

Pattison College

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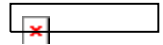
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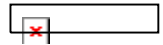
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Introduction and summary

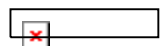


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

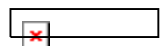
Information about the school



Pattison College was established in 1949 to provide full-time education for talented pupils wishing to make a career of the theatre. Over the years the emphasis has changed. There is still a great deal of opportunity for pupils interested in dance, drama and music, but the school now aims to provide educational opportunities for pupils from nursery age through to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). It also offers a specialised three-year vocational course in musical theatre for 16-19 year-olds.

The school sets out to offer a family atmosphere and place the needs of the individual pupil at the heart of what it does. It is not academically selective, but accepts pupils at any stage in their school career whom it considers would benefit from a traditional education where discipline, hard work, good manners and concern for others are an important part of the school ethos.

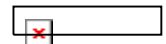
Summary of main findings



Pattison College provides a very high standard of education in the academic subjects, reinforced by strong provision in the vocational curriculum. The school curriculum timetable ensures that pupils have access to, and benefit from, lively and diverse educational experiences. Teaching is very good and at times excellent, most notably in French, the humanities, mathematics and English. This is also the case in dance, ballet and speech. Skills acquired by pupils in one area of the curriculum are transferred effectively to others.

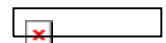
The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and is reinforced by the high expectations which staff and pupils have of each other. Pupils are articulate and express and carry themselves well. Standards of achievement are high in academic and vocational aspect of the curriculum and are enhanced by regular opportunities for performance at local and national level.

What the school does well



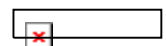
- provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that pupils have a secure basis for their education;
- it creates a climate of care and consideration for others, which is reflected in the excellent behaviour of the pupils;
- the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school;
- the quality of teaching across the curriculum is very good; and
- it successfully fulfils its aims of achieving high standards through an integrated academic and vocational curriculum.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- ensure that there are appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill.

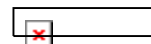
Next steps



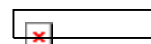
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development in order to raise standards further:

- to develop systems for appraisal that will enable all staff to have further access to appropriate training; and
- increased use of information and communication technology (ICT), in order to support the vocational and academic curriculum more fully and strengthen assessment procedures throughout the school.

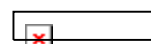
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the school



The quality of the curriculum



Overall, the quality of curricular provision is very good. In the Foundation Stage, planning follows the recommended guidance, while assessment is provided by the Foundation Stage Profile. The pupils are given a good, secure basis for their subsequent work through the school. Staff promote the pupils' confidence and personal development particularly well.

The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum which covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC), religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). French is taught from Years 5 to 11. Much care and thought has been given to organising the timetable in order to ensure that appropriate time is allocated to all the areas of learning and to specific subjects. Homework is used effectively to supplement work covered in lessons.

There is an emphasis on a wide variety of creative and expressive arts. Music is taught separately, with singing a regular feature of the daily routines in the nursery and lower infants. Specialist instrumental tuition for upper juniors is provided after school.

English and mathematics pervade the curriculum. A significant amount of time is spent on reading, phonics and creative writing. As a result, pupils make good progress in these aspects. Specialist teaching in ICT, French, music, art, drama and dance has resulted in improvements in standards.

Most subjects are supported by policy documents. These are complemented by detailed schemes of work largely based on unit plans from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which assist the teachers in the practical planning of lessons. Teachers make good use of resources available to them and ensure that the pupils' learning environment is bright and welcoming through the display of pupils' work.

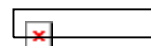
The school places appropriate emphasis on the early identification of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Clear and helpful individual educational plans are drawn up for those pupils who have learning needs identified by teachers.

The curriculum is enhanced by educational visits, both locally and beyond - for example, to the Tate Modern and Warwick Castle. These visits provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to learn from first-hand experience. It is further boosted by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.

The school's adherence to the NC for all key stages ensures that there is consistency and continuity for all pupils. The academic curriculum in the senior school is focused and balanced and is effectively interlinked with the vocational curriculum, ensuring that pupils receive a varied daily educational diet. Provision for physical education (PE) has been strengthened by the addition of a sports club, but the lay-out of the timetable ensures that there are above average opportunities for all pupils to take PE within the vocational curriculum.

