



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports  
For Schools with Residential Provision**

**CATS College London**

**April 2019**



## Contents

<b>School's Details</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>1. Background Information</b>		<b>4</b>
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
<b>2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection</b>		<b>5</b>
Preface		5
Key findings		7
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		7
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		7
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		8
PART 6 – Provision of information		8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		8
<b>3. Educational Quality Inspection</b>		<b>9</b>
Preface		9
Key findings		10
Recommendations		10
The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements		10
The quality of the pupils' personal development		12
<b>4. INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>		<b>14</b>

### School's Details

<b>College</b>	CATS College London			
<b>DfE number</b>	202/6000			
<b>Address</b>	CATS College London 43-45 Bloomsbury Square London WC1A 2RA			
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 784 11580			
<b>Email address</b>	mdiclemente@catslondon.com			
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Mario Di Clemente			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Stuart White			
<b>Age range</b>	14 to 24			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	230			
	<b>Boys</b>	145	<b>Girls</b>	85
	<b>Day pupils</b>	115	<b>Boarders</b>	115
	<b>Seniors</b>	45	<b>Sixth Form</b>	185
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24 to 26 April 2019			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 CATS College London was founded in 2011 as an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from 14 to 24 years. It is part of a group of schools owned by CEG Colleges Ltd. The proprietor holds overall responsibility for the school and a governing body oversees its operation and strategic direction.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, governance procedures for operational responsibility and strategic management have been restructured.
- 1.3 Boarders aged under 18 years are accommodated in a school house close to the main school premises. The remaining pupils live in independent accommodation arranged by their families and attend as day pupils.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.4 The school aims to create an environment of mutual respect and to foster pupils' potential, independence and maturity. Its objective is to prepare pupils for university entrance and for their futures as global citizens.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.5 Almost all pupils come from overseas business and professional families with some 55 nationalities represented in the school. Approximately half of the pupils are boarders and the remainder live in independent accommodation, attending as day pupils. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is below average. The school has identified 11 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mostly mild learning difficulties such as dyslexia, and all of these receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for almost all pupils and additional support is provided for them in this regard in individual or group lessons. More able pupils are provided with opportunities to extend their learning through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### 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. 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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection 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, including the boarding NMS, 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 identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS.** 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, together with the NMS covering the same areas. 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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2015 to 2017 have been in line with the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 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 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff.
- 2.6 **The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 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, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 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. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.11 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 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 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

**2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.14 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 any 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, 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

**2.15 The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

**2.17 The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

**2.19 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are 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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Academic English	Year 11 and 12
Pre-programme & Fast track GCSE	Year 11
A1	Years 12
A2	Years 13
Fast track AL	Years 12 and 13
University Foundation Programme (UFP)	Years 12 and 13

## Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- Almost all pupils are well motivated, working hard to achieve examination success.
  - Pupils' physical, aesthetic and creative skills are under-developed, restricted by a curriculum focusing primarily on core subjects, examinations and university entrance.
  - Pupils' broader non-academic achievements are limited because the school does not sufficiently facilitate or encourage engagement in activities beyond subject learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils' self-confidence and resilience develop rapidly as they learn to take responsibility for themselves and to manage the considerable freedom allowed.
  - Pupils show excellent tolerance and respect for others.
  - Pupils have limited understanding of, or interest in, the ways in which they could contribute positively to the school or wider community, or of the responsibilities of global citizenship.

## Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
- Enable pupils to improve their physical, aesthetic and creative skills by broadening the curriculum.
  - Enable pupils to achieve more non-academically by increasing the learning opportunities available to them beyond the classroom, and actively encouraging their participation.
  - Enable pupils to contribute more to the school and wider community by extending opportunities for them to do so.

## The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs (SEND), achieve the academic results they need to progress to a degree course in a British university, which is a prime objective within the school's published aims. The school's own assessment indicates that pupils' ability on entry is below the average of those in maintained schools. Data for the years 2015 to 2017, the most recent years for which comparative data is available, show that pupils' attainment at A level is similar to those of comparable ability in maintained schools.
- 3.6 Pupils, including those following the school's own university foundation programme (UFP) make good progress over time. Those who choose to take a fast track route, aiming to complete their programme of study in one year or less, make especially swift progress, successfully reaching examination standard in a very short time. Overall, pupils' progress is rapid in lessons where teaching employs excellent questioning and clear exposition to engage attention and where classroom control ensures that all pupils remain focused, as seen in English lessons focused on the use of the future tense. On occasions, the progress of pupils' learning is restricted by the slow pace of the lesson and insecure classroom management. The few pupils with identified SEND are well supported by teachers, for example by providing useful lists of subject specific vocabulary, so that their progress and attainment keep pace with that of their peers. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and the development of their competence in English is excellent. Pupils make rapid progress in developing their oral and written skills from a wide range of starting points, so that they quickly reach the required levels for university entrance. They are supported in this by senior leaders' insistence on English being

used at all times in all lessons, as well as by energetic teaching which provides sensitive individual support as necessary.

