



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

The Mall School

January 2022

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School's Details

School	The Mall School			
DfE number	318/6003			
Registered charity number	295003			
Address	The Mall School 185 Hampton Road Twickenham Middlesex TW2 5NQ			
Telephone number	020 8977 2523			
Email address	reception@themallschool.org.uk			
Headmaster	Mr David Price			
Chair of governors	Mr Rupert Walker			
Age range	4 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	189			
	EYFS	12	Pre-prep	31
	Prep	146		
Inspection dates	25 to 28 January 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Mall School is a day preparatory school in Twickenham. It is registered as a single-sex school for male pupils. It was founded in 1872 and moved to its present site in 1909. The school is an independent charitable trust administered by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved the Reception and Year 1 from a subsidiary site, which is now closed, to the main school site, and reduced the leaving age from 13 years to 11 years. The library has also been completely refurbished.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers and vulnerable pupils. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.6 The school's objective is to 'bring out the best in every boy' so that they become confident, independent, well-rounded young men ready for the challenges of the next stage of their educational journey. The aim is to help pupils become considerate and concerned for the welfare of others, with an intellectual curiosity about the world around them.

About the pupils

- 1.7 Pupils come from families with a wide variety of social, professional and cultural backgrounds. Data provided by the school indicate the ability profile of pupils, on intake, is broadly in line with those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 42 pupils as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia, dyspraxia and speech and language difficulties. Three pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Eight pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), four of whom receive additional support for their English.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report 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, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are 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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection 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 standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. 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 standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 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 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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 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.
- 2.11 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

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes 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 any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, 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.

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

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

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

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Key findings

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

- Pupils have excellent and highly developed communication skills.
- Pupils have an excellent attitude towards their learning and work with very high levels of engagement in their lessons.
- Pupils of all abilities make sustained, rapid progress.
- Pupils have excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.

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

- Pupils have an excellent understanding that the decisions that they make, both personal and work-related, are instrumental in shaping their own future success.
- Pupils show very well-developed social skills including the ability to collaborate highly effectively with their peers.
- Pupils display excellent self-confidence, resilience and knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils are extremely well-mannered and show a high degree of respect for their school rules as they take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Recommendations

3.3 The school should make the following improvements.

- Ensure pupils can clearly identify steps for improvement through consistent implementation of the marking policy.
- Ensure pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their education by having more opportunities to follow their own lines of enquiry to develop their knowledge and understanding of topics.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Data provided by the school indicate that all pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make excellent progress from their individual starting points so that they reach levels of achievement that are above, and in some cases, well-above expected levels for their age. As a result, pupils are very successful in their 11+ examinations, and many gain entry to senior schools with high standards of entry.

- 3.6 The pupils have excellent knowledge, skills and understanding for their age, across all areas of the curriculum, as was evident in lessons observed, interviews with pupils and work scrutiny. Their basic skills for learning in literacy and numeracy are at a particularly high level. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for example, children develop a secure understanding of the sounds which letters make as they make plausible attempts at tricky words in their early writing activities. Pupils develop excellent knowledge in a carefully planned and integrated curriculum. For example, in science they show clear progression as they explore a range of scientific concepts such as dissolving substances, separating mixtures, forces and electricity. Older pupils outlined how their independence and personal organisation skills grow as the curriculum becomes broader and features an increasing level of specialist teaching.
- 3.7 Pupils have excellent and highly developed communication skills and apply their strong speaking, listening, reading and writing skills to great effect in lessons. In Year 3, for example, pupils used their extensive vocabulary and excellent knowledge of grammar and literary devices to analyse and then improve a diary entry. They demonstrated confident speaking skills when assessing the performances of their peers in music. In Year 1, pupils demonstrated excellent listening skills, which they referred to as 'whole-body listening', and worked effectively in a carpet-time discussion as they explored adjectives, developing their understanding of what adjectives are and how to use them in a sentence. Even from the youngest age, the pupils answer questions orally with confidence using well-developed vocabulary. For example, children in Reception confidently articulated what activities they had just undertaken in front of the whole class. Pupils cited the opportunity to speak in front of the class or to perform in plays as important factors in the development of their speaking skills. They write with fluent cursive script and neat presentation. For example, pupils in Year 4 used highly creative language to convey fear and humour through beautifully presented written work, whilst pupils in Year 6 were highly adept at applying specialist terminology in analysing and interpreting poetry as they identified alliteration, synonyms and metaphors with confidence.
- 3.8 Pupils acquire excellent numeracy skills and apply these effectively across all areas of the curriculum. In Reception, all children, including those with additional needs, select from carefully planned activities that accurately match their developmental needs and interests to develop their emergent understanding of simple mathematical skills such as 'counting on' to find a total. Older pupils successfully tackle a range of concepts such as place value, shape and problem-solving in their work. The pupils' mental mathematical skills are very well developed. In Year 3, pupils demonstrated a solid knowledge of times tables and an ability to cope with calculations involving brackets while, in Year 4, pupils simplified fractions and identified equivalents with confidence. Pupils also talked with great enthusiasm about their enjoyment of house mathematics competitions and the opportunity to test and stretch their capabilities.
- 3.9 Pupils have strong information and communication technology (ICT) skills and, when given the opportunity, confidently apply knowledge and understanding to popular software applications in ICT lessons and across the curriculum. For example, in the EYFS, children worked independently with a touchscreen device to complete animated addition problems, while in art pupils in Year 5 adeptly switched between digital applications to research, download and save pictures for a mural painting project. Pupils apply their skills effectively to support the completion of projects in history, such as those on the Roman Empire and the power of the Church in the Middle Ages.
- 3.10 Pupils demonstrate an excellent ability to think for themselves, hypothesise and accurately analyse data. For example, pupils in Year 1 reflected on their own, and others' work, to identify how to improve their letter formation. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 demonstrated sophisticated analytical skills in evaluating and planning for improvement in a piece of descriptive writing about Loch Ness. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated excellent capacity to reflect on and challenge their own understanding of a poem and offered complex hypotheses about potential interpretations. In their lessons, younger pupils independently draw from a range of sources, such as vocabulary sheets and 'working walls', and use these effectively to support their learning. In history, pupils in Year 6 utilised a range of resources,

