



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

WITHINGTON GIRLS' SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Withington Girls' School			
DfE number	352/6033			
Registered charity number	1158226			
Address	100 Wellington Road Fallowfield Manchester M14 6BL			
Telephone number	0161 224 1077			
Email address	office@wgs.org			
Headmistress	Mrs Sarah Haslam			
Chair of governors	Mr Malcolm Pike			
Age range	7 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	681			
	Boys	0	Girls	681
	Juniors	135	Seniors	392
	Sixth Form	154		
Inspection dates	13 to 14 September 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

Withington Girls' School is an academically selective independent day school for girls aged between 7 and 18 years and is overseen by a board of governors. The current head has been in post since September 2016. Since the previous inspection, new junior school facilities have been built.

The school was founded in 1890 with the intention to enable girls to have the same educational opportunities as boys, and moved to its current site in 1903. It comprises a junior and a senior school on a single site, across which some facilities and teachers are shared.

What the school seeks to do

The school aims to provide the highest standard of education and care for all pupils, with many opportunities to develop the skills needed to prepare them for academic success and become mature, independent learners who can face with confidence the challenges and opportunities of adult life in the 21st century.

About the pupils

Pupils come from a range of professional, business and academic family backgrounds, from a multicultural community with a variety of faiths and none, living locally and up to a 20-mile radius from the school. Around 1 in 6 senior school pupils receive financial support through means-tested bursaries.

The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils on entry to the junior school is above average. National standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the senior school is well above average and that the ability of the pupils in the sixth form is above average.

The school has identified 35 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs; 1 pupil has an education, health care (EHC) plan; and 125 pupils live in homes where a language other than English is spoken, 2 of whom require some additional support. The needs of pupils identified by the school as most able are met within the curriculum through wider challenges and extension tasks.

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. 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.

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 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 2013 to 2016, results have been well above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2013 to 2016 have been far 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 and proprietors

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of 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 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 a governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended house meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. 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

Mrs Alison Horton

Reporting inspector

Mr Jonathan Webster

Compliance team inspector (Bursar, HMC school)