



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

St Christopher's The Hall School

February 2022

Contents

School's Details		3
1. Background Information		4
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection		5
Preface		5
Key findings		6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		6
Action point 2		7
Action point 3		7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		7
PART 6 – Provision of information		7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		8
3. Educational Quality Inspection		9
Preface		9
Key findings		9
Recommendations		9
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements		10
The quality of the pupils' personal development		11
4. Inspection Evidence		14

School's Details

School	St Christopher's The Hall School			
DfE number	305/6010			
Registered charity number	307917			
Address	St Christopher's The Hall School 49 Bromley Road Beckenham BR3 5PA			
Telephone number	020 8650 2200			
Email address	mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Tom Carter			
Chair of governors	Ms Tracy Sell-Peters			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	227			
	EYFS	40	Juniors	187
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Christopher's The Hall School is a co-educational independent preparatory day school situated in a residential area of Beckenham, Kent. The school is a charitable trust with a board of directors, who act as the governing body and oversee the work of the school. The school comprises an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 3 to 5 years and junior classes for pupils aged 5 to 11 years.
- 1.2 The current headteacher took up his position in September 2021.
- 1.3 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers.
- 1.4 During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.5 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.6 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.7 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders.
- 1.8 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 The school aims to provide a happy and hard-working environment where all pupils can find the opportunity to develop their talents to the full within a wide and well-balanced curriculum. It seeks to treat each pupil as an individual and encourage them to aim for the highest standards in whatever they do.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Most pupils come from professional families living within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 19 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 40 pupils, whose needs are met by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 27 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report 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, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. 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.

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 standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required 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 should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 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 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not pay due regard to current statutory guidance. The school's procedures for handling any allegations against staff do follow the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE). Governors' oversight of safeguarding is insufficient to ensure that all requirements of KCSIE are met. The school does not always implement an effective approach to risk assessment. In particular, it does not always take appropriate action to reduce potential risks when a safeguarding concern is raised.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 9–15], 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, but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding] and 16 [risk assessment] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that procedures for handling any allegations against staff follow the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* [paragraph 7(a) and 7(b); EYFS 3.4 and 3.7].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that oversight of safeguarding by governors is sufficient to ensure that all requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* are met [paragraph 7(a) and 7(b); EYFS 3.4 and 3.7].

Action point 3

The school must take appropriate action to reduce potential risks when a safeguarding concern has been raised [paragraph 16(a) and (b); EYFS 3.65].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 **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

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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.
- 2.14 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes 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 any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, 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.
- 2.16 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 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.
- 2.18 **The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.19 The proprietor does not ensure 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. Governors do not provide effective oversight of safeguarding and risk assessment.

2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 4

The school must ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

Action point 5

The school must ensure that governors provide effective oversight of both safeguarding and risk assessment [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

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.

The headline judgements apply 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>
Lower and Upper Kindergarten	Nursery

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

- The progress and attainment of pupils, including those with SEND, are good.
- Pupils of all ages have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils develop good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum, with particularly high levels in music, drama and modern foreign languages.
- Pupils achieve high levels of success in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. Their physical skills are particularly well developed.
- Pupils' ability to hypothesise, analyse and synthesise is not strongly developed, particularly in science.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils throughout the school show excellent confidence and self-awareness.
- The positive and supportive relationships between all pupils are particularly strong.
- Pupils collaborate well and show a strong sense of social awareness and responsibility.
- Pupils show a very strong awareness of cultures other than their own in this inclusive community.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Strengthen pupils' ability to hypothesise, analyse and synthesise, particularly in science.
- Strengthen pupils' ability to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to their learning across the curriculum.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Children make a good start to their education in EYFS. They develop a curiosity for learning and the skills they need to be successful and achieve well. The high standard of work and strong progress across the school are evident in pupils' books. These show good levels of achievement across a range of subjects and topics including literacy and numeracy. Progress is stronger in the pupils' application of skills in physical and aesthetic subjects. For example, the level of challenge in Year 6 art on perspective was notable. Pupils aim high to achieve their best work. Many are awarded art scholarships for their senior schools. There are equally high levels of challenge in music and sport. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching, including online provision, enables their child to make progress. Pupils with SEND make good progress because of targeted in-class support or individualised plans based on their identified needs. More able pupils do well over time. By the time pupils leave school in Year 6, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- 3.6 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are determined to be the best that they can be. EYFS children confidently share their own experiences and can discuss what they are learning when completing activities across the setting. Pupils across the school are proud of their learning and take care with the presentation of their work. They describe their learning mission to achieve creatively and ambitiously as part of the school's character values and know that they need to challenge themselves. Pupils are clear about their learning and know how well they are doing. They are accustomed to editing and improving their own work. Pupils know how to improve their learning and are determined to excel. They support each other well.
- 3.7 Across the school, pupils display a thirst for knowledge that is contagious. They demonstrate good levels of understanding across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils appreciate each other's high-quality art and topic work which are displayed around the school. The good standard achieved demonstrates the mission statement and charter values of the school. Pupils apply their knowledge and understanding effectively and confidently build on this as they study new themes and topics. In some areas, such as in modern foreign languages or drama, pupils' understanding is excellent. Home challenges boost pupils' learning. For example, Year 3 pupils studying ancient Egypt extended their understanding about mummification by making 'death masks' at home. Pupils talk enthusiastically about physical education and aim to become games captains or to be awarded school colours. As a result, they grow in confidence and develop the skills they need to become confident in sport. For example, in Year 3, pupils developed their hand-eye coordination by throwing and catching more accurately.
- 3.8 Sporting successes are many. Music and performing arts are significant strengths of the school. Pupils enjoy success in sports tournaments at regional and national level. These include co-educational hockey, netball and tag rugby. Pupils have achieved success when competing across two counties in cricket, in the national ISA football and swimming championships 2021. They have qualified for both these sports in the 2022 finals. Pupils also won the 2022 ISA regional netball tournament. Pupils have achieved individual success with district level representation playing for football league club academies. Individuals also succeed as ISA national swimming and biathlon winners and in regional cross-country events. A large majority of pupils achieve musical success in graded examinations, including some at Grade 4. This is because music is a strong feature of pupils' education. Many pupils across Years 3 to 6 play and are members of the school orchestra. Pupils support each other strongly in their achievements outside of the formal curriculum. This was apparent in the pupil interviews where they celebrated an extensive range of each other's achievements with great aplomb.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly articulate and speak with confidence. Younger junior school pupils, as soon as they enter the school, are enabled to speak in full sentences whenever possible. Reception children can think about and recall who the main characters are in a story when it is read to them. Pupils across