- 3.7 Pupils develop good subject specific skills and understanding. They demonstrate excellent communication skills, expressing themselves fluently and confidently. They question each other intelligently, seen for example in presentations on spring festivals in different countries, or pupils explaining their reasoning in mathematical tasks on mechanics. Pupils' numerical skills are highly developed and they apply them confidently across other subjects such as psychology and business studies, for example creating graphs tabling the results of psychological experiments. They use computer programmes on their own devices and mobile telephones with great confidence. Pupils studying a business or financial course form a good understanding of complex international business operations by making efficient use of the specialist computer facilities which the governors have recently, and wisely, invested in.
- 3.8 Pupils following the GCSE programme develop a sound understanding of human and social development in a variety of ways: through the enrichment programme with topics such as democracy, social intelligence and diversity; through exposure to lessons in French language and culture, and to English literature; and in history lessons. When discussing topics such as Napoleon's policy towards slavery, pupils made perceptive and evaluative comments on the historical context. Pupils utilise their creative skills in art, for example, creating a lively wall mural displaying their good sense of colour, and preparation work in the art room showed their interesting experimentation with material and form. However, pupils' breadth of achievement in using their aesthetic, creative and physical skills is restricted by the school's prime focus on the core subjects necessary for university entrance and on developing their English language. Year 11 pupils improve their physical health in the compulsory PE lessons which allow them access to a local gym or to run in local parks. Older pupils say they wish there was more sport; the numbers joining in voluntary physical activities, however, are small. In questionnaire responses, the majority of parents and of pupils said they are happy with the range of subjects offered, although a minority of pupils were less satisfied with the opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence supports the view that while the academic curriculum meets the pupils' needs, extra-curricular activities, including those for physical exercise, are limited.
- 3.9 The majority of pupils develop good study skills. Some sixth formers have undertaken the extended project qualification (EPQ) and show considerable skill in analysing and synthesising information from a range of sources necessary to complete their projects. Sixth form historians were able to hypothesise well on the causes of the deteriorating relationship between Spain and England under Elizabeth I. Sixth form pupils are able to use higher order thinking skills in their learning, seen for example in mathematics or economics, in which their questioning showed them exploring topics at a sophisticated level. Year 11 pupils are also able to question thoughtfully to deepen their understanding, although they are more reliant on their coursebooks and the framework suggested by their teachers for answering examination questions. The very large majority of pupils are well motivated and eager to learn. They waste little time in settling down to the task set; they work industriously on their own and in pair work and are eager to contribute. Their motivation is encouraged by supportive and energetic teaching and excellent relationships between themselves and the staff.
- 3.10 Some pupils have challenged themselves by entering mathematics or science Olympiads, achieving good results. A Young Enterprise group has produced a thought-provoking booklet as part of its project; in previous years a Young Enterprise group reached the national finals. A school team of sixth-formers recently won an inter-college general knowledge quiz, and a football team reached the semi-finals of an inter-college tournament. A few pupils have shown the initiative to find a centre outside school where they can undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award and school leadership has been supportive of this venture. All Year 11 pupils join one club or activity for the autumn term as required by the school. However, the school does not sufficiently encourage or facilitate pupils' engagement in activities beyond the curriculum. Pupils commented in discussions on the few activities available to