Dance in many forms is offered at all years in the senior school along with music and drama. The specialist musical theatre course is of good quality and offers daily variety. It includes detailed attention to the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) speech course. Pupils absorb and practise enjambement, end-stopping and caesuras while reciting their chosen poems. The singing lessons offer opportunities for close analysis of the impact of outstanding songs from musicals. Detailed choreography is undertaken in the musical theatre classes.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching in all the lessons observed in the junior school was good, some very good. As a result, pupils make good progress. Very good teaching is underpinned by effective planning.

Teachers build well upon previous learning and, where appropriate, give attention to pupils' individual learning needs. They know them well and have established good relationships with them. Pupils behave very well and respond positively to judicious questioning. During the best lessons, teachers impart enthusiasm and encourage exuberant responses for the subject. They make good use of time so that pupils have to work hard and be productive.

Teachers demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught. Due emphasis is placed upon the teaching of creative and descriptive writing. These can be found in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers encourage high levels of clarity in the way notes are taken and high standards of presentation, as well as continually striving to improve handwriting.

Reading tests indicate that pupils are generally attaining standards above those expected of their age. Teachers ensure there are plentiful opportunities for pupils to practise their arithmetic. Most are highly numerate. The best lessons encourage investigative activities; others rely too heavily on worksheets.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Standardised tests are used to gauge pupils' performance. The school is at an early stage of setting pupils individual targets and involving them in regular assessment of their own work. Teachers mark pupils' work well. The best practice is diagnostic, where developmental feedback to pupils identifies gaps in their understanding and helps them to make progress. The monitoring of pupils' progress is less evident in lessons.

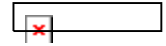
Teaching in the upper school, both in the academic and vocational curriculum, is good and often very good. It is characterised by careful planning, enthusiasm for the subject, extensive subject knowledge, energy and the provision of opportunity for pupils to develop their learning. In the best lessons, a wide variety of techniques are employed, and this was particularly successful when lessons were of double normal length.

Pupils are confident with the spoken word, and, as in the junior school, staff insist on high standards of presentation and emphasise good note taking. In a double French lesson for Year 10 at the end of the school day the excitement generated was maintained to the end by a well-chosen range of activities and a reward for sustained work, involving the singing with great vigour of Alouette adapted to a train journey on the a French high speed train, backed by a lively Rhythm and Blues accompaniment.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school, which provides a happy and mutually supportive atmosphere wherein the pupils flourish.

The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good and is linked to the school's programme for PSHE. Pupils of all ages are welcoming, polite and friendly to visitors and show courtesies such as opening doors and standing back to let others pass. In the senior school, such self-discipline ensures safety along the corridors and up and down steps. School assemblies involve class presentations. Religious festivals such as Diwali and events from other cultures and faiths are celebrated. For example, in a class assembly, lower juniors presented art work, confidently told the story of Rama and Sita and discussed the significance of light to Hinduism. This was followed by a prayer led by a pupil. The mutual sharing and celebrating of diversity helps to promote the tolerance and racial harmony apparent in the school.

Many pupils join the school after the nursery class and are integrated and included well into school life. Staff are caring and the very good role model they set is a major contributory factor ensuring that pupils are happy at the school.

Pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are further promoted through the considered use of praise by staff. Pupils have the opportunities to undertake responsibilities as prefects and monitors. A house system operates with merits given for good behaviour or work, and responsible, caring actions. Pupils in Year 9 escort the lower infants to lunch and care for them in the playground. Pupils are heavily involved in raising funds for various charities. Parents are right to be confident that the school encourages their children to become mature and accept increased responsibility for themselves and for others as they get older.

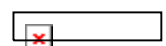
Pupils' artistic and dramatic achievements and work are celebrated through carefully planned displays, in assemblies and through public performance. Lessons emphasise cultural awareness. A Year 9 geography lesson successfully explored the environmental impact of the tourism industry in Majorca. A Year 11 history group learned about the development of the role of women in public life in a mature and sophisticated way.