the school are very confident when speaking to visitors, debating and contributing during lessons. Pupils enjoy reading and, by the end of Year 1, they can match letters and sounds well to help them determine unfamiliar words. Pupils across the school actively engage with reading and demonstrate good levels of understanding, and in some cases, this is at a high level. Pupils make good progress in writing. They are able to apply written skills consistently across the curriculum. Pupils use their knowledge about different styles and purposes of writing well when adapting their style and vocabulary according to the purpose. Older pupils make sophisticated vocabulary choices in their persuasive writing. For example, Year 6 pupils explained how they had produced the work on display depicting writing based on the excerpt from Shakespeare's *The Seven Ages of Man*. The work reflected a good understanding of literary devices including metaphor and personification.

- 3.10 Pupils have a very good understanding of number. They apply this understanding to calculate and solve problems. They show good reasoning skills and transfer their mathematical knowledge well in other subjects, for example in science, where they present their findings in graphs and bar charts. Pupils are mostly motivated and engaged in mathematics lessons. Their short-term progress is often good and, in some lessons, rapid. This was highlighted in Year 4 enrichment lesson on equivalent fractions, where the pupils were challenged in small groups with a range of visual fractions.
- 3.11 Pupils demonstrate good study and research skills including a range of memorisation techniques to encourage independent and extended study. Pupils are able to find answers and use the appropriate tools to solve problems for themselves. Vibrant and useful wall displays with memory aids encourage the development of their study skills, particularly for older pupils. However, pupils do not display strong understanding of how to structure scientific investigations or hypothesise, analyse and synthesise, particularly in science.
- 3.12 Pupils, including the oldest, demonstrate good ICT skills. They can use software confidently to manipulate information and present their work. However, not all pupils are able to apply their ICT skills either across the curriculum or when using digital programming, because of insufficient opportunity to do so. Pupils show high levels of motivation towards their weekly computing lessons. Some pupils were able to use computational language in a lesson learning about databases.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' self-knowledge, esteem, confidence and self-discipline are excellent. Pupils embrace the school's mission statement whereby each pupil is treated as an individual, encouraged to aim for the highest standards in whatever he or she is doing. This is exemplified in the number of scholarships pupils achieve for their chosen secondary schools. There have been important changes in the senior leadership team since the previous inspection and clear lines of responsibility have been established which have had a direct impact on improving pupils' personal development. Members of staff share in the ethos of the school leaders and have common goals for success. This ethos is underpinned by the emphasis put on 'character values' by the school leadership team and provides a clear framework for personal development. Pupils develop their self-understanding very well because positive encouragement is embedded throughout the school. During interviews with inspectors, pupils commented on being confident, quoting Oscar Wilde's *Be yourself because everyone else is taken*. There is a sense of calm and purpose which permeates across the school. Pupils are confident to make mistakes as part of learning. For example, children in the Kindergarten at the early stages of speaking were happy to share their developing vocabulary with adults because members of staff were supportive and valued their efforts. Pupils are expected to make decisions in their lessons as they choose which level of challenge they would like to attempt. For example, they can choose to work together or independently and can choose how to present their work. This was exemplified further in a mathematics lesson on equivalent fractions where pupils had to select which level of challenge they would tackle. All groups of pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education and later life.

