

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

OLD PALACE OF JOHN WHITGIFT SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2016



School's Details

Full Name of School	Old Palace of John Whitgift School
DfE Number	306/6082
EYFS Number	EY376554
Registered Charity Number	312612
Address	Old Palace of John Whitgift School Old Palace Road Croydon Surrey CR0 1AX
Telephone Number	020 8688 2027
Email address	schooloffice@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Carol Jewell
Chair of governors	Mr Dean Sutton
Age Range	3 months to 18
Total Number of Pupils	686
Gender of Pupils	3 months to 4 – Mixed 5 to 18 - Girls
Early Years Foundation Stage	119
Pupils' Ability	Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the preparatory department and the senior school is above the national average.
Pupils' Needs	The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is thirty-two. Twenty-one have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. They require support with learning difficulties. Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive additional support from the school.
History of the School	The school was established in 1898 in the Old Palace, once the residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury. In 2008 the Nursery and preparatory departments were relocated to a site in south Croydon.

School's Details

Ownership and Governing Structure	The school is a charitable trust with a board of governors.
School Structure	The Nursery department is housed in a separate building on the preparatory school site and cater for girls and boys aged between 3 months and 4 years. Reception and Years 1 to 5 comprise the preparatory school and accept girls only. The senior school and sixth form are located in a separate site and cater for girls in Years 6 to 11 and Years 12 to 13 respectively.
Inspection Dates	04 to 05 Oct 2016
Other Useful Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Governance is overseen by the Court of the Whitgift Foundation. The school has its own governing committee to which the Court delegates day-to-day oversight.ii) The school is academically selective and provides for pupils of above average academic ability.iii) The Nursery and preparatory departments are located in south Croydon and the senior school sited in central Croydon.

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. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or 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 and any concerns about quality identified at their previous inspection.

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. 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. The remaining standards will be deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary is found.

The inspection does not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as:

- (i) the school’s aims;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) compliance with data protection requirements;
- (iv) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (v) contractual arrangements with parents;
- (vi) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups. Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Independent School Standards Regulations](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

SUMMARY EVALUATION

The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the 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

In the preparatory school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.

At GCSE in the years 2012 to 2015, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools. At International GCSE in the years 2012 to 2015, performance has been above average for schools worldwide.

In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2012 to 2015 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.

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 pupil performance is in place.

The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1 - 4] are met.

PART 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.

The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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.

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

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

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

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.

The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22 - 31] are met.

PART 6

Provision of information

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.

The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7

Manner in which complaints are handled

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.

The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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.

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding. Children make appropriate progress relative to their starting points, reflecting and supporting the wide variation in stages of development of children under the age of two. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding and meets the developmental needs of each child, although insufficient note is sometimes taken of individual interests when planning learning programmes. Staff actively promote the children's personal and emotional development within a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where every child is valued. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are fully met, ensuring a safe and secure environment at all times. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the setting is outstanding when evaluating practice and securing continuous improvement that improves the prospects of each child.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. The vision to promote a happy atmosphere for children, parents and staff is evident throughout the setting. Staff have very high expectations of what babies and under-twos can achieve, providing exemplary standards of care and educational provision. The quality of the setting is enhanced by the keen interest shown by the governors and their rigour in ensuring strict adherence to policies and procedures.

The extensive programme of focused staff training, matched to statutory requirements and to targets from annual appraisal, ensures that staff fully meet the requirements of their current and future roles. Highly effective supervisions at individual and room level ensure that staff have focused time to discuss the needs and progress of the children in their care.

Self-evaluation is a strength of the setting and draws on performance against agreed targets and success criteria in the development plan. Since the previous inspection, the wooded area has been developed to provide outdoor discovery experiences for the children. Future plans outline the provision of home learning, more consistent planning schemes between rooms, and peer observation of activities for different age ranges.

The curriculum is clearly set out within the whole-school policy, fully meets statutory requirements and is adapted to address the needs of individual children within a particular age range. For example, the current baby room timetable reflects the young age of the group and has been adapted accordingly. The settling in period, which allows bonding between key staff and children along with an opportunity to judge progress before targets are set, is a strong feature of the setting. Planning does not always draw sufficiently well on the interests of the children.

Carefully planned regular observations track each child's progress against expected developmental goals, securely preparing them for the next stage of their education.

The setting celebrates the diversity of its pupils and neighbours, for example it recognised Chinese New Year with a visiting ceremonial dragon, and a storyteller illustrated Black History Month. British values are actively promoted; even the youngest children wore crowns to commemorate the Queen's ninetieth birthday. The values of sharing, kindness and awareness of the needs of others are fostered throughout the setting.

The arrangements to protect children meet all statutory requirements. A comprehensive training programme ensures that all staff are aware of the need to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Children's everyday safety is carefully addressed by strict adherence to school policies and procedures such as daily equipment checks, detailed risk assessments and comprehensive recruitment checks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Staff have very high expectations of each child's achievement. Carefully tailored individual programmes which are based on regular assessments meet the wide range of development characteristic of this age group.

