



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS
FOR SCHOOLS WITH RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

STAMFORD JUNIOR SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Stamford Junior School			
DfE number	925/6045			
Registered charity number	527618			
Address	Stamford Junior School Kettering Road Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 2LR			
Telephone number	01780 484400			
Email address	SShamsi@ses.lincs.sch.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Smith			
Chair of governors	Dr Michael Dronfield			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	407			
	Boys	207	Girls	200
	Day pupils	394	Boarders	13
	EYFS	72	Juniors	335
Inspection dates	19 to 21 September 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Stamford Junior School, incorporating Stamford Nursery School, is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged between 2 and 11 years. The junior school is part of Stamford Endowed Schools, a registered charity, comprising the junior school, Stamford School, and Stamford High School for Girls. All three schools are overseen by a common board of governors.
- 1.2 The current junior school was purpose built in 1976 and since then the original site has been developed. A new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) block was opened in 2013, and a dedicated Year 6 building was opened in 2015. The current headteacher was appointed in 2012.
- 1.3 The school consists of two sections: the EYFS, for children aged 2 to 5 years and the junior school for pupils aged 5 to 11 years. A small number of boarders are housed in one boarding house within the school grounds.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to create a happy, exciting and supportive environment in which learning is the priority and where young people are inspired to achieve their best, develop their intellectual curiosity, and have a caring and respectful attitude towards others.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of business and professional backgrounds, mostly from families living within a 25-mile radius of the school. Most pupils are of White British ethnicity but a range of nationalities is represented. Nationally standardised tests indicate the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 73 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include speech and language delay, attachment disorder and other conditions, 52 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for nineteen pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Two pupils receive additional support for their English outside the classroom. Data used by the school have identified 14 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them.

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. 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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

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, including the boarding NMS, 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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. 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. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management, together with the NMS covering the same areas. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, 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 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 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.9 **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, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.11 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.

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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include 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.

Key Findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils achieve very well across the curriculum and apply skills highly effectively from one subject to another.
 - Pupils throughout the school exhibit excellent communication and collaboration skills.
 - Pupils achieve exceptional standards in sporting and other extra-curricular areas.
 - Pupils with SEND and/or EAL make rapid progress due to the quality of support they receive.
 - Pupils exhibit outstanding attitudes towards learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils are extremely capable to take on responsibilities.
 - Pupils have a mature understanding of right and wrong, readily accepting, and taking steps to remedy, their mistakes.
 - Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding and appreciation of diversity, and show great empathy towards those less fortunate than themselves.
 - Pupils are highly confident, polite, self-aware and resilient due to the overriding emphasis the school places on well-being and personal development.
 - Pupils behaviour in class, around the school and in the boarding house is exemplary.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following:
- Ensure ability, attainment and progress data is used effectively to inform planning and provide opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities to make maximum progress.

THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The school successfully meets its aim to provide a supportive environment in which learning is a priority and pupils develop intellectual curiosity. From the EYFS onwards, pupils progress well and achieve high standards across all areas of the curriculum ensuring that, by the end of Year 6, they are very well prepared for the transition to senior school. This is due to the positive attitudes pupils have towards their learning and the engaging teaching seen in most lessons. The school does not participate in National Curriculum tests but the available data from the school's own assessment data, scrutiny of work books and lesson observations, indicate that attainment is above in relation to national age-related expectations. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school meets their children's educational needs effectively.
- 3.6 Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that the school enabled pupils to make good progress and develop skills for the future. Inspection evidence agrees. Pupils with SEND, EAL or who enter the school part of the way through their school career make excellent progress as they are quickly identified, and highly effective additional support is put in place so that any gaps in their learning or attainment are closed. Pupils, including boarders, appreciate the support they receive and know that help is always available if they need it. The most able pupils respond well to the challenge that is a feature of the most effective teaching and extra-curricular activities.