such as primary sources, online research and dictionaries to analyse evidence and suggest reasons for historical events and decisions in the context of modern-day political needs. The careful preparation of a helpful range of resources is an important factor in supporting pupils across the ability range to develop such skills. Occasionally, however, pupils make little progress in developing higher-order skills because the teaching is too didactic and focuses solely on the acquisition of knowledge.

- 3.11 Pupils achieve extremely well in their academic and other pursuits. Pupils do extremely well in gaining places at senior schools with high standards of entry, with some being awarded full academic, sports, music and performing arts scholarships. A large proportion of the school's pupils learn at least one, and often two, instruments and reach a very high standard in national music examinations. In sport, pupils compete in regional and national competitions, particularly in swimming, football, and cricket.
- 3.12 Pupils have an excellent attitude towards their learning and work with dedication and focus in lessons. They engage well and are productive in their individual work. They work effectively in groups to develop their learning as part of whole-class discussions. For example, pupils in Year 6 showed excellent attitudes as they discussed in groups a variety of scenarios pertaining to the use of drugs and the law. They exhibited focus and maturity in their discussions and allowed each other to take turns to speak. In music, pupils were highly skilled in taking leadership in their learning, working in pairs and then, as a group, evaluating their performance. Pupils are highly effective at working collaboratively and offering sophisticated feedback to improve their learning based on their prior knowledge and understanding. In a mathematics lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils demonstrated outstanding attitudes to supporting each other as they ensured pupils learning remotely, and participating via an online link, were fully involved in the group work. In drama, pupils worked exceptionally well in groups to cast, rehearse and perform extracts from *Bugsy Malone*, happily taking direction from each other as they strived to give the best possible performance.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Throughout the school, pupils show high levels of self-understanding and self-esteem, and demonstrate self-confidence in their learning, answering questions in lessons with enthusiasm and showing good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. For example, pupils in Year 4 recognised that they tend to perform better in those subjects that they particularly like and, whilst many show a robust self-confidence, some pupils also reflected that they recognise nervousness as a sign of feeling less confident. When faced with challenge in their work, they show good levels of perseverance and resilience for their age. They are able to reflect on their learning and adapt in order to improve. For example, in music, pupils in Year 6 were highly effective at self- and peer-evaluation to improve and develop individual and group performance, demonstrating significant resilience. However, a small minority of pupils indicated that they do not always know how to improve their work because the marking does not provide sufficient guidance on how to improve. The inspection found that marking in workbooks often praises pupils for what they have done well but offers little written guidance on how to improve.
- 3.15 In the EYFS, children make appropriate independent choices as they select from a range of activities, for example, to support their mathematical development. As they move through the school, however, pupils have limited opportunity to direct their own learning. Older pupils may, for example, choose the content of a story or the subject of their artwork, but an over-reliance on teacher-directed and worksheet-based activities stifles the opportunity for pupils to make choices. Nevertheless, pupils play an effective role in decisions that affect the whole school community through their participation in the school council by, for example, suggesting and implementing a programme to reduce food wastage in the school. Pupils have a clear understanding that they will have to make important decisions which may affect their future, as they move forward in their school careers. These include the need to allocate their time effectively to balance work commitments, hobbies and friendships.

They recognise that the decisions they make, both personal and work-related are instrumental in shaping their own future success; this is particularly evident in their preparation for 11+ examinations and senior-school admission. Pupils talk with confidence about this process and aspect of school life.

