

27th January 2023

St Joseph's Inspection Outcomes:

Fully Compliant with all Independent Schools Standards

“The quality of the pupils’ academic and other achievements is Excellent.”

“The quality of the pupils’ personal development is Excellent.”

Dear Parents,

I am very pleased to finally be able to share with you the results of our recent ISI inspection, which took place from the 6th to the 8th of December 2022. As you will recall, this was a testing time: the penultimate week of term, two Junior School productions going ahead, the Seniors having just completed exam week and all the challenges an end of term brings with it.

The inspectors were very thorough indeed, and looked at things initially as part of a Focused Compliance Inspection. This is a measurement of how we meet the Independent Schools Standards and Regulations (ISSRs). We were fully compliant in our last Compliance Inspection in 2017. For this, the inspectors look at:

- Part One – Quality of education provided
- Part Two – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- Part Three – Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- Part Four – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors
- Part Five – Premises and accommodation at school
- Part Six – Provision of Information
- Part Seven – Manner in which complaints are handled
- Part Eight – Quality of leadership and management of schools

I am delighted to say that **we were fully compliant in every regard with all of the above**. Having spoken since with our ISA South West Regional Ambassador, with whom I sit on the ISA SW Regional Committee in my role as ISA SW Area Secretary, she has confirmed how difficult this is, and how many schools do not meet all of the ISSRS, and sent her congratulations.

The FCI report states that “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



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is required as a result of this inspection.” A very prosaic summation of an enormous amount of work!

More excitingly, the second part of the inspection was an **Educational Quality Inspection**. For the Educational Quality Inspection there are two focuses, each of which has eight areas. The two parts are:

- a. **The Achievements of the pupils, including their academic development**
- b. **The personal development of the pupils**

Grades for each section are awarded as ‘Excellent’, ‘good’, ‘sound’, or ‘unsatisfactory’. Our report states that:

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

- *Pupils are highly enthusiastic learners, keen to fulfil their potential.*
- *Pupils’ study skills are extremely well developed, allowing them to become confident independent learners.*
- *Pupils’ communication skills are highly developed and their oral communication is notably strong.*

“Throughout the school pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, develop excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding for their abilities across the curriculum.”

The quality of the pupils’ personal development is excellent.

- *Pupils have highly developed levels of self-confidence, self-esteem and perseverance.*
- *Pupils collaborate extremely well in lessons and around the school.*
- *Pupils have a strong sense of moral understanding; they readily take responsibility for their own behaviour.*
- *Pupils’ contributions to others, to the school and the community are excellent.*

“Pupils demonstrate very strong levels of self-knowledge and self-discipline seen through the quality of their discussion with inspectors, their contributions in class, and in extra-curricular activities. In this way the school very successfully fulfils its aim for pupils to become confident, competent individuals, ready to face the adult world. They show resilience and are appreciative of their teachers’ encouragement and support, using this as a motivating force for further progress.”

I cannot tell you how happy I am that we were found to be Excellent in both regards, and just what a credit it is to the school, and to the many years of hard work that have gone in to achieving this





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grading under particularly challenging circumstances when taking into account the timing of the inspection.

We have faced many challenges in recent years. As Headteacher, I have seen many changes: in staffing, in Governance, and with the small matter of a global pandemic, the national lockdowns that we have had to find our way through and the challenges of moving the whole school online. Twice. Not to mention the endless, endlessly evolving, associated legislation of recent years.

So to now be Headteacher of a school where we are near capacity and are fully compliant with the exacting ISSR standards *and* Excellent in both pupils' academic and other achievements and pupils' personal development is something of which I am immensely proud.

This outcome is not the result of the work of the few days in December during which the Inspectors were in school. We did not put on a show, or a performance, for the inspectors that was over or above what we normally do.

I have never believed Inspection should be anything other than a thorough examination of what we normally do, because we should be aiming for excellence as a matter of course, and for that excellence to be for the benefit of the children in our care, not for the benefit of inspectors we meet on a Tuesday and who are gone by the Thursday evening.

The judgements – which were both Excellent, if you remember – were achieved by a dedicated team of teaching assistants, Governors, non-teaching staff, drivers, cleaners, teachers and all others who contribute to a school's success. Most of all it was achieved by the pupils, who you will see from the report itself were seen and spoken to and heard, and were, quite rightly, the focus of every aspect of the inspection. It is how anything we do as a school feeds into their outcomes that is all that matters.

As such, I would like to thank all staff, pupils, parents and governors for their hard work through the years to get us to this point. That includes parents past and present, and pupils who shape the school today and have helped build it to its current position. The staff of St Jo's were superb throughout the inspection, and I would thank my fellow members of the SMT Mr Matthews, Mrs Skerry and Mr Barton for this, as well as all other staff too many to mention.

Thank you too to the Board of Governors of St Joseph's. They are of course referenced positively in the report, as they should be. One such example is here:



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“Supported by the governing body, a major contribution to pupils’ considerable academic development is through the leadership team’s promotion of thorough planning, high-quality teaching, and use of informed strategies to support individual pupils.”

This support has continued through the successive time given by three successive Chairs of Governors, Mrs Margaret Warren (without whose support in the early 2010s the school would not have continued to exist), Mrs Sue Rowe – my predecessor as Headteacher - and our current Chair Mrs Lis Mann.

I would also like to take a moment, as we enjoy the success of the work that has gone into the report, to remember Mr Andrew Marshall, Mrs Sharon Thorns and Mrs Sue Lewis. They are three Governors who served on the Board during my time at St Jo’s, each of whom is no longer with us. I know each would be very proud of the inspection outcomes, and I can imagine their emails and words of support. Each of them left their unique mark on St Jo’s, and for each the school held a special place in their lives. Absent friends who helped create the school as it is today, and who are much missed.

As I’m sure you can imagine, I could fill several pages more with the lovely things in the report, but it is much better to recommend you to read it for yourselves.

We will of course continue to work to move the school forward, and I am aware that schools can change all too fast and we will be ever vigilant to any drop in standards. But now, in the cold of a Cornish winter, I hope the report brings to you some of the warmth it has brought to us. We all live the school daily, and to have the excellence for which we strive validated by the good people of the Inspectorate, and at such a challenging time of year, is a wonderful validation of the good the school does for the children in our care.

With thanks for your continued support,

Yours sincerely,

Mr Oliver Scott

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