- 3.15 Pupils work together successfully in pairs or groups, demonstrating positive relationships with classmates. They support each other and are respectful of each other's ideas. In the EYFS, routines are established quickly at the start of the year. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere where children cooperate with each other sensibly. In Kindergarten and Reception, children's ability to play together and take turns is excellent. All parents who completed the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child develop strong teamwork and social skills. Pupils are very friendly and polite. They socialise and show respect for staff and each other. Pupils listen carefully and support each other admirably during lessons. They display a genuine care and concern for each other. Older pupils perform responsibilities for younger pupils well, such as when escorting pupils in all year groups from their form rooms to house assemblies. The active school council influences the direction of the school. For example, the school council has influenced the selection of trousers as part of a new uniform and have presented thoughtful arguments that enabled pupils to decide which charities to support.
- 3.16 Pupils have a very strong understanding of the importance of issues such as community and respect for others. In discussion with inspectors, pupils made sensible suggestions about the qualities of good leaders, such as someone who listens to their ideas and is helpful and generous. The oldest pupils conveyed much enthusiasm about taking responsibility in important roles, such as house captains and games captains, and contribute fully to the life of the school. They were excited to talk about their roles as community monitors, looking after the school environment by picking up rubbish around school or tidying away toys after breaks. Pupils take their areas of responsibility in the school seriously and wear badges with pride. They contribute effectively to enhance the lives of others by organising events such as harvest collections, raising funds or donating books to the Children's Book Trust. They also contributed useful items that were sent to Malawi and designed events to raise money for external defibrillators.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate a very strong knowledge about similarities and differences between different faiths and cultures and confidently challenge behaviours they believe to be wrong. This was shown in the way older pupils debated prejudice during a personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lesson. Pupils have a highly developed appreciation of diversity and respect for their own and other cultures. This is reflected in the high quality of art work in the style of different cultures on display across the school. All parents who completed the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. In discussion with inspectors, older pupils confidently said that they were unique in their own way. They were able to explain respectfully the meaning of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender plus (LGBTB+) and the use of pronouns and terms such as 'non-binary'. In house assemblies, pupils described adaptability (one of the charter values) and focused on what it meant to be dyslexic, dyspraxic or how they dealt with recently breaking an arm. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said they enjoy engaging with literature that allows them to learn and explore how people have been impacted by their colour, race or religion.
- 3.18 Pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They can speak confidently about key events on the Christian calendar. They also demonstrate a deep understanding of other faiths and an awareness of culture. In discussions with inspectors, pupils stated that they enjoy their study of a range of religions which successfully teaches them about diversity and tolerance. Reception children talk proudly about their families and how they enjoyed sharing fortune cookies during the Chinese New Year lunch. Younger junior school pupils talked with reverence about the Buddhist festival of Wesak, where they experienced the lighting of incense and enjoyed a calm still moment.
- 3.19 Pupils display a strong moral awareness and are deeply caring and respectful of one another and the school community. They move around the school calmly and understand the importance of working as a team in class. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school teaches them how to build positive relationships. A few did not agree that pupils are kind and respect each other. However, inspection evidence from school records and pupil discussions did not support this view. Pupils behave very well in lessons because they do not want to let their teachers down and want to

do well. On the playground, during breaks and lunchtime, pupils naturally look after each other. Pupils respect school rules and think that the new routines for sanctions work well, saying that they have learnt how to think before they speak. Pupils talk positively about their learning and have a very good understanding of fundamental British values. Their understanding of how these apply to their own lives and at school has been strengthened through leaders' promotion of the school's 'character values'.

- 3.20 Pupils know how to stay safe. They talk knowledgeably about e-safety, showing a deep understanding of how to use computers and the internet without putting themselves in danger. Pupils know what to do should they find themselves in potentially dangerous situations. This was exemplified in Year 4 during a PSHE lesson, where pupils distinguished right from wrong when discussing consent with regard to good and bad touching. The pupils know very confidently how to say no in such situations. They understand the importance of telling an adult if they have any concerns. Pupils exercise regularly and engage effectively in a wide range of physical activities to improve their skills. Pupils demonstrate well their learning about the negative impact of too many sweets on teeth, diet and health. For example, when older pupils explain that bacterial plaque converting sugars into acid cause tooth enamel decay. They make sensible food choices demonstrating their understanding of how to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Older pupils reflected thoughtfully about mental health week and the poetry they had written. This included outlining how the 'SNUG', as a room to visit when they are feeling anxious, is a safe place for them to go when they need some calm time. They said that the staff listen to them and care for them well.

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

Inspectors

Mr Desmond Dunne	Reporting inspector
Ms Shirley Drummond	Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)
Ms Carrie Wear	Team inspector (Assistant headteacher, IAPS school)