Staff have an exceptional level of knowledge and understanding of study programmes for this age group, and know their key children very well. This is reflected in the highly effective tracking system which ensures that each child understands how well they are doing and is progressing appropriately, and that any potential concerns are identified and resolved, drawing upon detailed and meticulously maintained records. Parents are invited to formally share their children's progress at regular intervals and are able to view progress records at any time. As a result, they understand how they can contribute to their children's progress. Outside agencies are consulted as required.

Parents receive appropriate information that displays how their children are doing in relation to expected levels of development and what they must do to progress. In interview and through their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, parents expressed full satisfaction with the levels of communication regarding their children's progress and daily activities. They have many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, for example through sharing stories, sending in photographs for inclusion in learning journeys and regular communication about daily activities.

Equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity are supported by provision of suitable resources and activities to reflect the cultural mix of the school population and surrounding neighbourhood. Since the previous inspection the wooded area has been developed to include a mud kitchen, a willow house and large plastic building blocks.

The teaching equips the children with the skills and capacity to develop and learn effectively. As a result, transitions within and from the setting are handled sensitively to prepare them for the next stage of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The personal development, behaviour and welfare of the children is outstanding.

Within the safe and stimulating environment, staff set achievable goals for each child and praise successes with pride and enthusiasm. Background music in the baby room promotes a calm atmosphere conducive to play and supporting a growing awareness of their friends and surroundings. Toddlers confidently access activities inside and out, such as playing in the sandpit. The good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities promotes independent choices. These are limited as the children are not always aware of the variety on offer.

Children demonstrate a secure confidence in their surroundings, using their increasing mobility and sense of curiosity by accessing activities and sharing books and songs. One baby was very proud to have discovered how to crawl into the ball pit and explore the colours of the balls with his key person. In the toddler room, independence is promoted, for example children are encouraged to feed themselves and put on their socks and shoes.

Staff know all of the children very well and the seamless transfer to the next room is a strong feature of the setting. Detailed handover meetings ensure that staff pass on essential information, and a settling in period enables children to bond with their chosen key person. Completion of an updated information sheet from parents further informs the transfer.

Staff demonstrate great affection for the children; toddlers were observed being woken from their sleep in a gentle and caring fashion that brought smiles to their faces. Parents are very appreciative of the continuity of staffing, especially if the same key person has looked after several of their children. Strict adherence to health and safety rules and close liaison with parents ensures that children's physical needs and personal care are comprehensively addressed, enlisting the help of the school nurse if necessary.

Accurate records of attendance are fully maintained and any unexplained absence promptly followed up.

The whole school policy sensitively guides the management of any behaviour issues in the baby and toddler rooms. Staff are good role models for good manners and mutual respect, and even the youngest children are encouraged to express their thanks and are reminded of the need for kind hands. The proactive approach taken by staff to address particular behavioural concerns demonstrates their commitment to keep parents fully informed and, for example, resulted in an information booklet explaining the reasons behind a common behaviour trait and how to handle it both at home and in the setting.

The under-twos do not have direct access to social media but great care is taken to ensure that full permission is received for photographs to be taken and that only school equipment is used for this purpose.

Healthy meals ensure that children have a balanced intake of food during the day. Regular outings for babies and outdoor activity sessions for the toddlers ensure that all children have plenty of fresh air and a change of scene during the day. Feeding and personal training routines strictly follow the schedules set up between the key person and parents, and a full account of the day's activities is provided at collection time.

The highly successful programme of personal development ensures that children are taught to respect each other and contribute to the wider life of the school and society in Britain.

Outcomes for children

The outcomes for children are outstanding. All children progress very well from their personalised starting points, which are carefully chosen following a period of observation by key staff. Individual next steps are matched to appropriate developmental stages, for example one baby who had just started walking was encouraged to extend this new skill by using the baby gym. Careful recording of individual progress ensures that further advice can be sought if necessary.

Younger babies enjoy exploring their environment, using their newly discovered mobility by reaching for toys and stimulating their senses with musical toys, sensory bottles and finger painting. Staff support problem solving activities by ensuring safety and kindness on the way to the goal, such as walking around another child attempting to reach something. Encouragement by staff to develop language skills is rewarded by children saying 'thank you' and responding to others in the room with smiles and, for older babies, with a greeting or an imaginary telephone conversation.

Toddlers enjoy reading books with staff and their friends, learning to say simple words in response to pictures. They carefully follow the actions in songs and demonstrate emergent mark-making skills with coloured pens and paint puppets. Pictures of happy and sad faces effectively help children to learn to express their emotions to their key staff. Number skills are developed as they learn to count objects, for example children counted four dinosaurs during outdoor play. They enjoy the creativity of making collages and of exploring their environment using magnifying glasses.

Compliance with statutory requirements

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Recommendation(s) for further improvement

In addition to the above action points, the school is advised to make the following improvement(s) to its provision for children in the early years.

- Extend the opportunities for children to make independent and informed choice of activities in free play sessions.
- Ensure that proper account is taken of individual and class interests in future planning of activities.

About the inspection

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman of trustees. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Alistair Telfer	Reporting Inspector
Dr Alison Primrose	Accompanying Inspector
Mrs Heather Trim	Compliance Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Gillian Bilbo	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years (Retired Head, GSA school)
Miss Jennifer Hillman	Team Inspector for Early Years (Head of Pre-Preparatory, IAPS school)