



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Thames Christian School

June 2023

School's details

School	Thames Christian School			
DfE number	212/6403			
Registered charity number	1081666			
Address	Thames Christian School 12 Grant Rd London SW11 2FR			
Telephone number	0207 228 3933			
Email address	info@thameschristianschool.org.uk			
Headteacher	Dr Stephen Holsgrove			
Chair of governors	Mrs Marie-Louise Wells			
Proprietor	Thames Christian School			
Age range	11 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	175			
	Years 7 to 9	104	Years 10 and 11	71
Date of inspection	27 June 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Thames Christian School is an independent co-educational day school. It was founded in 2000 and is overseen by a board of governors. There are 42 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom three have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Five pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance inspection coupled with an inspection of educational quality, which took place in April 2022.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to extend the age range of pupils from 11 to 16 years to 11 to 18 years from September 2023, with no increase in overall pupil numbers. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupil performance)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school provides pupils with an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum. Schemes of work take into account the needs, aptitudes and ages of pupils, including those with SEND and with EHC plans. The curriculum currently provides pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress across all the required areas of learning. It provides appropriately for the acquisition of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The proposed schemes of work for Years 12 and 13 provide a programme of activities which is appropriate to the needs of pupils in that age group. Careers guidance and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) planned for pupils aged 16 to 18 years contain suitable content, pitched at an appropriate level of sophistication for this age group. The PSHE programme for this age group reflects the school's aims and ethos. The plans for careers guidance include guidance on university application, degree apprenticeships and a suitable range of other options.
- 2.3 The planned provision is likely to meet the needs of pupils aged 16 to 18 years.

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

- 2.4 The school meets the standard.
- 2.5 Teaching observed during the inspection was planned effectively, considered pupils' needs, aptitudes and prior attainment effectively, and treated pupils fairly. Teaching enabled pupils to make progress through the use of effective teaching methods, high expectations of behaviour and engagement, effective use of suitable resources and well-communicated subject knowledge. The school has recruited teaching staff whose age-appropriate experience and expertise seems likely to ensure that the teaching to be provided to pupils aged 16 to 18 years will meet the pupils' needs.

Quality of education provided – framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 The school has an appropriate framework for assessing pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders have planned a suitable framework of pupil performance for pupils aged 16 to 18 years. This framework includes baseline and regular assessments of progress and is informed by reference to national norms as evident in public examination results, and consultation with relevant examination boards.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.8 The school meets the standard.
- 2.9 The school actively promotes principles that promote mutual respect and tolerance and other fundamental British values. It encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and appreciate and respect others, including those with protected characteristics. This was evident in PSHE and relationships and sex education materials which cover certain forms of prejudice and misogyny effectively. Pupils who spoke to the inspector said that they explored themes of rights and equal opportunities. They also said that the school would take any racism or prejudice very seriously. The planned provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils aged 16 to 18

years, including a 'life skills' programme, centres around appropriate age-related themes, such as consent, and is likely to meet the pupils' needs effectively.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.10 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.11 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 The school implements its policy effectively to safeguard the welfare of pupils. It acts in the best interests of the child throughout all sections of the school, including by encouraging pupils to share any concerns that they might have. When pupils raise a concern, they receive a response and suitable action is taken. Scrutiny of safeguarding records confirms that the school acts appropriately and in accordance with locally agreed procedures when safeguarding concerns are raised. The school liaises with and refers to relevant external agencies when appropriate. It implements effective procedures to respond to any concerns about child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment or sexual violence, providing suitable support to pupils affected. The school has effective procedures to respond to any allegations or low-level concerns about staff or other adults working with children. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputy DSLs and staff are suitably trained. They understand their responsibilities towards safeguarding and the staff code of conduct. Governors are trained appropriately in safeguarding and maintain effective oversight of the safeguarding policy and procedures, including those for recruitment. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online, and filters and monitors internet usage appropriately. The safeguarding team provide sufficient coverage for the school and are likely to continue to do so once the proposed material change takes place, including through the introduction of an additional deputy DSL. In addition, the school has made appropriate consideration of the safeguarding needs of pupils aged 16 to 18 years and any potential risks to the pupil body as a whole of introducing pupils of that age to the school.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.14 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.
- 2.16 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 wellbeing of the pupils. Leaders have planned and prepared effectively for the proposed material change. Staff who spoke to the inspectors explained how leaders had provided appropriate support for them to ensure the school's preparedness for including sixth-form provision.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's proposal, to extend the age range of pupils from 11 to 16 years to 11 to 18 years, with no increase in overall pupil numbers, be approved.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and with the chair of governors. He observed lessons, talked with groups of pupils and scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Steven Popper

Reporting inspector