- 3.7 Pupils make good progress, developing their knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects as a result of participating fully in lessons and practising enthusiastically, resulting in good progress. Initiative and collaboration help them to develop their skills further. They appreciate the input from staff and recognise that this contributes to their progress. They demonstrate that they are adaptable and can transfer skills learnt to new situations and from one subject to another. Sports skills are developed to an exceptional level due to the commitment to high quality coaching and facilities, and the outstanding range of opportunities for all pupils to participate at a competitive level, as was seen during an inter-school hockey competition held during the inspection. Pupils say they are extremely proud to represent their school.
- 3.8 Pupils listen carefully and with interest, to both adults and their classmates, responding appropriately and, when required, extending ideas through discussion. Their speaking skills are extremely well-developed through such activities as debating club; they speak confidently, clearly and politely, communicating effectively with adults and their peers in a wide range of situations. Pupils recognise the importance of developing reading skills and are frequently encouraged to read aloud, such as when presenting the results of their research in a history lesson. Pupils of all ages read to an excellent standard for their own enjoyment due to the encouragement they receive from the ERIC (everyone reading in class) initiative and a whole school accelerated reading programme. They write fluently and for a variety of purposes including story-telling, poetry and informative reports on their independent research.
- 3.9 Achievement in mathematics is excellent. Pupils' numeracy skills develop quickly from the EYFS, where staff make excellent use of everyday opportunities to introduce mathematical concepts, and throughout the school. Pupils are adept at applying mathematical processes across a wide range of subjects, for example measuring, and cutting materials for a DT project. Pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of number and were eager to use their skills to solve problems, as seen when a group of pupils searched for and solved a selection of number puzzles hidden around the school grounds. Pupils learn best when there are opportunities to discuss different strategies and look at alternative ways of finding answers. Where this was evident, the pupils responded well, eagerly suggesting possible outcomes through estimation and careful reasoning.
- 3.10 Younger Pupils demonstrate an easy confidence when using tablets, such as when recording results and researching different time zones during a mathematics lesson. In this case, ICT greatly enhanced learning as it enabled quick, accurate evidence collection, allowing more time for other activities. Older pupils are highly proficient in the use of ICT as was seen in the library where a group of pupils were carrying out independent research and report writing.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, pupils exhibit excellent initiative and collaboration, due in part to the introduction of the Independent Learning and Intellectual Curiosity (ILIC) programme that is at the heart of the school's educational philosophy. They collaborate very well in a range of situations, listening to and considering the ideas of others. In the EYFS children demonstrate initiative and independent learning, and these characteristics can be seen throughout the school. For example, in an art class, pupils worked extremely well together listening to each other's ideas and deciding on a joint strategy to create their finished artwork. Pupils exhibit high levels of creative thinking and readily share their ideas, confident that their contribution will be valued.
- 3.12 Pupils develop individual interests and talents to a very high level due to the exceptionally wide-ranging selection of extra-curricular activities available before and after school, and during lunch breaks. Daily activities in music, sport, creative and academic areas are enthusiastically enjoyed by the pupils who achieve excellent levels of success. Boarders and day pupils achieve a very high standard in sporting and other activities, participating at regional national and international level. In recent years pupils have played at county level in hockey, tennis, swimming and cross country, and have achieved success at the National Schools' Swimming Championships and the 2017 World Dwarf Games in Canada. During the inspection, exceptionally high standards of performance were observed in swimming, dance and hockey. Additional clubs and activities are available to boarders further

enhancing their opportunities for personal development. They appreciate the input from the staff and value the chances they are given to excel beyond the academic curriculum.

- 3.13 Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning, exemplified by their ability to collaborate very effectively, being eager to learn, focussed, enthusiastic and showing that they enjoy learning. They work very effectively with others, each taking an active part, remaining on task and collaborating well. They demonstrate highly developed abilities to reflect on their own learning, and empathy and encouragement when giving feedback to their peers. All pupils exhibit a very positive attitude towards the school.

