are also aware of how to keep safe through what they learn in lessons. There is a notice board with useful information about how pupils can stay safe.
- Leaders have ensured that the premises are clean and safe. Risk assessments are in place to reduce potential risks and to promote the well-being of pupils.
- All standards in part 8 have been met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the previous inspection, the school had not prepared an accessibility plan to improve the accessibility of the school's physical environment and curriculum for disabled pupils.
- The school has now written an accessibility plan to show how they plan to make the site and the curriculum more accessible for disabled pupils.
- This requirement is met.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the previous inspection leaders had not ensured that all the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' had been met. Leaders had not ensured that all staff with responsibility for teaching children in the early years had the appropriate qualifications.
- Leaders have now ensured that all staff in the early years have the appropriate qualifications to meet the needs of all the children and ensure their safety.
- All the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' have been met.

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 that were checked during this inspection. This includes the standards and requirements that were judged not to be met at the previous inspection. All of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection, except for the standards in Part 2, because they were met at the last inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards:

Part 1. Quality of Education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.

- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) 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
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out the appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person–
 - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person’s qualifications;
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person’s appointment.
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person’s appointment.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that each member of staff had the relevant qualifications.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school’s academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
 - 32(3)(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which–
 - 33(c) sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint
 - 33(e) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (d), establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to made in writing
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school
 - 33(h) allow for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish
 - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is–
 - 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher
 - 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and–
 - 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
 - 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and
 - 33(k) provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	122143
DfE registration number	928/6056
Inspection number	10085182

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Number of part-time pupils	5
Proprietors	Mr Michael Dawe, Mr David Reynolds, Mr Douglas Forrester
Chair	Mr James Waddington
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Fenlon
Annual fees (day pupils)	Nursery–Year 2 £6,825; Year 3–6 £7,065; Senior £9,150
Telephone number	01604 411745
Website	www.stpetersindependent.org.uk
Email address	bursarsps@btconnect.com
Date of previous standard inspection	20–22 March 2018

Information about this school

- St Peter's Independent School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged three to 16. The school is a charitable trust, governed by its trustees and a board of governors.
- The school is a Christian foundation which aims to welcome pupils of all faiths and backgrounds.
- The school aims to provide an education in a welcoming, open and caring environment where everyone is valued and achieves their individual potential, academically, culturally and socially.

- The previous standard inspection took place on 20 to 22 March 2018. The inspection was conducted by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. The school received a sound judgement.
- The school left the Independent Schools Association in August 2018. The school is now inspected by Ofsted.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The previous inspection of the school was a standard inspection which took place on 20 to 22 March 2018. Following this inspection, the school was asked to prepare an action plan. The Department for Education rejected the action plan.
- This inspection was the first progress monitoring inspection following the previous standard inspection. The inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The inspector met with a group of staff and a group of pupils. He also spoke to staff and pupils informally. The inspector observed in lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. The inspector looked at documentation related to safeguarding. He checked the school's single central record and the school's systems for recruiting staff. The inspector reviewed the school's assessment information related to pupils' attainment and progress and the school's action plan. He reviewed the school's self-evaluation. The inspector also toured the school site with a senior leader. He met with the chair of the trustees and the chair of the governing body.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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