

# Iona School

310 Sneinton Dale, Sneinton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG3 7DN

**Inspection dates**

3 July 2019

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(g), 4*

- The previous standard inspection in December 2018 found weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics, writing and science. There were too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills or solve complex problems in mathematics. Teachers did not develop pupils' knowledge of scientific methods well enough, or consistently support pupils' ability to spell accurately. Pupils did not make good progress over time.
- The previous inspection found that teachers did not use their assessments of pupils' abilities incisively to set work to meet the most able pupils' needs. In the early years, assessments of children's abilities did not provide teachers with adequate information about what children could do. The activities planned by teachers did not take sufficient account of children's needs. There was no framework in place to assess pupils' performance with reference to the school's own aims.
- Teachers are now providing pupils with increased opportunities to write, solve mathematical problems and investigate scientific concepts. For example, the oldest pupils have recently written short stories, poems, and persuasive letters and experienced a writing workshop with a local author. In science, pupils have deepened their knowledge and skills in such topics as the human body, animals, botany and lights and shadows. Mathematical problems are being solved weekly, in areas such as money and data handling. A new spelling scheme is now in place that is linked to national curriculum expectations. The scheme is enhanced through the learning of words relevant to the current topic, Roman history, for example.
- A new, whole-school assessment system has been introduced, including in the early years. The system enables teachers to identify the attainment and progress made by each pupil, including the most able pupils, in a wide range of subjects. The system is helping to ensure that teachers have adequate assessment information to plan activities which sufficiently challenge all pupils.
- Daily assessment sheets and 'reflective journals' are allowing teachers to record information about those pupils who have achieved well and those that may require extra support. Staff, including those in the early years, have received appropriate training and have met with teachers from other schools to moderate pupils' work. This is ensuring

that the assessment judgements made by teachers are accurate and secure.

- The school meets the requirements of the independent school standard in this part.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. There have been no changes to the school's safeguarding procedures since the previous standard inspection in December 2018. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe.

### Part 6. Provision of information

#### *Paragraph 32(3)(e)*

- The previous inspection found that leaders did not publish particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding year, including the results of any public examinations, and did not provide this information to parents and carers of pupils and prospective parents of pupils.
- On the day of the inspection this academic performance information was not published. However, during the day, school leaders ensured that the particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding year were added to the school's website. This information included teachers' assessments in reading, writing and different aspects of mathematics, for pupils leaving the school for the next stage of their education. This information has now been published and is available on the school's website for parents of current pupils and parents of prospective pupils.
- The safeguarding policy is available on the school website, meets current guidelines and is available for parents and carers to download. The policy was updated in May 2019. A paper copy is available should this be required.
- The school meets the requirements of the independent school standard in this part.

### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

#### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- The previous inspection found that leaders and managers had not ensured that all the independent school standards had been met. Roles and responsibilities for the leadership of the school were unclear and trustees did not hold school leaders to account well enough for the quality of education. School leaders did not hold teachers to account for the progress pupils made.
- The previous inspection found that leaders were not monitoring the attendance of pupils closely enough. Leaders had not identified accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including in the early years.
- The recent appointment of an experienced education manager has strengthened leadership. The appointment has enabled teachers to become increasingly accountable for the progress of pupils in their classes. More time is given to monitoring activities, such as lesson observation and the checking of teachers' plans and work in pupils'

books. Feedback given to teachers after such activities is helping them to improve their practice. Leaders are now more effective in holding teachers to account for the progress pupils make.

- The roles and responsibilities of the trustees and senior leaders are now clear. A school leadership flowchart, available on the school's website, shows clearly who has responsibility for overseeing the quality of education, safeguarding, finance, fire safety and pupils' behaviour, for example.
- Leaders are now monitoring the attendance of pupils more closely. A new attendance policy has recently been implemented, with letters being sent to, and meetings held with, parents whose children's attendance is causing concern. Current attendance rates are now above the national average.
- Leaders, including in the early years, are now identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses through the use of an appropriate framework.
- The school meets the requirements of the independent school standard in this part.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
  - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
  - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
  - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
  - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

#### **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—
  - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations, are made available to parents.

#### **Part 8. Quality of Leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently

- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

## School details

Unique reference number	122941
DfE registration number	892/6010
Inspection number	10107411

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Number of part-time pupils	10
Proprietor	The Iona School Association
Chair of college of teachers	Robert Stafford
Business manager	Vacant
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,373.52
Telephone number	01159 415295
Website	<a href="http://www.theionaschool.org.uk">www.theionaschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@theionaschool.org.uk">admin@theionaschool.org.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	4–6 December 2018

## Information about this school

- The Iona School is an independent day school for boys and girls. The school follows the Steiner curriculum. The school's ethos is that 'educating children should be a continuing process and our task is to stimulate and develop the faculties and skills which enable our pupils to learn for life, from life, throughout life.'
- In line with normal Steiner practice, there is no headteacher. However, there is a chair of the college of teachers and a newly appointed education manager, who are responsible for the education provision.

- There is a separate Nursery provision on the school site, which was not in the remit of this inspection.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.
- The school has an exemption from the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- The school was previously inspected by Ofsted on the 4 to 6 December 2018 and received a requires improvement judgement.
- The school submitted an action plan indicating how leaders would tackle the unmet standards. This plan was deemed acceptable by Ofsted in March 2019.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was unannounced and was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement in December 2018.
- The inspector held various meetings with the education manager, chair of college of teachers, kindergarten lead, three teachers and six pupils.
- The inspector examined a range of policies and documents, including those relating to pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' planning, leaders' monitoring activities, safeguarding, attendance and a selection of pupils' workbooks.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the school, including the extensive outdoor area known as 'The Land'.

## Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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