- 3.16 Pupils appreciate the non-material aspects of life and develop a good capacity for spiritual understanding. Younger pupils, for example, were fascinated by the minibeasts they discovered with their magnifying glasses as part of a study of micro-habitats in the school's science garden, and older pupils watched in silence as they went on a virtual tour of the Sistine Chapel during a religious studies lesson. When prompted, pupils reflect that they have been inspired by creative writing or moved by personal success. Pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by the school to develop this aspect of their character, particularly through engagement with the curriculum in religious studies and history, and through a programme of visits to local places of worship for a variety of faiths. They talk confidently about different faiths, such as Islam and Hinduism, and reflect on how their first-hand experiences have shaped their understanding of the world around them. In the EYFS, children develop empathy for others as they reflect on different emotions and what effect their actions have on others.
- 3.17 Pupils are well behaved. They can articulate the values and expectations that epitomise being a member of the school community. They can effectively distinguish right from wrong and demonstrate a good understanding of, and respect for, systems of rules and laws. Pupils articulate this understanding in the context of their academic study, for example, through form-time discussions exploring topical issues around the law and COVID-19 restrictions to discussions in history around the Magna Carta and the formation of laws. Pupils' behaviour is typified by good manners towards their staff and their peers. They are aware of, and respect, the school rules, to which pupils have contributed, and examples were seen by inspectors of pupils challenging the behaviour of others. This is facilitated by a universally accepted system of rewards and sanctions and the pupils' desire to earn positive recognition. Pupils show a keen sense of fair play, embedded within the school rewards system in which the headmaster's commendations and other awards reinforce positive behaviour towards others and contribution to the community. Pupils accept responsibility for their own behaviour and spoke eloquently about exploring a range of different scenarios in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons covering, for example, e-safety and anti-bullying. House captains take their roles very seriously and recognise that they are role models to the rest of the school.
- 3.18 Pupils form excellent relationships with each other and work effectively in pairs or groups. This begins in the youngest pupils. For example, in Reception, children showed advanced development in playing collaboratively, being able to take turns and share resources effectively. They enjoy being part of a sports or house team and are content to work with anyone in their class. Pupils are very supportive of each other even when there is a degree of competition. In preparing to audition for the school play, for example, pupils worked together in randomly selected groups to cast, rehearse, and present a scene for the director. Those pupils interviewed were keen to point out that respect and support for those who may exhibit different characteristics are widespread. They talk with enthusiasm about their charitable actions as a school and why they had chosen and raised funds to support a range of local, national and international charities. Pupils particularly noted an assembly led by pupils in Years 5 and 6 explaining the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan that led to effective collaboration to implement a number of themed days to raise money for this cause. Pupils develop a strong respect and empathy towards each other through whole-school initiatives, such as 'One kind word'.
- 3.19 Pupils enjoy an appropriate range of opportunities to make a contribution to their school and the local community. Younger pupils act as classroom monitors and helpers and, from Year 3 upwards, classes elect a representative to sit on the school council and the charity committee. Chosen representatives wear their badges with pride. Each of these roles has an organisational and public-facing aspect which develops confidence. There is a strong pupil leadership team and a particularly clear focus on the school council as a voice that enables pupils to support and contribute to the wider life of the community. Pupils speak with real enthusiasm about the impact of the school council in improving the life of their community. They have been actively involved in discussions around new school menus,

changes to the way in which house points are awarded, and how sports teams are selected. As a result, they develop a strong sense of the value placed on the pupil voice. For the older pupils, there is the opportunity to serve as a head pupil, prefect, house captain or tour guide. Pupils are highly effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and contributing positively to the lives of others within the school community. Through their increasing levels of responsibility and independence as they move through the school, the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their school career.

- 3.20 Pupils are inclusive of those from backgrounds different to their own, mixing easily with pupils of other nationalities, backgrounds and beliefs. They are deeply conscious of issues around discrimination of any sort and are vocal in their rejection of such attitudes. A growing understanding of the major faiths is promoted in the school's religious studies curriculum where, for example, pupils in Year 2 recently visited a Sikh gurdwara as part of their module of study entitled 'Celebrating Differences'. Pupils have delivered well-received presentations to their classmates on festivals they celebrate personally. As a result, pupils have a secure understanding of different religious festivals such as Eid, Diwali and Easter.
- 3.21 Pupils recognise the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the steps they can take to keep themselves safe, due to the regular discussions in assemblies, PSHE and ICT lessons. They can explain the benefits of physical exercise and the components of a healthy diet. This is further demonstrated through the choices they make in the dining hall. Pupils spoke confidently about eating a balanced lunch and ensuring this includes vegetables or salad and a variety of food groups. Pupils did note that they would like more vegetarian options to support healthy choices. Pupils also talked enthusiastically about opportunities for exercise provided by physical education (PE) and, in particular, their weekly swimming lessons in the school's own pool. They understand the benefits of learning to swim for their health and safety, and the most able reach very high standards, competing and achieving excellent results at national school swimming competitions. Pupils recognise the importance of maintaining positive mental health, and older pupils are able to explain the importance of this.

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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff 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 Robert Lilley	Compliance team inspector
Mr James Raymond	Team inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)