



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL

MARCH 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Queen Anne's School		
DfE number	870/6000		
Registered charity number	312700		
Address	Queen Anne's School 6 Henley Road Caversham Berkshire RG4 6DX		
Telephone number	0118 9187300		
Email address	office@qas.org.uk		
Head	Mrs Julia Harrington		
Chair of governors	Mr Jonnie Noakes		
Age range	11 to 19		
Number of pupils on roll	444		
	Girls	444	
	Day pupils	267	Boarders 177
	Seniors	328	Sixth Form 116
Inspection dates	08 to 09 March 2017		

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.

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 following their inspection 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.

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.

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 an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. 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'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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 chapel and 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 Alistair Telfer	Reporting inspector
Mrs Valerie Dunsford	Team inspector (Headmistress, HMC school)
Mr Nicholas Plater	Team inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Sr Paula Thomas	Team inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Miss Jean Walker	Team inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Queen Anne's School is an independent day and boarding school for girls aged eleven to nineteen. Founded in 1698 in Westminster as the Grey Coat Hospital, it became a girl's school in 1874, and moved to the present site in Caversham in 1894. The school is part of the Grey Coat Hospital Foundation whose charitable objective is the provision of education with a Christian ethos; it welcomes girls of all faiths or none. The foundation maintains oversight of the school through an independent governing body. Since the previous inspection two boarding houses have been built and a further two have been refurbished. A new sixth form centre and restaurant, The Space, was opened in September 2016.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to promote excellence in all areas of education so that on leaving the school the girls will be strong, creative, successful and enterprising individuals. Within the boarding community, the school seeks to enable girls to develop good relationships and become independent and self-reliant adults.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils at the school are mainly from families with professional backgrounds and include some from the armed forces. Day pupils come to school from the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Boarders are mostly from the south of England with those from overseas coming from countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. Boarders are accommodated in four age-related boarding houses and there are three day houses. Although pupils are from predominantly white Christian families, a number of religions are represented in the school. Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the senior school is above average and the ability profile of the sixth form is broadly average. The school has identified 42 pupils as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and all of these receive specialist learning support from the school, mostly for dyslexia. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, due to a hearing impediment. There are 55 pupils who have support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report 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 Fours	Year 7
Fours	Year 8
Upper Fours	Year 9
Lower Fives	Year 10
Upper Fives	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.5 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in March 2011. The recommendation from that inspection was:
- Ensure that existing strong practice in teaching is applied consistently across all the subject areas, particularly in marking and assessment.
- 1.6 The recommendation of the intermediate boarding inspection in February 2014 was:
- Increase the amount of time that boarders spend together at the end of the school day in all houses, to further develop house integration and community spirit.
- 1.7 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous inspections.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils display excellent verbal and communication skills and are extremely articulate.
- Pupils show excellent achievement in extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils are very ambitious learners, eager to make progress when provided with challenging opportunities.
- Pupils are effective collaborators in all areas of school life

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

- The pupils show a clear respect and tolerance for different beliefs and diversity, that reflect the strong family ethos of the school and within the boarding houses.
- Excellent levels of confidence are shown by pupils at all ages, supported by the strong personal, social, health and educational (PSHE), *Wellbeing* and *BraincanDo* programmes.
- Pupils make informed choices, empowered and supported by their teachers.
- Pupils readily assume roles of responsibility in the upper school but opportunities for this are limited in the lower school

Recommendations

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- The sharing of the best teaching practices to further challenge all pupils in lessons and empower them to achieve their full potential.
- Offering more opportunities for lower school pupils to assume roles of responsibility.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Queen Anne's School pupils are educated to a high level in accordance with the school's aim to promote excellence in all areas of education. They acquire excellent levels of understanding and knowledge in lessons and demonstrate exceptional levels of performance and creativity in their extra-curricular activities.
- 3.3 In the years 2013 to 2015, the most recent three years for which comparative data is available, performance at GCSE and A level has been above the national average for maintained schools. In 2016 further academic success has continued, with improved standards in GCSE. The achievement of pupils in the sixth form enables an overwhelming majority to succeed in gaining admission to their first choice of university, all having benefitted from the support of the careers guidance programme. Pupils benefit from the embedded assessment and tracking programme, which enables them to know how well they are progressing. They make rapid progress over time, as a result of high teacher expectations in the majority in lessons.
- 3.4 Pupils with SEND or EAL make good progress and are enabled to achieve standards in external examinations that are in line with those of their peers. In French, for example, younger pupils with SEND achieved an understanding of the perfect tense, equal to the more able pupils. They actively seek support from the SEND teaching staff through one-to-one and small group support sessions, as well as the study support provided by the SEND and EAL departments. Upper school pupils eagerly make use of the lunchtime and after-school subject support clinics provided by their teachers, recognising that these enhance their understanding and enable them to progress in lessons. Boarders greatly appreciate the assistance and support of academic staff, who as house tutors, are available during their homework and study sessions.
- 3.5 More able pupils progress with the provision of suitably challenging work in a large majority of lessons, and further benefit from enrichment in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. They are additionally inspired and benefit from extra challenge through extended work projects as part of the BrainCanDo Programme. A substantial number of pupils achieve scholarships on entry to the school for academic, music, art, drama and sport and a significant number also achieve annually available awards and on entry to the sixth form.
- 3.6 Pupils are enthusiastic and determined learners, willingly prepared to take risks, and they respond positively to different styles of teaching and challenging opportunities when these are offered. Pupils are inquisitive learners; an excellent example was observed in their production of science topic videos for the celebration of science week, using animation techniques, drama and scientific experiments. Pupils demonstrate a determined sense of purpose, moving calmly to their lessons, quickly settle and show eagerness to learn and be involved in discussion and questioning. Pupils respond well to guidance in lessons. Marking enables progress and self-reflection and is meaningful and engaging. This is supported by a large majority of pupils' views, in their questionnaire responses and interviews, that marking helps them to improve.
- 3.7 Pupils use sophisticated language confidently, and are articulate, as observed in sixth form economics, where pupils explained and discussed natural business monopolies, such as utilities, and the need for government intervention to ensure fairness and maintain standards of quality. They are attentive and apply knowledge in class and reason thoughtfully and logically. Active and lively discussion skills are wide-ranging and informed. In history, older senior school pupils thoughtfully discussed which of Florence Nightingale or Elizabeth Garrett should best be the face of International Women's Day and showed very sophisticated discrimination between the concept and what the women did as individuals. In the pupils' questionnaire, a small minority voiced concern regarding the lack of balanced views by their