The wide variety of extra-curricular activities is well attended. Work in the classroom is extended through out-of-school visits to museums, art galleries and other educational venues. The school plays an active and vigorous part in the local community, thus extending the pupils' cultural awareness. This is enforced in lessons; for example, a history lesson in Year 10 focused on the development and repair of roads in the Coventry area over the centuries.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school has in place a raft of policies designed to ensure high standards of welfare, health and safety for the pupils. These are understood, accessible and carefully implemented. They also undergo regular updating and take fully into account the requirements laid out by the Department for Education and Skills. Policies on child protection, anti bullying and health and safety are clear and unfussy. There are good links with the local police. The school encourages pupils to act responsibly

and to exercise responsibility.

Accident and incident books indicate high levels of care and are being updated to ensure consistent record-keeping and the promotion of confidentiality.

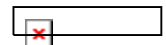
Qualified First Aiders are available in each building and a wider number of staff will shortly be receiving training. Fire drills are held regularly and detailed records are kept of equipment checks and tests. The admission and attendance registers are maintained appropriately. The admission register is available in standardised hard copy and electronic form. Great emphasis is put on pupils' safety, as was observed when senior pupils took their part in the sports club in the local park, adjacent to the school.

The school complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

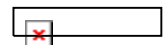


The proprietors are the headteacher and her mother, who is the founder of the school. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership while ensuring that the aims and principles of the school established by the founder are maintained and further developed. She has strengthened management by the appointment of a senior mistress and junior school co-ordinator. There are no heads of department but there is a theatre arts co-ordinator. All perform their roles with enthusiasm and efficiency. Specialists are appointed to deliver the vocational curriculum and all teachers are appropriately deployed. Staff are checked against the Criminal Records Bureau register and meet all regulations. The school benefits from the competence and expertise of the Bursar and the secretarial staff. The kitchens are very well run.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The premises are suitable for their purpose. They consist of two separate sections fronting to the same street. The senior school buildings consist of two adjacent houses which have been joined together and share a large well-maintained garden with hard-surfaced multipurpose play area. Most classrooms are small, but care is taken to ensure that larger classes take place in the larger classrooms. These buildings include two large studios furnished to provide specialist facilities for dance and performance, a designated ICT room, a library, art room and science laboratory. The junior school is housed in a refurbished primary school which has a studio that has added extensive provision for vocational performance and for dancing. The standard of the kitchens is very high, as confirmed by the most recent environmental health inspection

The classrooms in the junior school are spacious and well used. There are two hard-surfaced play areas, well laid out with a shelter and access to grassed playing fields in the adjacent public park.

Throughout the school high standards of cleanliness, decoration and maintenance are observed. There is no graffiti and no litter. All classrooms are decorated and festooned with pupils' work and materials which assist learning. There is adequate provision to enhance pupils' physical development. There are clean toilets and changing rooms throughout the school. There is no designated area for pupils who are ill.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

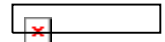
The school meets all but one of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- ensure that there are appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill (paragraph 5(l)).

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners

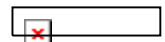


The prospectus is clear, straightforward and informative. It lays out the aims and ethos of the school. Parents receive a detailed starter pack. Policy statements are presented with clarity and simplicity. All of these are readily available, as are academic results. Reports on pupils' progress and achievement are sent out twice a year in the upper school and once in the junior. These are detailed, closely written and contain specific judgements on each subject. Information about policies, pupils' achievement and the school's participation in the staging of performances are conveyed in regular newsletters. These are now supplemented by bulletins from the Parent Teachers Association, which serves as an additional route for communication. Opportunities for e-mail communications are now being developed.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints

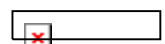


The complaints procedure has been improved over the last year. A synopsis has been available to parents, but a more detailed procedure which meets all requirements has been put in place and is on display outside the main waiting room. It is also available to parents on request.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	Pattison College
DfES ref number:	331/6011
Type of school:	Non-selective independent school specialising in the performing arts
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	3 - 19 Years, from 16 onwards for 3 years musical theatre course
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 23, Girls 115 , Total 138
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 2, Girls 11, Total 13
Annual fees (day pupils):	£3,846 to £4,896
Address of school:	90 Binley Road Coventry West Midlands CV3 1FQ
E-mail address:	pattisonsinfo@btconnect.com
Telephone number:	0247 645 5031
Fax number:	0247 644 1590
Headteacher:	Mrs Elizabeth McConnell
Proprietor:	Mrs E McConnell and Mrs B Cramp
Lead Inspector:	Mr Simon Bennett
Dates of inspection:	22 - 25 November 2004

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