them, and the numbers taking up the available options are small. This narrows pupils' opportunities to widen their life experiences and to discover just what they could do, or achieve, beyond the academic.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.11 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.12 Pupils' self-confidence and resilience develop rapidly as they are immersed in a way of living which requires them to be largely self-sufficient from the very moment they join the school. Pupils' personal independence is strongly supported by the school's commitment to giving the pupils as much freedom as possible to take responsibility for their own lives. At the same time, this commitment makes it difficult to create a culture of community or of involvement beyond lessons. Pupils are supported well by their personal tutors in personal and academic matters, and by house parents in the practicalities of living away from home, but the responsibility for their daily lives is very much their own. As a result, they develop a maturity beyond their years and a marked confidence in daily interactions with adults.
- 3.13 Pupils have the resilience to manage the challenges of working in an unfamiliar environment and with academic pressure extremely well. Those in Year 11 soon learn that homework is not an option, but essential if they are to meet their own ambitions. Older pupils, especially those on fast track courses, show effective insight into their preferred learning styles, for example explaining why they prefer to use a stylus rather than a keypad to make notes on a tablet device. Pupils show considerable self-knowledge, and are able to explain how they feel they have changed and grown in the course of their time in the school, so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.14 The pupils swiftly come to realise the impact of the decisions they make on their lives in school and potentially on their futures. They learn to cope and to reflect on the consequences of their actions in communal living, such as the importance of taking their turn on the cleaning rota in the house kitchen area. They also show maturity in reflecting on choices which will have a potential impact on their studies, for example having to balance the temptation to socialise against the knowledge that they have a work deadline to meet. Pupils value the complete freedom they have to manage their time between the end of lessons and the time they have to be back in their accommodation, and most make wise decisions about how to utilise this discretion. The growing maturity and self-knowledge they develop is evident in their willingness to re-consider their career choices as they move through their course programmes, and come to a new understanding of their own strengths and interests with the support of their personal tutors.
- 3.15 The pupils talk less easily on issues of spiritual understanding and the non-material aspects of life than they do about their work and career ambitions. Nevertheless, their responses in lessons show an openness to considering such matters thoughtfully. The booklet produced by the Young Enterprise team is a compilation of aphorisms drawn from different cultures, followed by questions provoking thought, such as on the relative values of relationships versus work, or asking what readers might wish to forget about what they have done in their lives. Pupils have written well-constructed short philosophical pieces in response to the school's extension programme, pondering imaginatively on topics such as the beauty of mathematics or what poses the greatest danger to humanity. Their ability to think and reflect in this way is supported by the sensitive guidance of their tutors in tutorial times, discussing the topics of the school's enrichment course.
- 3.16 In discussion, pupils' understanding of moral behaviour was sometimes expressed primarily in terms of their understanding of what is and is not legal in the UK. Their behaviour and attitudes show a good awareness of what is, and is not, morally acceptable and they have the strength of character to take issue with peers whose behaviour they consider unacceptable. They understand and respect the school rules. Pupils place a strong emphasis on the importance of respect for others, regardless of different cultural attitudes. This acceptance helps to support their ability to work together effectively, for example when solving mathematical problems, or working on the school magazine.

- 3.17 Pupils are strong-minded individuals and some show an eagerness to contribute positively to school life by acting as school leaders in the school council. These individuals are clearly making efforts to be an interface between pupils and the school by bringing their peers' ideas and concerns to regular discussions with senior staff. In putting themselves forward for election, they have shown a real wish to contribute to the school community. However, generally pupils are either unaware of, or are cynical about, the effectiveness of a school council. There is no evidence of other opportunities for pupils to take initiative or leadership roles for the benefit of the school or boarding community. Pupils show little engagement with the wider community or commitment to the few charitable fundraising ventures which have been managed by student leaders. Some pupils remembered that the school takes part in the CEG project to support a school in Cambodia, but other social or charitable issues do not appear to have registered on pupils' minds. Their thinking about the responsibilities of global citizenship is limited, and the school is not sufficiently encouraging them to reflect on how they can contribute positively to the societies of which they will be a part: in this regard, the school is not yet fulfilling its aim to prepare pupils for their lives as global citizens.
- 3.18 The pupils' respect for cultural diversity is a real strength. Cultural diversity and tolerance are fundamental to the school's ethos, part of the very air the pupils breathe. They strongly value the experience of living with pupils from all over the world and this experience undoubtedly contributes to their maturity and wide understanding of diverse world views. Their capacity for thinking about how cultural respect can be translated into a grasp of the responsibilities that come with global citizenship is not, however, being capitalized on by the school. The pupils are philosophical about the occasional disagreements resulting from misunderstandings of a different culture's mores. These are managed well by the school, and resolutions are reached with the support of tutors or house parents.
- 3.19 Pupils are well aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, and elements of healthy eating, exercise and stress management are covered in the enrichment programme. Some pupils say that they do not have enough opportunity for exercise and inspectors agree. Within the constraints of its location, the school makes sufficient arrangements to facilitate exercise, should pupils wish for this, for example by using the nearby park and also by enabling pupils to use facilities at a local gym. The school, however, does not encourage pupils sufficiently to participate. Many pupils choose not to eat in the school dining room, saying they do not find enough healthy or appealing food. The meals provided are nutritious but inspectors agreed that it is not always possible to make a healthy, satisfying meal selection during the two hour lunch service as the food is not replenished promptly. Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe while living in a busy city far from home. They also feel that they are kept safe by the school, and appreciate the ease of access to emergency support should it be needed.

#### **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 the chair of governors and attended tutor meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the educational resource area. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

#### **Inspectors**

Mrs Colette Culligan	Reporting inspector
Dr Richard Robson	Compliance team inspector and team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Louise North	Team inspector for boarding and team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Robert Teague	Team inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)