teachers. In interviews, pupils expressed enthusiasm for being able to discuss and debate ideas freely in and out of class. Literacy is very strong; pupils are avid readers, utilising the extensive library provision which is well stocked with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and periodicals and a welcome place for quiet reading and independent research. Pupils additionally enjoy competitive reading challenges as part of inter-house and external competitions.

- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate very good numeracy skills and apply them successfully. The oldest senior school pupils in physics effectively demonstrated the competent use of formulae and calculation, to explore the frequency of pendulum motion. The use of computers within the curriculum shows that pupils often have skills well above those expected for their age. During consolidation work in a mathematics plenary session pupils, avidly and competitively, used internet software to test their understanding of distance time graphs and a Year 13 student demonstrated excellent skills in her creation of an animated children's story. Pupils employ a variety of independent learning skills, developed within the school's PSHE programme and school focus on research skills, exemplified by the youngest senior school pupils successfully using internet research for information on different careers and producing detailed posters and pamphlets for a school competition.
- 3.9 Pupils make informed choices to successfully participate in the extra-curricular programme of suitably age-related clubs and activities during the school day, after school and at the weekends, including reaching the semi-finals of the Wings of Hope Achievement Award, and ten pupils who took part in a national enterprise competition, Tycoons in School, and learned how to set up and operate a business, successfully selling chalk board notice boards and friendship bracelets. They were delighted to go to Buckingham Palace to receive their award and all profits were donated to a charity in Uganda. Pupils achieve awards in several mathematical competitions such as the individual and team Mathematics Challenges, at bronze, silver and gold level. In Years 9 to 11, pupils have achieved bronze and silver awards in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and sixth form pupils are working towards their gold award by further endeavour through physical and social challenges. Pupils enjoy the challenge of competitive sport and show support for each other in the team and individual events. Active and skilful participation in team sports, includes lacrosse, netball, tennis, and recently rowing, results in success in local, regional and national competitions. Success is also achieved by individuals in athletics, trampolining, sailing and swimming. Class and extra-curricular achievement is celebrated on posters throughout the school, including the 'Wall of Excellence', which celebrates individual achievement, displaying pupils' work that includes biographies, creative writing in English and Mandarin, musical scores, and A*-achieving tests. Pupils also enhance their educational and cultural understanding by participating in visits to destinations in the United Kingdom and overseas. Boarders additionally benefit from a wide range of weekend excursions, which are designed to enrich their boarding experience. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by listening to visiting speakers including the 'World of Work' which gave Year 9 pupils the opportunity to 'speed date' with visiting professional alumnae to learn about potential careers.
- 3.10 Pupils achieve national awards in music and drama. They avidly engage and demonstrate their musical talents in activities such as the orchestra, choirs, and other musical ensembles. Pupils become confident public performers through involvement in theatre. Pupils achieved places at the National Youth Theatre and National Youth Musical Theatre and have successfully written and directed their own school productions, including 'Annie', 'Grease' and 'Alice in Wonderland'. Pupils gain experience and achieve success back stage in theatre sound, lighting, stage and costume design. Many pupils find pleasure and achieve personal and academic success in creative work and are encouraged to develop their interest and talent in

