



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT**

**PITSFORD SCHOOL**

**FEBRUARY 2018**



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## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

|                                  |   |     |                   |     |
|----------------------------------|---|-----|-------------------|-----|
| <b>School</b>                    | Pitsford School   |     |                   |     |
| <b>DfE number</b>                | 928/6064  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Registered charity number</b> | 298910  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Address</b>                   | Pitsford School<br>Pitsford Hall<br>Moulton Lane<br>Pitsford<br>Northamptonshire<br>NN6 9AX |     |                   |     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>          | 01604 880306  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Email address</b>             | office@pitsfordschool.com   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>               | Mr Noel Toone   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>        | Mr Alisdair Tait  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Age range</b>                 | 4 to 18   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b>  | 295   |     |                   |     |
|                                  | <b>Boys</b>   | 183 | <b>Girls</b>      | 112 |
|                                  | <b>EYFS</b>   | 16  | <b>Juniors</b>    | 82  |
|                                  | <b>Seniors</b>  | 147 | <b>Sixth Form</b> | 50  |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>          | 7 to 8 February 2018  |     |                   |     |

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Pitsford School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of four and eighteen. The school is owned and run by the Northamptonshire Independent Grammar School Charity Trust Ltd, an educational charity whose trustees are the school's governors.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1989 as Northamptonshire Grammar School and changed its name in 2011, taking its new name from Pitsford Hall, the Georgian hall in which it is housed and the Northamptonshire village in which it is located. Although it is managed as one school, the senior and junior sections occupy distinct premises on the 26-acre site they share.
- 1.3 Since the last inspection the school has ceased to educate three year olds.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.4 The school aims to educate the whole person focused around the values of excellence, opportunity and understanding. Competition both in work and sport is encouraged and emphasis is placed on developing the highest personal and moral qualities. The school has not formed a particular connection with any one religious denomination but strives to portray a living Christianity that reflects the whole range of denominations whilst being sympathetic to other faiths.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.5 Pupils come from a wide area across Northamptonshire and south Leicestershire, with a significant number joining from overseas at age sixteen. Overseas pupils live in lodgings with local families that are arranged by an agency independently of the school. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicates that the ability of the pupils is broadly average. The school has identified 54 pupils as having special educational and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of educational needs. English is an additional language for 27 pupils who receive additional lessons in English and support by their classroom teachers. The school has chosen not to identify individual pupils as gifted or talented.

## 2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

### Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such 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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2014 to 2016, performance has been in line with the national average for maintained schools although in 2014 and 2015 performance was above the national average.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2014 to 2016 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.9 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.11 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, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

**2.14 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 variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

**2.16 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 ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

**2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

### **3. INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 3.1 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. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

#### **Inspectors**

Mr Alasdair McBay

Reporting inspector

Mr Devin Cassidy

Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)