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Throughout the school pupils, including the very youngest children, are confident, polite and self-aware, due to leaders' and governors' overriding emphasis on well-being and personal development. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and show great resilience. In assembly, failure is discussed as a necessary step on the road to success. As a result, pupils are confident to take on challenges. The school's core values, embodied in the CREEDS (citizenship, responsibility, embracing the wider world, environment, democracy and stepping up to serve) result in pupils who are confident in attempting new and demanding tasks. Pupils are reflective and can discuss effectively how to develop their own learning. For example, in a Year 5 maths lesson, pupils discussed how they solved a problem and decided which was the best method. Almost all parents and all parents of boarders who responded to the questionnaire said that school successfully supported their child's personal development.
- 3.16 In the EYFS children make choices about which activities to choose, with whom and where to play. This was seen most effectively during an outdoor learning session where children engaged in independent emergent writing, den building and nature study with binoculars and magnifying glasses. Older pupils demonstrate autonomy in their studies and in the wider life of the school effectively, as they make independent choices about the level of challenge in academic activities or encouraged to make tactical decisions in a sport match. Pupils have a very well-developed sense of their own strengths and areas for development. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education and confident about the transition. All groups of pupils, including boarders, are able to contribute ideas to the school council which meets weekly and feeds back to the whole school.
- 3.17 Pupils are confident about their learning and due to teachers providing useful and regular oral and written feedback. Pupils are motivated and set high standards for themselves. They know that they are making progress and understand that they can learn from their mistakes as they are given time to reflect upon, and respond to, the comments teachers make in their work books. Throughout the school pupils collaborate extremely well and show as much pride in the achievements of others as they do in their own.
- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate a mature respect for the non-material aspects of life as they explore issues of peace and empathy for others through an uplifting combination of story, singing and prayer in assembly. Pupils appreciate the quiet spaces that allow time for reflection around the school, including within the boarding house. The atmosphere within the school is calm and purposeful at all times. ERIC is a popular part of school life that provides time for reading and reflection.
- 3.19 Children have a very strong understanding of right and wrong as they discuss being responsible for one's own actions in a PSHE class. Excellent behaviour reflects their embracing of responsibility for themselves and empathy for others. Pupils understand and accept the school's golden rules, to which they have contributed. They readily admit when they make mistakes and are keen to remedy their errors. Pupils are supportive of their fellow pupils and show empathy for their struggles. For example, a group of pupils cheered on others who were struggling to finish last lap of running training, spurring them on to a sprint finish.

- 3.20 Pupils carry out a variety of responsible roles, such as school council member, form captain, prefect, or ELF (expert, listener, friend), extremely well. Within the boarding house, additional opportunities exist to shape the boarding experience as a member of the boarding committee. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of those less fortunate than themselves, taking the initiative to raise money for local and national charities, including raising funds for children in Liberia and the less fortunate at Christmas. Pupils also contribute directly to the local community, singing in a concert at a local church, and visiting a nearby care home to undertake an art and history project with the residents.
- 3.21 Children develop a sensitive awareness of different religions and respect for cultural diversity as was seen as one pupil shared her experience of Diwali celebrations. This is a result of the comprehensive PSHE programme, assemblies, art and the use of diverse role models to inspire understanding. Displays and signs around the school in different languages celebrate different cultures. New pupils are quickly integrated to become part of the school community. As a result, pupils feel valued and respected as individuals. Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and belief.
- 3.22 Pupils are very aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and what that involves due to the commitment to promoting physical exercise for all is evident throughout the school. They talk knowledgeably about the importance and exercise in staying healthy. In interviews with inspectors, day pupils and boarders expressed the view that the school is proactive in helping them to stay safe. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe due to the detailed guidance they receive on e-safety, bullying and what to do in an emergency such as a fire. Boarders are confident that there is always someone to go to, including an independent listener, if they have any concerns outside of normal school hours.
- 3.23 Pupils use apparatus in PE lessons with appropriate care, showing an awareness of how to stay safe due to quality of instructions and embedding of safety protocols from an early stage. Pupils are able to take risks and challenge themselves physically due to their understanding of the importance of staying safe.

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended an assembly. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with 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

Mr Chris Manville	Reporting inspector
Mr Brian Hayes	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Anne Jones	Team inspector (Former head, GSA school)
Mrs Ruth Loveman	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Whymark	Team inspector for boarding (Head, IAPS school)