drawing, painting and photography. A very large majority of parents and pupils agreed in the questionnaires that these opportunities greatly enhance pupils' achievement.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 All pupils show extremely high levels of self-confidence and an excellent understanding of how to progress. They willingly participate in the highly effective personal tutor system, and benefit from the setting of individual academic targets, termly one-to one tutor reviews and good quality, informative reports. Pupils show personal pride in the quality of their work, and their ability to complete tasks inside and outside the classroom. Throughout the school, pupils are unafraid of being wrong and do not judge this as a failure but as a learning opportunity. They react positively to challenges and occasional setbacks, and thus develop self-confidence and strong resilience which enables them to respond successfully to the choices open to them at the different key stages of their educational development. Pupils who recently joined the boarding house reported that the welcoming and supportive family atmosphere enabled them to make a confident start to their school life. This was further recognised in responses by a large majority of pupils and most boarding parents in the questionnaires.
- 4.3 Senior pupils are well prepared to face the challenges of living and working in modern Britain with the strong provision of PSHE, Wellbeing and careers guidance. All pupils employ sensible and productive use of their free time, with the support of their tutors, boarding house staff and the pastoral system, making informed decisions regarding their extra-curricular choices. Pupils utilise and appreciate quiet rooms and study areas, which includes the sixth-form centre being avidly utilised for personal study and enhanced learning opportunities. Year 9 pupils make informed choices regarding subject options to follow a career pathway and sixth form pupils respond successfully to further guidance regarding suitable university courses. A few senior pupils expressed their concern that they did not receive good advice regarding subject and career choice in their questionnaire. This was not reflected in discussion and interviews with pupils, where senior pupils expressed that there was strong provision to enable them to make informed choice.
- 4.4 Pupils have a strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life and they actively participate in art, music, sport and theatre throughout the school. They show a genuine appreciation of how kindness makes for a better family-orientated community. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding that individual success is not the only factor in their development and that co-operation can result in better outcomes. Pupils foster strong skills in working together as members of the school community. Throughout the school, pupils eagerly and successfully participate in carefully planned group tasks in their lessons. In science lessons and in sports pupils engaged actively and worked together to successfully develop their understanding and skills. Upper school pupils relish the opportunities afforded for leadership as house captains, committee membership and sports captains. Such opportunities are limited in the lower school, however, and this is similarly reflected in the pupils' comments. Pupils enjoy acting as peer-to-peer mentors and shadows for younger pupils in the school and new boarding and day pupils.
- 4.5 The pupils demonstrate high levels of empathy and tolerance towards others, respecting and valuing diversity. Peer respect is also reflected in the low levels of bullying that are recorded and pupils who were interviewed did not believe bullying to be an issue. In the questionnaire, a minority of pupils felt that staff did not always treat them fairly. During discussion, interviews and lesson observations no evidence was found to support this view. Pupils actively support each other and help monitor behaviour. Pupils have an excellent appreciation of the wide range of cultures within the school. They also demonstrate a rich understanding of the key values that characterise modern Britain. Throughout the school pupils appreciate that family

spirit and unity, rather than difference, is the key to tolerance. They successfully acquire greater understanding of these characteristics in academic lessons, PSHE, the Wellbeing programme and participation in assemblies and educational visits. Pupils exhibit respect for school rules and core values that they have designed, and understand that individuals are responsible for their own actions.

- 4.6 The school council provides an appreciated forum for the upper school pupils to have a voice and contribute to fundraising activities. On the food and rewards and sanctions committees, they have the opportunity to express their opinions and can air their views on school rules. Pupils learn effectively about, and understand, the democratic process and can experience the use of their vote; for example, in some houses pupils vote for house captains and school council representatives. There are, however, limited opportunities for lower school pupils to be involved in such activities, although all pupils partook in a Brexit vote. Pupils enthusiastically participate in the close links that provide direct support to many local, national and international groups through community service and charity sponsorship. They have an active voice in the choice of charities and the manner of fundraising, ranging from own clothes days, cake sales and sponsored running.
- 4.7 Pupils articulate a strong understanding regarding their physical and mental well-being. They appreciate the need for a balanced approach to life, through their willing participation in physical activities as well as their academic studies. Pupils value the support of the medical centre, however a small minority indicated their concern regarding the promptness of medical aid. In discussion, pupils noted that they are discouraged to leave lessons for minor treatments. School policy now encourages them to attend the medical centre during break times to avoid lesson disruption. Pupils' wellbeing is further supported by a counsellor, chaplain and an independent listener.
- 4.8 Pupils continue to develop the concept of risk taking with the support of the pastoral team and 'BraincanDo' programme. Pupils fully realise the benefit to the individual and to wider society of a good diet and suitable levels of exercise and pursue these. They participate enthusiastically in the extensive range of individual and team sports provided. Pupils make informed choices from the school breakfast and lunch menu. However, in their questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils registered their concern regarding the quantity and quality of food. In discussion with pupils, they voiced their concern at the lack of choice and the quantity of food for their evening meal. Fruit and snacks are provided in the boarding house kitchens and the school is aware of the pupil views in this respect and is acting to address them. During inspection, the trial of new evening dinner provision was observed in a boarding house, pupils being given a choice of options. Their preferred option was freshly prepared and served to their great satisfaction.